

National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative

Early Successional Habitat

Landowner Outreach Plan Template

Introduction

This document is a template for a state marketing plan to attract and persuade landowners to inquire about advice and assistance in creating Early Successional Habitat (ESH) on their land. This template is the product of a long-term project funded by the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative with input and assistance from every NBCI member state and several other stakeholders.

This plan will walk you through the process of planning your state's landowner outreach program and direct you to the resources available to implement it. Free ad templates (referenced throughout) are available at <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/marketing/>.

Background

This marketing plan and all the resources referenced in it are the result of an effort that NBCI began in 2016. This section briefly outlines the process NBCI went through to develop these materials. The rest of the document is a practical marketing plan about how a state agency or other entity might communicate effectively with landowners about implementing early successional habitat management on their lands.

Workshop - The effort began with a workshop attended by NBCI staff, leadership, state quail coordinators and other stakeholders. The workshop resulted in identification of the key audience, communications objectives and major strategies for the plan.

Stakeholder Interviews – Interviews with wildlife directors, quail coordinators, private lands biologists, etc. helped confirm the results of the workshop and provided additional details for strategy and message development.

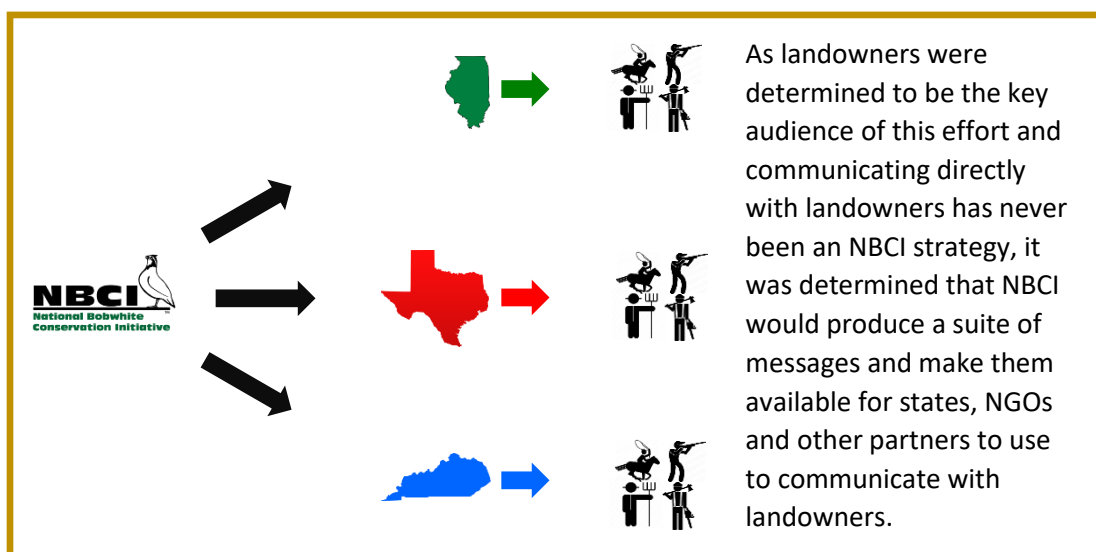
Initial Message Development & Testing – Six potential messages were developed and tested online via a focus group of state quail coordinators.

Landowner Focus Groups - The best of the initial messages were refined further and tested via landowner focus groups of row crop farmers, ranchers and southern pine timber operations.

Message Templates – Message templates were then created for states and NGOs to encourage landowners to request assistance in creating and maintaining ESH on their land.

Implementation Assistance – This marketing plan and templates for flyers, magazine and newspaper ads, billboards, social media and online advertising are all available to the states for free download at <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/marketing/>

NBCI has also agreed to create a Google AdWords account including search terms, ads and geotargeting for any interested state participating in the program (see Page 14 for details).



Target Audience – Landowners

The target audience for this campaign is landowners. Suitable land types include row crop farming, ranching/grazing, timber production, recreation or a combination of the above. Landowners are our target as they are most often the final decision makers as to whether or not habitat is created and maintained on their property.

