



# The Delta Council Review

Vol. 15, Issue No. 1

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF DELTA COUNCIL

April 2021

## MILWAUKEE TOOL BRINGS 800 NEW JOBS TO GRENADA COUNTY



Milwaukee Tool is expanding in the Delta by constructing a manufacturing facility in Grenada County. The company will invest \$60 million in advanced technology and manufacturing equipment to support the new accessories facility. Milwaukee Tool is also committed to creating 400 more jobs to be added to the existing Mississippi locations in Greenwood, Jackson, Olive Branch, or at

the new Grenada location for a total growth of 1,200 new jobs.

Milwaukee Tool, headquartered in Brookfield, Wisconsin, has grown its employee headcount in Mississippi from 526 in 2010 to more than 2,343 in 2020. The company last expanded in Mississippi in February 2020, adding a new distribution center in Olive Branch and also recently delivered on its 2017 commitment to create 660 jobs over four years at its Mississippi locations.

"This expansion, by Milwaukee Tools, is an example affirming that the business case in Mississippi is strong and ultimately they chose a location that provides the best return on their investment," says **Wade Litton**, Chairman of the Delta Council Development Department. "Milwaukee Tool's commitment and expanding footprint in this region and State are tremendous. We will work hard with them and everyone to ensure that we deliver results."

MILWAUKEE *continued on page 8*



GREATER GRENADA  
PARTNERSHIP

**DELTA**  
**STRONG**

## MISSISSIPPI LEVEE BOARD RESPONDS TO OUTSIDE GROUPS' LEGAL ATTEMPT TO PREVENT LIFE AND WILDLIFE-SAVING FLOOD MITIGATION

*The Mississippi Levee Board released the below statement following the filing of Am. Rivers v. Army Corps of Engineers, D.D.C., in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The suit, filed by national organizations based outside of Mississippi, seeks to reverse the 2021 Record of Decision from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that will allow the completion of the Yazoo Backwater Project and save lives in Mississippi.*

The filing against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is a disingenuous and dangerous attempt to prevent responsible management of flooding in the Delta that protects human and animal life.

The historic flooding of the last three years wiped out generations of wildlife-including the only endangered species in the area, the pond berry, which simply cannot survive underwater for six months. The flooding has also tragically taken two human lives and destroyed hundreds of homes. With an impoverished and minority community as our constituents, flood control is especially important to us.

The federal decision to move forward is consistent with applicable laws and sound science showing that reducing flood duration and height is not only good for our homes, roads, and people, but also provides multiple environmental benefits.



As proposed, the Yazoo Backwater Pumps will save lives while increasing wetland, terrestrial, aquatic, and waterfowl resources and reforestation. The addition of 34 supplemental low-flow groundwater wells will also improve water quality and raise water levels during low-flow season through responsible and modest flood mitigation.

Our community is tired of having national groups including American Rivers, National Audubon Society, Sierra Club and Healthy Gulf - none of which are based in Mississippi - trying to stop critically needed, life and livelihood-saving local projects. The Mississippi Levee Board will work with the federal agencies, seek to intervene in the suit, and continue to advocate for completion of the Yazoo Backwater Pumps to keep Mississippians safe.

The Mississippi Levee Board is the local sponsor for flood damage protection in the Yazoo Basin, including the pumps necessary to reduce flooding in the Yazoo Backwater Area. We greatly appreciate the work of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the State, our congressional champions-**Representative Thompson** and **Senators Wicker** and **Hyde-Smith**, and the many other governmental agencies that culminated in a Corps Record of Decision on the pumps in January 2021.

For more information contact Mississippi Levee Board Chief Engineer **Peter Nimrod**.

**SAVE  
THE DATE**

**86TH ANNUAL  
MEETING OF  
DELTA COUNCIL**

**FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2021**

**BOLOGNA PERFORMING  
ARTS CENTER,  
DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
CLEVELAND, MS**

**MAKE WEEDS BEG FOR MERCY.  
FOR UP TO 8 WEEKS.**



**FIERCE**  
HERBICIDE



## DELTA COUNCIL

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Vice-President: CARTER MURRELL, Avon

Vice-President: ANDY PROSSER, Yazoo City

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P.O. Box 257, Stoneville, MS 38776

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Coopwood Communications  
Cleveland, MS

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

##### Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 257, Stoneville, MS 38776

##### Shipping Address:

433 Stoneville Rd., Leland, MS 38756

Phone: (662) 686-3350

##### Web Address:

www.deltacouncil.org

Email: info@deltacouncil.org

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY PAUL HOLLIS



Hollis

It is spring time in the Delta, the tractors are in the field, and people are getting back together and enjoying the sunshine and camaraderie.

While the last year did not slow down the work of Delta Council, it certainly altered the way we work. Most everything we work on requires a strong foundation of both consensus and relationships. One thing that we have learned during the past year, is that

it is hard to nurture both relationships and consensus on issues over a computer screen or a telephone line.

