

Trailblazer news

good for the land . . . good for the people

In this issue:

- Upcoming Workshops
- Pollinator Workshop
- farmers.gov
- Pollinator Conservation
- NRCS Contact Information
- Helping Pollinators
- Sponsor Spotlight

Dear Friends,

It is exciting to be back in the swing of things planning workshops and visiting communities and partners. I hope you will join us as we move forward, as a sponsor or a participant.

Trailblazer offers a unique opportunity for sponsors to have a presence in rural communities throughout our region by giving organizations a “face” at workshops and in publications.

Workshop participants enjoy access to subject matter experts, the latest innovations, sponsor representatives, community leaders, and timely information—all free of charge!

I call that a “win-win” for Louisiana! I hope you join us as we move forward!



Ellzey Simmons
Chief Executive Officer
Trailblazer RC&D

Check Out These Trailblazer Workshops Being Planned Near You

Farm Pond Construction and Management Workshop

- Construction Basics
- Vegetative Management
- Water Quality
- Nutrient Issues
- Pond Stocking
- Technical and Financial Assistance

Estate Planning Workshop

- Wills and Trusts
- Asset Protection
- Tax Consequences
- Farm/Ranch Sustainability
- Technical and Financial Assistance

Forestry Best Management Practices and Field Tour

- Water Quality
- Stream Crossings
- Streamside Management Zones (SMZs)
- Harvesting in SMZs
- Temporary Roads
- Technical and Financial Assistance

Land Management for Wild Turkeys Workshop

- Techniques to Attract Wild Turkeys to Your Land
- Technical and Financial Assistance

Pollinator Workshop

- Pollinator Identification
- Current Status of Bees and Other Pollinators
- Creating Pollinator Habitats
- Plant Choices

Currently Recruiting Sponsors For These Workshops!

Become a Trailblazer Sponsor!

Reach out to people in rural areas!

Promote stewardship of the land!

Enhance the quality of life in Louisiana!

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

Basic Sponsor
\$300 Donation

Silver Sponsor
\$1,000 to \$1,999
Donation

Gold Sponsor
\$2,000 to \$15,000
Donation

Platinum Sponsor
\$15,000 or more
Donation

Invest in Your Community

Share Your Message

Extend Your Network

Make A Difference

Volume 10
Issue 7
July 2020

²⁴“Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.”

Proverbs 16:24
New International
Version
(NIV)

Send us an email and let us know which workshops you would like to see in your community.

ceo@trailblazer.org

Workshop Update



Pollinator Workshop



June 23, 2020
Minden Farm & Garden

Participants Rated the Speaker/Presentations as OUTSTANDING!

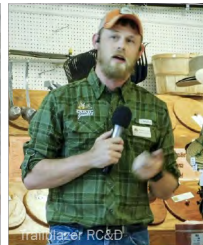
Minden Farm & Garden worked with Trailblazer to host a great workshop on pollinators on Tuesday, June 23. Getting our feet wet again with workshops is a tentative process during these “Covid” times. We appreciate the trust offered by our workshop sponsors, Minden Farm & Garden, our presenters, and our

attendees as we rolled out our first post-quarantine workshop. The workshop was a great success! It featured Jamie Shivers of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Sabrina Claeys of Quail Forever offering easy to follow information on conservation and enhancement of

pollinator habitats and available technical and financial assistance. Attendees were excited about the information and getting involved in pollinator conservation and asked for more meetings on this topic.

Thank You to Our Workshop Sponsors

- Minden Farm and Garden
- Webster Parish Police Jury
- ENABLE Midstream Partners
- Mudd & Holland Consulting Foresters, LLC
- Quail Forever
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



USDA News

USDA Expands Farmers.gov Features to Help Manage Conservation Activities

New self-service features on farmers.gov will help farmers and ranchers manage their conservation activities online and request assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

“These conservation features join a number of others already available through farmers.gov, including the ability to view farm loan information,” said Chad Kacir, State Conservationist in Louisiana. “As more content and capabilities are added, farmers.gov is quickly becoming the online hub for producers to find resources, submit applications and assistance requests and make connections. Now, amid this pandemic, we recognize the importance of online options for producers to

manage their USDA business.” Producers can access these conservation features by desktop computer, tablet, or phone. They can now:

- View, download and e-sign documents;
- Request conservation assistance;
- Reference technical terms and submit questions;
- Access information on current and past conservation practices; and
- View detailed information on all previous and ongoing contracts, including the amount of planned and received cost-share assistance.

The new conservation features enhance the request process with a customer-friendly unified mapping tool that allows farmers to locate areas of interest in minutes, with high-resolution aerial imagery and multi-layered display functionality.

For more information on this tool, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/la/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSSEPRD1598817> or contact your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

farmers.gov

CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

Insect pollination is critical to crop production and world food security. Honey bees and other pollinators support production of most of the fruits, nuts, and vegetables grown in the United States and around the world.



