

Trailblazer news

good for the land . . . good for the people

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Let the Hunt Begin Workshop, October 15, 2020, Homer, Louisiana



Featured videos on Trailblazer's YouTube channel:



Volume 10
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November 2020

Check out these videos on our YouTube channel!

Go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGghA8uiafntp92cYXWI5nw>

Or search

"Trailblazer YouTube" on your web browser.



Birds and Blooms Workshop, October 16, 2020, Homer, Louisiana

Dear Friends,

As we race towards the end of this year, we look back at 2020 with amazement. By the grace of God, we are still here and moving forward at Trailblazer. The challenges of 2020 have certainly tested us and spurred us to grow in exciting new directions.

To extend our outreach to everyone possible during times of quarantine and uncertainty, Trailblazer launched a YouTube channel. While we are learning video production as we go, the Trailblazer YouTube channel already offers information on establishing a wildlife habitat on your land, getting started building a farm pond, and ensuring success with a wildlife food plot. In coming months, Trailblazer will continue to bring subject experts to you with on advice on everything from soil health to attracting birds to your backyard. Please take a moment to visit our YouTube channel and check out our videos. Subscribe to our channel to make sure you are notified when new videos are posted. Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGghA8uiafntp92cYXWI5nw> or just search "Trailblazer YouTube" on your web browser.

Along with our videos, Trailblazer continues to offer top-notch community workshops, and this month, we hosted seven events! We were so happy to see the attendees, and hope to see you soon at one of our upcoming workshops—or online checking out our latest videos!

Eltzey

See page 2 for November events!

21 "He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning."

Daniel 2:21
New International
Version
(NIV)

Upcoming Workshops

November Workshops/Events

Join us for these free workshops!

FREE REGISTRATION!

TO REGISTER or for more information:

Call or text (318) 237-8350 and provide your name and contact information and the name of the workshop.

Date	Event	Location	Time	Topics
11/10/2020	Feral Hog Management Workshop	LSU AgCenter Event Room 9609 Marlatt Street Bastrop, Louisiana	6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	Control techniques to manage feral hog populations
11/17/2020	Estate Planning Workshop	Webster Parish Courthouse Annex Police Jury Meeting Room 401 Main Street, 1st Floor Minden, Louisiana	6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	Wills and trusts, asset protection, tax consequences, farm and ranch sustainability, and technical and financial assistance
11/21/2020	Veterans Festival	Veteran's Therapy Health Garden and Trail Athens Town Hall 15327 Highway 9 Athens, Louisiana	9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Celebration to honor all who have served in the United States Armed Forces

Free registration for these workshops is made possible by the support of our sponsors and partners.

See page 8 for a list of sponsors and partners.

Join us on Nov 11 in Bastrop to learn more about feral hog management from Walter Cotton, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist with USDA APHIS Wildlife Services.



Yvonne Huijbens from Pixabay.

Louisiana Hunting Regulations:

Feral Hogs

From Louisiana 2020-2021 Hunting & WMA Regulations OUTLAW QUADRUPEDS (COYOTES, ARMADILLOS & FERAL HOGS)

Holders of a hunting license may take coyotes, feral hogs and armadillos year round during legal daylight shooting hours. . . . Persons using cage or corral traps to capture feral hogs must have a basic hunting license. Hog traps must have an opening in the top measuring at least 22 x 22 inches or 25 inches in diameter. Persons using snares to capture feral hogs must have a trapping license. Use of snares is not recommended in areas that have bears.