Call us old fashioned, but gathering people together and having a meaningful exchange with them trumps all of the technology you can throw in the mix.

That is why I am glad to announce that the 86th Annual Meeting of Delta Council will be held on Friday, June 4th on the Bologna Performing Arts Center stage in Cleveland on the campus of Delta State University. We have just set the date and we will be making more announcements in the coming weeks, but we are excited to be able to hold this special day in the life of the Delta in 2021 after having to postpone the meeting in 2020. In addition, we are going

to be holding 2 very important committee meetings of Delta Council in the month of May.

The Flood Control Committee of Delta Council will be held on Wednesday, May 19th at 10:00 a.m. in the Capps Center on the Stoneville campus of Mississippi State University. The Flood Control Committee is chaired by **John Phillips** of Holly Bluff and the Vice Chairmen are **Butch Scipper** of Marks, **Charles Walker** of Marks and **David Wansley** of Valley Park.

In that same facility on Thursday, May 20th, Chairman **Walton Gresham** of Indianola will hold a Highways and Transportation Committee meeting of

PRESIDENT *continued on page 3*

## GUEST COLUMN | PETE HUNTER



Hunter

Over the last forty-six years I have fallen in love with saltwater fishing in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. Fishing in marshes and among many Gulf of Mexico islands is one of my passions. Over these forty-six years I have seen a

decline in fishing success due to the hypoxia (dead zone) and decline in marsh growth. With this foremost in my mind, I have over the years implemented many Best Management Practices on the farm in the Mississippi Delta with a goal to improve water quality and quantity.

Several years ago, NRCS headlined Soil Health as one of its top priorities and as the top BMP, in my opinion, cover crops were promoted to create a greater interest within the agriculture community.

In the Mississippi Delta eighty percent of the land is cleared for farming. Even though the land is basically flat there is a tremendous amount of soil moved by rain and wind every year. Nutrients are also carried with the soil movement and contribute to the “dead zone” in the Gulf. I have often wondered how much the hypoxia in the Gulf could be reduced by planting all cropland in the Mississippi River Basin in cover crops!

### COVER CROPS/ SOIL HEALTH/ CARBON SEQUESTRATION

#### WATER QUALITY

Soil is held in place from water or wind erosion along with the attached nutrients. In addition to soil health resource concerns, sandblasting of crops by high winds which can lead to the need of replanting. In these circumstance cover crops serve as a level of insurance to reduce the need to replant

#### WATER QUANTITY

Furrow irrigation and rainfall runoff is slowed by cover crops and more is absorbed in soil and possibly back into the aquifer. There will be less need for irrigation and less draw on the aquifer.

#### SOIL TILTH

Cover Crops, especially when planted in a mix of several types of seed can loosen the soil to allow more water in and lead to better root development in the cash crop, with less tillage needed cover crops will enhance soil organic matter.

#### NUTRIENT REDUCTION

Less Nitrogen fertilizer is needed when legume cover crops are planted that supply left over nitrogen for cash crop.

#### SMALLER CARBON FOOTPRINT IN THE FARMING OPERATION.

Successful farmers utilizing cover crops usually plant no till, ridge or strip till resulting in a smaller carbon footprint from less trips across fields.

#### INCREASED BIOMASS

Cover Crops will suppress certain noxious weeds that will compete with cash crops, which can lead to the reduction of herbicide use, therefore enhancing with quality.

#### WATERSHED PROTECTION

Areas planted in cover crops pose a lot less threat to watershed control dam structures, watershed ponds, pipes, and high hazard dams. The existence of cover crops can increase infiltration, in addition to decreasing runoff rates. These benefits can serve as a level of protection beyond the original intent of these structures. Cover crops will provide a food source and habitat for wildlife, especially in the winter months when other habitat is exhausted.

Our new administration has put a priori-

ty on conservation and carbon sequestration. One acre of cover crop has been shown to capture and hold three tons of carbon.

Many farmers have been slow to embrace the use of cover crops. Some university studies are telling farmers that there is no significant cash crop income benefit from cover crops. In looking back at the Conservation Stewardship Program, I saw some of the best success from this program because it was an incentive-based payment program. It was bringing farmers in to the NRCS office that had never participated in programs before. It was educating them on many different programs in conservation. To me one of the best results in the CSP program was new faces coming into the NRCS district offices.

With this being said, I would like to look at the possibility of making a cover crop program with a payment that would cover the cost of seed and planting of the cover crop. Also, an incentive payment attached to the program to get producers in the door and on the program. Thinking a \$50 per acre of planted cover crop. With respect to the fact that larger acreages of cover crops could be planted, NRCS may be able to partner with large corporations that seek carbon credits and use their funding in part to implement this program.

Cover crops cover a lot of bases!