NBCI research uncovered a few other things about landowners:

1. They enjoy having wildlife on their land for hunting purposes or simply because they enjoy seeing it on the property.
2. They feel they are stewards of the land and wish to leave it better than they found it. This could be for their children or grandchildren or for the general benefit of nature.
3. If their land has any purpose other than recreational, it needs to produce revenue of some sort in order to help keep their business viable and their family provided for.
4. They are most likely interested in having more of one or more of the following species on their land:
 - a. white-tailed deer
 - b. wild turkeys
 - c. bobwhite quail
5. They react more favorably to private lands biologists whose vocabulary, handouts, etc. are in line with the way they use their land. Not surprisingly, ranchers like to hear words like “ranch” and “cattle.” Row crop producers like to hear words like “farm” and “crops.”



The “Sales” Process

With some minor exceptions, every private lands program representative we spoke to in the research phase of this project outlined roughly the same process for attracting a landowner and assisting him/her to put more wildlife habitat on their land:

1. **Exposure:** The process starts when a landowner encounters a quail/ESH conservation message. It might be by mail, from a newspaper article or a field day.
2. **Phone Call:** In nearly every instance, the landowner reaches out to their state wildlife agency for assistance, most often by phone. Some interviewees used this call solely to set up a meeting with the landowner. Others used the call to qualify the landowner and only set up meetings with landowners with property and objectives that made the time taken for a face-to-face meeting likely to pay off.
3. **Kitchen Table/Conference Room Meeting:** Every private lands program we talked to said the most crucial step in the process was the first opportunity to sit down with the landowner. This first meeting was used to establish rapport and credibility, as well as to ask the landowner about his/her goals for the property and resources (funds, machinery, manpower) that were available to be put toward habitat work.
4. **Ride the Property:** Assuming the landowners’ objectives and resources warranted it, the next step for the agency was to learn about the property itself. This was done by talking to the landowner and/or walking or driving around the property.
5. **Land Plan:** Armed with an understanding of the landowner, property and situation, the program representative developed a land plan specifically for that landowner. The land plan described the actions needed to create/maintain habitat on the property, resources (funding and supplies) that might be available to help with the effort, as well as any volunteer manpower that might be put to use.

The process could end at this point, with the landowner taking action or deciding not to bother. The interviewees said some land plans lead to nothing, while others generate long-term relationships with the landowner and regular consultations regarding help, resources or advice.

6. **Help with Project:** In some rare occasions (perhaps larger or more important projects), the program representatives remained intimately involved and assisted the landowner with hands-on labor or by leading groups of volunteer labor.