NIGHTTIME TAKE OF NUTRIA, BEAVER & OUTLAW QUADRUPEDS

On private property, the landowner, or his lessee or agent with written permission and the landowner's contact information in his possession, may take outlaw quadrupeds, nutria or beaver during nighttime hours year round. However, no person shall be allowed to participate or be present during nighttime hunting activities if convicted of a class three or greater wildlife violation within the previous five years or if he has any other prohibition which would prevent the legal use of a firearm or participation in a hunting activity. Such taking may be with or without the aid of artificial light, infrared or laser sighting devices, or night vision devices. Any

person attempting to take outlaw quadrupeds, nutria or beaver under the provisions of this paragraph, shall notify the sheriff of the parish in which the property is located of his intention to attempt to take outlaw quadrupeds, nutria or beaver within 24 hours prior to the attempted taking or immediately upon taking the animal.

To see more of Louisiana's Hunting Regulations, go to: https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/asets/Resources/Publications/Regulations/2020-2021_Hunting_Regulation_Low_Res.pdf

Call or text (318) 237-8350 to register for the Nov 11 Feral Hog Management Workshop in Bastrop.

November Presenters



Trailblazer always offers top notch presenters at our workshops, and the workshops in November are no exception! Check out this line-up of presenters:

Feral Hog Management

Walter Cotton is a supervisory wildlife biologist managing the Monroe, Louisiana, district office with USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services. He graduated from Arkansas Tech University in December 1999 with a B.S. degree in wildlife and fisheries biology. Previous to his current position, he served the Mississippi and Alabama programs for 2 years each.

Scott Breedlove is the District Conservationist in Bastrop, Louisiana, for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. He works with ag producers to help them meet their conservation goals.

Estate Planning

Paul Spillers is Senior Counsel with Theus, Grisham, Davis and Leigh of Monroe, Louisiana. He is a specialist in tax law, estate planning, estate administration, mineral rights, and all areas of acquisition, ownership, and management.

Jeff Foster is the District Conservationist in Minden, Louisiana, for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. He works with ag producers to help them meet their conservation goals.

Call or text Trailblazer RC&D at (318) 237-8350 if you have a concern regarding your land or its resources and you are not sure which office to call. We will put you in touch with the right people to address your concerns.

October Workshop Update

October Workshop Ratings			Rated Workshop as Excellent
Workshop	Date	Location	
Forestry BMPs	10/2/2020	Houghton	94%
Let the Hunt Begin!	10/15/2020	Homer	87%
Birds and Blooms	10/16/2020	Homer	87%
Waterfowl Migration Patterns and Trends	10/19/2020	Ruston	94%
	10/20/2020	Bossier City	79%
	10/26/2020	Bastrop	79%
	10/27/2020	West Monroe	57%

Thank you for joining us for these workshops!

Partners and Sponsors for October Workshops

Listed in Alphabetical Order
 Allstate Land and Timber Co., Inc.
 Bossier Parish Police Jury
 Burnham Construction
 Canfor Southern Pine
 Claiborne Parish Library
 Claiborne Parish Police Jury
 ENABLE Midstream Partners
 Lincoln Parish Police Jury
 Lincoln Parish Sheriff's Office
 Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
 LSU AgCenter
 Morehouse Soil and Water Conservation District
 Mudd & Holland Consulting Foresters, LLC
 Simmons' Sporting Goods
 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Webster Parish Police Jury
Thank you for your support!



All photos on this page: Trailblazer RC&D

USDA Releases Final Rule for EQIP

On October 23, 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released the final rule for its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This rule updates EQIP as directed by the 2018 Farm Bill and integrates feedback from agricultural producers and others.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides producers technical and financial assistance through EQIP. Popular EQIP practices include cover crops, nutrient management, forest stand improvement, prescribed grazing, irrigation efficiency improvement, and water quality improvement practices.

Implementing conservation practices can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil, and better wildlife habitat while improving agricultural operations.

EQIP applications are accepted on a continuous basis. If a producer's application is funded, NRCS will offer an EQIP contract for financial assistance to help address the cost of implementing the practices. Payment rates for conservation practices are reviewed and set each fiscal year.

