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2017 ANNUAL REPORT



ISTOCK.COM / DSAMS

QUAIL FOREVER IS FLYING HIGH







MISSION STATEMENT
Quail Forever is dedicated to the conservation of quail, pheasants and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education and land management policies and programs.



KAILA BRUNER

By Howard K. Vincent
President & CEO

QUAIL FOREVER IS FLYING HIGH

The term “critical mass” comes to mind when considering the immediate future of Quail Forever. After years of slow, but steady growth, the membership, leadership, and the vision for carrying this organization into 2018 and beyond has coalesced and appears poised for even greater accomplishments as the decade draws to a close.

Watch for Quail Forever’s elevated presence within the larger organization as Quail Forever’s second decade hits its stride. Managing and advocating for six species of quail across a landscape as diverse as the United States requires different tactics than ring-necked pheasants, but one that the organization’s leadership embraces.

“We’re taking a fresh approach and moving the quail mission to its highest level ever,” says Howard Vincent, Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever president and CEO. “From the Southeast to Texas to California, quail present a unique and specific set of challenges. Weather is different, growing seasons are different, disturbance and land management practices require different approaches.”

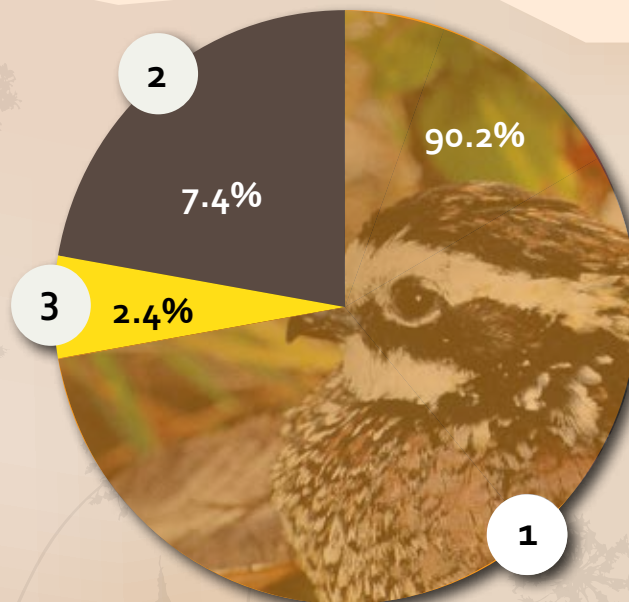
Recognizing those differences is Job Number One, but being effective still means leveraging a successful formula that works with partners, state and federal conservation programs, and focuses on areas that present the best use of the organization’s hard-earned dollars.

“When we launched Quail Forever, one new aspect was getting help through the Farm Bill from northern tier legislators for southern tier states,” Vincent said. “But now we have support from 48 states, and legislators across the nation see our impact and want Farm Bill conservation programs nationwide.”

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WHERE YOUR DOLLARS GO

- 1: Wildlife Habitat Mission **90.2%**
- 2: Fundraising **7.4%**
- 3: Administration **2.4%**





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Exciting Times in Quail Forever's Second Decade

During its first 12 years, Quail Forever followed a marketing formula that always has served Pheasants Forever well. It has emphasized the locally driven model focused on public land bird hunting and the Conservation Reserve Program as the holy grail for private lands conservation. That formula has served Quail Forever well, too.

In taking the next leap, however, watch for a more segmented approach that focuses on the specific habitats and cultural considerations that surround quail hunting. Expect a less homogenized marketing strategy, says Bob St. Pierre, the organization's vice president of marketing and communications.

Members already have seen the organization take strides to differentiate the *Quail Forever Journal* from its pheasant counterpart with more emphasis on cooking, culture, travel and other aspects of the hunting lifestyle. With the impending retirement of longtime Editor Mark Herwig, QF will be bringing on two editors, one specific to each organization and title. Readers of both magazines can expect a special fifth edition, the combined Upland Super Issue, again in 2018. The 2017 version was our largest publication in a decade and the second largest in the combined organization history. Well-received by members and partners, the Upland Super Issue highlighted the exhilarating culture around quail and pheasant hunting and the cutting-edge work occurring to expand it to a broader audience.

QF/PF also hired its first full-time video production specialist in 2017. Watch for this new team member, Jake Schiller, to pay great dividends in 2018 and beyond with improved website and social media content.

National Pheasant Fest and Quail Classic 2017

A big crowd of 30,000 attended the National Pheasant Fest and Quail Classic at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The 2017 consumer show included hundreds of exhibitors and seminars. Thanks to all the attendees, exhibitors and sponsors who make this event possible year after year.