Objectives

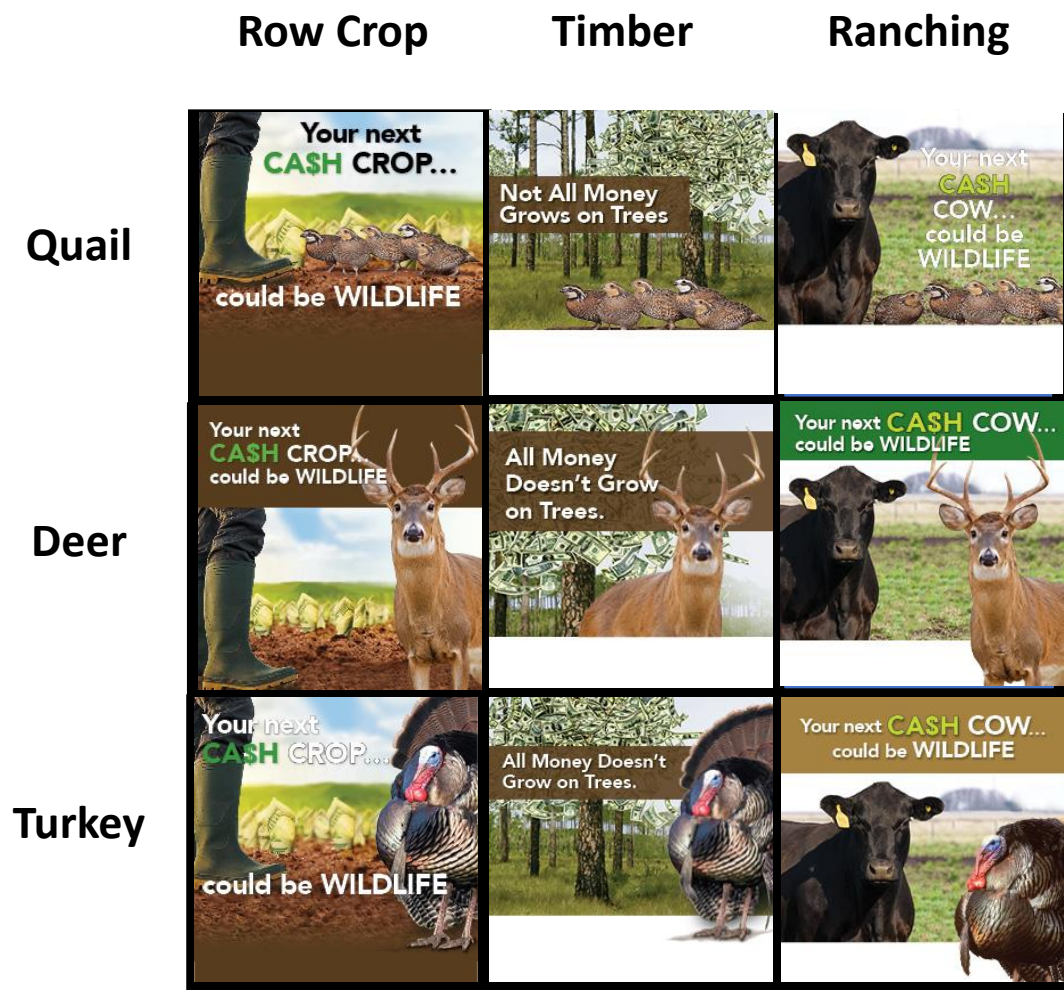
Based on the research with real-world target audiences, following are the objectives for this marketing plan template. Your state may or may not have these exact objectives. The more your objectives differ from these, the less likely the NBCI marketing plan and associated materials will be useful to you.

1. Increase the number of “first meetings” private lands biologists have with landowners who would like to create and maintain ESH wildlife on their land.
2. Increase the percentage of “first meetings” with landowners that ultimately result in additional ESH on the ground.
3. Increase the number of acres dedicated to ESH in the range of the bobwhite quail.

Messaging

NBCI has developed message templates for a broad range of media. These messages target three types of working landowners (row crop farmers, ranchers and timber operations), and they feature all three of the highly desired ESH species mentioned above (deer, wild turkey and quail). Thus, practitioners have nine main messages, all of which are available in a variety of shapes, sizes and styles.

The primary motivator in all nine species/land use combinations is money. The combination of money and wildlife is used to capture the viewer's attention. The copy of the ad and any subsequent messages should be sure to position this additional revenue as a way to fund landowners' conservation efforts—not necessarily a new profit source for their land.



Each of these messages is available formatted for:

- Flyers
- Newspaper & magazine ads
- Billboards
- Social media
- Online advertising

All formats are accessible from <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/marketing/>.

Media Outlets

The secret to marketing success is to get the right message in front of the right people as efficiently as possible. NBCI is making that easy for you by providing tested messages in formats that the target audience has told us themselves that they use.

Here's what participants in NBCI focus groups said were the media they were the most likely to use:

Farmers:

- Television
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- The Internet
- AM/FM Radio
- Satellite Radio

Ranchers:

- Television
- The Internet
- Newspapers
- Television
- AM/FM Radio
- Satellite Radio

Timber Producers

- Magazines
- The Internet
- Television
- AM/FM Radio
- Satellite Radio
- Newspapers

While they would doubtlessly reach landowners, we are not using TV or radio as part of this campaign due to their high production costs and the likelihood that much of the money invested in a broadcast media buy would end up reaching people who don't own large tracts of land.