**Pete Hunter** is a semi-retired producer from the Mississippi Delta near Clarksdale. He has been involved in conservation programs all his life. Stovall Farms has hosted many conservation tours over the years. **Pete** is past president of the Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts and past chairman of the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission as well as a Vice President of Delta Council. He serves on the Governor's task force for the declining aquifer in Mississippi. He is a National Association of Conservation Districts Soil Health Champion. **Pete** has served many years as a Coahoma County Mississippi Soil and Water District Commissioner.



## COOPERATIVE COMPETES GRANT AWARDED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN COAHOMA COUNTY TO THE CROSSROADS ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN COAHOMA COUNTY ARE POISED FOR SUCCESS WITH A NEW BRAND NAME, TAGLINE, AND A RECENTLY AWARDED COOPERATIVE COMPETES GRANT.



The Clarksdale/Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce and its collaborative partner, the Economic Development Authority of Coahoma County, announced the new brand name, Crossroads Economic Partnership. The organization name better reflects the outstanding cooperation of city and county governments, as well as regional, state, and federal partners, including Coahoma Electric Power Association.

The rebrand is best communicated through the new tagline “We’ve come together to make a new day,” which encompasses both preceding organizations and reflects the new ecosystem of leadership in the region. The collaborative marketing and new website are a result of strategic vision, months of execution, and funding support from partners like Coahoma Electric through the Cooperative Competes program.

“Coahoma Electric is a true community and economic development partner in our region,” said **Jon Livingston**, executive director of the Crossroads Economic Partnership. “They have long supported economic development efforts in Coahoma County, and their financial support in this marketing endeavor truly shows coming

together to make a new day.”

The \$25,000 Cooperative Competes grant will help offset the costs of the marketing strategy, rebranding, and website design of the economic development organization, as well as support future marketing efforts of the organization.

“We are glad to see the Crossroads Economic Partnership vigorously pursue economic growth,” said **Keith Hurt**, Coahoma Electric general manager. “Their investment in marketing is a testament to our region’s commitment to success, and better communicates our valuable partnerships to those outside of our region.”

“Coahoma Electric’s investment in our organization will allow us to compete globally to bring investments and jobs into our area,” said **Livingston**. “With a new name, tagline, website, and financial support from our partners, we are ready more than ever to welcome new partners to Clarksdale and Coahoma County.”

For more information about the Crossroads Economic Partnership visit [www.crossroadseconomicpartnership.com](http://www.crossroadseconomicpartnership.com)

For more information about Cooperative Competes visit [www.cooperativeenergy.com/economic-development-cooperative-competes/](http://www.cooperativeenergy.com/economic-development-cooperative-competes/)



Jon Livingston and Keith Hurt

### MILWAUKEE *from page 1*

Delta Strong is proud to have played a small role in this effort and commend the Grenada community, and Governor along with his team at MDA for their persistence in landing this project.”

“Our people and our culture have clearly made the difference in our growth and success. As we seek out new opportunities to attract, retain, and recruit the best talent in the country, the State of Mississippi has continued to be a valued partner. We look forward to bringing more jobs to this state.” Milwaukee Tool Group President **Steve Richman**.

“Long-term economic advancement is the core mission of the Greater Grenada Partnership,” said **Matthew Harrison**, who serves as the CEO of the Greater Grenada Partnership, President of the Grenada Chamber of

Commerce, and executive director of the Greater Grenada Foundation for Economic Development. “As a world-renowned brand, the Milwaukee Tool company is set to bring quality careers and significant capital investment to Grenada County. Our office is proud to bring a project of this caliber to the citizens of Grenada County that will measurably move the economic needle in our community, region, and state. No project of this size is ever done in a vacuum. For the last sixteen months, we have worked tirelessly with all of our partners to make this project a reality. I want to thank the Grenada County Board of Supervisors, **Governor Reeves**, **Kevin Horan**, **Lydia Chassional**, and MDA for remaining dedicated to seeing Grenada County blossom. The great news, we are just getting started with the potential growth of Grenada County.”

For its latest expansion in Grenada, Milwaukee Tool will construct a 500,000-square-foot facility in Grenada County’s I-55 Business and Technology Park to support the company’s growing power tool accessories and power tool business. Available jobs will include machine operators, technicians, warehousing/inventory, shipping/receiving, engineering and management roles.

MDA is providing assistance for building construction. Grenada County and the Tennessee Valley Authority also are assisting with the project. The new project will receive support from the local school district and the community college system in preparing a pipeline of potential employees.

Milwaukee Tool expects to finish construction of the new Grenada facility by 2022.

### PRESIDENT *from page 2*

Delta Council. Vice Chairmen of that committee are **Tripp Hayes** of Clarksdale, **Johnny McRight** of Greenville and **Stephanie Patton** of Leland.

As we were going to press today for this issue of The Delta Council Review, we learned that Milwaukee Tool announced a new manufacturing facility will be constructed in Grenada. This \$60 million investment, 800 job facility will consolidate all of their manufacturing in 2 locations - Grenada, MS and Greenwood, MS.

