

State Wildlife Grant Program
*Enhancing Habitat for Northern Bobwhite and Bachman's Sparrow
in the Arkansas Delta*
FINAL Report July 29, 2008

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PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Restore 25 acres by planting native loblolly pine at PCHSCA to increase the population size of existing or new species dependent upon open canopy pine forest and herbaceous understory.
2. Restore hydrologic flow regimes through the restoration of fire plow lines on 200 acres at PCHSCA.
3. Develop a public outreach program to engage private landowners with the necessary knowledge, tools, and incentives to implement land management practices that will ensure the long term ecological integrity of PCHSCA and maintain healthy, viable populations of the species of greatest concern. Accomplished through an intensive private lands program at PCHSCA with the goal of 500 acres enrolled into USDA Farm Bill programs
4. Land acquisition to increase size of PCNA (public land) by 200 acres

RESULTS

1. In cooperation with Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission (ANHC owner, Pine City Natural Area) The Nature Conservancy paid for aerial herbicide of 30 acres at Pine City Natural Area. This area was previously planted in native loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*). The herbicide will suppress herbaceous vegetation and give pine seedlings a competitive advantage for increased survivability. In exchange ANHC provided 25-acres of pine seedlings planted in January 2006 as third party in-kind match. This change in deliverables was requested and granted October 9, 2006.
2. Restoration of the fire-plow lines was completed in July 2006. Sections of the remnant plow line that was installed by the AFC in response to a 1998 wildfire, were filled and compacted to prevent the development of "active flow" through the lines. Eliminating flow through these plow lines will allow them to fill in over time restoring the natural hydrology to the Pine Flatwood habitat.
3. Work on goals three and four continues. Educating landowners in stewardship and protection programs is essential to increasing habitat for declining species.

Through “on-the-ground” contact with landowners available knowledge, tools, and incentives can be passed on to property owners. Locating landowners willing to sell or encumber property for conservation is always a challenge. This is especially difficult in the Pine City area as many heirs are not aware that they have some /all ownership in a given tract of land. Since the start of this grant agreements with several willing and able (those with clear title) sellers have been identified. Currently 160-acres that can be directly attributed to this SWG grant are at some stage of the acquisition process by ANHC. These are landowners who have been cultivated for a lengthy period of time by TNC staff through written, telecommunication and onsite visits. Discussion with Pine City’s other small and large landowners must be continued. TNC’s ability to maintain landowner contacts and shepherd land into the ANHC natural area system is an effective method of protection and efficient means of increasing habitat for at risk species.



Twenty-five acres planted in Loblolly Pine seedlings.



Area sprayed for seedling release.



Fire Line Restoration



Bateman property has been appraised for purchase by ANHC.