

Call for Habitat Management Proposals

TARGET: Upland Game Bird Management with an Emphasis on Bobwhite Quail.

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Local County TPWD Biologists: [Find Your Local Biologist](#)

PURPOSE: In an effort to concentrate resources for the conservation and management of healthy upland ecosystems and to monitor quail recovery efforts, quail focus areas have been identified in three regions of Texas. All three focus areas historically supported huntable populations of bobwhite quail. However, quail populations have sharply declined over the past few decades. Fortunately, these areas of the state have the potential for bobwhite quail population recovery if proper habitat management occurs at a sufficient scale. In an effort to encourage this beneficial management practices, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is requesting proposals that target improving the quantity and quality of habitat in each of the following three focus areas: 1) Archer, Baylor, Callahan, Clay*, Shackelford*, Stephens, and Throckmorton* counties 2) Austin*, Colorado*, DeWitt, Fayette, Goliad, Gonzales, Karnes*, Lavaca, Refugio, Victoria, Washington, Wharton and Wilson* counties and 3) Ellis and Navarro counties. (**Denotes first-priority counties*)

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: Funding of proposals with Upland Game Bird Stamp funds is to promote healthy ecosystems and increase the quantity and quality of habitat for the benefit of bobwhite quail and other upland species in the focus areas mentioned above. Proposals must address the most limiting factor(s) to bobwhite quail populations by manipulating habitat using accepted management practices. The cost of each practice can be estimated using the 2014 NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program pay rates. One or more of the objectives listed below should constitute the primary focus of any proposal.

1. Adequate nesting cover is critical to maintaining healthy bobwhite populations. Bobwhites prefer to nest in 2-year old bunchgrasses over 12 inches in diameter and at least 24 inches in height. Recommended bunchgrass density ranges from 250-1,000 clumps per acre. Methods to restore or improve nesting cover may include, but are not limited to: prescribed grazing (including dormant season grazing or grazing deferments), conversion of exotic grasses to native species, range reseeding, field borders and prescribed fire.
2. Bobwhite quail utilize woody cover for both loafing and to escape predators. The interspersed and structure of woody cover can increase or decrease the amount of useable space available. Brush management should be carefully planned to maintain a diversity of shrubs in patterns capable of meeting bobwhite quail cover requirements. Depending on location, recommended brush canopy densities range from 10-30%. Methods to address deficiencies in woody cover requirements include, but are not limited to: mechanical brush removal, selective herbicide applications, and shrub plantings (in strips or mottes).
3. Bobwhite quail require approximately 25% or more bare ground. Bare ground is important to bobwhite quail mobility and food access. Methods to address bare ground requirements include, but are not limited to: prescribed grazing, prescribed fire and fallow disking.

The guidelines for upland game bird management habitat proposals are located here: [Guidelines](#)

Ranking Criteria: The goals and objectives of TPWD's Upland Game Bird Strategic Plan (UGBSP) will be the basis for ranking all proposals submitted through this process. The criteria used to evaluate proposals are provided below to assist each applicant in developing a quality proposal.

- Does the project address three or more of the objectives outlined in the UGBSP?
- Does the proposal have a standardized bobwhite or grassland bird monitoring protocol component (e.g. point counts)?
- Is the project location within a focus county?
 - If outside of a focus county, the distance of the project location to a public or private property that is actively managing for upland game birds will be considered.
- What is the percentage of matching funds the applicant is providing (direct and in-kind)?
- Does the applicant have a history of completing habitat projects beneficial to upland game birds?
- Does the project have the resources (e.g., equipment, funding, manpower, staff/volunteers) to continue the project into the future without additional TPWD funding?