This was an outstanding team effort with **Matthew Harrison**, **Keith Mitchell** and **Jay Gore** heading up the local effort along with state leaders including **Governor Tate Reeves** and MS Development Authority Executive

Director **John Rounsaville**, among others. This is a huge win for Grenada County, the Delta region and the State of Mississippi. It also solidifies Milwaukee Tool’s tremendous footprint in the Delta region.

I want to acknowledge, in addition to the Grenada team, the efforts of the Delta Council Economic and Community Development Department for assisting Grenada in this monumental task. **Wade Litton** of Greenwood is chairman of the Development Department and **Jerry Chávez** is the Director who is doing an outstanding job in our Delta Strong Economic Development efforts in conjunction with local communities.

I hope you continue to have a good spring, and I look forward to seeing many of you at an upcoming Delta Council event.



## CAMPBELL AND COPPAGE NAMED DELTA LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FELLOWS



Campbell



Coppage

Delta Regional Authority (DRA) named four Mississippi leaders as fellows of the 2021 Delta Leadership Institute (DLI) Executive Academy. Among those selected include USDA Rural Development State Director and Greenville native **John Gordon Campbell** and Washington County Economic Alliance Executive Director **Will Coppage**. DLI is an extensive, nine-month executive leadership program that brings together public, private, and nonprofit sector

leaders from DRA's eight-state region. The 2021 DLI class will consist of 30 fellows from all eight DRA states.

"To enact change, you need strong leaders with bold yet thoughtful ideas to move the needle in the right direction," said DRA Federal Co-Chairman **Chris Caldwell**. "The four fellows selected for the 2021 Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy are already leaders within their communities. With the knowledge and skill sets gained through DLI, they will evolve to become the change agents needed to address the most pressing issues facing the Delta."

## USDA ANNOUNCES DR. CARRIE CASTILLE AS NEW NIFA DIRECTOR



Castille

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced **Dr. Carrie Castille** as the new, six-year term director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. **Dr. Castille** began her new role on Monday, January 4, 2021.

**Dr. Castille** served as Assistant Professor and Agriculture and Natural Resource Leader at Louisiana State University (LSU) prior to serving as Associate Commissioner and Senior Advisor to the Commissioner for the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. In 2017, she joined USDA as State Director for Louisiana Rural Development, and in 2019 was named as the mid-south (Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri)

coordinator for USDA's Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area.

**Dr. Castille** was appointed by **USDA Secretary Vilsack** to the National Agriculture Research, Extension, Education, and Economics (NAREEE) advisory board from 2010 – 2017. During this period, she served as Chair of the NAREEE board, and also contributed to many organizations, including the American Public and Land Grant University (APLU) Council on Agriculture Research, Extension, and Teaching.

She holds a Ph.D. in Renewable Natural Resources (with emphasis on environmental and public policy) from Louisiana State University, an M.S. degree in Environmental Studies from Louisiana State University, and a B.S. degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette

## EBELHAR RECEIVES 2021 OUTSTANDING RESEARCH AWARD IN COTTON AGRONOMY



Ebelhar

Retired Mississippi State University Research Agronomist **Wayne Ebelhar**, Stoneville, Miss., received the 2021 Outstanding Research Award in Cotton Agronomy at the 2021 virtual Beltwide Cotton Conferences, Jan. 7.

"I can think of few people more deserving of this award," said **Daryl Chastain**, assistant research professor and cotton systems agronomist, Delta Research and Extension Center (DREC), MSU, as he announced **Ebelhar** as the winner during the Agronomy, Physiology and Soils Conference Awards webinar.

**Chastain** noted **Ebelhar's** 40 years of service in applied soil fertility crop production research involving cotton, corn, soybeans, rice, wheat, sunflowers, bioenergy crops and medicinal plants and herbs.

"His work at the Delta Research and Extension Center, as well as in producers' fields, contributed more to his field than could possibly be listed," **Chastain** said. "His program has focused on cultural practices and nutrient management strategies for optimizing yields and proper profitability for producer clientele in the Mississippi Delta. As part of a team of diverse researchers, the emphasis was placed on factors directly related to farm operations in this region."

**Chastain**, who calls **Ebelhar** a mentor and friend, praised him for helping the research community, whether judging or coordinating conference responsibilities or working directly with students, "even to the point of coaching them on presentation style," he added.

**Chastain** also called **Ebelhar** a "valuable community leader," serving his church, Lions Club, and Habitat for Humanity.

## MSU'S GHOLSON PROMOTED TO NCAAR COORDINATOR



Gholson

**Dr. Steve Martin**, the interim Head at Mississippi State University's Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville, is proud to announce the appointment of **Dr. Drew Gholson** as the Coordinator of the National Center for Alluvial Aquifer Research (NCAAR). NCAAR is a jointly created and cooperative organization established by MSU and USDA/ARS. The mission of NCAAR is to conduct research and provide information for issues surrounding water-use for agriculture and natural resources in the Lower Mississippi River Basin (LMRB).

