



The Delta Council Review

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THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF DELTA COUNCIL

November 2018

COMMITTEE MEETINGS, CONGRESSMAN KELLY ADDRESS TO PUNCTUATE DELTA COUNCIL AGENDA

Meeting Set for Monday, November 12, in Stoneville

Four committee meetings and a Keynote Address by U.S. Congressman **Trent Kelly** punctuate the Delta Council Mid-Year Board of Directors meeting on Monday, November 12, at the Charles W. Capps Entrepreneurial Center in Stoneville from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Farm Policy Committee and Soil and Water Resources Committee will meet in Capps Room A at 10 a.m. Concurrently, Highways & Transportation Committee and the Development Department will meet in Capps Room B at 10 a.m. Following those committee meetings, a General Session and lunch convenes, highlighted by Keynote Speaker **Congressman Trent**

Kelly of the 1st Congressional District in Mississippi.

"We are honored that Congressman **Kelly** will share his insights with us on the work of the Second Session of the 115th Congress and his outlook for the next Congress that will convene in January," said **Delta Council President Woods Eastland** of Indianola. "In just his third year as a Congressman and with a critical seat on the Committee on Agriculture in the House of Representatives, **Trent Kelly** has established himself as a real force in Washington. We look forward to his insights on the pending Farm Bill and appreciate the work he has done to make it as favorable as possible to Mississippi producers."

Kelly, a native of Union, graduated from East Central Community College and the University of Mississippi with



Congressman Kelly and Woods Eastland

both a bachelor's degree and juris doctorate. He eventually served as District Attorney before being elected to Congress in 2015. **Kelly** is currently serving as a Brigadier General with the Joint Force

MEETING *continued on page 8*

DELTA HERITAGE AREA, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SIGNS GREET TRAVELING PUBLIC

After several years of work, a major initiative for both the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area and Delta Council was achieved - 14 signs placed strategically into major entrances of the Mississippi Delta region welcoming people to the Heritage Area with the logo of both the Heritage Area and the National Park Service.

"These signs represent a significant achievement for our efforts to attract more visitors to the Delta," said **Bill Allen** of Belzoni, who serves as the Delta Council representative on the 15-member Heritage Area Governing Board. "We want to let people know that they are entering a special place in the fabric of the United States,



and having the National Park Service logo, which is the gold standard for the traveling public, recognizes the hard work the Heritage Area is doing to tell the story of the Delta."

Allen praised **Chairman Buck Clarke** of the Mississippi State Senate, **Transportations Commissioners Dick Hall** and

Mike Tagert, and the staff of the Mississippi Department of Transportation, for making sure the signs - constructed with funds from the Heritage Area - met approval and could be placed on highway right-of-way in strategic locations as people enter the Delta.

"This was a collaborative effort by a lot of people and we appreciate the assistance we received from **Buck Clarke** and the leadership of MDOT to make these attractive signs a reality," said **Delta Council Transportation Chairman Walton Gresham** of Indianola. "However, it simply would not

HERITAGE *continued on page 3*

MID-YEAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, November 12, 2018

Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center
Stoneville, MS

10:00 A.M. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Joint Committee Meeting
Farm Policy & Soil and Water Resources
Room A, Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center

Development Department: Delta Strong Update
Highways & Transportation

Room B, Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center

11:15 A.M. ADJOURN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

11:30 A.M. GENERAL BUSINESS SESSION

President's Remarks
Action on Resolutions

12:15 P.M. LUNCH

Message from Featured Speaker
Congressman Trent Kelly
House Committee on Agriculture
House Armed Services Committee
Chairman of the Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight
and Regulations for the House Small Business Committee

1:15 P.M. ADJOURN

The Delta Council Mid-Year Board of Directors Meeting is sponsored by C Spire



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY WOODS EASTLAND



Eastland

As we approach our 84th Midyear Directors Meeting of Delta Council, we are also concluding one of the larger agricultural harvests in recent years across most of the Delta. Although most reported per-acre yields of cotton, soybeans, rice, and catfish, are better than our average, due to several targeted areas in the Delta which received excessive rainfall at harvest time, quality discounts are prevalent in those areas.

Although there is a glimmer of hope that a 2018 Farm Bill could be part of a Lame Duck Congressional Session following the November 6, election, House and Senate Ag Committee leaders seem determined to wrap it up this year. In meetings with Committee staff and Mississippi Congressional leaders earlier this month, it was clear to us that they remain committed to enactment of a Farm Bill before the next session of Congress which begins in January.

Our Midyear Board meeting will be on Monday, November 12, in Stoneville, and we are looking forward to joint Committee meetings which will begin at 10:00 a.m. The joint Committee meeting of Farm Policy and Soil and Water Resources will be highlighted by **Gary Adams**, the President of the National Cotton Council and a respected ag economist. Gary will give a Washington report, as well as review the alternative paths forward under both

scenarios of a new Farm Bill versus a one-year extension of the existing 2014 farm legislation.

The U.S. Geological Survey and the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, will give comments about the most recent data captured by the USGS pertaining to the condition of our irrigation groundwater aquifer. The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Executive, **Gary Rikard**, will present his views on the importance of accurate and complete data being provided by permit holders at the point of initial permitting and permit renewals for groundwater use.

In addition to the most pressing agriculture issues of the joint meeting of Farm Policy and Soil and Water Resources Committees, a joint meeting of the Highways and Transportation Committee, and the Development Department of Delta Council will be held. Northern District Transportation Commissioner **Mike Tagert** will headline the Highways and Transportation Committee agenda with an overview of the content and impacts that should be expected relative to the recently-enacted transportation and infrastructure legislation which was adopted in the 2018 Special Legislative Session.

