

# ***“Collaboration For Conservation”***

**American Bird Conservancy  
&  
Central Hardwoods Joint Venture**



**Jeff Powelson**  
Conservation Delivery Coordinator  
Arkansas Private Lands Academy Kickoff  
February 11, 2025



## Who Me?



\*2 years as CHJV Conservation Delivery Coordinator

\*Stantec Consulting as Habitat Ecologist - 1yr

\*Retired - 27 years with MDC

- 22 yrs. as Private Land Biologist

5 yrs. as wildlife biologist working on 9 wildlife areas.

University of Missouri Fish and Wildlife Management Degree

## Who Me?



Species worked with, song birds, least terns, waterfowl, 5 yr. deer trapping and monitoring project, prairie chickens, eastern turkey, rough grouse, brown headed nuthatch, bobwhite quail monitoring projects Feral hogs, CWD and Elk reintroduction project.

Passion working with native grasses and wildflowers.

Love “outdoors anything”, trapping, archery, western hunts, hiking, canoeing, hiking national parks, woodworking, wildlife photography, working on new farm and being a grandpa!



## Who is ABC?

**ABC is a Conservation group dedicated to birds throughout the Americas and is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary!**

**Focusing on obtaining real conservation results for birds!  
National impacts from policy, energy, silviculture, ag  
communities from cats, glass to grass!**

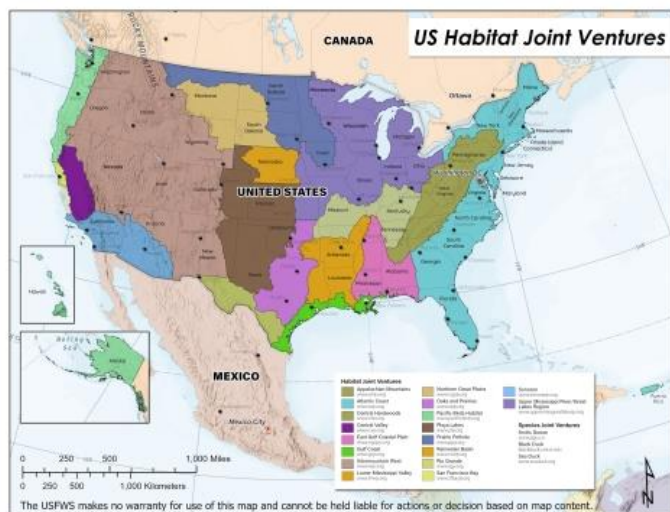


## What is a Joint Venture?

Collaboration of regional partnerships of government agencies, non-profit organizations, corporations, tribes, and individuals that conserve habitat for the benefit of priority bird species, other wildlife, and people.

Bring diverse partners together under the guidance of national and international bird conservation plans to design and implement landscape-scale conservation efforts

Support of the [North American Waterfowl Management Plan](#) and the other bird management plans.





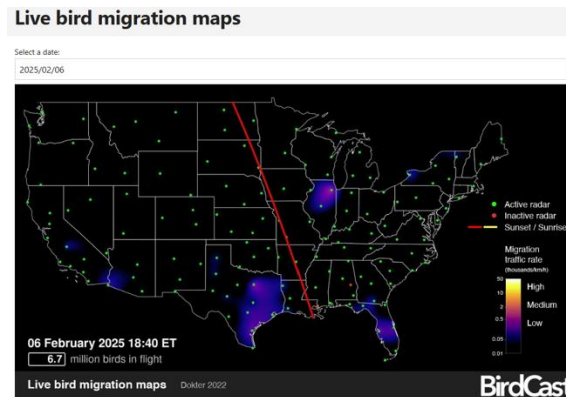


## Arkansas Has Multiple Joint Ventures

### Central Hardwoods Joint Venture



### Lower Mississippi Valley JV



## CHJV Staff



Kyle Brazil –CHJV Coordinator

Jeff Powelson – CHJV Conservation Delivery  
Coordinator

Sheela Turbek – CHJV Science Coordinator

Judi Brown – Let the Sunshine In - Indiana



WWW.CHJV.ORG

Learn More About Forestry for the Birds



*Central Hardwoods  
Joint Venture*

*Partnerships for Conservation*

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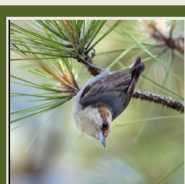
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## Central Hardwoods Joint Venture

### Central Hardwoods Joint Venture

*A public-private partnership working to conserve birds and their habitats*



#### Cross-boundary Collaboration

Effective and efficient conservation requires purposeful collaboration among conservation partners. No one partner has the resources to succeed on their own.



