

Mississippi Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program teams up with USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

Article by Jeffrey Lee, USFWS Private Lands Biologist

The Mississippi Ecological Services Field Office expanded its potential to assist private landowners with habitat restoration and/or enhancement projects during 2011. The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Mississippi was lacking a significant presence in the northern portion of the state in recent years. During 2011, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that allowed Mississippi's Partners for Fish and Wildlife State Coordinator to transfer from Jackson, MS to Carrollton, MS. NRCS provided office space and some administrative support. This new sub-office allows the Partners Program in Mississippi to be located in closer proximity to private landowners who have interest in wetland restoration and prairie restoration projects. The Service agreed to assist NRCS with Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) project evaluations and other wetland related issues dealing with the Mississippi River Alluvial Delta region. This newly formed relationship will greatly enhance both agencies ability to provide assistance to landowners in the northern portion of the state.



Natural Resources Conservation Service Supervisory District Conservationist, Kent Blaine (left) and USFWS Partners State Coordinator for Mississippi, Jeffrey Lee (right) working together to provide better service to private landowners interested in wildlife habitat conservation. *Photo by Jeffrey Lee, USFWS Private Lands Biologist.*