Don Davis, Director of the Federal Highway Administration for the State of Mississippi, will give a brief overview of the Federal role in setting standards and guidelines on weight restrictions for State and local bridges. The Federal Highway official will also comment on bridge inspection and rating requirements, and the Federal

agency's role in helping fund these repairs.

Willie Huff, Chief of Weight Enforcement, will give a report on bridge postings in the Northwest Mississippi region and future bridge weight ratings which might impact certain bridge postings in response to a 2018 MS legislative measure. For anyone who wishes to become more knowledgeable about the potential impacts of these recently-enacted highway measures, or concerns about the weight enforcement procedures, standards, and potential changes that could occur due to this legislation, I would urge you to try to be in attendance.

Hue Townsend, a banking leader from Humphreys County, will give a progress report on the Delta Strong project, a multi-year, privately-supported, regional initiative aimed at evidence-based approaches to workforce preparedness and training, and the recruitment and retention of commercial and industrial investments in the Delta Council region.

I strongly encourage any member, committee member, guest, or public official to **mark your calendar for November 12**, and join us for this meeting. As the lead story in this edition of the Delta Council News has pointed out, **Congressman Trent Kelly will offer the Keynote Address** during the noon luncheon. **Kelly** is a rising leader on the House Agriculture Committee, a Member of the House Armed Services Committee, and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Regulations for the House Small Business Committee.

GUEST COLUMN CROP PROTECTION PRODUCTS UNCERTAINTY

BY DON PARKER

Manager IPM

National Cotton Council of America



Parker

Before you get comfortable with the idea that you can manage your pest problems with currently available crop protection products, be aware you may not have access to those products in the future.

Or if you do have access to them in the future, those same products may come with new restrictions that reduce how you can use them going forward. The concern is not just that "new products are not in the pipeline," but that many products currently used may not get EPA approval for continued registration. For example, acephate (sometimes recognized by the trade name Orthene) has been a key component of many Tarnish Plant Bug management programs. But EPA currently is considering whether acephate will retain its registration. Based on the current risk assessment published by EPA, retaining the current use of acephate is not likely.

Presently, EPA's risk assessments have multiple new challenges, both for EPA and for re-registration and reviews. Four areas of

focus are dramatically altering product risk evaluations: 1) Legal consultation between EPA and both U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS) with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) for Endangered Species Act (ESA) requirements; 2) recent pollinator risk assessments resulting from public pressure due to pollinator decline; 3) developing science in the field of epidemiology; and 4) legal challenges against EPA by anti-pesticide advocates.

By law, EPA conducts a risk assessment to ensure human safety first (Food Quality Protection Act or FQPA), and then EPA must conduct risk assessments to ensure "no unreasonable harm or adverse effects" to the environment (Federal Insecticide Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act or FIFRA). This means that under FIFRA, EPA must consider costs and benefits of products. Pesticide Registration Improvement Act (PRIA) sets a reasonable timeline for EPA to complete these risk assessments for product registration. However, if the EPA risk assessment indicates the product "may affect" an endangered species, then the ESA mandates that EPA complete a consultation with the FWS and NMFS. However, FWS and NMFS do not consider risks and benefits, nor are they confined to

consider verifiable scientific data. With a relatively small staff compared to EPA, FWS and NMFS are required to produce a biological opinion that in essence says, "save the species."

The consultation process is broken. It has not worked since the beginning of ESA, but environmental groups oppose any attempt to revise the ESA. The problem involves legal conflicts between ESA and FIFRA risk assessment processes, and although the agencies have been attempting to find a solution for years, no solution is in sight. That leaves EPA in a dilemma: either complete registration reviews while working on ESA compliance, likely resulting in a lawsuit or impose buffer restrictions in counties with endangered species that are great enough to support a conclusion of "no affect" to endangered species. For crop protection users, that means there will be large portions of fields where a product cannot be used.

The public outcry for greater pollinator protection resulted in EPA implementing a new multi-tier pollinator risk assessment, a costly and lengthy set of studies defined by EPA that registrants are required to complete. The risk assessment essentially requires caging

GUEST continued on page 3

UNITED SOYBEAN BOARD EXPORT COUNCIL CHAIRMAN, HAIGWOOD SPEAKS AT FUTURE DELTA EVENT



Delta Council recently served as host for the 7th annual Future Delta event held under the "I Give A Crop" tent at the Mighty Mississippi Music Festival at Warfield Point Park near Greenville. This event is held each year to recognize and gather the Delta's future leaders who are involved in farming and allied agricultural business in our 18-county region.

Delta Council invited the Chairman

of the Board of the United Soybean Export Council, **Derek Haigwood**, to speak at the event concerning the current situation and outlook for how new trading paradigms will affect U.S. production agriculture, and specifically the Mid-South and Mississippi. **Haigwood** also represents Arkansas as a director on the United Soybean Board (USB). From Newport, Arkansas, he is a partner in a family farm that produces



Derek Haigwood

soybeans, rice, corn, grain sorghum and wheat.

"With offices located in key market areas around the world, the United States Soybean Export Council works to create, maintain and expand international markets for US soybeans. This has been a critical and trying time for that organization, and we appreciate **Derek** taking the time out of his schedule to share with us the work they are doing to ensure that we can continue to enjoy healthy and sustaining markets for our largest commodity in the Mississippi Delta," said **Woods Eastland**, **Delta Council President**.

SENATORS PRESS COMMERCE DEPT. TO ENFORCE ANTIDUMPING LAWS TO ENSURE LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR U.S. CATFISH

Lawmakers Protest International Trade Administration Deferential Treatment of Vietnamese Exporter

Eight U.S. Senators, led by **Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith** called on **Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross** to implement U.S. antidumping laws strongly and impartially to ensure U.S. catfish producers are competing on a level playing field.