The Denny Sanford Premier Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, will host the 2018 event February 16-18. It'll be the first time the show has visited South Dakota,

MEET BECKY LANGER

QUAIL FOREVER TESTIMONIAL

"The Bayer Bee Care Program is proud to partner with an organization like Quail Forever that shares our commitment to increasing and diversifying forage for pollinators across the nation and educating the next generation through initiatives, including Quail Forever's Youth Habitat Education Program. In addition to supporting the planting of more than 250 acres of pollinator forage in 16 states in 2017 alone, we've joined a new project with Quail Forever to restore the rights-of-way along Route 66 between Chicago and St. Louis. Using seed mixes designed to benefit pollinators, Bayer and Quail Forever will transform more than 1,400 acres along a 300-mile stretch of Route 66 into the ideal habitat for monarch butterflies, honeybees, other pollinators and wildlife."



— Dr. Becky Langer

Director of the North American Bayer Bee Care Program

Check out our website at quailforever.org/legacy.

ADVOCACY



and it coincides with the organization's 35th anniversary. Conservationist, quail hunter and public lands advocate Steven Rinella will deliver the keynote address to a crowd of more than 1,000 members and supporters at the National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic Banquet on Saturday evening, February 17. QF/PF has partnered with South Dakota State to offer a Precision Ag Workshop in conjunction with National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic on February 17 from 10 to 3 p.m. It's designed specifically for farmers, precision specialists, agronomists and ag lenders, focusing on maximizing return-on-investment for every acre on the farm, while also improving wildlife habitat.

Communicating in the 21st Century means developing relationships with

potential new members through traditional channels like print, radio and television, but also digital social media — Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, among others. Be sure to follow Quail Forever feeds on Twitter and Facebook, as well as the organizational websites, for a constant stream of entertaining content, recipes, organizational updates and conservation news.

Corporate Support Continues

Quail Forever believes strong, aggressive support from corporate sponsors brings unrestricted revenue for our mission and strengthens the organization's brand. New national partners this year include SoundGear, Birchwood Casey, Realtree, Ruff Tough Kennels and Orca Coolers.

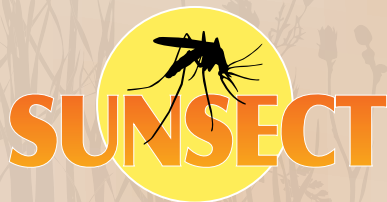
In particular, thanks to Orca Coolers for taking their local support of our Quail Forever chapters in Tennessee to a national level as our "Official Cooler" national sponsor. Long-standing conservation partners also deserve your support: Purina, SportDOG, Federal Premium Ammunition, South Dakota Tourism, Irish Setter, Apple Autos, Polaris, Scag Power Equipment and Merck.

In a special field promotion for 2017, Casey's General Store and Pepsi expanded their partnership with Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever as part of the "Fuel Up for the Field" promotion. During the month of October, they made donations for every bottle of Mountain Dew or Diet Mountain Dew purchased in 1,989 Casey's General Store locations spanning 15 states.

MEET STEVE SHAFER

QUAIL FOREVER TESTIMONIAL

"I could not be more pleased to be involved with Quail Forever and helping them build the next generation of hunters and conservationists. The work they are doing to ensure our youth will carry on the traditions of hunting, fishing and building habitat is one of the most important facets of the organization. Sunsect is honored and excited to be a partner with Quail Forever to ensure our outdoor legacy continues."



— Steve Shafer

Quail Forever Patron Member and CEO of Sunsect, Inc.

Check out our website at quailforever.org/legacy.

FEDERAL
PREMIUM
AMMUNITION



BENNETTA

Educational Efforts Growing

Working to support and advance the national hunter R3 movement — an initiative to recruit, retain and reactivate hunters — the organization hired Cortney Schaefer as the organization’s first-ever Hunting Heritage Program Manager this past summer. With generous support from the Cabela’s Outdoor Fund, Schaefer will work to develop programs with an emphasis on introducing

men, women and children to hunting traditions nationwide.

Rich Wissink, vice president of education and outreach, describes a full plate of initiatives to recruit new members to the cause of Quail Forever. The Charter Starter program aims to launch 90 new chapters nationwide in the next five years, with a special emphasis on the quail range. It focuses on supporting a local scholastic

shooting team, engaging them, then sharing the habitat mission.

“We hope to engage nonhunting families involved in shooting teams with our Learn-To-Hunt program. They’re already interested in pulling triggers, so hunting and habitat are the next logical step,” Wissink said.

