



The Delta Council Review

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THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF DELTA COUNCIL

November 2021

DELTA COUNCIL TO HOLD MID-YEAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2 IN STONEVILLE FITZ ELDER TO BE HIGHLIGHTED AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Elder

Please join us for the Delta Council Mid-Year Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, December 2, 2021, at the Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center in Stoneville, MS at 11 am, sponsored by C Spire. In addition to the regular business of Delta Council, the meeting will be highlighted by an address from **Fitzhugh Elder IV**, who serves as Minority Staff Director of the Committee on Agriculture,

Nutrition, and Forestry in the United States Senate for Senator John Boozman of Arkansas.

A Virginia native, **Fitz** spent his childhood living throughout the Southeast (North Carolina, Mississippi, and Tennessee). Having developed a love of the outdoors and the West as a teen, he studied forestry at the University of Montana in Missoula, Montana.

Fitz started his professional life working for **Senator Robert F. Bennett** of Utah and then joined the Committee on Appropriations in 2003. After serving as the clerk of the agriculture appropriations subcommittee for five years, **Fitz** left the Senate in 2011 and represented food and agriculture related concerns before the federal government. **Fitz** returned to the Senate Appropriations Committee in October 2016 to serve as the Deputy Staff Director, for **Senator**

Thad Cochran. Most recently, he served **Senator Roy Blunt** as the Staff Director of the Committee on Rules and Administration and the Staff Director of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies.

Fitz has three sons and lives in Loudoun County, Virginia.

There will also be a separate period of recognition for certificates of memoriams presented to the families of Delta leaders who have passed away. These recipients and their families will also be recognized during the General Session of the meeting.

The 2021 Mid-Year Board of Directors Meeting is sponsored by longstanding Delta Council supporter, C Spire, the largest privately held wireless carrier in the country based in Mississippi.



EPA DEALS DELTA DEVASTATING BLOW

EPA CONFIRMS YAZOO BACKWATER PUMPS PROJECT IS STILL SUBJECT TO 2008 VETO

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) transmitted a letter to the Army for Civil Works on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, confirming the 2008 veto of the Yazoo Backwater Pumps Project. In the letter, EPA explains that the 2020 Proposed Plan for the Yazoo Pumps Project is prohibited by EPA's 2008 Clean Water Act Section 404(c) Final Determination.

This action supersedes a portion of a November 30, 2020, letter from EPA to the Army Corps of Engineers asserting that the 2020 Proposed Plan was not subject to the 2008 Clean Water Act 404(c) action.

"For decades we have watched our South Delta communities endure record-breaking man-made flooding that has devastated wildlife, nature, our homes, our jobs, our main economic base of agriculture, and even take lives of our neighbors," said **Paul Hollis**, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Delta Council, MS Levee Board Commissioner, and Rolling Fork resident. "It is unfathomable that we find ourselves here again fighting for what is rightfully and legally ours and is the only long term and feasible solution to backwater flooding - the pumps. It's past time for the EPA to

put people before politics and stop subjecting South Deltans to this environmental injustice."

"This is an absolutely terrible day for the people who live in the Mississippi Delta and an even sadder day for the country when an agency like the EPA refuses to do the right thing for the people," said **Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith**. "I will continue to work for the people of the Delta to try to salvage this project, which should have been built decades ago. I do know we absolutely do not need empty platitudes from the EPA on a 'path forward' and environmental justice."

Hyde-Smith has made the Yazoo Backwater Area Pumps project a priority since becoming a U.S. Senator in 2018. The Senator was instrumental in securing funding for pre-construction planning and other activities on the New Proposal for the Yazoo Area Pump Project.

"I am deeply frustrated the EPA has chosen to reverse its guidance on the Yazoo Backwater Pumps and leave the people of the South Mississippi Delta in harm's way.

The federal government authorized the pumps 80 years

PUMPS *continued on page 2*

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DELTA COUNCIL

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY PATRICK JOHNSON



Johnson

It has been a pleasure to serve the first 5 months of my term as Delta Council President. It has been an eventful time with a lot of different issues that we have worked on.

Of course, the news that is on the front page of this paper and that has been discussed throughout the region is the recent action by the Environmental Protection Agency to revoke the 2020 suspension of the EPA Clean Water Act veto from 2008. This move effectively puts the veto of the project back into place and stalls the incredible progress that has been made during the last 2 years.