Updates to EQIP included in the interim final rule included:

- Creating incentive contracts and payments for incentive practices to better support locally led conservation needs.
- Requiring NRCS to offer an advance payment option for historically underserved producers.
- Raising the payment cap for producers participating in the

Organic Initiative to \$140,000 for contracts entered into for fiscal years 2019 through 2023. Previously, it was \$20,000 per year and \$80,000 for any six-year period.

- Expanding the Conservation Innovation Grant program, which is funded through EQIP, to include opportunities for On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials and Soil Health Demonstration Trials.

To view the final rule go to the online Federal Register at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/10/26/2020-23437/environmental-quality-incentives-program>. For more information on how to sign up for EQIP, visit your local USDA NRCS field office.

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,

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.

COVID PRECAUTIONS

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**.

Local 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

Local USDA Service Centers Directory

Across the nation, USDA Service Centers provide access to the services of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, and Rural Development. To make it easy to locate a service center near you, USDA offers an online Service Center Locator. With a very user-friendly click through map, this website provides the address and contact information for all USDA Service Centers.

Check the USDA Service Center Directory out at:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact/local/>

CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

USDA Seeks New Partnerships to Safeguard, Restore Wetland Ecosystems

In October, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced up to \$30 million is available in technical and financial assistance through the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP) to help conservation partners protect and restore critical wetlands on agricultural lands. Restored wetlands help improve water quality downstream, enhance wildlife habitat, reduce impacts from flooding, and provide recreational benefits.

Eligible conservation partners will work through WREP to voluntarily execute high priority wetland protection,

restoration, and enhancement activities on eligible agriculture lands. WREP enables effective integration of wetland restoration on working agricultural landscapes, providing meaningful benefits to farmers and ranchers who enroll in the program and to the communities where the wetlands exist.

NRCS will review partners' project proposals and evaluate priority resource concerns, objectives, costs, and expected outcomes for each project and rank proposals based on criteria set forth in the requirements listed on each state's NRCS website.

Eligible partners should submit proposals for ACEP-WREP by email; complete proposals must be received on or before Monday, November 30, 2020. Proposals should be emailed to Tim Landreneau, Assistant State Conservationist – Easement Programs at tim.landreneau@usda.gov. If submitting more than one proposal, submit each proposal separately.

To download a copy of Louisiana's WREP announcement, go to: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/la/programs/easements/acep/> then click on LA FY 2021 WREP Announcement.



Wetlands are a valuable part of the natural landscape. They provide habitat for wildlife, reduce flooding, improve water quality, and increase groundwater recharge.

USDA NRCS

Wetland Reserve Easements

NRCS also provides technical and financial assistance directly to private landowners and Indian tribes to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands through the purchase of a wetland reserve easement. Through the wetland reserve enrollment options, NRCS may enroll eligible land through permanent easements, 30-year easements, term easements, and 30-year contracts. To learn more, contact your local office of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Louisiana's wetlands are home to fish, turtles, frogs, nutria, muskrat, beaver, mink, alligators, migratory waterfowl, wading birds, songbirds, and more!

Wetlands function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water and slow the speed of flood waters.

Wetlands remove sediment, nutrients, and pollutants from agricultural runoff.

Wetlands make it easier for water to infiltrate the land surface and eventually arrive at the water table as recharge.

LDWF News

Invasive Species Alert!

Be on the lookout for a potential invasive species in Louisiana:

Northern Snakehead Fish

Northern snakehead fish have been found in nearly a dozen states, including Mississippi and Arkansas, and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has issued an advisory to be on the lookout for them in Louisiana.

These fish are a highly predatory species that will aggressively outcompete and prey on Louisiana's native fish, frogs, and crawfish. Because of this, they pose a potential threat to Louisiana's recreational and commercial fisheries.



US Geological Survey, Bugwood.org

LDWF advises if you think you caught a snakehead fish:

- **DO NOT** put the fish back into the water.
- Take a side view photo of the fish (if possible).
- Kill it, freeze it (double bag) and contact your local LDWF office or call the Aquatic Nuisance Species Hotline at (225) 765-3911.
- Make sure to note the exact location of the catch. This is helpful to determine species distribution and control/management strategies.