Hyde-Smith, along with **Senators Richard Shelby, Roger Wicker, John Boozman, Bill Cassidy, Tom Cotton, John Kennedy, and Doug Jones** are raising serious concerns over recent deferential actions by International Trade Administration (ITA) toward a Vietnamese catfish exporter, which could affect the critical process to determine whether Vietnam continues to violate U.S. antidumping laws.

"We are troubled by this series of events, as in recent years Commerce has consistently found significant dumping by Vietnamese fish fillet exporters, and has determined repeatedly that many exporters have been uncooperative in responding to the Department's questionnaires. The decision by Commerce to consent to a Vietnamese Embassy official's request to allow uncooperative Vietnamese parties to impede your Department's proceeding with further delays will have a catastrophic effect on the domestic industry. Our catfish farmers rely on strong enforcement of U.S. antidumping laws to ensure they can compete on a level playing field," the Senators wrote.

"Vietnamese respondents or any other parties that fail to comply with requests for timely and accurate information do not deserve more favorable treatment than U.S. catfish producers. We hope your Department will remain committed to strong implementation



of U.S. antidumping laws, and that procedural rules will be applied to all parties in an impartial manner," the letter concludes.

The ITA, a Commerce Department agency, in recent months has deviated from standard practices to grant the Hung Vuong Group (HVG), a leading Vietnamese exporter, extensions to provide evidence of its compliance with U.S. antidumping laws. The agency actions contradicted its own earlier actions to reject incomplete HVG data and to apply standard dumping margins to HVG products.

Since 2003, ITA has found that frozen fish fillets from Vietnam have been sold in the United States at less than fair market value, resulting in economic damage to U.S. catfish producers.

FSIS inspections in FY2017 and FY2018 resulted in more than six million pounds of catfish being rejected for not meeting U.S. food safety standards. As the FSIS has worked to fully implement the inspection program, the number of eligible exporters has dropped from more than 90 in 2017 to 27 in 2018.

The letter to **Ross** is available at www.hydesmith.senate.gov/content/senators-press-commerce-dept-enforce-antidumping-laws-ensure-level-playing-field-us-catfish

DELTA STRONG UPDATE

Delta Strong staff has conducted over fifty-five meetings with companies throughout the United States and Canada, from Toronto and Winnipeg to the central U.S. and California. Most recently, two recruiting visits were completed this fall, with two more in November and December pending.

"We are taking the Delta Strong message and our advantages to manufacturing prospects that include Metal Fabrication, Food Processing, Plastics,



Distribution, Aviation, Pharmaceuticals and Electronics," said **Tom Gresham**, Chairman of the Delta Council Development Department.

Because of the dedication to the Delta Strong process, the region has

received multiple company visits, which included tours of buildings and land sites and additional local meetings. Three of the five companies have revisited as they continue to evaluate whether to locate in the Delta. Between trips, communities and leaders are diligently working to enhance the Delta Strong message and competitiveness. Three projects are currently underway, and we are looking forward to several announcements very soon.

GUEST from page 2

bee colonies in a treated crop and forcing them to feed only from the treated crop while documenting the health of adults and immatures. It forces exposure and does not account for dilution effects from feeding on other plants, nor does it account for unattractiveness of crops that bees may normally avoid. However, the lawsuit against EPA in the registration of sulfoxaflo has greatly affected EPA's pollinator risk assessment sensitivity. In that lawsuit, the 9th District Court vacated the registration of sulfoxaflo and remanded the registration review back to EPA. Now, pyrethroids, organophosphates, and many other products must pass the new pollinator risk assessments during their mandated

re-registration reviews.

When I googled Epidemiology, I found the following definition from the Center of Disease Control: "Epidemiology is the study of diseases in populations of humans or other animals, specifically how, when and where they occur. ... Epidemiological evidence can only show that this risk factor is associated (correlated) with a higher incidence of disease in the population exposed to that risk factor." In the case of pesticides, new studies are emerging suggesting correlations between pesticides and human health conditions. One example is related to organophosphate (OP) products. Although the data does not reflect 40 years of studies required by EPA under Good Laboratory Practices (GLP), EPA has given high weight

to epidemiological studies and has included new "Safety Factors" which essentially increase the risk by multiple fold (in some instances, 1000-fold) thus causing the risk assessment to suggest human health concerns. The use of these studies is like the precautionary approach used by the European Union rather than the science driven approach of FIFRA. Epidemiological studies do not prove a risk. However, EPA is utilizing the studies to intensify risk assessments.

These factors, paraphrased above, raise great concern about the ability to retain usable registration of crop protection products. It appears at best, we should anticipate losses of some uses and greater buffer restrictions, especially in counties designated to have endangered species.

HERITAGE from page 1

have happened without the perseverance and persistence of **Bill Allen** and we appreciate his leadership, not only on ensuring this initiative was realized, but his efforts on representing Delta Council on the Heritage Area Board.

Other members of the Heritage Area Board who served with **Allen** on the Sign Committee included **Spencer Nash** of the Delta Foundation, **Myrtil Tabb**, Chair of the Heritage Area, **Bo Pentecost** of Solve Design Studio, **Bill Justice** of the National Park Service,

and Heritage Area Director for the Delta Center for Culture and Learning, **Dr. Orlando Herts**.

The signs have been a major project for the Heritage Area since its approval, which began in 2007 and was fully recognized by the National Park Service in 2011. **Allen** credited the late **Ken Murphree** of Tunica, the first Chair of the Heritage Area, for seeing the need to fully tell the Delta's story in a way that brings more visitors -and dollars - to the region.

For more information about the Heritage Area, please visit <http://www.ms-deltaheritage.com>.