This is simply a tragedy, and all of us who live in the Delta know that there is no other alternative to flood protection than the completion of the authorized MR&T Backwater Pumps. Unfortunately, the South Delta will continue to be susceptible to annual inundation of long duration that will continue to erode the environment, wildlife,

tax base, and economy of this important region. While this action does not “kill” the project forever, it does deal a crippling blow to the region being able to see meaningful progress anytime soon.

There are a lot of individuals and people in government, political office, conservation groups, and others who stood up for the right thing to advocate for the completion of the Backwater Pumps, but Delta Council would like to point out 4 people and organizations for their unceasing efforts.

Senators Cindy Hyde-Smith and Roger Wicker were stalwarts the entire process in making sure that this project had full consideration in all levels of government. They expended enormous political capital to help the people of the South Delta and we are grateful for their strategic moves all during the process. And, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Mississippi Levee Board as the local sponsor made every right move to position the Yazoo Backwater Pumping Plant for success.

At the end of the day, the Administration and EPA ignored the science and the impact that it has had on the people of the South Delta in favor of extreme environmental groups who seem not to understand anything but how to fundraise off of the backs of the poor people in Mississippi. There will be a time for this project to be revived and it is disheartening that it will probably take another devastating backwater flood event for people to realize the enormous mistake that was made. Delta Council will not abandon this project or the people and economy of the South Delta!

Delta Council had another officer's meeting last week in Clarksdale and I would be remiss if I did not point out what an excellent group of leaders I have serving with me this year.

The 2021/2022 officers include: **La Shon Brooks**, Itta Bena; **Lawson Gary**,

Greenwood; **Jay Gore**, Grenada; **Shaw Johnson III**, Clarksdale; **Johnny McRight**, Greenville; **Tim Timbs**, Indianola; and **Craig Shideler** of Senatobia.

The men and women who serve as 2021/2022 Presidential Appointees to the board include: **Rob Baker**, Greenville; **Tyler Cannon**, Cleveland; **Kevin Corban**, Rolling Fork; **Clayton Davis**, Greenville; **Justin Jefcoat**, Greenwood; **Michael Johnson**, Greenwood; **Stacie Koger**, Belzoni; **Bill Walker**, Marks; **Nott Wheeler, Jr.**, Merigold; and **Grey Windham**, Rolling Fork.

I appreciate the time they have given us to advance the needs of our regional economic and agricultural development organization and look forward to the remainder of our term.

I hope that all Directors, members and guests will attend our Mid-Year Board of Directors meeting on December 2 at 11:00 a.m. at the Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center in Stoneville.

In addition to reviewing some of the issues that Delta Council is currently working on, we are privileged to have as our Keynote Speaker, **Mr. Fitzhugh Elder IV**.

Fitz Elder is the Minority Staff Director for the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry in the United States Senate for **Senator John Boozman** of Arkansas. **Fitz** is an old friend to the Mississippi Delta and has worked with us on a number of issues during his career, including farm policy, rural development, transportation and other issues that have had an impact on our region and on the United States.

I hope that you can attend our Mid-Year Board of Directors meeting and also hope that you will not hesitate to contact me or the staff if you would like to share your thoughts on issues that we are working on or should be addressing.

PUMPS from page 1

ago, but the project has been held up by bureaucrats and red tape ever since,” said **Senator Roger Wicker**. “Roads will continue to be impassable, deer and other wildlife and plant life will die, hypoxia will kill fish, small businesses will shut down, and residents will continue to be forced to leave their houses. In fact, 94% of the homes that this project would save from the 100-year floodplain are minority-occupied. It amounts to an environmental injustice. I intend to continue fighting to achieve approval of this much-needed flood control project.”

The Mississippi Levee Board, local sponsor of the Yazoo Backwater Pumps Project, also released a statement regarding the reinstatement of the 2008 veto. “Despite the Biden Administration and the EPA Administrator's repeated insistence that

environment justice is a priority, including during a meeting this past Sunday where Administrator Regan had the opportunity to hear directly from those still suffering from the 2019 flood, today, they chose to ignore the concerns of our community and determined that no pumps can be built in the Yazoo Backwater Area.”