"**Drew** has distinguished himself as an excellent researcher and leader during his tenure at NCAAR," said **Bubba Simmons**, Chairman of the Delta Council Advisory Research Committee. "We look forward to his leadership and important research endeavor."

**Dr. Gholson** received his undergraduate degree in Rangeland Ecology and Management from Texas A&M University, and his masters in Water Management and Hydrological Sciences from Texas A&M. **Dr. Gholson** also received his Ph.D. from Texas A&M in Soil Science. In his new role, **Gholson** and his team will coordinate closely with the ARS faculty and staff to further the mission of NCAAR.

## KENNEDY RETIRES FROM USDA/ NRCS AS CLARK STEPS IN



Kennedy



Clark

an indelible mark on the landscape of this region."

Effective February 15, 2021, **Richie Lee Clark** will serve as acting area conservationist for Area 4, which consists of the following

counties: Bolivar, Coahoma, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington, and Yazoo.

**Mr. Lee Clark** was born and raised on his family farm in Montgomery County. He is a 1995 graduate of Kirk Academy located in Grenada, MS. After high school, **Lee** attended Holmes Community College and graduated with an associate degree in Forestry. He began his NRCS career in 2001 as a Soil Conservation Technician in Grenada County.

**Lee's** duty stations as a Soil Conservationist include Grenada, Yalobusha, Leflore, and Tallahatchie counties. He has worked in Area 1 and Area 4. Working in multiple areas has made him a more knowledgeable and informed employee. During 2016, **Lee** was detailed as the Supervisory District Conservationist in Carroll and Montgomery counties. Since September 2018, **Lee** served as the Supervisory District Conservationist in the Grenada/Yalobusha cluster.

## GOODWIN NAMED DELTA WILDLIFE PRESIDENT



Goodwin

Delta Wildlife recently held a Board of Directors Meeting at their office in Stoneville. **John Murry Greenlee**, reporting on behalf of the nominating committee, announced **Tommy Goodwin** as the new 2021-2022 President for Delta Wildlife.

Following other business, Wildlife Executive Staff Officer **Rush Walsh** with Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks gave an update on Chronic Wasting Disease. To learn more about Delta Wildlife or to become a member, visit [www.deltawildlife.org](http://www.deltawildlife.org).

## MANDATORY ANNUAL DICAMBA TRAINING



Bayer has introduced a new online training program for Xtendimax herbicide in cotton and soybeans. Offering self-paced training or guided webinar training, the program gives growers easy, convenient access to complete their mandatory yearly dicamba training. Growers and applicators in 34 states can use the training to meet EPA requirements, and even accomplish training for multiple states, as the program automatically customizes to the states growers specify. Visit <https://www.roundupreadyxtend.com/stewardship/Pages/default.aspx>



# AROUND DELTA FIELDS

## LANDOWNERS CAN NOW APPLY FOR SOUTH DELTA FERAL SWINE CONTROL PROJECT



Delta Wildlife, along with state partners The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, and Mississippi State University, are pleased to announce the sign-up and application period for the South Delta Feral Swine Control Pilot Project.

"Feral swine cause significant damage to crop and grazing lands, while also impacting the health of our natural resources," said NRCS State Conservationist **Kurt Readus**. "By collaborating with our partners nationally and here in Mississippi, we hope to control and eradicate this invasive species – improving operations for farmers while also protecting our natural resources for the future."

NRCS and APHIS are working with Delta Wildlife, Inc. on this pilot project to deliver NRCS funded assistance to producers for eradication and control. Collaboration in the pilot area will provide outreach, training opportunities, trap distribution, 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.

NRCS, APHIS, and the Mississippi State Technical Agriculture Committee worked together to define the critical areas to be considered for projects within the state. The Mississippi pilot project will be conducted from 2020 to 2023. Participating counties will consist of Issaquena, Sharkey, Warren, and Yazoo.

The purpose of the Mississippi Delta Feral Swine Abatement Project is to 1) reduce feral swine populations and 2) reduce impacts of feral swine in the project area. Thirty-one percent of the 1.5 million acres project area is in row crop agricultural production. The balance of the acres are in forest and conservation lands, which is home to one of the densest populations of feral swine in the State of Mississippi. The

annual impact this feral swine population has on cropland exceeds \$60 million annually. This project will support existing USDA Wildlife Service feral swine management activities in the project area and provide technical and direct assistance to private landowners in the project area to actively trap and remove feral swine.

Private landowners seeking assistance can visit <https://www.deltawildlife.org/feralswine.html> to submit an online application. MSWCC will complete site visits and assessments on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information on the project or assistance signing up, please contact MSWCC Feral Swine Program Coordinator, **Nolan Brooks**. You may email him at [Nolan@deltawildlife.org](mailto:Nolan@deltawildlife.org) or call 662-822-6764.