POLLINATOR CONSERVATION

Pollinator Conservation Priorities

Every few years, Congress passes legislation (Farm Bill) that has tremendous impact on farming in the United States. Crop insurance, sustainable agriculture practices, pest management, beginning farmer training, conservation, and food security are a few of the issues addressed in the Farm Bill. In recent years (2008, 2014, and 2018), pollinator conservation became a part of the language of the Farm Bill.

The primary purpose of the Farm Bill has always been to ensure good food prices for farmers and consumers, adequate food supplies, and protection and sustainability of our nation's natural resources. In response to declining populations of honey bees and other pollinators and the impact this could have on food supplies, the 2008 Farm Bill established: (1) a priority for conservation of pollinator habitats through the Conservation Security Program (now the Conservation Stewardship Program); (2) a pollinator priority for the Conservation Reserve Program state acres for wildlife practice; and (3) special consideration when determining payments for practices that promote pollinator habitat through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. The 2014 and 2018 Farm Bill legislation retained all of the pollinator conservation provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill and added targeted support for creation of honey bee habitat in

2014 and coordination of honey bee/pollinator research provisions in 2018.

You Can Make A Difference

Pollinators are a critical part of the agricultural landscape, as well as the backyard gardening landscape. Farmers, ranchers, and backyard gardeners can make decisions for their land that will benefit pollinators; such as using cover crops, including diverse flowering plants that will bloom throughout the growing season, and/or creating buffers to reduce pesticide drift. Including native plants in the landscape can offer food and shelter for native pollinators.

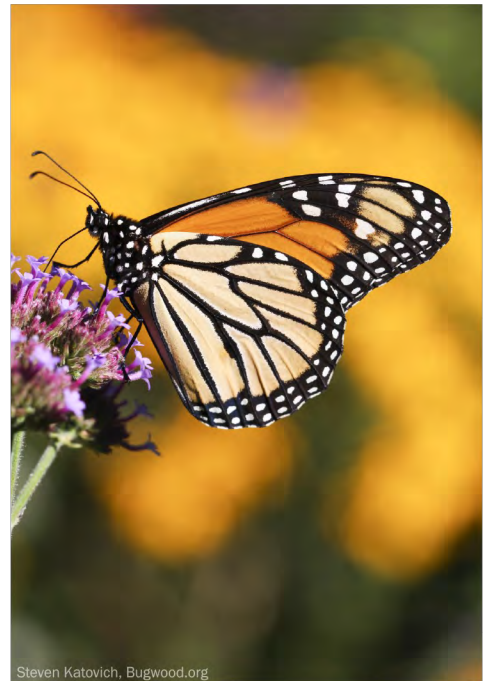
Technical and Financial Assistance

A host of conservation practices can be used to benefit pollinators. **The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service** is available to help you develop a plan specific to your operation that includes practices that will help you meet your pollinator goals for your land. Farmers, foresters, and ranchers may be eligible for financial assistance to implement conservation practices through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Contact your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for more information on pollinator conservation practices.



Joseph LaForest, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org



Steven Katovich, Bugwood.org



Susan Ellis, Bugwood.org

Continued on Page 4

Why is Pollination Important?

- Of the 1,400 crop plants grown around the world, i.e., those that produce all of our food and plant-based industrial products, almost 80% require pollination by animals.
- Visits from bees and other pollinators result in larger, more flavorful fruits and higher crop yields.
- In the United States alone, pollination of agricultural crops is valued at 10 billion dollars annually.
- Globally, pollination services are likely worth more than 3 trillion dollars.
- More than half of the world's diet of fats and oils come from animal-pollinated plants (oil palm, canola, sunflowers, etc.).
- More than 150 food crops in the U.S. depend on pollinators, including almost all fruit and grain crops.
- The USDA estimated that crops dependent on pollination are worth more than \$10 billion per year.

From:
U.S. Forest Service, Why is Pollination Important?
<https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/importance.shtml>, viewed 6/28/2020.

Pollinator Resources

USDA NRCS, More Information About Pollinators

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/plantsanimals/pollinate/info/>

Pollinator Partnership

<https://www.pollinator.org/pollinators>

USDA Forest Service, Celebrating Wildflowers, Pollinators

<https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/>

Are you interested in learning more about pollinators?

If you are interested in attending a pollinator workshop in your community, contact Trailblazer RC&D at (318) 255-3554 or ceo@trailblazer.org. We will bring expert presenters to your community and provide an interesting and educational workshop for you and your neighbors.

USDA Service Centers Are Open By Phone Appointment Only

Due to current COVID-19 conditions:

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field offices in Louisiana are open by phone appointment only until further notice, and NRCS staff are available to continue to provide one-on-one, customer-specific advice to producers to help them meet their unique conservation and business goals.

All USDA Service Centers, including those with NRCS field offices, are not currently accessible to customers in person.

Online services are available to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov offsite link where producers can view USDA farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in. Online NRCS services are available to customers through the Conservation Client Gateway link which can be found at www.nrcs.usda.gov. Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance and electronically sign documents.

For the most current updates on available services and Service Center contact information, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

NRCS staff are working with customers through phone, mail and online communications, and field work continues with appropriate social distancing to help producers with conservation planning and financial assistance through Farm Bill programs.