MDWFP AND DELTA WATERFOWL INTRODUCE PRIVATE LAND WETLAND INCENTIVE PROGRAM



The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, (MDWFP) and Delta Waterfowl are pleased to announce a pilot program to promote wetland habitat on private lands near selected Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the Mississippi Delta. This program will assist private landowners by offering incentive payments to flood wetland habitat for migrating waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife. The goals of this program are to provide additional wetland acres in close proximity to WMAs with wetland management during times when this habitat is typically very limited; to increase the overall attractiveness for waterfowl in the surrounding landscape around selected WMAs; and to raise awareness among private landowners about the importance of flooded habitats for priority wildlife species.

Priority areas for this incentive program will be private lands within five miles of the following WMAs: Howard Miller, Lake George, Mahannah, Sunflower, and Twin Oaks. Eligible habitats will include existing agricultural fields that have not been tilled following harvest, as well as managed moist-soil wetlands with natural vegetation (non-cropland).

For more information contact **Houston Havens** at **662-299-0273**, houstonh@mdwfp.state.ms.us, **Darrin Hardesty** at **662-588-2596**, darrinh@mdwfp.state.ms.us, or **Alec Conrad** at **662-588-6648**, alecc@mdwfp.state.ms.us

SOLAR FACILITY COMING TO THE DELTA

UK-based renewables developer Renewable Energy Systems Ltd (RES) has signed a power purchase agreement (PPA) for a 100-MW solar project that it will design, develop and build in Carroll County, Mississippi.

The deal is with Cooperative Energy, which will purchase all the

electricity generated at the solar power plant. The project, which will use around 363,000 panels, is called Delta's Edge and is located near Greenwood in Carroll County. It is expected to start operations in 2021-2022 and to produce enough power to meet the needs of almost 16,400 homes a year.

According to Cooperative Energy's President and Chief Executive **Jim Compton**, Delta's Edge will be the largest solar power plant in Mississippi. Cooperative Energy supplies electricity to 11 member-owned electric distribution cooperatives.

David O'Bryan, General Manager of Delta Electric Power Association said, "Our member-consumers along with the other 10 member systems of Cooperative Energy will benefit for many years from the renewable energy generated by this large solar facility. We are further pleased to bring economic benefits to the Greenwood area with the creation of about 350 temporary construction jobs over the 10 month construction period along with 3-4 permanent jobs and the associated property tax benefits."

DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE RECEIVES \$150,000 GRANT FROM THE PHIL HARDIN FOUNDATION



Delta Health Alliance has been awarded a \$150,000 grant from the **Phil Hardin Foundation** to implement programs in the Ruleville elementary school to ensure incoming students are academically ready for kindergarten and to provide third grade students with the support they need to pass the third grade reading test for the 2019-2020 school year.

The **Phil Hardin grant** will support a kindergarten entry "boot camp", called Promise School, where students learn skills that they will be assessed on, as well as skills to enable them to learn successfully in a classroom setting. The grant will also fund a group of special classroom teachers, called "Literacy Fellows," to work directly with third grade students to help improve their reading skills.

According to **Lloyd Gray**, Phil Hardin Foundation Executive Director, "Research shows children who are not entering kindergarten ready

to learn and who are not reading at grade level in third grade are on a trajectory towards poor educational outcomes, with lifetime social and economic consequences. The Phil Hardin Foundation is committed to making sure all students have the resources they need to succeed in school. DHA has a successful track record with these programs in Indianola and we are pleased to expand them to other students in the Sunflower County Consolidated School District. It is our hope that these programs together can serve as a model that eventually will be further expanded to other districts around the state."



GOV. BRYANT APPOINTS MS LOTTERY CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Gov. Phil Bryant appointed five members to the Mississippi Lottery Corporation Board of Directors. The members include **Dr. Cass Pennington**, **Philip A. Chamblee**, **Dr. Mike McGrevey**, **Kimberly LaRosa**, and **Gerard Gibert**.

The Mississippi Lottery Corporation was created during the Mississippi Legislature 2018 First Extraordinary Session upon passage of Senate Bill 2001. The affairs of the Corporation shall be administered by the Mississippi Lottery Corporation Board of Directors composed of five members appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Mississippi Senate.

Among the appointees is Delta Council past president **Dr. Cass Pennington** of Indianola. **Dr. Pennington** is a retired educator and former superintendent of both the Indianola and West Tallahatchie School Districts.

Dr. Pennington served as Executive Director of Delta Health Alliance from 2004 to 2008 and currently sits on its board. He's a former member of the Mississippi Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning, the Mississippi Instructional Management Task Force, and the South Sunflower County Hospital. Additionally, he served on the Mississippi State Health Board and as Administrative Assistant to the President at Delta State University.

"**Cass** has always served when asked to work for his home town, Indianola, the Delta, and the state. Because of the breath of his career experience, he is called upon often for guidance and insight. His bio clearly shows that in all his endeavors, others have recognized his ability and moved him to the top. He is a man of deep character, and ability," commented **Delta Council President, Woods Eastland** of Indianola.

TUNICA CO. CHAMBER EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT ARNOLD RETIRES; FINKLEY TO TAKE HELM

The Tunica County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has selected **Charles L. Finkley, Jr.** to serve as the new Executive Vice President of the Chamber, as former director **Lyn Arnold** has retired. After 18 years of service, **Lyn** was recently honored for her work with a plaque presented by the County Board of Supervisors at her retirement party.

Before stepping into the position of Executive Vice President, **Finkley** served as the Director of the Office of Planning and Development for Tunica County. "After a rigorous search, the Board selected **Mr. Finkley** based on his extensive background in the private and public sector," said Chamber Board Chairman, **Monty Wiggins**. "His experience as a municipal planner in both large and small cities, combined with this work here in Tunica County, will be a great asset as he leads our community's future economic development efforts."

Finkley has a Bachelor of Science in Urban/Regional Planning and is currently completing requirements for a Master's Degree in Public Administration.