## MUSEUM AT WINTERVILLE MOUNDS TO CLOSE FOR FUTURE RENOVATION



The Visitor Center and Museum at Winterville Mounds will remain closed for future renovation and interpretation of its exhibits. The historic grounds will remain open to the public and will continue to be monitored by MDAH personnel. A new on-site brochure is in development to provide visitors with information and direction around the site.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) will develop a new comprehensive interpretation plan for Winterville Mounds with support from the Native American Tribes. Future developments for the site will feature upgraded museum exhibits, public programming, an orientation film for visitors, and outdoor signage and trails.

With the help of the Greenville Garden Club and Winterville Mounds Association, recent improvements to the site have included historic preservation of the grounds, landscaping work on the mounds, refurbished pavilion areas with new picnic tables and grills for families, a new pedestrian overpass, and new outdoor signage. Mound A remains barricaded as MDAH continues to work with the Tribes, local engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to repair sloughing due to heavy rains.

Winterville Mounds is a prehistoric ceremonial center built by a Native American civilization that thrived from about A.D. 1000 to 1450. Its most prominent feature is the 55-foot-tall Temple Mound, the tallest mound between Natchez and Cahokia, Ill.

## THOMAS APPOINTED TO STONEVILLE GIN LAB



**Thomas**

**Archie Tucker**, the Director of the Agricultural Research Service, Southeast Area, is proud to announce the appointment of **Joe Thomas** as the Research Leader of the Cotton Ginning Research Unit at Stoneville, Mississippi. "Joe brings over 45 years of ginning industry experience and a long history of collaboration with ARS to the lab," said **Tucker**. "Joe knows both the cotton ginning industry and ARS and will provide effective leadership to the gin lab." **Thomas** comes to ARS after a 45 year career in the cotton ginning industry, most recently he served as the Chief Technologist of Lummus Corporation in Savannah, Georgia and has served in various leadership roles within the cotton industry including as a National Cotton Council Foundation Trustee, Advisor to the Joint Cotton Industry Bale Packaging Committee, a member of the University of Georgia Agricultural Visioning Committee, and a Charter Member of the Advisory Council for the Texas A&M University Cotton Engineering, Ginning, and Mechanization Endowed Chair. **Thomas** will focus his research on process control, lint cleaning, and high-speed roller ginning but will also focus on recruiting, mentoring, and developing gin lab personnel and researchers to continue the legacy of the Stoneville Gin Lab.

## MSU AWARDED \$1 MILLION NOAA GRANT TO SHORE UP U.S. AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY



**Karunakaran**

Mississippi State University scientists are receiving a three-year, \$1 million grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sea Grant College Program to establish national economic metrics for the U.S. aquaculture industry.

The project's lead investigator **Ganesh Karunakaran**, a Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station assistant research professor, is guiding a team of nearly a dozen university researchers from eight institutions. The research will analyze the economic viability, impact and management measures of the U.S. aquaculture industry to help producers and stakeholders now and in the future. The

grant, administered through the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, is one of 12 awarded across the country and part of a \$4.7 million investment aimed to strengthen the economics of U.S. aquaculture.

## KEITH COBLE TO LEAD MSU DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND VETERINARY MEDICINE



**Coble**

**Keith Coble**, William L. Giles Distinguished Professor and head of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Mississippi State, has been named Vice President for the University's Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine (DAFVM).

MSU President **Mark E. Keenum** made the announcement Tuesday, Feb. 9, placing **Coble** at the helm of MSU's nationally recognized agriculture and natural resource teaching, research and service efforts. The National Science Foundation ranks MSU in the top 5 percent nationally for agricultural research.

"We are pleased and excited that **Dr. Keith Coble** has been named as Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine, said **Bubba Simmons**, Chairman of the Delta Council Advisory Research Committee. "Dr. Coble has been a tremendous resource to Delta Council for the past twenty years. His detailed analysis of farm policy programs have been invaluable to producers in their decision making process. We are eager to continue this relationship, and look forward to working with **Dr. Coble** in a much broader scope."

An MSU faculty member for more than 20 years, **Coble** has also served since last July as a special assistant to the Vice President for DAFVM.

## MISSISSIPPI STATE LAUNCHES AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS WEBSITE

Mississippi State University Extension with the Department of Agricultural Economics has developed a new website for resources and information on the latest ARC-CO and PLC program payments, market information and

WASDE forecasts along with Mississippi row crop planning budgets. Visit <https://msuagecon.github.io/index.html> to browse the information and updates from MSU faculty.