#### Science & Research

We ensure conservation actions are based on the best-available science, and the right habitat is put in the right places.



#### Forests & Woodlands

We coordinate and support science-based active forest management and prescribed fire to restore and maintain native oak and pine-woodland ecosystems.



#### Working Grasslands

Pastures are essential habitats for declining eastern grassland birds. Improved grazing practices that incorporate native grass forages in working pasturelands increase producer profitability while providing grassland bird habitat.

Brown-headed Nuthatch, USFWS; Radio transmitter, CHJV; Shortleaf pine woodland, USFS; Cattle grazing native grasses, K. Brazil

## Conservation Based on Sound Science

### Central Hardwoods Joint Venture (CHJV)

The Central Hardwoods Joint Venture (CHJV) is a partnership of state, federal, and non-profit wildlife conservation agencies and organizations that work together to ensure the long-term viability of native bird populations across the [Central Hardwoods Bird Conservation Region](#). A [Management Board](#) consisting of representatives of each partner agency or organization provides the overall vision and guidance for the partnership; [CHJV staff](#) provides the day-to-day coordination and technical capacity needed to implement the CHJV vision.

[Learn More About Forestry for the Birds](#)

#### GEOGRAPHY



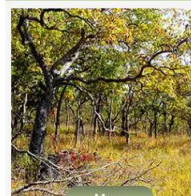
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#### PRIORITY BIRDS & HABITATS



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#### SCIENCE & EVALUATION



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#### IMPLEMENTATION



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## Partnerships Working Together in Conservation

JVs provide partners with seed money, critical scientific, human dimensions, technical, and policy guidance and support to plan and carry out the most effective on-the-ground bird and habitat conservation efforts.

JVs have worked with partners on habitat restoration and protection, capacity building, inventory and monitoring, planning, scientific research, and communications, education, and outreach.



## Partnerships Working Together in Conservation

Multi layer responsibility

NRCS state technical advisory committees

Society of American Forestry

The Wildlife Society

Prescribe Burn Councils

Scientific Reviews

Promote Science based management

Promote on the ground management

Science/Research projects

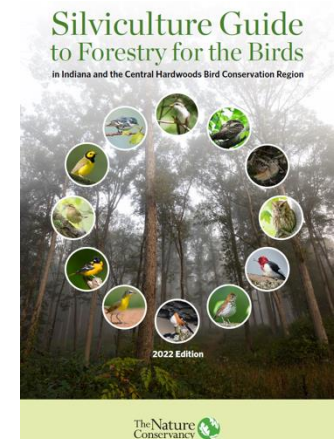
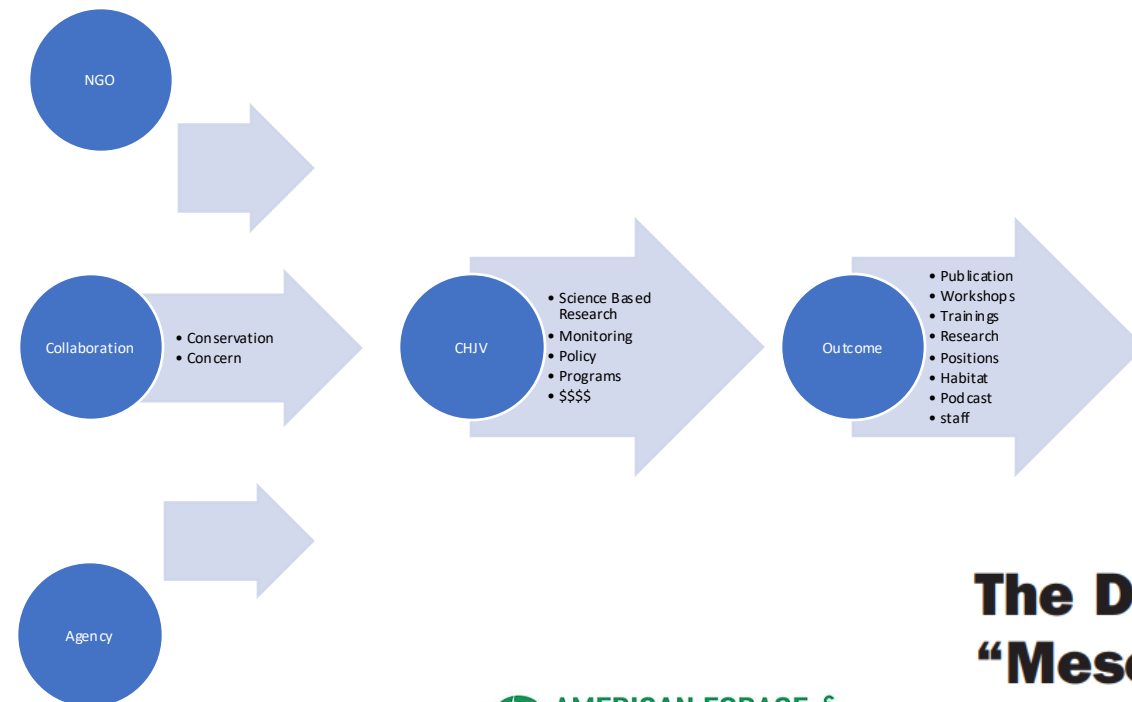
Monitoring and modeling