Finkley

A native of Mobile, AL, **Finkley** has previously served in planning positions in Mobile and Memphis. He currently resides in North Tunica County.

Recently recognized as the inaugural Emerging Planner Award winner by the MS chapter of the American Planning Association, **Finkley** has demonstrated skills and all qualities needed in the economic development profession.

"I can't say enough about the strong leadership that **Lyn** has shown in her time at the Chamber, and we're confident that **Charles** will continue to build on that foundation. His energy and commitment to Tunica and the Delta will be great assets for our area in the future," said **Patrick Johnson**, Chairman of the Delta Council Farm Policy Committee from Tunica County.

STAPLCOTN'S ALLEN RETIRES; REICHLER TO SERVE AS PRESIDENT & CEO

After 33 years of service to the company and 8 years of serving as president and CEO, **Meredith B. Allen** has retired from Staple Cotton Cooperative Association (Staplcotn) and Staple Cotton Discount Corporation (Stapldiscount).

Allen joined Staplcotn's marketing team in 1985 and was promoted to vice president of marketing a year later. In 2008, he became Staplcotn's Executive Vice President and assumed his current position, replacing **Woods Eastland**, in 2010. **Allen** is a former president and former Chairman of Cotton Council International and former board member and Chairman of the Memphis Branch Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. He is a director and former Vice President of the National Cotton Council and a director of Delta Council. **Allen** served on the boards of The Seam and the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Agribusiness Industry Council, as well as on the Cotton Committees of both the National Council of Textile Organizations and the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE). He also served on the board of AMCOT, a trade associa-



Allen



Reichler

tion made up of the four major U.S. cotton cooperatives.

Selected by the Board to take over the position of President and CEO is **Hank Reichle** of Greenwood, Mississippi, formerly Executive Vice President of Staplcoth and Stapldiscout. In 2001, **Reichle** entered the cotton industry when he accepted the position of corporate controller with The Seam, and was soon promoted to CFO. **Reichle** joined Staplcoth in 2004, and in 2005 assumed the position of Senior Director of Export Sales. He was promoted to Vice President of Export Sales and Market Administration in 2010 and to Vice President of Marketing in 2014. He was named Executive Vice President in 2016.

Reichle serves as First Vice President of Cotton Council International and on the boards of the National Cotton Council and The Seam. He was recently elected as an AMCOT Director and named to the Agribusiness Industry Council of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

"Staplcoth and Stapldiscout are very fortunate to have had a CEO of such competence as **Meredith**, and to be able to promote from within someone as competent as **Hank**. The story clearly describes the respect for their ability and character which others hold, elevating them to leadership positions in varied fields. But the story for Staplcoth is greater than that. The driver of Staplcoth's success is the ability of the CEO and the CEO's top one or two advisors to analyze the Cotton market and make hedging decisions that generate prices that are satisfactory to the members. It takes a particular mental ability to do this well. I am not saying one has to be a genius because you don't. It is just a certain talent. **Meredith** possesses it, and **Hank** does too. Thus their transition should be seamless," said **Woods Eastland**,

USDA/NRCS INVESTS TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY IN MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) /Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will invest in five high-priority watersheds across the Mississippi River Basin that will help improve water quality and strengthen agricultural operations. This investment is part of a commitment since 2009 to address critical water quality concerns in priority watersheds while boosting rural economies.

The specific projects targeted in Mississippi for FY 2019 are the Christmas/Stillwater in Bolivar and Washington Counties, Long Lake

in Sunflower and Bolivar Counties, Brook/Tommie Bayou in Bolivar County, Burrell Bayou in Sunflower County, and Beaver Bayou-Mound Bayou in Bolivar and Sunflower Counties.

These projects are funded through the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watershed Initiative (MRBI), which uses several Farm Bill conservation programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). They help farmers adopt conservation systems to improve water quality, enhance wildlife and restore wetlands. In addition, they have shown to reduce loss of nutrients and sediment to waters that eventually flow into the Gulf of Mexico.

MRBI is one of many landscape-level efforts to address water quality. Financial assistance is available to qualified Mississippi landowners wanting to address specific resource concerns in these watersheds. Applications must be received by November 16, 2018, to be eligible for the first sign-up.

To qualify for EQIP, an applicant must be an individual, entity or joint operation that meets eligibility criteria. Applications for all NRCS financial-assistance programs are accepted on a continuous sign-up process; however specific sign-up deadlines are established to rank, contract and fund qualified tracts of land. The deadline to sign up to be considered for funding in the MRBI first ranking period of FY 2019 is November 16, 2018.

Interested landowners are encouraged to contact their local USDA service center.

CWD UPDATES: SECOND MISSISSIPPI WHITE-TAILED DEER SUSPECTED OF DISEASE



Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has become a national problem affecting deer herds from Michigan to Mississippi and beyond. On October 8, 2018 in Pontotoc County, a 1.5-year-old male white-tailed deer collected tested positive for CWD. This is the second animal in Mississippi testing positive for the disease. A sample will be shipped to the National Veterinary Sciences Laboratory in Iowa for an additional, definitive test.

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDW-

FP) will await final results before implementing the agency's CWD Response Plan. Mississippi deer hunters are being called upon to help document their harvest for CWD this season. The MDWFP adopted regulations for revised CWD Management Zone for the 2018-2019 hunting season. These regulations were approved at the August 16 meeting.

New zones have been established in the Delta and include portions of Issaquena and Sharkey County. The zone is identified as all areas south of Highway 14 and 16, areas west of the Yazoo River, all portions of Warren County and all areas east of the Mississippi River. There will be CWD Management Zone Sample Days on Saturday November 17, Friday November 23, Saturday-Sunday, December 29 and 30, and January 5-6. MDWFP staff will run the check stations at the Onward Store and at the junction of Highways 465 and 61 (boat ramp). Samples will be taken from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The MDWFP will establish collection sites with freezers for the general public to deposit deer heads for testing.