“There is no project that better meets the goals of environmental justice as prioritized by the Biden Administration and Administrator Regan, and without pumps, there is no relief from annual devastating flooding. The Levee Board will consider all options, including potential legal action, to advance this essential project.”

Administrator Regan noted his concerns about the process EPA followed in preparing the November 30, 2020, letter. In the 11th hour of the previous Administration, the

Yazoo Pumps Project was approved. Project elements that were vetoed by the Bush Administration in 2008 were given a green light. The Corps and other parties have developed additional information since 2008 that could be considered in this effort. The EPA and Corps are continuing to develop the technical and scientific information needed to address flooding in this region and identify a durable solution.

“I had the opportunity to visit the Yazoo Backwater Area and see the truly challenging dynamic there,” said EPA Administrator **Michael S. Regan**. “EPA understands the urgency and is ready to work with its federal partners and local stakeholders on a transparent process to find a solution to flooding in the Yazoo backwater area that is both durable and environmentally protective.”

USDA ANNOUNCES AG DISASTER DESIGNATION FOR MS COUNTIES AFFECTED BY JUNE FLOODING



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a primary agricultural disaster designation for counties in Mississippi. Under this disaster designation, producers in contiguous counties in Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Alabama also qualify for benefits.

Additional information on USDA's disaster assistance program, including a list of designated counties and maps, can be found at <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

DR. GORE TO SERVE AS INTERIM HEAD OF DELTA RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER



Gore

Dr. Gary Jackson, Director of Mississippi State University Extension along with **Dr. Keith Coble**, Vice President, MSU Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, recently announced that **Dr. Jeff Gore** will serve as the interim head of the Delta Research and Extension Center (DREC) in Stoneville, effective November 16, 2021.

Dr. Gore is an accomplished Research and Extension Professor of Entomology who is housed at DREC. He is an excellent scientist and leader who has developed an outstanding reputation in the Delta Region and the nation. His work at DREC and involvement with USDA-ARS, stakeholder groups, agricultural business and industry, producers and other MSU faculty and staff make him an ideal choice to serve in this role.

"We are grateful to **Dr. Martin** for his service as the Interim Head of DREC over the last two years," said **Dr. Jackson**. "He will be returning to his primary role as the Associate Director of Extension on the main MSU campus, where he will provide more leadership for county operations."

DELTA STRONG PARTNERS MEET IN STONEVILLE



Velma Wilson, Quitman County Administrator, addresses the Delta Strong group as **Ryan Ashley**, USG Planter Manager (Left), **Parker England**, Planters Bank President and **Lara Bowman**, Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce CEO (Right) look on.



Delta Strong investors and partners met recently in Stoneville for an update from developers and Delta Strong leadership. Nearly 40 were in attendance for the meeting where Development Department

Director **Jerry Chávez** and Department Chairman **Wade Litton** talked about upcoming recruitment plans for the next year.

HYDE-SMITH, PANEL HEAR PLEA FOR TREASURY DEPT. FUNDS TO HELP UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES, BUSINESSES

Miss. Delta Banker Testifies at Senate Appropriations Hearing on FY22 Treasury Budget Requests



Andy Anderson

U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith welcomed the testimony of a Mississippi Delta banker on the need to expand federal programs that allow small community banks to supply loans to underserved populations.

Hyde-Smith, ranking member of the Senate Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, invited Bank of Anguilla CEO and **President Andy Anderson** to testify at a hearing to review the FY2022 budget requests for the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

“While we consider the broader scope of Treasury Department policies and proposals under the Biden budget plan, it’s important for us to hear directly from business leaders from outside of Washington on the problems facing our nation and their proposed solutions,” **Hyde-Smith** said. “**Andy Anderson** provided very good insights on Treasury programs that can have an even bigger impact on underserved regions of the country, like the Mississippi Delta.”

Anderson advocated greater investment in the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund and its Bank Enterprise Award (BEA) Program, which his Sharkey County institution uses to serve the South Delta.

DREC FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDED MSU DAFVM AWARDS

Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine (DAFVM) recently held the DAFVM Summer Celebration which recognizes faculty staff for their excellent work throughout the year. Among several award winners from across the state, Delta Research and Extension Center staff member **Boise Stokes** was awarded the Doris and Louis Wise Support Staff Award. The Wise Support Staff Award is given to



MSU President Mark Keenum, Boise Stokes, MSU DAFVM Vice-President Keith Coble

Division staff members who best emulate the “Wise Character”. The award recognizes individuals who show superior service to others, effectiveness in the accomplishment of goals, untiring and patient support for each other, and lives based on high ethical standards.