If you feel strongly about TV or radio, we recommend you start by sending press releases about the successes and opportunities of your private lands efforts to ag or outdoor-related shows or reporters. That will get you some of the advantages of TV and radio at a fraction of the cost.

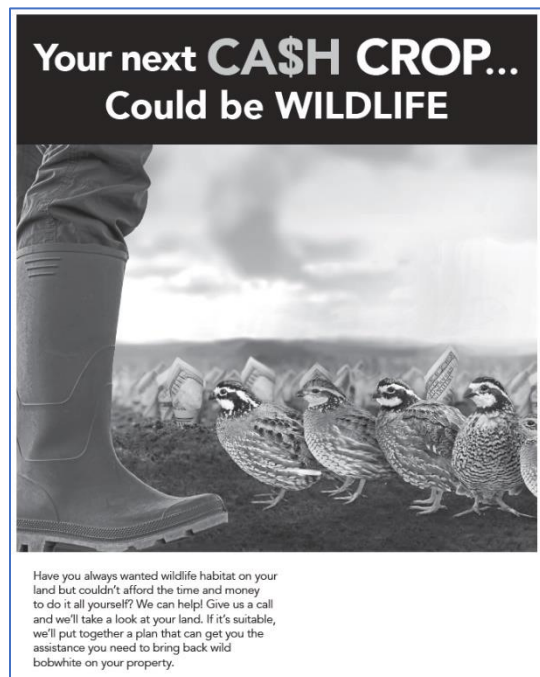
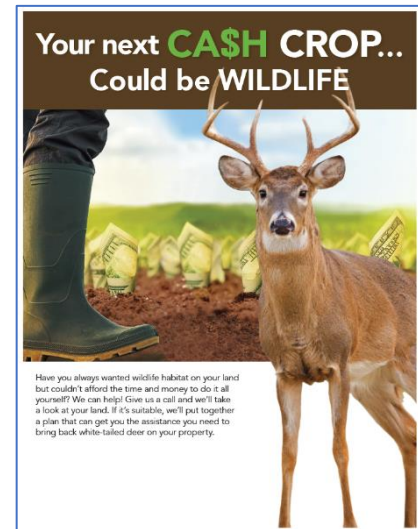


Flyers

Flyers are the ultimate in low-cost media. Many of the most effective ways to use them are low-to-no cost. Just think about where the farmers, ranchers and/or timber producers go in your area, and that's where you want to make sure one of your flyers is on the bulletin board.

Here are a few ways you could use flyers:

- Bulletin board at the:
 - Grange Hall/Cattlemen's Club
 - Hardware store
 - Feed store/grain elevator
 - Small town cafes and restaurants
 - Farm equipment dealer
- Stuffed in shopping bags or printed on receipts at:
 - Hardware store
 - Feed store/grain elevator
 - Small town cafes and restaurants
- Inserted in the newspaper or local shopper (rural deliveries only)
- As handouts at the fair
- Attached to an email
- Add a link to the file in your email signature
- Posted on your website



All the flyers produced for this effort are 8.5" x 11". There are black and white and color versions of each message, and the flyer layouts are provided in two file formats.

Jpeg – This file is simply a large image. You can insert it into Word or PowerPoint as a graphic, hit "send to back" and then add your logo or type your contact information over the top of it.

InDesign – If you have a designer, this is the better way to go. Just give them the InDesign file, tell them what you would like to add and they should have everything they need to make your flyer.

Once you have your final file, you can print it out on your copier or printer, send a PDF by email or get hundreds duplicated at a copy shop.

Newspaper & Magazine Ads

In order to make magazine and newspaper buys cost effective, you need as many of the readers as possible for that publication to be members of your target market.