In addition, this spring, QF/PF will launch a Hunter Mentor Certification program. Partnering with the International

2017 TOP 10 BANQUETS BY MEMBERS

Missouri River Valley (MO).....	256	Great River (IA)	177
Flint River (GA)	229	Commonwealth (KY)	174
Silver Creek (IL)	198	Keeper of the Plains (KS)	154
Northern Kentucky (KY)	185	Otter Creek (IL)	154
Route 36 (KS)	180	Marion County (KS)	150

2017 TOP 10 CHAPTERS – MAINTENANCE ACRES

San Antonio Area (TX)	10,000	Gulf Coast (TX)	1,435
Lone Star (TX)	4,400	San Diego (CA)	1,030
West Central Missouri (MO).....	3,475	Shortgrass (MO).....	1,025
Ridgecrest (CA)	2,510	High Desert (CA)	1,004
Ventura County (CA).....	2,510	Southeast North Carolina (NC)	883

2017 TOP 10 CHAPTERS – NESTING COVER ACRES

Gulf Coast (TX)	1,503	Shortgrass (MO).....	500
Tri-County (IL)	1,186	2 C Quail Forever (MO)	437
West Central Missouri (MO).....	1,028	Southern Middle Tennessee (TN).....	380
Bootheel Bobwhites (MO)	601	Otter Creek (IL)	338
Central Nebraska (NE)	600	San Antonio Area (TX).....	320

2017 TOP 10 CHAPTERS – FOOD PLOT ACRES

Heart of the Ozarks (MO)	2,500	Mark Twain (MO).....	600
Music City (TN)	2,030	Wyota (MO)	525
2 C Quail Forever (MO)	829	St Louis (MO)	450
Kentucky Lake (TN).....	676	Southern Middle Tennessee (TN).....	425
North Fork (OK).....	650	Silver Creek (IL)	384

HABITAT





TODD SAUERS

Hunter Education Association, the initiative aims to create a pool of certified hunters ready and available to mentor the next generation.

“It’s a call to action for today’s hunters, many of whom are not aware of the decline in hunting numbers and the impact it has on wildlife conservation,” Wissink said. “We need folks to share the hunting heritage with someone else. Take a youth or reactivate someone — your dad, aunt or friend. It’s our responsibility as hunter conservationists to share and pass down our hunting heritage.”

In DC and Beyond in 2018

On the policy front, the 1,000-pound gorilla remains the 2018 Farm Bill and ensuring that it includes a strong conservation title. Dave Nomsen, the organization’s vice president of governmental affairs, believes the 2018 Farm Bill could see agricultural committee

markup by late winter with a conference report by late spring or early summer. With the existing 2014 Farm Bill expiring in September, the pressure is on Congress to complete its work. Nomsen said the recently passed tax bill addressed some problems with cotton and dairy policies that could help smooth the waters for the Farm Bill.

“There still will be some big battles, but I’m optimistic they could get this thing done on time,” Nomsen said.

One remaining unknown is where exactly the Trump administration falls on the merits of the greatest private lands program in the history of upland bird management: the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson from Minnesota, the ranking Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee, has said he supports at least 32 million acres of CRP. That’s lower than the 40-million-acre program PF and QF

members have advocated for (and the program’s historical high of 37.6 million acres), but still a third larger than the existing program.

“We want more, but in this budget environment to have him stand and say a 33 percent increase, that’s important,” Nomsen said.

Specific to quail, Nomsen remains confident that CP-33, the Bobwhite Buffers component, will remain in the next Farm Bill. Established in 2004, CP-33 falls under the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program and aims to provide habitat for northern bobwhite and other upland birds via landowner incentives to establish native grass buffers along row-crop field margins. In over 14 states, breeding bobwhite densities were 70 to 75 percent greater around CP-33 buffered fields than unbuffered crop fields. More states need to implement the program, Nomsen said.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

ELSA GALLAGHER



Producing more quail means establishing more grasslands, but better quail country often simply means better management of habitat.

“We have to do the thinning and burning in savannah habitats that are critical for quail,” Nomsen said. “We have too much old CRP that’s not being managed to benefit quail.”

Quail Forever urges upland hunters to contact congressional leaders and the White House throughout the winter to

stress the importance of the 2018 Farm Bill and its implications for the future of wildlife, water, and rural communities in the United States.

Last year, a milestone for the organization occurred with the hiring of Bethany Erb, the organization’s new government affairs representative and its first Washington, DC-based employee.

“We’re much more engaged much more frequently on day-to-day issues with Bethany on the ground in DC,” Nomsen said. “Our voice for wildlife habitat conservation on

behalf of our members just got louder.”