Dr. David Wise and **Dr. Suja Aarattuthodi** also located on the Stoneville campus, were awarded the William White Award for the development of cell cultures from catfish belonging to family Ictaluridae to study catfish viruses. The William M. White Special Projects program provides financial support for agricultural research, the extension service, and educational enhancement to the Division. It is used to support worthy projects and further the development of agriculture and agribusiness in Mississippi.

USDA ANNOUNCES THE APPOINTMENT OF ESSIE PATTERSON TO SERVE ON FSA STATE COMMITTEE IN MS



Patterson

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced the appointment of **Essie Patterson** to serve on the FSA state committee in Mississippi which ensures the effective and efficient delivery of FSA federal farm programs to the state’s agricultural

producers.

Members of the FSA state committee are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture and are responsible for the oversight of farm programs and county committee operations, resolving program delivery appeals from the agriculture community, maintaining cooperative relations with industry stakeholders, keeping producers informed about FSA programs and operating in a manner consistent with USDA equal opportunity and civil rights policies.

Patterson, of Leland, Mississippi (Washington County), is owner/operator of a family farm and Essie Patterson Farm Trucking, LLC. She is active in several civic and agricultural organizations including the National Black Growers Council.

SATTERFIELD ELECTED TO SERVE AS CHAIR OF USA RICE FARMERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Satterfield

With their two-year terms that ended in July, the chairs of two USA Rice governing boards handed their gavels to two rising industry leaders. **Kirk Satterfield**, a Mississippi rice farmer from Bolivar County, was unanimously elected to serve as the new chair of the USA Rice Farmers Board of Directors and **Eric Unkel**, a Louisiana rice farmer from Allen Parish, was unanimously elected to serve as the new chair of the USA Rice Council Board of Directors.

Chair-elect **Satterfield** thanked outgoing Chair **Nicole Montna Van Vleck** of California for her two years of service at the helm of the USA Rice Farmers.

“With the new farm bill in our sights, it is important that leaders like **Kirk Satterfield** step up to assume critical posts such as Chairman of the USA Rice Board,” said **Patrick Johnson**, President of Delta Council and a rice, cotton, and grain farmer in Tunica County. “**Kirk** has been a steady voice in the U.S. Rice Industry, and we appreciate his service.”

Each new appointee will serve a two-year term that began August 1, 2021.

HEARTLAND CATFISH AWARDED MARKETER OF THE YEAR BY NORTH AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL MARKETING OFFICIALS



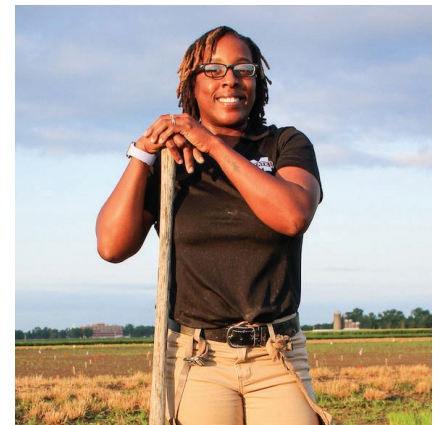
NAAMO members attending the 2021 NAAMO Conference tour the catfish farm and processing facilities of Heartland Catfish in Itta Bena.

The North American Agricultural Marketing Officials (NAAMO) presented Mississippi-based Heartland Catfish Company with the Agricultural Marketer of the Year Award during its annual conference hosted by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

Founded in 1920, the North American Agricultural Marketing Officials is an international organization of the State and Provincial government agricultural marketing officials who provide both domestic and international marketing services to the agricultural and food industries in their states and provinces. Each year during the NAAMO Annual Conference, one entity in the state where the meeting is held is awarded the NAAMO Agricultural Marketer of the Year Award for continued innovation and advancement in the promotion of agricultural products.

Following a tour of the Tackett Catfish Farms and the Heartland Catfish Company, NAAMO board members joined Mississippi **Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson** in presenting Heartland Catfish Company with the prestigious award. **Jonathan Mills**, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, and **Ric Perkins**, General Manager, accepted the award on behalf of the Heartland Catfish Company.