Here's an example. Let's say you have \$1,000 to spend on print advertising to landowners. You are considering two alternative publications.

The Greenville Times – a local newspaper serving the small town of Greenville. It has a circulation of 2,000, all within 50 miles of Greenville. 60% live within the Greenville city limits, so it is a reasonable guess that not many of that 60% own large parcels of land. If we assume one-third of the remaining 40% own large parcels of land, that leaves us with 13.3% or 267 farmers/landowners. If an ad in the Times costs \$500, then it would cost \$1.87 to reach a farmer/landowner ($\$500/267$ landowner circ).

Green State Farmer Monthly – a magazine for farms in the Green State. It also has a circulation of 2,000 but spread all over Green State. It's a reasonable guess that nearly every reader is a farmer, therefore the publication reaches 2,000 farmers/landowners. If an ad in the Farmer Monthly costs \$1,000, then it would cost \$.50 to reach a farmer/landowner ($\$1,000/2,000$ landowner circ).

If you have the \$1,000 and your effort is not focused specifically around Greenville, your best bet is to buy the more expensive ad in Farmer Monthly and reach more farmers at a lower cost per farmer.

Here's a few ways you could use print advertisements:

- Small town newspapers
 - Ag section
 - Outdoor section if your paper has one
 - Ad or an insert that only goes to rural subscribers
 - Send them press releases of your successes, field days, burns, etc.
- If you have a local or regional farm store or sporting goods store, ask them if they would print your ad as part of their weekly circular.
- Statewide or regional farm publications
 - Ads
 - Send press releases of your successes, field days, burns, etc.
- Statewide or regional ranching publications
 - Ads
 - Send press releases of your successes, field days, burns, etc.
- Statewide or regional timber publications
 - Ads
 - Send press releases of your successes, field days, burns, etc.

The newspaper and magazine files come in several sizes:

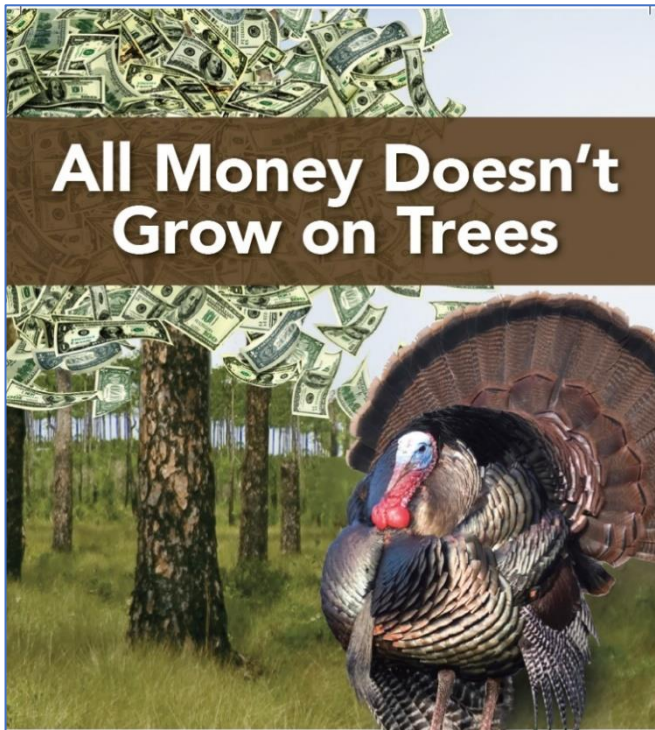
- **Newspaper:** ¼ page
- **Magazine:** Full Page, Horizontal ½ Page, Vertical ½ Page, ¼ Page

Your next **CASH CROP...
Could be WILDLIFE**



Have you always wanted wildlife habitat on your land but couldn't afford the time and money to do it all yourself? We can help! Give us a call and we'll take a look at your land. If it's suitable, we'll put together a plan that can get you the assistance you need to bring back wild bobwhite on your property.