## MEMBER FOCUS | GARY J. DYKSTERHOUSE



### BUSINESS:

From 2007 – 2012, **Gary** worked primarily for a cooperative row crop effort between his father-in-law, **Walker Sturdivant**, and his business partner with Due West in Glendora. In 2012 **Gary** transitioned full time to managing Due West Grain, a local grain buying company that focuses on providing an efficient and profitable harvest destination for corn producers. In 2017,

after discussions with **Walker** and his two brothers **Mike** and **Sykes, Gary** transitioned to a more comprehensive role in which he manages Due West Grain, co-manages Due West Gin with **Walker**, and is being mentored by **Mike III** to run the business of the farming operation. He is a 6th generation farmer that aims to follow the successful footsteps of **Mike, Sykes, and Walker Sturdivant**. “We all look to their father, **Mike Sturdivant Sr.** as a source of inspiration and leadership in how to manage a farm, invest in a community, and dedicate oneself to the betterment of all Mississippians,” said **Gary**.

### HOMETOWN:

**Gary** grew up in the Carolina’s where his father worked as a civil engineer and his mother as a nurse and homemaker. He met his wife, **Kathryn Sturdivant**, in college at Wake Forest, and were married immediately after graduating. “Her father, **Walker Sturdivant**, once told me to ‘live our life however **Kathryn** and I wanted, but that if I was ever interested in coming back and farming, to give him a call,” said **Gary**. “After 4 years of coaching college basketball, and spending much of my career on the road, **Kathryn** and I made the decision to put down roots, move to her home state of Mississippi, and join the family business.”

### AFFILIATIONS:

**Gary** has been a Delta Council member since 2010. He is the founder and chairman of the Delta Street Academy Charity Weekend, which raised over \$500,000 for the school over nine years. He is an inaugural board member of Mississippi Teach Corps, a past president and member of the Sumner Rotary Club, volunteer basketball coach, and Deacon at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

“As a member of the agricultural community, I place a great emphasis on resource management and infrastructure maintenance,” said **Gary**. “My greatest personal joy in this life is my time with my wife and my two children. I am shaped by the coaches and mentors of my past and apply the lessons I have learned to my parenting, my work, and my volunteer time in the community.”

### WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT GARY:

“**Walker Sturdivant** did the Delta a favor when he enticed his son-in-law **Gary** to join their farming operation. In addition to his many responsibilities in the **Sturdivant** operation, **Gary** has given his time unselfishly to many community service initiatives that have greatly benefited from **Gary’s** leadership and teamwork skills,” said **Tommy Gary**.

## ARKANSAS RICE FARMER PROVIDES TESTIMONY AT THE U.S. SENATE AG COMMITTEE HEARING

### FARMERS AND FORESTERS: OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD IN TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE



Arkansas Rice Farmer **Mark Isbell** testified on behalf USA Rice and Rice Arkansas at a U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee hearing to share his views on climate and conservation. To read his testimony, visit <https://www.deltacouncil.org/markisbell.html>

**Mark Isbell** is a 4th generation rice farmer from Lonoke County, Arkansas. **Mark** is a recognized volunteer leader in the rice industry and is an active member of the USA Rice Federation and has worked widely on sustainability and climate-change solutions within agriculture. He is a partner in **Isbell Farms** with his father, mother, cousin, and brother-in-law and resides in North Little Rock, Arkansas, with his wife, **Marda**, his son, **Sam**, and his daughter, **Nora**.

**Isbell’s** testimony focused on the substantial economic and environmental benefits of the U.S. rice industry, such as the conservation practices used by rice farmers that are continuing to advance and evolve with the use of less water and energy; the improvement of water quality, air quality, and soil conservation; and the continual enhancement of wildlife habitats to support biodiversity. **Isbell** also emphasized the need for climate solutions to be voluntary, as not all solutions will be viable for all crops and regions.

## COMMISSIONER GIPSON ANNOUNCES PROMOTIONAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MDAC AND ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY



Picture left to right: **Dr. Franklin Chukwuma**, Associate Director for Extension; **Marcus Ward**, Vice President for Institutional Advancement; **Dr. Felecia M. Nave**, President of Alcorn State University; **Commissioner Andy Gipson**; **Henri Fuselier, Jr.**, Director of MDAC’s Consumer Protection Division; **Brent Bowman**, Director of MDAC’s Weights and Measures Division; and **Jennifer Thompson**, Director of MDAC’s Petroleum Division.

Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce **Andy Gipson** announced the promotional partnership between the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and Alcorn State University. Commissioner **Gipson** was joined by **Dr. Felecia M. Nave**, President of Alcorn State University; **Marcus Ward**, Vice President

for Institutional Advancement; and **Dr. Franklin Chukwuma**, Associate Director for Extension.

This partnership is part of a new initiative to promote universities within the state through MDAC’s Bureau of Regulatory Services inspection stickers. Each division within the Bureau of Regulatory Services will feature the school colors of the chosen university for one year. This authorized system in the regulation of various segments of commerce informs the public when inspections were conducted as well as the contact information for MDAC’s Weights and Measures Division, State Metrology Laboratory, Petroleum Products Inspection Division and Consumer Protection Division.