RCPPs, Joint Chiefs Projects, CFLRP and others

**We bring the science to the field and make it applicable.**

# CHJV - What We Do!

We are the arrows!





## CHJV - What We Do!

Research, Re-introductions, Monitoring,  
Habitat Management Establishment, Recommendations from science and experience  
Native Warm-season Forage Research Center  
Landowner initiative with USDA/NRCS, Universities, USFS, NGO's.....





# What ties us all together?

**“Birds, Bark, Bourbon, Blooms, Butterflies, Beef, and Bucks!”**

Birds



Bark



Bourbon



Blooms



Butterflies



Beef



Bucks



# Private Land Impact

## Focusing on obtaining real conservation results for birds

Birds have been a driving force behind the conservation movement in the US

Farm Bill started with waterfowl, Moved to quail then butterflies and bees

“Thinking outside the box”

ABC is launching its inaugural [Untreated Seed Pilot Program](#) (USPP). The program aims to support beneficial insect populations which contribute to healthy habitats for birds, like the [Western Meadowlark](#) and [Northern Bobwhite](#) quail.



Steven Riley  
Director of Farm Bill Policy  
American Bird Conservancy  
802-433-5078  
SRiley@abcbirds.org

Healthy rangelands provide conservation services, including carbon storage, water filtration, erosion control, and nutrient cycling. They are vital to recovering grassland bird populations.

AMERICAN BIRD  
CONSERVANCY  
4301 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 431  
Washington, D.C. 20008  
202-274-7310 • [info@abcbirds.org](mailto:info@abcbirds.org)  
[abcbirds.org](http://abcbirds.org)

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) will work with Congress and the Administration to pass a 2023 Bird-Friendly Farm Bill that:

- Encourages broader conservation easements to protect key habitats for birds.
- Incentivizes rangeland rest in grazing systems to capture carbon, conserve birds, and expand grassland-conserving policies.
- Encourages partnership-driven, incentive-based conservation.
- Increases partner technical assistance capacity.
- Reinforces that wildlife will continue to be a co-equal priority in the Farm Bill, along with soil and water conservation.
- Prioritizes diverse stands of native plants, limits the use of non-native plants, and reinforces the National Seed Strategy.

### Top Priorities

**Rest-Recover-Recapture** — We recommend establishing a new program and scenarios to existing programs to incentivize grazing rest. Periodic rest improves plant species diversity, system heterogeneity, stability, resilience, sustainability, and stored carbon; soil health; and increases forage production.

Approximately 30 percent of the U.S. is rangeland (~770 million acres), mostly in the West. Rangelands are highly diverse, and provide livestock forage and habitat for many wildlife species. Healthy rangelands provide conservation services, including carbon storage, water filtration, erosion control, and nutrient cycling. They are vital to recovering grassland bird populations.

We support two options to provide expanded incentives for conservation that will store carbon while adding substantial habitat quality for grassland birds:

**Option A** authorizes the use of Rest-Recover-Recapture scenarios for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs and mandates short- to intermediate-term contracts to rest specific pastures undergoing conservation improvement to compensate for foregone income.