NRCS Contacts

Bienville Parish:
(318) 377-3950, ext. 3

Bossier Parish:
(318) 872-4949

Claiborne/Webster Parishes:
(318) 377-3950, ext. 3

Jackson/Lincoln Parishes:
(318) 255-3136, ext. 3

Union Parish:
(318) 368-8021

Winn Parish:
(318) 357-8366, ext. 3

LAGNIAPPE

a little something extra

Bees · Bats · Wasps · Moths · Butterflies · Hummingbirds · Flies · Beetles

POLLINATORS

RANCHERS

Livestock producers promote pollinator habitats by including a variety of flowering annual clovers in their pastures, maintaining flowering areas throughout the season, and avoiding overgrazing.

GARDENERS

Home gardeners support pollinators by planting a variety of native plants that bloom from spring into fall; eliminating pesticide use; including a pollinator garden in their landscape; and learning more about pollinators and their habitats.

FORESTERS

Foresters support pollinators through use of best management practices such as riparian forest buffers, alley cropping, windbreaks, and silvopasture.

FARMERS

Ag producers use conservation practices to help pollinators by creating pollinator habitats and protecting those habitats from exposure to pesticides.

Are you interested in learning more about pollinators?

If you are interested in attending a pollinator workshop in your community, contact Trailblazer RC&D at (318) 255-3554 or ceo@trailblazer.org. We will bring expert presenters to your community and provide an interesting and educational workshop for you and your neighbors.

Contact Trailblazer

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

JUST FOR FUN

Can you find the **BEE** in these flowers?

These flowers are hydrangeas. Not all hydrangeas provide food for bees. While the flowers in this photo are not a good food source for bees, they are very good for hiding that sneaky bee! Can you find it?

When planning for pollinators, do research to find out which plants will thrive in your area and provide the best food sources.



Hint: The bee is on a pink flower.

Are You Ready to:

- Expand outreach and increase your impact on the community
- Align your company with sustainable agriculture and a healthy environment

- Engage employees in solving resource, economic, environmental, and social concerns
- Build your brand

- Secure tax deductions
- Increase profits
- Make a difference

Call us today!

Partner with Trailblazer RC&D

Contact Trailblazer today at
ceo@trailblazer.org or
(318) 255-3554

Friends of Trailblazer



CEO Ellzey Simmons (right) Trailblazing with a good friend to Trailblazer: Coach Billy Montgomery (left), Bossier Parish Police Jury special projects liaison. Good to see you Coach!



Congratulations Ronda on Your Retirement!

Congratulations to Ronda Carnahan on her recent retirement from the Webster Parish Police Jury as Secretary Treasurer! Ronda did a great job for Webster Parish and was a great friend of Trailblazer. We wish Ronda the very best!

Around the Town

JOIN THE TRAILBLAZER TEAM

COMMUNITIES · CORPORATIONS · COMPANIES

Opportunities With Trailblazer

- ✓ Increase Your Community Involvement
- ✓ Increase Your Brand Visibility
- ✓ Attract New Customers

Become a Trailblazer Sponsor Today!

Call (318) 255-3554 or email ceo@trailblazer.org

SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

Opportunities Through Trailblazer

- ✓ Advocacy for USDA program participation
- ✓ Effective communication with USDA agencies
- ✓ Info on USDA financial/technical assistance

Contact Trailblazer to Arrange a Meeting

Call (318) 255-3554 or email ceo@trailblazer.org

**For the good of your organization,
for the good of your community:**

BECOME A TRAILBLAZER SPONSOR!

CONTACT US TODAY

(318) 255-3554 or ceo@trailblazer.org



Trailblazer is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

Trailblazer partners with a diverse group of organizations to offer quality training and outstanding events. These groups recognize the value of working with Trailblazer to encourage conservation of our natural resources, help communities address areas of concern, and achieve organizational objectives. As a result of their partnership and sponsorship of Trailblazer activities, communities across northern Louisiana have access to quality training offered by well-known experts who addressed issues identified by communities at no cost to participants.



Friends of Trailblazer

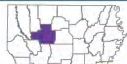
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

LSU AgCenter

USDA APHIS

Claiborne Parish Library

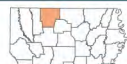
Louisiana Forestry Association



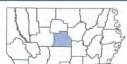
BIENVILLE PARISH POLICE JURY



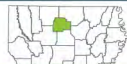
BOSSIER PARISH POLICE JURY



CLAIBORNE PARISH POLICE JURY



JACKSON PARISH POLICE JURY



LINCOLN PARISH POLICE JURY



UNION PARISH POLICE JURY



WEBSTER PARISH POLICE JURY



302 REYNOLDS DRIVE
RUSTON, LOUISIANA 71270
(318) 255-3554
ceo@trailblazer.org



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

This Dial 811 message is brought to you by Enable Midstream Partners.

Enable Midstream Partners is a publicly traded master limited partnership that owns, operates, and develops strategically located natural gas and crude oil infrastructure assets serving major producing basins and markets.