STONEVILLE'S TAMEKA SANDERS FEATURED ON MSU OUR PEOPLE



The phrase “Life’s a marathon, not a sprint” certainly isn’t lost on **Tameka Sanders**. The research associate II at Mississippi State’s Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville works fulltime, is pursuing a doctoral degree in plant and soil sciences, has two young daughters and runs marathons for fun in her spare time. Her passion for research, love of the outdoors and drive to show her daughters they can grow up to be anything they want motivates Sanders to pursue excellence without limits.

“My daughters motivate me to keep working toward my Ph.D. I want them to be able to see that anything is possible regardless of your gender or race. If you put your mind to it, you can do it,” she said. “Growing up, I didn’t see many women in leadership roles, and seeing Black women in those roles was even rarer. I can show my daughters, ‘Hey, I did this despite life’s challenges, so you can do it, too.’”

AROUND DELTA FIELDS

BURGER NAMED DEAN AND DIRECTOR FOR MSU'S COLLEGE OF FOREST RESOURCES AND FOREST AND WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER

A longtime Mississippi State faculty member and administrator is the new dean of the university's College of Forest Resources and director of the Forest and Wildlife Research Center, pending formal approval by the Board of Trustees, State Institutions of Higher Learning.



Burger

Loren W. "Wes" Burger, a W.L. Giles Distinguished Professor of Wildlife Ecology in MSU's Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, is the permanent dean and director, after serving in these roles on an interim basis since July 2020.

"With nearly 30 years of research, teaching and outreach at Mississippi State, Dr. Burger's leadership at all levels has served this university, his students, and many other stakeholders extremely well," said MSU Provost and Executive Vice President David Shaw. "We are fortunate to have Dr. Burger in this role because of his leadership, expertise and—most importantly—his commitment to undergraduate and graduate students."

EARL GLENN NAMED DISTRICT 3 ENGINEER

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) promoted Earl Glenn, Jr., P.E., to District Engineer for District 3, which covers the Delta region south through Vicksburg, Fayette and Hazelhurst. This role includes management of the district headquarters in Yazoo, including construction, maintenance and fiscal responsibilities.



Glenn

Glenn received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Mississippi State University in 1998 and began working with MDOT at the Newton project office that same year. In 2002, he began to work with the Whitfield project office before being transferred in 2008 to the Construction Division as an Area Engineer that covered District 2 in northwest Mississippi.

In 2012, Glenn became Assistant State Construction Engineer; and later, State Construction Engineer in 2016 before being

promoted to his current position.

"Earl comes into his new role with the skills and leadership ability to provide the excellence that we are accustomed to at MDOT," said Commissioner Willie Simmons, Central Transportation District. "The entire Mississippi Delta region is in good hands with Earl's dedicated leadership."

Originally from Macon, Glenn currently resides in Brandon with his wife, Montie, and son, Jalon. He and his family attend New St. Matthew Baptist Church in Flowood where Glenn serves as Deacon.

CLEVELAND-BOLIVAR CHAMBER WELCOMES SEAN JOHNSON AS DIRECTOR OF TOURISM



Johnson

The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce has hired a new Director of Tourism. Sean Johnson, a tourism industry professional with more than a decade of experience working with communities in north Mississippi, is slated to

take over the position later in September. In his previous capacity, Johnson developed multi-tiered advertising and marketing strategies for several organizations, contributing significantly to the growth of tourism tax revenues for north Mississippi cities.

Laura Howell, chair of the Tourism Commission at the Chamber of Commerce, said, "We are thrilled to have Sean in Cleveland and Bolivar County. With all of our recent growth and property developments, we feel confident that Sean's proven track record of success in developing assets for tourism will help us take our community to the next level."

STAPLCOTN CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY



Mike Sturdivant and Woods Eastland

Last week, cotton marketing corporation, Staplcotn, held a centennial celebration

at their headquarters in downtown Greenwood. Governor Tate Reeves, Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann, Secretary of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson along with Congressman Trent Kelly were among speakers at the event.

Delta Council Past President and retired Staplcotn CEO Woods Eastland opened the event, followed by comments from board chairman Mike Sturdivant. "Staplcotn has not only survived, but has excelled throughout its history," said Sturdivant. "and it is poised to do so for the next 100 years."