**All Money Doesn't
Grow on Trees**



Have you always wanted wildlife habitat on your land but couldn't afford the time and money to do it all yourself? We can help! Give us a call and we'll take a look at your land. If it's suitable, we'll put together a plan that can get you the assistance you need to bring back wild turkey on your property.

The ad layouts are provided in two file formats.

Jpeg – This file is simply a large image. You can insert it into Word or PowerPoint as a graphic, hit “send to back” and then add your logo or type your contact information over the top of it. This would be adequate for a local ad in a fair program or something of that nature. For most paid newspaper or magazine ads, you will want to use the InDesign files.

InDesign – If you have a designer, this is the better way to go. Just give them the InDesign file, tell them what you would like to add and they should have everything they need to make your ad. If you don't have a designer, ask the publication you are running your ad in to create your ad for you.

Most print publications will take a PDF file format. If you use Word to create your ad, save to PDF or print to file to make a PDF for the publication. If you have a designer create your ad, just ask them to make a PDF for you.

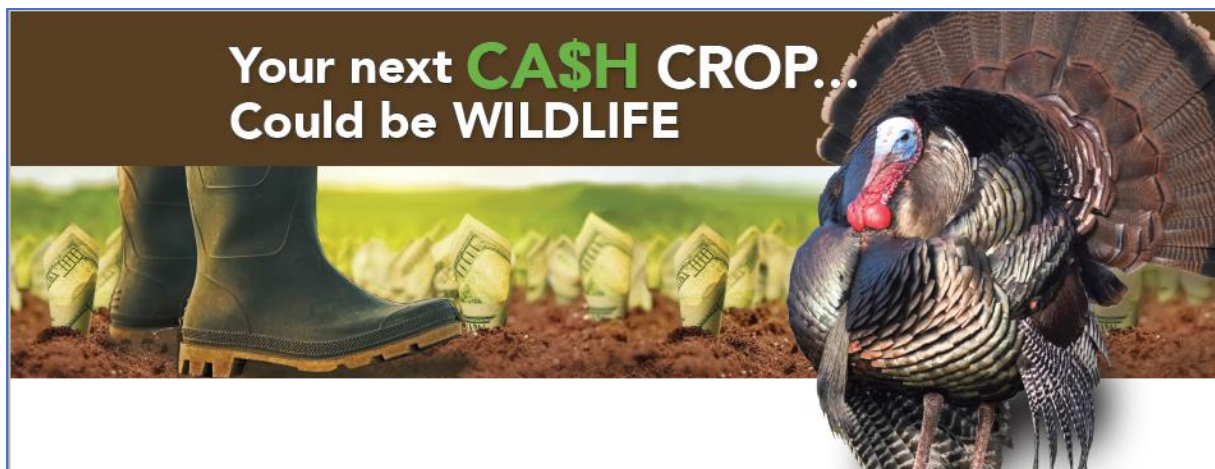
Billboards

Billboards offer three advantages in landowner habitat recruiting:

- 1) They offer you the ability to focus on parts of your state that are the most valuable for you. For instance, in or near your focal area, or in an area where you have been having some success that you wish to leverage by creating additional habitat.
- 2) They are cheaper on rural roads. Billboards are priced by the number of people that drive by the board each day. A board on a freeway, at a busy intersection or downtown in a city can be very expensive. Conversely, a board on a lightly used road in the country may be very affordable and, at the same time, more likely to be seen by your rural landowner target.
- 3) They last for 30 days and even longer. So if you can get one of your billboards up on the route to or from the feed store, the grocery or a popular diner, landowners might see it once or twice a day for an entire month.