The North Region will have sampling drop off points at the North Region Office in Enid, the Charlie Capps WMA in Rosedale and the Malmaison WMA in Holcomb.

The supplemental feeding ban and permitted hog trapping has been lifted for Yazoo County. But within the revised zone, the ban is still in effect for supplemental feeding and hog trapping and only permitted through the MDWFP. In addition, no deer carcasses can be transported out of the zone.

For more information regarding CWD in Mississippi, visit www.mdwfp.com/cwd or call at (601) 432-2199.

SECRETARY ZINKE APPLAUDS PRESIDENT TRUMP'S NOMINATION OF SKIPWITH TO BE DIRECTOR OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

President Donald J. Trump announced his intent to nominate **Aurelia Skipwith** to be the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. **U.S. Sec. Skipwith** of the **Interior Ryan Zinke** applauds the nomination. **Skipwith** currently serves as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks in the Department of the Interior, the team responsible for ensuring the protection and stewardship of lands and waters within the national park and wildlife refuge systems. Previously, she served as Assistant Corporate Counsel at Alltech, Inc. **Skip-**



with earned her B.S. in biology from Howard University, M.A. in molecular genetics from Purdue University, and J.D. from the University of Kentucky College of Law. **Skipwith** is the first African American, and third woman, to ever be nominated to the position.

"For the past year and a half while she served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary, I've come to know **Aurelia Skipwith** as a professional, a scientist and passionate conservationist, and I know she will be an incredible Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service," said **Secretary Zinke**. "She has helped lead some of my top priorities for getting more people to enjoy our public lands, like expanding access for hunting and fishing, recognizing Urban National Wildlife Refuges, and designating sites on the African American Civil Rights Network. I look forward to her speedy confirmation."

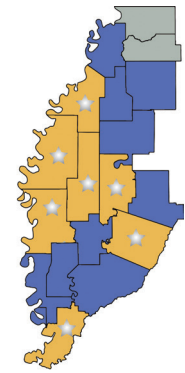
"I am deeply honored that **President Trump** has considered me for the role of Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service," said **Aurelia Skipwith**. "During the past 18 months as Deputy Assistant Secretary, I have had the distinction to work with dedicated people of the Service to ensure the implementation of this Administration's and **Secretary Zinke's** policies to protect our species, increase public access, and ensure science is at the forefront of our decisions. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to lead the Service in achieving a conservation legacy second only to **President Teddy Roosevelt**."

RIBBON CUTTING AND FAMILY GARDEN NIGHT AT LELAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FUNDED THROUGH DELTA EATS



Delta Health Alliance recently helped facilitate a Ribbon Cutting and Family Garden Night at Leland Elementary School in honor of their new school garden. The project is funded through Delta Eats, in conjunction with Food Corps and the Leland School District. The evening consisted of a U-Pick sweet potato harvest, 5th grade student performances, the celebratory ribbon-cutting, family games and activities and healthy, fun garden food. For more information, please visit delta-healthalliance.org.

DELTA IS WORKREADY



CERTIFIED ACT WORK READY COMMUNITY
IN PROGRESS
NOT CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING IN ACT WORK READY COMMUNITIES

The 18-county Delta Council area will soon be an ACT Work Ready Certified region. With 7 counties already certified, and 6 others approaching certification, workforce development forces are collaborating to enroll 4 rural counties in the ACT Work Ready program.

Currently, Bolivar, Coahoma, Holmes, Leflore, Sunflower, Warren, and Washington Counties are certified and working toward new "maintaining goals". Carroll, Humphreys, Issaquena, Panola, Sharkey, Tunica and Yazoo Counties are working toward certification at different paces. Representatives for Quitman and Tallahatchie Counties will be attending an ACT Boot Camp soon to confirm their participation in the program, with the Panola Partnership serving as their sponsor.

Delta Workforce Development Area has worked diligently to implement the ACT Work Ready Communities program and National Career Readiness Certification testing across the region and understand the value of the program to industrial recruitment and retention in the Delta. Recently, Delta Workforce Development Area served as host for a special session ACT Boot Camp for several of the non-participating counties to join the program and learn how it will be beneficial to their role in the Delta Strong effort and how to conduct testing in their counties.

The Delta currently has over 14,000 certified workers, with 55% of those scoring in the Silver category, which indicates the skills required for at least 69% of all profiled jobs, and the majority of industrial based jobs.

For more information about how to become a WorkReady Community or to take the ACT National Career Readiness Certification test in your community, please visit www.deltaworkready.com, or contact **Mary Catherine Davis** at mcDavis@delatocouncil.org or at 662-686-3377.

NEW PROGRAM FOR WRP LANDOWNERS

With significant support from USDA-NRCS and other partners, Delta Wildlife is proud to announce a new 3-year project to enhance Wetland Reserve Program lands in the Mississippi Delta. The program will focus on protecting the vegetation and hydrology restoration investment of the USDA-NRCS by better managing feral swine and enhancing habitat for migratory waterfowl.

WETLAND ENHANCEMENTS

Enhancing wetland and waterfowl habitat on WRP moist soil impoundments generally involves setting back vegetative communities to an early successional stage and adequately managing water. A wildlife biologist from Delta Wildlife will visit each site to assess current vegetative and hydrological conditions. Following the initial assessment, a wetland management plan will be developed for each hydrology unit prescribing management activities over the course of a three year schedule of operations. Wetland management

activities and subsequent incentives include: Early Successional Habitat Management – Disking - \$21.34/moist soil acre, Herbaceous Weed Control – Chemical - \$19.29/moist soil acre, and Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management – Impound Water - \$7.34/water acre.