With more than a billion dollars in revenues, Staplcotn serves 11 states, and markets 2.5 million-3.5 million bales annually

FAIRLEY ANNOUNCED AS REGIONAL APPOINTMENTS FOR USDA AND SBA



Fairley

President Joe

Biden announced his intent to appoint individuals to serve in key regional roles at the United States Department of Agriculture and the Small Business Administration. Among those announced is Thaddeus Fairley,

Mississippi's State Executive Director for Farm Service Agency.

Thaddeus Fairley Sr. is a non-profit professional from Sunflower, MS, presently residing in Indianola. He currently serves as a Field Representative for Congressman Bennie G. Thompson, current chair of the Committee on Homeland Security. During his time with the Congressman, he has served as an expert on broadband initiatives and constituent services, including issues from farmers. Prior to joining the Congressman's office, Fairley worked in the banking industry for over seven years, building relationships between the financial institutions and communities and teaching financial literacy. He is a graduate of Mississippi Valley State University and Louisiana State University at Shreveport. He and his wife, Felicia, have two sons Thad Jr. (5) and Joshua (3).

SNYDER IS NAMED EPA AG ADVISER



Snyder

Ron Snyder, with a background in traditional and sustainable agriculture, will serve as the EPA's agriculture adviser, announced administrator Michael Regan. Snyder said he would pursue "practical, science-based solutions that protect the environment and ensure a vibrant and productive agricultural system."

Before joining the EPA, Snyder was president of Field to Market, an alliance that promotes

sustainability on commodity crop farms. He has also worked for the National Corn Growers Association and CropLife America, a pesticide trade group. In 2015, he was a co-founder of the Sustainable Agriculture Summit, now the largest annual sustainable agriculture conference in North America.

Farm groups applauded the appointment. Jen Sorenson, president of the National Pork Producers Council, said Snyder was a familiar figure, and she commended "his decades-long dedication to protecting the environment and the livelihoods of America's farmers."

WICKER, HYDE-SMITH SPONSOR NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION & REFORM ACT

Comprehensive Legislation Includes Proposals Championed by Miss. Senators



Hyde-Smith

U.S. Senators Roger Wicker and Cindy Hyde-Smith

helped reintroduce legislation to implement a long-term reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and ensure more affordable premiums for policyholders in Mississippi and around the country.

The National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization and Reform (NFIP-RE) Act (S.3128) is a bipartisan, bicameral effort to extend NFIP for five years through

Sept. 30, 2026, and authorize reforms to assist policyholders and ensure the long-term success of the program.

"The NFIP is a lifeline for many Mississippi communities that remain at risk of flooding," Wicker said. "After an active season of floods, it is clear that the NFIP not only needs to be reauthorized, but also that it needs to be reformed to make it work better for taxpayers and policyholders alike."

"Flooding poses a consistent threat throughout Mississippi and fundamental problems within the National Flood Insurance Program causes unneeded economic and emotional trauma for thousands of families," said Hyde-Smith. "It's time we get serious about fixing what's wrong with the program, while implementing reforms that will benefit taxpayers and policyholders over the long term."

The NFIP RE Act would tackle systemic problems within the NFIP, move the program toward solvency, and invest more on cost-effective prevention and mitigation projects in order to spare the high cost of rebuilding after flood disasters.



Wicker

DELTA ON THE MOVE | PJ WALDROP DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

In 2001, I started my freshman year at Delta State University. That day changed my life forever as I began to see the world as a Deltan. The capstone of my time at Delta State was serving as the 2005 Delta State Congressional Fellow, which allowed me to spend a semester in **Senator Thad Cochran's** Washington, D.C., office. The magnitude of the Delta's historic and economic value to both the state and the nation was among the things I learned through this experience. It also ignited a strong desire to continue to work with the Mississippi Congressional Delegation, particularly with the agriculture and natural resources communities. I returned to Washington after graduating from Delta State, working first as a staffer for then-**Chairman Saxby Chambliss** on the Senate Agriculture Committee and later as **Senator Thad Cochran's** Agriculture Legislative Assistant. These opportunities provided me with outlets to continue to serve the Delta, as well as to learn how to effectively advance legislation.

