Trailblazer Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

TRAILBLAZER
2016 Annual Report

2016 Annual Report
Issued January 2017

Trailblazer RC&D
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Our Mission
To support a quality environment, demonstrate regional leadership, secure resources and deliver programs and services that build strong, vibrant communities where conservation and development are in balance with the needs of the people.

A Message From the CEO
Dear Friends,

As we begin the new year, we would like to share our 2016 Annual Report with you. As you read through this report, you will see highlights from our 2016 activities, a course of action for our future, and an invitation to join us in the coming year.

2016 was a great year for Trailblazer! We helped people and communities come together to address common problems. We increased awareness of key environmental issues. And we expanded our local partnership of individuals, organizations, and communities committed to improving our environment through individual action.

We are very grateful to have so many partners who worked with us and encouraged us throughout the year—we could not have done it without your support!

We are excited to share this report of our 2016 success!
Ellzey Simmons

About Trailblazer
Trailblazer RC&D, officially authorized in 1966 and incorporated in 1988, serves the following parishes in north central Louisiana: Bienville, Bossier, Claiborne, Jackson, Lincoln, Union, Webster, and Winn; and we are expanding to other parishes in north Louisiana to accommodate project goals and activities. Trailblazer RC&D is a locally sponsored and directed organization that provides assistance to parishes in north Louisiana. The purpose of Trailblazer is to improve the quality of life in local communities. It is a non-profit organization and is tax exempt (501c3) according to the Internal Revenue Service. Donations, loans, grants, special events, and other fundraising activities are essential to the future of our organization.

Trailblazer is governed by volunteers who establish priorities. Local leadership and innovative thinking are highly encouraged. Projects are carefully selected with emphasis on those that are good for the communities and projects that are not being addressed by other groups.

During 2016, Trailblazer leaders established the following major areas of interest:

- Forestry Industry Issues and Support
- Water Quality Education and Remediation
- Landowner Issues
- Environmental Stewardship
- Pipeline Safety Awareness
- USDA Program Support
- Giant Salvinia Eradication/Bistineau Task Force
- Community Outreach
- Encouragement for Entrepreneurs
- Encouragement for Rural Business
- Youth Programs
Water Quality Program: Education and Outreach

Water quality education is important for our youth. They will soon become our nation’s decision-makers, and cultivating an attitude of stewardship is critical in developing conservation-minded leaders. During 2016, Trailblazer conducted educational presentations, field trips, and special events at 4-H camps, libraries, schools, and civic organizations to provide information on the importance of water and how to protect our water from pollution from oil, pesticides, trash, sewage, and more. As a result of Trailblazer’s water quality education efforts, over 1,165 people are now part of Trailblazer’s campaign to improve water quality in Louisiana. Sponsoring partner: Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

Examples of Presentations Offered in 2016
- 4-H Roughing It Camp
- 4-H Forestry Awareness Day
- Claiborne Water Fest
- Summer Reading Program
- Water Quality Education for Adults—Ouachita Parish

“The kids had a good time and really enjoyed the program.”
Mary Sanders, Anna P. Tooke Library

Coming in 2017 . . .

Water quality presentations for schools, civic groups, clubs, and organizations. Call us to schedule a presentation with your group or organization.
What is StrikeForce?

In an effort to help grow American agriculture and increase opportunity for poverty stricken rural communities, USDA established the StrikeForce initiative. Increased outreach by USDA agencies through the StrikeForce initiative has resulted in increased participation in agency programs. Trailblazer RC&D is partnering with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to support the StrikeForce initiative and promote USDA financial and technical opportunities. As a result of this partnership, over 500 people are now aware of USDA program opportunities and best management practices, and these participants have made important connections to leaders in their communities. Sponsoring partner: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Examples of Workshops Offered in 2016

- Pond Management Workshop
- Feral Hog Workshop
- Timber Marketing Workshop
- Estate Planning Workshop
- Forestry Best Management Practices Workshop

Coming in 2017 . . .

- Farm Pond Workshop
- Feral Hog Workshop
- Aging Deer on the Hoof Workshop
- USDA Outreach
- Water Quality Education

“Speaker was very knowledgeable and more than willing to answer questions and give recommendations.” Workshop Participant
Pipeline Safety

**Why Pipeline Safety?**

America depends on a network of more than 185,000 miles of liquid petroleum pipelines, nearly 320,000 miles of gas transmission pipelines, and more than 2 million miles of gas distribution pipelines to move energy and raw materials throughout our nation. Farming, logging, operating heavy equipment, driving heaving equipment, or even digging in your yard over or near a pipeline or utility right-of-way can pose a huge safety risk. In cooperation with the Pipeline Partnership, Trailblazer RC&D offers forestry best management practices and pipeline safety workshops. During 2016, pipeline safety information was provided to over 500 workshop/field day participants. Sponsors of this effort include Boardwalk, Louisiana Midstream LLC, and ENABLE Midstream Partners.