# Private Land Impact

## FOREST MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RED-HEADED WOODPECKER



The Red-headed Woodpecker is a well-known bird that is iconic to eastern forests in the United States. These beautiful birds are 10 inches tall, sport a brilliant red head, black back, white belly, and noticeably contrasting white flash in their wings. The oldest individual on record was almost 10 years old. Red-headed Woodpecker populations have declined significantly — by as much as 58% since 1970. These birds can be found in many sustainably managed forests in the Southeastern U.S., and private working forests offer opportunities to create habitat conditions and contribute to reversing population declines for this popular and charismatic bird.

Like most woodpeckers, Red-headed Woodpeckers are usually found climbing tree trunks and chipping away at dead wood in search of insects or to create cavities. Unlike other woodpeckers, they frequently catch flying insects in the air and forage on the ground. They commonly cache acorns and other nuts by pecking shallow holes into a dead branch or trunk and stuffing an acorn or nut into each hole that can be retrieved during winter.

The Red-headed Woodpecker prefers open forest areas with ample snags (completely dead trees) and trees with sizable dead branches. Habitat should include tall trees in an open woodland or savanna-like forest. Groundcover should be short and sparse, with some bare ground mixed with very short grass or other vegetation. Prescribed fire can be a useful tool to create these desired conditions.

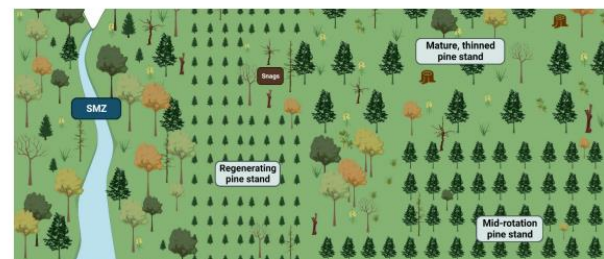
### Ideal Red-headed Woodpecker habitat

- Open areas of at least 8 acres per bird or pair.
- Sparse, short groundcover and some widely spaced, taller trees.
- Patches of hardwood or young pine.
- For each territory, 8-16 large snags per acre.
- Mast-producing trees such as oaks and beeches in each territory.



### Snags are critical for food, nesting, and roosting

- Retention of 16 snags per acre is best, but lower densities can support the species if other habitat requirements are met.
- The woodpeckers will forage in harvested stands that retain hardwood trees and snags, and nest in young stands with larger pine snags or in dead parts of living trees.
- Snags should be greater than 8 inches diameter at breast height (DBH), greater than 20 feet in height, and retained in groups to provide for foraging and cavity trees for nesting and roosting.
- Snags created by killing live trees using fire, girdling, or herbicide may take 2-4 years to decay and attract woodpeckers.



Red-headed Woodpecker habitat features as part of a managed forest in the Southeastern U.S. that incorporates generous streamside management zones (SMZ), especially those with a heavy oak component, pine, and mixed pine hardwood stands of varying ages, retention of hardwood patches for escape cover, and dead trees (snags) for nesting, roosting, and foraging. Created by BioRender.com.

### Cover patches are needed to avoid predators

For each 8-acre territory, provide three cover patches that include a combination of:

- Hardwood trees with dense canopy at least 15 feet tall and 15 feet in diameter.
- Dense patches of young pines with combined crown at least 15 feet tall and 15 feet in diameter.

### Food trees

- Red-headed Woodpeckers select areas that include oaks and other mast-producing trees that are key elements of territories. Acorns, nuts, and seeds are always a high proportion of diets: two-thirds in summer and nearly 100% in winter.



Red-headed Woodpecker cavity on the edge of a streamside management zone. Photo by Emily Jo Williams.



