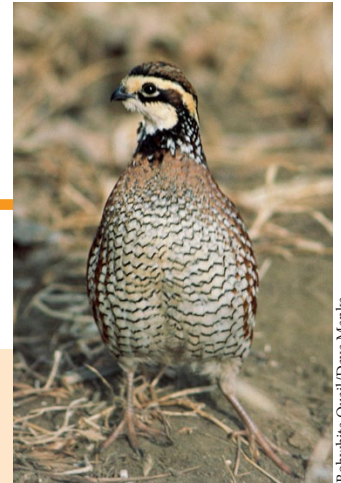




... the unified strategy to restore wild quail



Bobwhite Quail/Dave Menke

## NBCI Accomplishments & Milestones

### Background



In 1995, the Southeast Quail Study Group (SEQSG) met for the first time in South Carolina to discuss bobwhite quail decline from a regional perspective. Three years later, the directors of the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) charged the group with developing a bobwhite recovery plan. The plan, the Northern Bobwhite Quail Initiative (the original “NBCI,”) was published in 2002 and immediately adopted by SEAFWA. That original NBCI catalyzed a lengthy list of accomplishments and milestones.

### Major Accomplishments



- Bobwhite restoration has become a consensus priority and a common topic of the national conservation dialogue
- Almost every relevant State Wildlife Action Plan has prioritized bobwhites
- 14 states have bobwhite initiatives/restoration plans (Prior to NBCI only two states had them)
- USDA has implemented research, new practices and new policies to support the NBCI effort
- The bobwhite community has earned standing among migratory bird conservationists by use of the ecologically-based Bird Conservation Regions and its collaboration with the Partners in Flight songbird conservationists on behalf of restoring native grassland ecosystems for all wildlife
- Other national/regional partnerships have been forged, such as with the Society for Range Management, the Southern Group of State Foresters, the National Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils, the USDA Forest Service, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Pollinator Partnership
- New game bird strategic planning initiatives inspired by and modeled after NBCI have sprung up across the country—for western quail, American woodcock, prairie grouse, spruce grouse and ring-necked pheasant
- New, non-government organizations dedicated to quail conservation have been created to help increase the momentum



*Nick Wiley, executive director, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and co-chair of NBCI Management Board at unveiling of NBCI 2.0 in 2011 (John Doty)*



Pollinator/Bridget Collins



Pine Savanna/John Doty

[www.bringbackbobwhites.org](http://www.bringbackbobwhites.org)

# Milestones



## 2002

- Congress supports NBCI in the 2002 Farm Bill
- The International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies endorses NBCI
- A Multi-State Conservation Grant helps fund the first NBCI coordinator, with additional funds from southeastern states and the NRCS
- Congress appropriates \$1.5 million to NRCS for bobwhite research to help advance the initiative

## 2003

- First NBCI coordinator is hired

## 2004

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) approves, and the President announces, the creation of Conservation Practice 33 (CP33), or “bobwhite buffers,” within the Conservation Reserve Program
- The SEQSG Research Committee develops the first-ever standardized, national bird monitoring program for a CRP practice, CP33

## 2005

- NBCI and CP33 featured at the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation
- NBCI momentum stimulates the Pheasants Forever organization to create Quail Forever
- Second Multi-State Conservation Grant approved, to build NBCI capacity and update the plan

## 2006

- SEAFWA extends NBCI coordinator position for three years
- SEAFWA expands its NBCI Directors’ Committee to include the Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies and the Northeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, and the quail study group expands its steering committee to include those same organizations
- FSA approves CP 36, the longleaf pine initiative
- NRCS funds a six-state “native grass for habitat and farms” demonstration project

## 2007

- SEAFWA begins the process of finding a permanent operational home for NBCI, and publishes a Request for Proposals

## 2008

- SEAFWA selects the University of Tennessee (UT) as the NBCI headquarters
- CP 38 State Acres For wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) practice

## 2009

- NBCI-catalyzed CP33 “bobwhite buffers” practice tops 200,000 acres
- Workshops to revise the 2002 NBCI are conducted in 25 states and involving 600 biologists under the contracted management of Tall Timbers Research Station
- The National Fish & Wildlife Foundation designates the NBCI and southeastern grassland birds as a “Keystone Initiative”
- The SEQSG has its first joint meeting with Southeast Partners in Flight
- The SEQSG expands to include all states in the bobwhite range and renames itself the National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC)
- Third Multistate Conservation Grant awarded, for NBCI liaison to the USDA FSA
- NRCS releases NBCI-catalyzed report “Managing Working Lands for Northern Bobwhite”
- NBCI coordinator becomes full-time employee of UT
- Mississippi State University releases NBCI-catalyzed final report on CP-33 monitoring showing 116,000-290,000 bobwhites added in the first year of CP-33 on the first 108,000 acres



## 2010

- NBTC, USDA FSA and UT sign a Memorandum of Agreement
- 23 states commit to support NBCI coordination, including 8 non-SEAFWA states
- 1st annual meeting of the NBTC outside the Southeast, in Wichita, KS
- First new NBCI staff experts hired to provide national implementation and leadership capacity—science coordinator, communications director, forestry coordinator and FSA liaison

## 2011

- The completely revamped bobwhite restoration plan—NBCI 2.0—is released in March
- First-ever range-wide inventory of grassland habitat conservation accomplishments is compiled
- NBCI helps create shortleaf pine savanna restoration group
- CP33 has established 235,000 acres of premium new bobwhite habitat around crop field edges in 24 states
- CP36 has planted more than 104,000 acres of longleaf pine across nine states

August 2011

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