CURRENT TITLE & RESPONSIBILITIES:

In June of 2021, **Governor Tate Reeves** created the Governor's Office of Military Affairs. He saw the need for an office, housed within the Mississippi Development Authority, that would concentrate on military and defense interests in the state. Mississippi has a major stake in our national



defense, and he saw a need for an office that would support the communities in our state that host military installations, the installations themselves, and the ever increasing defense economy. My role is broadly defined by those identified needs. Although every day is different, I spend a lot of time working with various educational, economic development, and defense-focused entities to problem solve and support projects.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR POSITION?

Mississippi has unique and important assets, and Mississippians take pride in our treasures. Our Governor has a great perspective and vision about the importance of our military to both the state and the nation, and he values those partnerships. I love to spend my days working to advance our state's interests; champion and expand our defense, cyber, and space economies; and working with communities as they seek to better the quality of life for those serving in the military.

MEMBER FOCUS | BILL LONG AGRONOMIC SOLUTION ADVISOR

BUSINESS OR OCCUPATION:

Bill Long is an Agronomic Solution Advisor for BASF in Greenwood. He graduated from Mississippi State University in 1981 with a Bachelor's in Accounting and went to work for Webb Chemical upon graduating. After several decades of working for agriculture companies such as Griffin, and Dupont, he joined BASF 3 years ago.

HOMETOWN:

Bill is originally from Webb, MS but currently resides in Greenwood. He spent his summers on the family farm at Booga Bottom, outside of Duncan, MS where his interest in agriculture began to take off. He has two children, **Ally** (23), a graduate student at Mississippi State University and **Harris** (20) a junior at Mississippi State University.

AFFILIATIONS:

Over the years, **Bill** has been very involved in his community and state. He currently serves as Secretary/Treasurer of the Mississippi Agriculture Industry Council and was President in 1996. He has served as a board member for the Bureau of Plant Industry Advisory Board, former member and Chairman of Mississippi Certified Crop Advisors board in 2001 and 2002, and former board



member and Past President of Mississippi State Alumni Association.

He is also active in the local Boy Scouts as district commissioner and eagle project coordinator for troop 4200.

WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT BILL?

"**Bill Long** is one of the friends, coworkers and volunteers that all of us wish we could have on our team and that we try to emulate," said **Floyd Melton** of Greenwood. "He cares about everyone he meets and will help in all ways possible. He wants everyone to achieve their most successful dreams and he is willing to help them get there if they are willing to do the work too. **Bill** and I have worked through Boy Scouts and Pillow Academy Sports for years and I have seen him make a critical difference in hundreds if not thousands of young people's lives. He helps these young people, and many adults, succeed by giving them the knowledge, support, and encouragement when they needed it."

DELTA WILDLIFE FERAL SWINE ERADICATION PROJECT ROUND II OPENS DEC 1

Delta Wildlife, along with state partners The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, and Mississippi State University, are pleased to announce the sign up and application period for the Mississippi Delta Feral Swine Abatement Expansion Project will be available online beginning Wednesday December 1, 2021, at 3pm CST.

This project is implemented jointly by NRCS and USDA's Animal and Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS). Total funding for the program is \$75 million over the life of the 2018 Farm Bill.

Collaboration in the pilot area will provide outreach, training opportunities, trap distribution and management, monitoring and evaluation. Activities will also allow efforts to focus on their eradication and control of feral swine by educating landowners and providing tools/equipment that can be used after the project has ended.

The first round Mississippi pilot project runs from 2020 to 2023. Participating counties consist of Issaquena, Sharkey, Warren, and Yazoo. The second round known as the "Mississippi Delta Expansion Project" is slated to run from 2021-2024. Participating counties will consist of the original 4 counties plus Claiborne, Holmes, Humphreys, Jefferson, and Washington.

Combined, there will be 36 smart traps deployed across the nine counties that are managed by Delta Wildlife staff offering landowners the most effective means of whole sounder removal at no expense or effort to the landowner. Delta Wildlife staff is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the trap from start to finish. Delta Wildlife is enthusiastic to work with our state and federal partners to get this project going and expand the footprint of smart trapping that is currently taking place in the Mississippi Delta.

Private landowners seeking assistance will request services by visiting <https://www.deltawildlife.org/feralswine.html> to submit



an online application once the application period begins 12/1/21. Site Visits and Assessments will be completed by MSWCC on a first come first serve basis, then active management/trapping will be prioritized and scheduled using a damage assessment ranking tool by Delta Wildlife Staff.