This new collaborative effort between MDAC and institutions of higher education around the state will strengthen the relationship between the agriculture community and universities, promote awareness of Mississippi’s colleges and create opportunities for both the public and students to learn more about their state agency’s regulatory functions.

Visit [www.mdac.ms.gov](http://www.mdac.ms.gov) to learn more about the various programs offered by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.



## DELTA COUNCIL OFFICERS MEET FOR UPDATE ON DELTA ISSUES



Delta Council President **Paul Hollis**, a producer from Rolling Fork, leads the Delta Council Officer's Meeting. Officers and Presidential Directors were given an update from Delta Council and Delta Wildlife staff members on current projects and initiatives.



Delta Council Officers and Presidential Directors met in person and virtually. Pictured (Back) **Bill Walker**, **Carter Murrell**, **Kevin Corbin** and Delta Council Development Department Director **Jerry Chavez**. (Front) **Paul Hollis**, **Frank Howell**, **Andy Prosser**, **Keith Mitchell**, **Pierce Brown** and Delta Wildlife Past President **Allan Gritman**. Virtually joining the meeting were **Tyler Cannon**, **Kirk Satterfield**, **Henry Reed** and **Jimmy Walker Jr.**



Wednesday, April 14, 2021 Delta Council President **Paul Hollis** of Rolling Fork addressed the Mississippi River Commission on the importance of continued flood protection for the region.

## MS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN ROUNSAVILLE VISITS CLEVELAND / BOLIVAR COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



**Cheryl Comans**, Entergy, Cleveland Chamber of Commerce President; **Robert Maxwell**, Port of Rosedale Director, Cleveland Bolivar Economic Development Foundation Chairman; **John Rounsaville**, Mississippi Development Authority Executive Director.



Stoneville and Delta aquaculture leadership recently met at Delta Council to discuss trematode research and outlook on catfish feed prices. Pictured from left to right are: **Dr. David Wise**, MSU Fishery Biologist; **Dr. Steve Martin**, Intern Head of Delta Research & Extension Center, **Chat Phillips**, Phillips Brothers Farm, Holly Bluff; **Andrew Stainback**, America's Catch; **Austin Jones**, Bear Creek Fisheries Inc, Moorhead; **Bill Battle**, Pride of the Pond, Tunica; **Dr. Matt Griffin**, MSU Aquatic Animal Health; **Geoff Waldbieser**, USDA ARS Research Molecular Biologist; **David Alley**, **Ganesh Kumar**, MSU aquaculture economist; not pictured are **Jon Cooper** and **Bradley Richardson**.



The National Center for Alluvial Aquifer Research Advisory Committee met at Delta Council recently for an overview on research efforts from **Dr. Steve Martin** and **Dr. Drew Gholson** of Mississippi State University and **Archie Tucker** and **Chris Delhom** with USDA-ARS. Pictured from Left to Right are: **Dr. Steve Martin**, **Chris Delhom**, **Tim Clements**, **Tim Huggins**, **Bubba Simmons**, **Travis Satterfield**, and **John Koehler Bibb**.



# Delta Council

433 Stoneville Rd  
P.O. Box 257  
Stoneville, MS 38776

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## HUGGINS NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DELTA WILDLIFE AND DELTA F.A.R.M.

**Tim Huggins** has been named the Executive Director of Delta Wildlife and Delta Farmers Advocating Resource Management (Delta F.A.R.M.), two natural resource and conservation stewardship organizations serving the Mississippi Delta from its headquarters in Stoneville.

A Greenville native and current resident of Chatham, **Tim** graduated from Delta State University with a Bachelor of Science and has been a vital part of both organizations' staff over a decade.

"We proudly welcome **Tim** as Executive Director," said **Allan Grittmann**, Past President of Delta Wildlife. "He is already a very respected and valuable part of the team, so he was the obvious choice for this position. We have full confidence that he will work diligently to ensure

the growth and stability of this organization."

Delta Wildlife was founded in 1990 by farmers, sportsmen, and business leaders to establish an organization dedicated to the conservation, enhancement, and restoration of the wildlife and natural resources of the Delta and part-Delta counties of Northwest Mississippi. Delta F.A.R.M., founded in 1998, is an association of growers and landowners in the region that strive to implement recognized agricultural practices which conserve, restore, and enhance the environment of Northwest Mississippi.



Huggins

"I am delighted that **Tim Huggins** has been selected as the new Executive Director for Delta Wildlife and Delta F.A.R.M.," said **Bubba Simmons**, Chairman of Delta F.A.R.M. "He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position and I am confident that the organizations will prosper under his leadership."

A full profile of **Tim** was featured in the Spring edition of Delta Wildlife Magazine, which can be obtained by purchasing a membership or visiting [www.deltawildlife.org](http://www.deltawildlife.org). Please feel free to reach out to **Tim** at 662-686-3372 or [tim@deltawildlife.org](mailto:tim@deltawildlife.org).



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