

Pheasant News and Notes

June 2021



Trivia Question

Last month we learned of Ernest Hemingway's fondness for driven pheasant shooting. What did King George V purportedly say after he and his party shot 3,937 driven pheasants on December 18, 1913?

Farm Bill and USDA News

USDA-FSA is busy unwinding the original CRP enrollment applications received before the new incentives and policies were announced in April. Those original applications were deleted from FSA's system in early June and letters to landowners inviting them to resubmit will go out no later than June 18th. FSA then [issued instructions](#) to staff regarding offers received beginning June 14, including application deadlines for the general signup. Producers must submit offers for new land no later than July 23rd, and offers for re-enrolled land (or a combination of new and re-enrolled land) no later than August 6th. Contracts must then be signed by September 30th. The notice also advised how the new policies and incentives are to be implemented.

The Biden administration released its FY2022 [budget request](#) a couple of weeks ago. It included \$2.332 billion for CRP, up from \$2.05 billion in FY2021. EQIP and CSP each got a \$50 million requested increase, though less was budgeted for CSP technical assistance. As we have noted in past years, these budget requests often bear little resemblance to the budget that Congress ultimately sends to the President's desk, but they are signposts of the administration's priorities.

Speaking of CSP, Jenny Prenosil (PF Coordinating Wildlife Biologist, Nebraska) recently gave a presentation to PF staff regarding opportunities within the program. New among them is a "bundle" of practices ("enhancements") [designed to benefit pheasants and quail](#). Landowners may qualify for more attractive incentives if they agree to several of these enhancements concurrently rather than individually. If anyone would like additional information, I am sure Jenny would be happy to visit with you.

Finally, the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) just put out their [2018-2023 Farm Bill Field Guide](#). It is meant as a reference for those trying to explain the breadth of offerings within the current Farm Bill. A number of state agency and PF staff were contributors, along with other conservation professionals.

Notes from Around the Pheasant Range

We have reached the peak hatch date for first nests in many areas, and the western half of the range (i.e., from the Rocky Mountain states west, but also including the Dakotas) is still suffering from severe drought. Sufficient moisture is a key determinant of pheasant production in most of these states, so the current conditions do not bode well.

In happier news, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks won "Best in Show" at the 2021 Minnies Media Innovation Awards for their "Hunt the Greatest" marketing campaign. The campaign, which was designed in partnership with their Department of Tourism and private marketing firms, was recognized

as the most innovative media plan, competing with brands like Subaru, Coach, and Red Baron for the highest honor. Congrats to SDGFP!

I attended the MAFWA Private Lands Working Group meeting last month and gave the group an update on our Plan revision activities. A few notes from the meeting that I jotted down:

- Illinois uses a lottery system to allocate opportunities on walk-in access lands, with preference given to first-time hunters;
- Kansas has had success with an electronic reservation and check-in system on a subset of their walk-in lands, particularly near their larger cities;
- Missouri is getting a RCPP project up and running that uses precision ag data to direct carbon credits and buffer/pollinator plot implementation in a pilot to value ecosystem services;
- Nebraska is currently working on updating their state pheasant plan, and they may soon have more CRP Grasslands acres than “traditional” CRP enrollments;
- North Dakota has seen a reduction in acres enrolled in their walk-in (PLOTS) program, mostly due to the decline in CRP acres enrolled;
- Ohio is using \$145 million in state funding to do water quality work similar to that done under their Lake Erie CREP;
- South Dakota is steadily gaining acres enrolled in their James River CREP due to an increase in fund availability; this was accomplished with a permit cost increase for certain hunters;
- Wisconsin provides a tax break to private forest owners who enroll in a public access program;
- The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (RAWA) was reintroduced in the House by Representatives Dingell (D-MI) and Fortenberry (R-NE) with a new funding and apportionment formula and competitive grants program. The bill may be attached to the infrastructure bill;
- Jen Mock Schaeffer, AFWA’s Government Affairs Director, is leaving in June;
- Judith Scarl, AFWA’s Bird Conservation Program Manager, left this month to become the Executive Director and CEO of the American Ornithological Society

Lastly, I think we are getting close to a final draft of the National Pheasant Plan revision – my work preparing that document delayed this one (my apologies). The Technical Committee should be done with their review of this draft soon, at which time it will be sent on to the Management Board for their consideration.

Pheasant-relevant Media

[Montana proposes pen-raised pheasants as a hunter recruitment tool](#)
[Man dies in Iowa accident after hitting a pheasant](#)
[Incentives are needed to help farmers address climate issues, report says](#)
[A giant organic farm in SD faces criticism that it's harming the environment](#)
[Strong prices, lower seed costs spur surge in sorghum acres](#)
[New report connects conservation and rural economic well-being](#)

Recent Literature

[Gascoigne, W., R. Hill, M. Haefele, J. Loomis, and S. Hyberg. 2021. Economics of the Conservation Reserve Program and the wildlife it supports: A case study of upland birds in South Dakota. Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism 35:100385.](#)

[Khadka, R. 2021. A joint estimation of pheasant hunting parameters. Thesis. South Dakota State University, Brookings.](#)

[Dahlgren, D. K., E. J. Blomberg, C. A. Hagen, and R. D. Elmore. 2021. Upland game bird harvest management. In K. L. Pope and L. A. Powell. Harvest of fish and wildlife. CRC Press, Boca Raton, Florida, USA.](#)

[Liu, F., J. Atlas, C. Du, A. Das, and L. Wen. 2021. The effect of environmental factors on the morphological variation of the common pheasant, *Phasianus colchicus*, in China. Pakistan Journal of Zoology 53:675-684.](#)

[Vandever, M. W., S. K. Carter, T. J. Assal, K. Elgersma, A. Wen, J. L. Welty, R. S. Arkle, and R. Iovanna. 2021. Evaluating establishment of conservation practices in the Conservation Reserve Program across the central and western United States. Environmental Research Letters \(early online version\).](#)

[Vayer, V. R., et al. 2021. Diverse university students across the United States reveal promising pathways to hunter recruitment and retention. Journal of Wildlife Management \(early online version\).](#)

[Rose, P. K., R. M. Brigham, and S. K. Davis. 2021. Conservation of sage-grouse critical habitat and implications for prairie songbirds. Wildlife Society Bulletin \(early online version\).](#)

Trivia Answer

“Perhaps we overdid it today.” Indeed. Some people can find a way to debase even finest experiences (not that driven pheasant shooting necessarily falls into that category – you can decide for yourself).

This update is brought to you by the National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan and Partnerships. Our mission is to foster science-based, socially-supported policies and programs that enhance wild pheasant populations, provide recreational opportunities to pheasant hunters, and support the economics and social values of communities. You can find us on the web at <http://nationalpheasantplan.org>.