Thank you members for keeping your membership current with Quail Forever during a challenging era for upland conservation habitat work. Despite the challenges, Quail Forever membership continues to grow, and upland bird hunters have never needed a stronger voice advocating for habitat. Help this organization grow by bringing a friend to your chapter banquet this year or consider a gift membership or two. Together, we’ll ensure that the greatest days of American upland bird hunting are yet to come. 🐔

PERMANENT HABITAT PROTECTION SUCCESS

In August 2017, Quail Forever permanently protected the wildlife habitat on this 968-acre working ranch in Edwards County, Kansas, with a voluntary conservation easement. This unique partnership with the private landowners (Harter family and Mull family), the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA), and Quail Forever (easement holder), perpetually protects the conservation values and historic uses of the property.

The benefits associated with this conservation easement will positively impact quail, pheasants, prairie-chickens, the ranching community and future generations. The project was completed as part of the Lesser Prairie Chicken Range-Wide Conservation Plan, being delivered by WAFWA, and it expands upon a neighboring easement to bring the total size of the permanent habitat complex to 2,749 acres.



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Check out our website at quailforever.org/legacy.



STAFF PHOTO

2017 QF Habitat Stats (Fiscal Year)

Farm Bill Biologist Projects

Nesting cover, controlled burns, wetlands,
woody cover and food plots

Acres Impacted1,012,839
Landowner Contacts29,583

Chapter Projects	2017	SINCE 2005
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FOOD PLOTS

Number	1,031.....	8,069
Acres Covered.....	11,963.....	61,275
Dollars Spent	\$119,067	\$660,628

NESTING COVER

Number	450	2,173
Acres Covered.....	8,470	38,805
Dollars Spent	\$206,895	\$1,108,719

WOODY COVER

Number	5	248
Acres Covered.....	32	1,088
Dollars Spent	\$16,062	\$144,263

WETLANDS

Number	12	51
Acres Covered.....	399	976
Dollars Spent	\$1,200	\$4,064

MAINTENANCE

Number	452	2,843
Acres Covered.....	36,770	798,486

LEAVING A *Legacy*

Quail Forever would like to thank these new and recently upgraded members for showing unwavering support for wildlife habitat conservation, and truly leaving a legacy for future hunters and conservationists.

PATRON MEMBERS

MI - R. Charles McLravy, **TX** - Frank Gore

LIFE MEMBERS

AR - Gregory Graham, Austin Klais, Jeff Nicholas, **FL** - Francisco Bergaz, **GA** - Patrick Britt, Jim Hamilton, Buddy Ray Johnson,
IL - Tom Cromwell, **KS** - John Almeida, **MI** - Douglas Whitley, **NC** - Ronald Barnes, **NE** - Angie Rakes,
OK - Mark Buffington, Karl Englund, David Nunn, Mickey Raney, **TN** - Will Coble, Andy Miller,
TX - Kirk Courson, Brandy McCrory, Glenn See, C3 Publications, Inc. Cooper Smith



LEGACY LEADERS

Conservation Leadership Matters!

Thank you to Quail Forever's Gold Patron Members and Patron Members for taking your membership to the next level. Your support helps Quail Forever make a greater difference by creating, restoring and permanently protecting wildlife habitat, while preserving the legacy of our hunting and conservation heritage.



GOLD PATRON AND PATRON MEMBERS

Gold Patron Membership (\$25,000 membership level)

Nancy Anisfield VT

Patron Membership (\$10,000 membership level)

Jay Barksdale	TX
Richard Bell	NE
Frank Gore	TX
Thomas Henning	NE
Steven Hurt	TX
Nathan Kiefer	OH
Duayne Madl	KS
R. Charles McLravy	MI
Steve Shafer	FL
David Wahl	FL



A Legacy That Lasts Forever

Thank you to those who made a financial contribution joined Quail Forever's Habitat Legacy Society by making planned gift as part of their will or estate plan, or grant to Quail Forever, as well to those who donated land or permanently protected their property through a donated conservation easement in 2017. Please know that Quail Forever greatly appreciates your financial support, as well as the support of our donors who chose to remain anonymous. On behalf of Quail Forever, thank you for your ongoing commitment during these challenging times for wildlife habitat!

The financial support of donors is a crucial part of Quail Forever's ability to expedite our wildlife conservation efforts. You are making a difference!

Perhaps you or someone you know is interested in supporting Quail Forever at a higher level. For more information on the many ways to support Quail Forever, contact David R. Bue, Vice President of Development, at 218-340-5519 or email at dbue@quailforever.org. You can also find helpful information at quailforever.org/legacy.