**Coming in 2017 . . .**
Continued efforts to educate land users on the importance of “Dial 811.”
Bistineau Task Force

Bistineau Network Success

The Bistineau Task Force is a product of the cooperative agreement between Bienville, Bossier, and Webster Parish Police Juries and Trailblazer Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) to combat the spread and domination of the invasive giant salvinia in Lake Bistineau. Formed in 2009, the Bistineau Task Force has worked through the years with volunteers and partners through citizen advocacy and education to restore and protect Lake Bistineau’s water quality and wildlife habitats.

2016 Task Force meetings resulted in more focused attention by local and state organizations regarding Lake Bistineau.

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“We accomplished what we originally set out to do—keep the public informed. Now, LDWF is holding regular meetings on the Lake Bistineau giant salvinia problem.”

Steve Ramsey
Webster Parish Police Jury
Bistineau Task Force Member

“Coming in 2017 . . .
Continued Task Force monitoring of the status of efforts by local and state agencies to combat the spread and domination of giant salvinia in Lake Bistineau.

“We accomplished our goal.”
Task Force Member

Trailblazer—Creating Awareness of Community Issues

Trailblazer RC&D
Partnerships Increase our Collective Impact

Partnerships increase our collective impact in our community and on our environment. The partnerships and sponsorships Trailblazer enjoyed during 2016 enabled us to do much more than we could have done alone. Training sessions, workshops, environmental education, outreach, facilities—all possible because of our partners and sponsors! Many thanks for your continued encouragement and support!

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<tr>
<th>Arkansas Timber Producers Association</th>
<th>Louisiana Forestry Association</th>
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<td>Bienville Parish Police Jury</td>
<td>Mudd &amp; Holland Consulting Foresters, LLC</td>
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<td>Bossier Parish Police Jury</td>
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<td>Burnham Construction</td>
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<td><strong>ENABLE Midstream Partners</strong></td>
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<td>Grambling State University</td>
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<td>Hunt Forest Products</td>
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<td>Jim Taylor Ford</td>
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<td>Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality</td>
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<td>Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries</td>
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Please consider becoming a sponsor. See attached information.
In 2016, Trailblazer worked with a group of people we would like to recognize for going above and beyond the “call of duty” to help us. This includes volunteering their time, service, expenses, as well as readily being on board with donations for our various workshops and general support of Trailblazer.

Thank you for helping Trailblazer succeed!
Special Thanks to . . .

**ENABLE MIDSTREAM PARTNERS**

ENABLE Midstream Partners is a publicly traded master limited partnership that owns, operates and develops strategically located natural gas and crude oil infrastructure assets serving major producing basins and markets. ENABLE is committed to safe and reliable operation of their pipelines in the communities they serve and education outreach.

**The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality**

provides service to the people of Louisiana through comprehensive environmental protection to promote and protect health, safety, and welfare while considering sound policies regarding employment and economic development.

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**Kevin Norton**

State Conservationist
USDA NRCS

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**USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**

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Call your local NRCS office today to find out how NRCS can help you.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Trailblazer RC&D offers special thanks to Kevin Norton, our NRCS State Conservationist.
Sponsor Registration

Yes! My organization would like to reach out to people in rural areas, promote stewardship of the land, enhance the quality of life in Louisiana, and build sustainable networks and communities!

Name ________________________________________

Address ________________________________________

Cty ____________ State _______ Zip ___________ Email ____________________________

☐ BASIC EVENT SPONSOR—$300 Sponsorship Donation

Name the Event ________________________________________

Examples:  Feral Hog Workshop, StrikeForce, Estate Planning, Forestry BMPs, Timber Marketing, Water Quality

Recognized as an event sponsor at the event. Recognized on Facebook and Trailblazer website for the event. Recognized in newsletter for the event.
Alternative option—$500—all of the above and included as a speaker on the agenda of the event.

☐ SILVER SPONSOR—$1,000 up to $1,999 Sponsorship Donation

Subscription to Trailblazer newsletter, recognition from the podium at 5 major events, and logo running on Trailblazer website for 3 months.

☐ GOLD SPONSOR—$2,000 up to $15,000 Sponsorship Donation

All of the above plus recognition in 12 monthly newsletters, logo running on website for 6 months, and display of exhibit or signage at 1 major event.

☐ PLATINUM SPONSOR—$15,000 (or more) Sponsorship Donation

All of the above plus associate membership on the Trailblazer Board of Directors (subject to Board of Directors approval), quarter page advertisement in monthly newsletter for 12 months, display of signage or exhibit at all events, named as a sponsor at all events (including Facebook, website, etc.) for 12 months, and logo added to the agenda at the event of your choice.

Contact Trailblazer’s CEO for more information at (318) 255-3554 or ceo@trailblazer.org.

Trailblazer RC&D is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation may qualify as tax exempt.

Return completed form and your donation to: Trailblazer RC&D, 302 Reynolds Drive, Ruston, Louisiana  71270 Telephone: (318) 255-3554, Email: ceo@trailblazer.org

Thank you for your sponsorship donation!