Here's a few ways you could use billboards:

- Near your focal area(s)
- Near recent successful projects to get more habitat on the ground
- Near or on the way to locations frequented by farmers, ranchers, timber producers. For instance:
 - Grange Hall/Cattlemen's Club
 - Hardware store
 - Feed store/grain elevator
 - Small town cafes and restaurants
 - Farm equipment dealer



Your next **CASH** CROP... Could be **WILDLIFE**



Most freeway or urban “high-cost” billboard locations will be printed on vinyl and can cost nearly \$1,000 just to print and will also cost you more to run. Lower-cost boards in the “country” will be printed on paper for around \$100 and cost you much less to run as well. Vinyl boards are likely to be long and skinny. Paper boards are usually shorter, stockier rectangles.

The production files for billboards are very high resolution and the files themselves are very large in order to be printed as large as they need to be for a billboard. For this reason, you won’t be able to create a file without a designer and the proper software. Many billboard companies are used to producing the files for their customers, so there is an excellent chance that you will be able to get some help with production.

Social Media

Social media has three distinct advantages for this program:

- 1) It's reasonably inexpensive (or free if you never pay for an ad or boost a post)
- 2) It's measurable in the sense you can count likes, follows, etc.
- 3) If your social media followers are farmers/ranchers and landowners, it's very likely that many of their friends are also farmers/ranchers or landowners, and every time they like or share one of your posts, they will be sharing it with other landowners who might want habitat on their land as well.

Say you were visiting the Jones farm, and as you drove in, an 8-point buck crossed the driveway, or you flushed a covey of quail out of the brush. If you were fast enough to get a picture on your phone and post it to your agency's Facebook page and tagged Farmer Jones in the post, then all the followers of your agency page, Farmer Jones and his friends are likely to see it even if no one shares or reposts it. That's a fair amount of return on very little effort and no financial investment.

Here are a few ways you could use social media:

- The social media templates available at <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/marketing/> include several sizes that are perfect for social media posts and headers on social media pages.
 - Put a reminder in your calendar to change the banner on your Facebook and other pages every 2-to-4 weeks.
 - Shoot out a post using one of the relevant ads every week or so. Just cycle through whatever ads are relevant to your job and location.
- Post events you are having like field days, work parties and burns to all your media accounts.
- Post new landowner projects as you break ground on them.
- Post them again as you complete them.
- Post shots of wildlife that you see in your area.
- Post attractive nature scenes (creeks, sunsets, fall color, prairie flowers, etc.).
- Post any relevant press release or announcement your agency/department puts out.
- Coordinate your private lands biologists, other biologists and conservation officers reposting agency posts on their own personal or professional pages and/or groups when relevant. If your agency sends out a post and then everyone on your team reposts it to their accounts, it will reach a lot more people.

Most of the social media files will need to be jpegs, but there are as many rules as there are social media platforms. If your organization doesn't have a social media manager you can work with, there are inexpensive software packages that are designed to help non-designers create social media files.

Here are a few:

- Canva
- Adobe Spark
- Pablo by buffer
- Desynger
- Snappa
- Gravit Designer



There are several social media ads available at <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/marketing/>.



- Facebook Banner (828 x 315 pixels)
- Facebook Link (1200 x 900 pixels)
- Facebook Link (254 x 133 pixels)
- Twitter (1024 x 512 pixels)

If you don't find a size you are looking for, check the online advertising section for something you might repurpose. You can also provide a handful of these files to your designer and he/she will have plenty to work with.

Online Advertising

Every year, people spend more and more time online. Mobile devices make it possible to be online everywhere, from sitting in a deer blind to plowing the back 40 or riding fences on the ranch. Online marketing is the most efficient means of reaching out to very specific but geographically dispersed audiences like farmers, ranchers and recreational landowners.