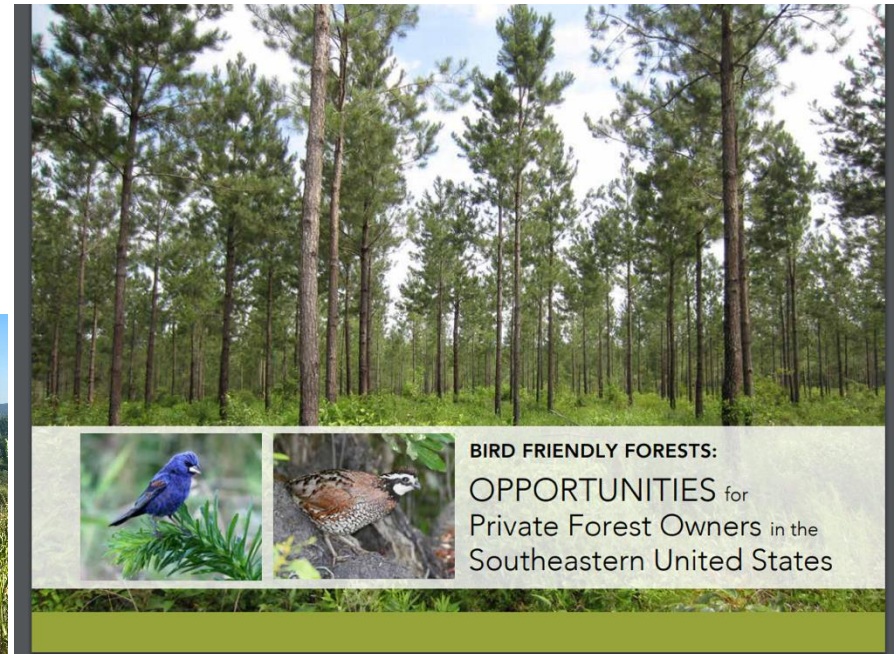
Cavity trees left after a harvest provide for roosting and nesting. Photo by Emily Jo Williams.



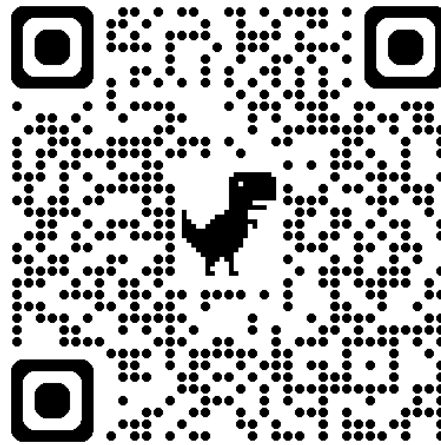
# Private Land Impact

Promote Bird Friendly forest and grasslands

Native grasslands, prairies, savannahs, glades and Bird friendly Ag programs like native forage programs.



# Private Land Impact



Illinois  
Indiana  
Missouri – 2025  
Tennessee – 25/26  
MO/AR – IHSPI,  
Glades & Grasses.....



## Forestry for the Birds

Pocket Guide for Landowners in Illinois and the Central Hardwoods Region







**Thank You**  
**Be Curious and Ask Questions!**

**Jeff Powelson**  
**Conservation Delivery Coordinator**  
**816-261-3939**  
**jpowelson@abcbirds.org**



  
**2025 Interior Highlands Shortleaf Pine Initiative Summit**

The Central Hardwoods Joint Venture and partners invite you to attend the **2025 Interior Highlands Shortleaf Pine Initiative Summit** in Hot Springs, Arkansas, February 24-26, 2025. This meeting will feature timely updates on shortleaf pine management, current research, fire management tools, and discussions on how to advance pine and pine-oak management in the Interior Highlands. Presenters will include USDA Forest Service Regions 8 and 9, state agencies, non-government organizations, and state level prescribe burn associations. Lunch is provided on February 25<sup>th</sup>, courtesy of The Nature Conservancy. We hope to see you there!

**Feb 24 1pm - 5pm.**  
**Feb 25 8am - 5pm.** (Lunch Provided)  
**Feb 26 8am - 12pm.** (Field trip to see active SLP management)

**Event location – Mahoney Building**  
**210 Woodbine Street, Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901**

**NO Registration Fee but Registration is required:**  
(Thanks to our partners at Pheasants Forever providing the registration link)

**Registration link:**  
<https://events.pheasantsforever.org/event/6488a-c2af-4467-b155-b5215612d5b3>

**Exhibitor Registration and Sponsorship Packages are available for \$250:**  
*Exhibitor registration is same link as attendance registration above.*

**Includes:** Exhibitor space, formal oral and written recognition, and an opportunity to address the audience and introduce your organization.

**Lodging info:** A block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Express, Hot Springs, Arkansas are available through January 24<sup>th</sup> for \$114.00 per night. Rates are for February 24-26, 2025.

**Lodging Link:** [American Bird Conservancy Reservation](#)

For more info: Contact Jeff Powelson: [jpowelson@abcbirds.org](mailto:jpowelson@abcbirds.org) or 816-261-3939