HAVE YOU LOOKED TO SEE IF YOUR BUSINESS QUALIFIES FOR THE EMPLOYEE RETENTION TAX CREDIT?

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was signed to provide additional relief for individuals and businesses affected by the corona virus pandemic. An extension of benefits were made in the form of the employee retention credit which allows employers to claim credits for qualified wages paid to employees was extended to the end of 2021 and extended to include more employers. This provision contains detailed limitations and technical requirements that must be considered in order to determine if they apply to your situation. If you believe you qualify, we highly encourage you to reach out to your CPA for further guidance.

Several businesses and agri-businesses in the Delta have reported that they meet the eligibility requirement for this tax credit and were not aware of it. Delta Council CFO **Stewart Lamb** prepared a diagram and information for the Delta business community, but as always, please contact your CPA for further guidance. Please visit deltacouncil.org/ertc to view a diagram prepared by our office.

GINNING AND COTTON QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE AND SOUTHERN COTTON GINNERS HOST JOINT MEETING IN STONEVILLE



The Ginning and Cotton Quality Improvement Committee of Delta Council and Southern Cotton GINNERS hosted a joint meeting at the B.F. Smith Administration Building Auditorium in Stoneville. Washington County ginner and cotton producer **David Cochran, Jr.** opened the meeting, followed by USDA Cotton Ginning Laboratory Research Leader **Joe Thomas**, who gave an overview of the funding status and priorities for placement of positions at the Stoneville Lab. MS Department of Public Safety **Commissioner Sean Tindell** updated the group on changes in Mississippi Weight and Truck Enforcement. National Cotton Council Former Vice-President of Producer Affairs **Craig Brown** concluded the meeting with an update on the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol.



Commissioner Sean Tindell

DELTA COUNCIL OFFICERS AND PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTORS MEET IN STONEVILLE



Delta Council officers and presidential directors recently gathered in Stoneville to review administrative business and get an update on flood control priorities from Chief Engineer of the MS Levee Board **Peter Nimrod**.

THE FUTURE DELTA EVENT HELD AT STOVALL GIN



Pictured from left to right: **Patrick Johnson**, Delta Council President; **Mac Marshall**, guest speaker; **Wade Litton**, Delta Council Development Department Chairman; **Gary Dyksterhouse**, Producer.



Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works **Jaime Pinkham** visited with residents of the South Delta about the important of finishing the Yazoo Backwater Pump Project. Pictured from left to right are Major General **Diana Holland**; Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works **Jaime Pinkham**; Fidler resident **Anderson Jones**; farmer and resident of Onward **Victoria Darden**; Sharkey County Supervisor **Sam Matthews**; and Colonel **Robert Hilliard**, deputy commander of the MS Valley Division of the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The Future Delta event held at Stovall Gin, Stovall, Miss., on Oct. 1 was held in conjunction with the Mighty Roots Music Festival. The event was intended to recognize and gather future farm and allied business leaders in the 19-county region of the Delta that is served by the Delta Council and Delta F.A.R.M., an organization of Delta farmers advocating for resource management. **Mac Marshall**, economist and director of market intelligence for the U.S. Soybean Export Council and United Soybean Board, was the featured speaker.

Delta Council

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GENERAL SESSION AGENDA

THURSDAY | DECEMBER 2, 2021 | 11:00 AM

I. PRESIDENT'S OPENING

Patrick Johnson, President
Delta Council

II. INVOCATION

Reverend Jennifer Deaton
St. John's Episcopal Church
Leland, Mississippi

III. PATRIOTIC MUSIC

Rubenna Grifin
LINKS Associate
Delta Health Alliance

IV. RECOGNITION OF OFFICERS AND SPECIAL GUESTS

V. RESOLUTIONS

Paul Hollis, Chairman
Delta Council

VI. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Patrick Johnson, President
Delta Council

VII. MESSAGE FROM OUR SPONSOR, C SPIRE

Terrell Knight, Vice President
Government Wireless &
Economic Development

VIII. FEATURED GUEST

Fitzhugh Elder, IV, Minority Staff Director
Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
Arkansas Senator **John Boozman**

IX. ADJOURNMENT



MAKE WEEDS BEG FOR MERCY.
FOR 6-8 WEEKS.



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HERBICIDE