The quantity and timing of management activities will depend on the site assessment and current vegetative community characteristics. However, a general assumption is that most units will require one disking, two herbicide applications, and retention of winter water during all three contract years. Compliance visits and scheduling of management activities will vary from property to property thus will be specifically highlighted in each individual contract.

FERAL SWINE

A similar process will be followed for WRP landowners with feral swine damage. An assessment will be completed and Delta Wildlife will provide

the landowner with a comprehensive feral swine management plan at no cost to the landowner. If needed, Delta Wildlife will coordinate and implement a feral swine monitoring plan. In cooperation with the landowners, Delta Wildlife may also assist in trapping feral swine.

HOW TO APPLY

WRP and WRE landowners in Mississippi NRCS Area 4 (Bolivar, Coahoma, Holmes, Humphreys, Leflore, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington, and Yazoo Counties) are eligible to participate.

Eligible landowners should visit www.deltawildlife.org and click on the “WRP Duck & Hog Project” button. The application may be filled out and submitted on line, which is the preferred method. Demand is expected to be high, so Delta Wildlife will process applications on a first come, first serve basis.

Once applications are received, Del-

ta Wildlife staff will coordinate with each landowner to perform an assessment for waterfowl habitat and/or feral swine damages, depending on the request. Each application will then be ranked to determine the level of technical or financial assistance that may be available for each tract. A management plan for wetland enhancements and/or feral swine management will then be provided to the applicant. Wetland management plans will include dates for practices to be completed by, compliance requirements, and payment schedules. The feral swine management plan will include best management practices tailored to the individual property.

PARTNERS

More than \$4 million dollars has been secured to implement this project with a majority coming from a grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services who administers the Wetland Reserve Program. Additional funding and support for this



PHOTO BY DEE MACHINISTEL, JR.

project comes from Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited, Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, and the Mississippi Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Additional support in excess of \$500,000 has also been pledged by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality through its National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund program. Delta Wildlife is grateful to the NRCS and all its partners and looks forward to working with WRP landowners in the region to attract more waterfowl and combat feral swine.

MEMBER FOCUS | SEAN WESSEL

BUSINESS OR OCCUPATION:

Sean currently serves as the President of Quality Steel Corporation (QSC), a \$120+ million privately held company headquartered in Cleveland, Mississippi that manufactures commercial-sized pressure vessels, primarily propane tanks, from facilities located in Mississippi, Ohio, and Utah. Before joining QSC, **Sean** served as Executive Vice President, Chief Accounting Officer and Controller for AmericanWest Bank, a \$4.5 billion financial institution located in Spokane, Washington. Prior to joining AmericanWest, **Sean** served as Chief Financial Officer for several financial institutions in Birmingham, Alabama. **Sean** is a CPA, with licenses in Mississippi and Alabama, and started

his career working in public accounting as an auditor for over 10 years in the Birmingham offices of both Ernst & Young and Arthur Andersen

HOMETOWN:

Sean grew up in Dothan, Alabama, graduating from Northview High School in 1989. From there, he attended the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting in 1993 and a Master of Business Administration degree with a concentration in Finance in 1995.

Sean resides in Cleveland and is married to the former **Susannah Tims**. Together they have three children: **Meredith** (17), **William** (15),

and **Patrick** (13). When not working, **Sean** enjoys travel, hiking in the North Carolina mountains, and spending time with his family.

AFFILIATIONS:

Sean is active in his community and is currently involved in the following organizations:

- Vice President, Cleveland Rotary Club
- Director, Regions Bank Board of Directors for North Mississippi
- Director, Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Foundation Board
- Member, Finance Committee – St. Luke United Methodist Church, Cleveland

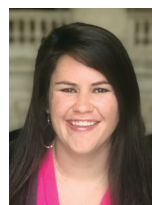


Wessel, far right, pictured with Meredith (17), William (15), Susannah (wife), Patrick (13)

“I asked **Sean** to serve as one of my Presidential Appointees to the Board of Delta Council this year and have enjoyed getting to know him,” said **Woods Eastland** President of Delta Council. “He is a tremendous asset to

Cleveland and the Delta, and it is impressive that someone like **Sean** who manages such a large business also has the time to give back to his community and region”

DELTAN ON THE MOVE | ANNE HALL BRASHIER



Brashier

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Anne Hall is a fourth-generation Deltan, born and raised in Indianola. She graduated from the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science

degree magna cum laude. Upon graduation, **Anne Hall** moved to Washington, D.C., to work fulltime for **U.S. Senator Thad Cochran**, moving up quickly from an internship to becoming one of his legislative policy advisors, focusing on military and economic de-

velopment. During her five years with **Senator Cochran**, **Anne Hall** played an instrumental role in many projects important to the Delta. **Anne Hall** has completed a Master's in Military Operational Art and Science from the Air University, as well as certificate programs at the Naval War College and Army War College. While her job requires her to spend time in Washington, she enjoys traveling back to the Delta as often as possible for weekends and during congressional recesses.

CURRENT JOB TITLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

In January 2018, **Anne Hall** joined the staff of **Congressman Trent Kelly**

of the First District of Mississippi as his military legislative assistant. She quickly proved valuable to the office and was promoted in May to serve as Congressman **Kelly's** legislative director. In this role, she serves as the congressman's lead legislative and policy advisor and legislative staff coordinator. These responsibilities are important to the Delta and North Mississippi as **Anne Hall** supports the congressman's work as a member of the House Agriculture Committee, the House Armed Services Committee, and the House Small Business Committee. It also gives her a key role in monitoring and recommending action on legislation

and policies moving through Congress or the administration which could affect Mississippi.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

“My favorite part about my job is the people. I enjoy working alongside Mississippians to develop ideas about how to improve our state and make them a reality. In my time working in Congress, I have had the honor of getting to know many excellent Mississippians who love our state deeply and work every day to make Mississippi better. Our state has long enjoyed the benefits of good representation in Washington, D.C., and I feel privileged to be able to

play a part in that,” said **Anne Hall**.

WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT HER?

“Since we are friends of **Anne Hall's** parents, we have watched her mature into a young lady of accomplishment. It has been a pleasure to observe this process unfold. Again, we learn a lot by observing how others evaluate her personality and abilities. Washington is a very competitive city, and her evaluators have continually moved her up the line in responsibility. These promotions are not gifts, but are earned. We are proud of her,” commented **Woods Eastland, Delta Council President** from Indianola.

GINNING & COTTON QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE/SOUTHERN COTTON GINNERS JOINT MEETING



Cotton producers, ginners and researchers from across the region gathered to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing them amongst harvest. Delta Council Ginning & Cotton Quality Improvement Committee Chairman **Haywood Wilson** presided over the meeting, welcoming **USDA-ARS Area Director Archie Tucker** to the podium to discuss the overview of funding status and priorities for placement of positions at the Stoneville Labs. **Lauren Krogman** (pictured left), Assistant Manager of Market and Processing Technology for the National Cotton Council addressed the room on proposed changes to cotton flow and contamination. **Workforce Director of the Capps Center, Todd Donald**, and **Workforce Development Area Director Mitzi Woods** reported updates on Gin Manager Training Programs, and **Willie Huff**, Director of Office of Enforcement at MDOT presented a Legislative synopsis of amendments to harvest permit tolerances as well as posted bridges.

DELTA STRONG BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING



Delta Strong regional leaders gathered at the Delta Council offices once again for an update on the industrial recruitment and marketing project. **USDA Rural Development Director John Rounsaville** addressed the crowd on many concerning issues in rural areas and how USDA is working to fund and resolve those issues locally and regionally.

DELTA COUNCIL GIVES WARM WELCOME TO NEW TEACH FOR AMERICA EDUCATORS



Stoneville and Delta leaders gave a warm welcome to over 50 Teach For America educators at the Delta Council offices. Amongst the meet and greet, Delta Council, DREC and USDA staff spoke to the group about what Stoneville is and many of the current projects the educators or students could get involved with.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI CHANCELLOR VITTER VISITS STONEVILLE



Dr. Jeff Vitter, University of Mississippi Chancellor, recently visited Stoneville to meet with Delta leaders in order to learn more about the challenges and opportunities the region faces and what our leaders are doing to meet them.

Delta Council

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RIBBON CUTTING AND COMPLETION OF I-269 CORRIDOR

Mississippi dedicated the completion of Interstate 269 in DeSoto County recently at the intersection of the highway with Getwell Road, about a mile east of Interstate 55.

Interstate 269 will serve as an “outer loop” for the Memphis area and connect Tunica and DeSoto County from U.S. 61 at Robinsonville with several major highways - Interstate 22 (formerly U.S. 78), U.S. 72, and terminating at Interstate 40 east of Memphis and north of Collier-ville.

“We appreciate the vigilance of **Commissioner Mike Tagert** and the entire Mississippi Department of Transportation team in ensuring this project got built in an expedited manner,” said **Delta Council Transportation Chairman Walton Gresham** of Indianola. “This is an important milestone in the Interstate 69 evolution and Delta Council and the Interstate 69 Coalition pledges to work



with the state transportation departments and civic leadership across the entirety of the corridor from Indiana to Texas to make the entire mid-continent transportation corridor a reality.”

The completion of the project will continue to bolster the economic development efforts in Northwest Mississippi.

“We have already seen an increase

in commercial, industrial, warehouse, and housing developments in DeSoto County and the entire region leading up to this completion, and those efforts will only accelerate,” said **DeSoto County Supervisor Lee Caldwell**, who also sits on the Interstate 69 Coalition Board of Directors.

MEETING *from page 1*

Headquarters for the state of Mississippi as a member of the Army National Guard, serving in the Mississippi National Guard. In 1990, he mobilized for Desert Storm as a combat engineer Second Lieutenant. In 2005, **Kelly** deployed as a Major during the Iraq War with the 155th Brigade as the Operations Officer of the 150th Engineer Battalion. From 2009 to 2010, he deployed as a Lieutenant Colonel to Iraq as the Battalion Commander of Task Force Knight of the 155th Brigade Combat Team and commanded over 670 troops from Mississippi, Ohio, and Kentucky. **Kelly** has received two Bronze Stars, the Combat Action Badge, the DeFleury Medal, and numerous other Federal and State awards for his service.

“November 12 is the observation date for Veteran’s Day, and it is most fitting that someone of Congressman **Kelly’s** military experience join our board members and guests as we commemorate those who have served our Nation,” added **Eastland**.

In the Farm Policy and Soil and Water

Resources joint session, **Gary Adams** of the National Cotton Council (farm policy), **Gary Rikard** of the MS Department of Environmental Quality (groundwater permits), **Jeannie Barlow** of the U.S. Geological Survey (groundwater data), and **J.R. Rigby** of USDA-Agricultural Research Service (groundwater injection pilot project) will headline that meeting.

In the Transportation and Development joint session, Northern District Transportation Commissioner **Mike Tagert** (2018 Special Session of the Legislature), U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Highway Administration Division Administrator **Don Davis** (role of Federal Highway Administration), **Chief Willie Huff** of the MS Department of Transportation’s Office of Enforcement (harvest permits, bridges, and weight enforcement standards), and Delta Strong leader and Belzoni banker **Hue Townsend** (Delta Strong update) will headline that meeting.

For more information please visit the Delta Council website — www.deltacouncil.org — for complete agendas on the morning’s activities.

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