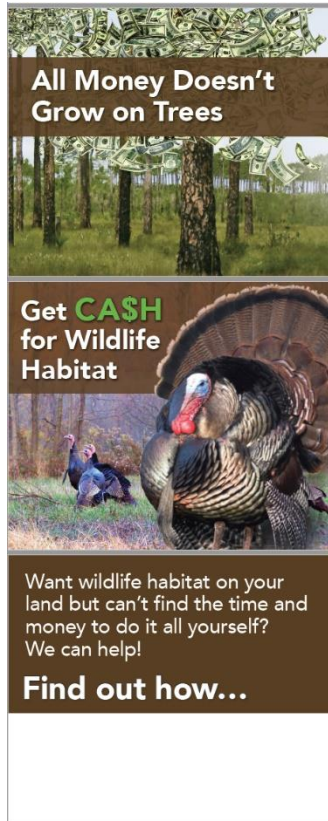
Online advertising isn't free like social media, but it's reasonably affordable, very easily measured and it can target individuals with specific interests, in specific locations, while keeping fairly tight control of your budget.

Also, as a part of the NBCI ESH Landowner Outreach Program, NBCI has agreed to fund DJ Case & Associates to help set up a Google AdWords account for your state. The account will be set up with keywords and ads and designed to reach out to landowners in only your state. NBCI will not be paying your actual advertising bills from Google, but you'll be all set up and ready to go.

DJ Case would develop an online advertising program for your state including:

- 3-to-5 online text ads
- Graphic online ads in the 3 most popular sizes
- Online marketing strategy including:
 - Search advertising – Ads that run on searches in Google and other search engines
 - Content advertising – Ads that appear in content related to the subject matter
 - Relevant site advertising – Ads that appear on sites relevant to the topic at hand, regardless of content





- You can geotarget areas of interest by: Drawing a shape on the map
- Selecting particular states, cities or zipcodes
- Selecting a radius around a point on the map

Here's a few ways you could use geotargeting in your online advertising:

- If your state has different regions where grazing, farming and timber are more popular, set your timber ad to run most heavily in the timber area, the grazing ad in the grazing area and so on. You'll be investing your advertising where the market is.
 - If you have a quail focal area, run your ads in and near that area to maximize the impact of any new habitat that gets created.
 - If your state has heavily populated urban areas, don't run your ads there. It will save you paying for a lot of potential clicks from people who are not very likely to own land.
 - If you have a big success or 2 or 3 projects going in the same area, run your ads in a 10- or 20-mile circle around that area so you can get more habitat going that will be available to the coveys on your current successful properties.
 - If there is an active Quail Forever or Pheasants Forever Chapter in your area, advertise in a 50-mile circle around the center of the area they cover or where they meet.

There are several online ads available for you on <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/marketing/>.

- 250 x 250 pixels
- 300 x 250 pixels
- 320 x 100 pixels
- 336 x 280 pixels

If you don't find a size you are looking for, check the social media section. You can also provide a handful of these files to your designer and she/he will have plenty to work with.

Once you have your AdWords account and everything is set to go, you'll want to set a budget you can work with. AdWords will run your ad when you have the funds and stop when you don't. Here are some budgeting tips:

- 1) Every ad group has its own ads, audience and budget. If row crops are more important in your state than timber, budget accordingly.
- 2) Start with low budgets like \$100 a month. Watch for a couple weeks and see what happens.
 - a. If an ad group doesn't reach budget, it's because there aren't enough members of the audience or relevant content to get up to the budget. Cut that budget down to just above where it is stopping naturally.
 - b. If the ad group runs out of a weekly budget in two days, increase the budget to take more advantage of the opportunities to get your messages in front of landowners.
- 3) If you have \$1,200 to run a certain ad for the year, set your budget at \$25 per week rather than \$100 per month. A monthly budget will run your ad until the budget is gone and then stop until

the next month. That could mean your ad disappears 3 weeks out of every month. If your weekly budget runs out in a day or two, your ad will be back in 5 days or so.

Next Steps

If you aren't using <https://bringbackbobwhites.org/marketing/>, send a link to your communications department or designer and check out all the resources that are available there for you. If you have questions or there are other resources you would find useful, contact Alyssa Merka (amerka@utk.edu) or John Doty (jdoty3@utk.edu).

If there are ad sizes or types of advertising we have not created for you, let your designer know about the files you do have; they may be able to create whatever you need fairly simply given the variety of shapes and sizes they have to work with.