For more information or to report a possible snakehead, contact: Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator, Post Office Box 98000, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70898-9000, (225) 765-3977.

To report any aquatic invasive species 24-hours a day, call the ANS Hotline at (225) 765-3911 or email AquaticInvasives@wlf.la.gov.

From: "Be On The Lookout: Northern Snakehead, Potential Invasive Species," Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Office of Fisheries Brochure, https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Resources/Publications/Invasive_Species/Snakehead_Brochure.pdf, viewed 10/29/2020.

Deer Hunters in Louisiana Should be Aware of Escaped Pen-Raised Deer

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) wants to alert Louisiana hunters to the possibility of encountering escaped pen-raised deer this season due to damage from Hurricane Laura and other storms this year.

Hunters who possess a Louisiana Big Game Hunting License may take these free-ranging, escaped alternative livestock animals, which include fallow, axis, sika and white-tailed deer, elk, red deer and other exotic hoof stock.

Escaped white-tailed deer may have ear tags, however, distinguishing those animals from native deer may not be possible. In Louisiana, captive exotics are listed as alternative livestock and fall under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF). Alternative livestock owners must recover escaped alternative livestock within 96 hours of escape and notification. Many of the exotics associated with escapes during Hurricane Laura will likely be free ranging during the 2020 fall hunting season.

Hunters and other members of the public are asked to report sightings of these animals to LDWF. Hunters who

harvest any of these animals are encouraged to contact LDWF to have the animals tested for chronic wasting disease.

If you see or harvest a suspected pen-raised deer, contact LDWF wildlife field offices at <https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/page/contact-us> or after-hours at 1-800-442-2511.

For more information, please contact Johnathan Bordelon jbordelon@wlf.la.gov or Dr. James LaCour at jlacour@wlf.la.gov.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Field Office Contacts

Minden Office – (318) 371-3050 – 9961 Highway 80, Minden Louisiana 71055

Monroe Office – (318) 343-4044 – 368 CenturyLink Drive, Monroe Louisiana 71203

Pineville Office – (318) 487-5885 – 2500 Shreveport Highway, Pineville, Louisiana 71360

LAGNIAPPE

a little something extra

Migration Patterns



If you are interested in watching birds and learning about their migration patterns, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology offers a fantastic opportunity for you to watch the volume and direction of migrating birds in almost real time. Using the U.S. weather surveillance radar network, the BirdCast tool maps show intensities of actual nocturnal bird migration between sunset and sunrise.

To see BirdCast maps, go to: <https://birdcast.info/>

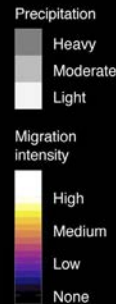
BirdCast maps are updated every 6 hours.

Night of October 31, 2020

Generated 31 Oct 2020 at 06:00 UTC (31 Oct at 02:00 ET)

Bird migration forecast maps Van Doren and Horton 2020

BirdCast



Colorado State University and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology currently produce these forecasts. Leon Levy Foundation, Edward W. Rose Postdoctoral Fellowship, and the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission supported this research, with additional support from University of Massachusetts Amherst and University of Oklahoma. The BirdCast project was created with grant awards from the National Science Foundation and subsequently supported by awards from Leon Levy Foundation.

Map: Van Doren, B. M and Horton, K. G. 2020 BirdCast, migration forecast map; generated 31 Oct 2020 at 6:00 UTC (31 Oct at 02:00 ET). Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Colorado State University. birdcast.info/live-migration-maps. Accessed 10/31/2020.

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Communities, Organizations, Corporations, Individuals

Check Out These Opportunities With Trailblazer!

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

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

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Contact Trailblazer to Arrange a Meeting

Call (318) 237-8350 or email ceo@trailblazer.org

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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.



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