

USDA-NRCS in Mississippi announces National Fish and Wildlife Initiative sign-up

Press Release
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

JACKSON, Miss. — Private landowners in general, and farmers and ranchers in particular, are essential partners in conserving natural resources. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have a long history of jointly supporting private land conservation. The United States Department of Agriculture is making financial assistance available to producers who want to restore and protect Mississippi's habitat. Applications that are received by April 9, 2021, will be considered for funding in the first ranking period.

NFWF and NRCS launched the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration in late 2014. The partnership is focusing on conserving land, improving water quality, and restoring wetlands, while at the same time sustaining agriculture production across the region. In Fiscal Year 2021, the focal area is expanding to include counties and the coastal counties of Mississippi.

"There are great opportunities for agriculture producers and landowners to adopt conservation practices serving dual purposes here in Mississippi. Enhancing wildlife habitat, in addition to wildlife improvements, opportunities are inevitable with the suite of conservation practices offered. We are excited about an additional source of funding to place more conservation on the ground," said Mississippi NRCS State Conservationist Kurt Readus.

Landowners in the following counties in Mississippi are eligible to participate in the NFWF Initiative: Attala, Forrest, Hinds, Jones, Neshoba, Scott, Yazoo, Claiborne, George, Holmes, Lawrence, Newton, Simpson, Clarke, Greene, Jackson, Leake, Pearl River, Smith, Copiah, Hancock, Jasper, Madison, Perry, Stone, Covington, Harrison, Jeff Davis, Marion, Rankin and Wayne.

Applications for all NRCS financial assistance programs are accepting on a continuous sign-up process. However, specific sign-up deadlines are establishing to rank, contract, and fund

qualified tracts of land. Applications for the NFWF Initiative received by April 9, 2021, will be considered for funding this year.

Interested producers can apply at their local USDA Service Center by submitting a Conservation Program Application (NRCS-CPA-1200).

NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. More information on NRCS conservation programs can be found at <https://www.farmers.gov/> or <https://www.ms.usda.gov/> under the financial assistance tab.

COVID-19 Guidance:

AHCA/NCAL issues statement following CMS announcement on new guidance for nursing home visitation

Press Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL), representing more than 14,000 nursing homes and long term care facilities across the country that provide care to approximately five million people each year, released a statement following an announcement from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on new guidance for nursing home visitation.

The statement is attributable to Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of AHCA/NCAL:

"While we are still reviewing the guidance, the indication that nursing home residents can visit with their loved

ones is welcome news that we fully support. It has been nearly one year to the day since visitors were restricted from nursing homes, and now thanks to the vaccines, we cannot wait to safely reopen our doors. Our dedicated staff members have done an extraordinary job filling in for loved ones and adapting visitations during this difficult time, but nothing can replace engaging with family members in-person. The health and wellbeing of our residents will improve thanks to this important guidance.

"It is critical that public health officials continue to prioritize vaccines for long term care residents and staff in order to help facilitate these reunifications. After the three rounds of on-site clinics, it is unclear how long term care fa-

MSDH Expands Eligibility for COVID-19 Vaccine

Press Release

Beginning today, Thursday, March 4, those eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination in Mississippi will now include all persons 50 years of age and older.

To date, 94 percent of COVID-19 related deaths (6,381) and 80 percent (7,342) of COVID-19 related hospitalizations in Mississippi have been among those 50 and older.

"So far, about 350,000 persons aged 50 years and older have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine in the state. We are expanding our eligibility to this age group to increase the access to vaccination in this vulnerable population and prevent hospitalizations and deaths," said MSDH State Epidemiologist Dr. Paul Byers.

The modified eligibility criteria for COVID-19 vaccine in Mississippi are as follows:

All persons aged 50 years and older.

All teachers/staff/employees in K-12, preschool or

childcare settings.

All first responders (including law enforcement, public safety, fire services and emergency management officials)

All healthcare personnel.

Persons aged 16-49 years with underlying medical conditions, as follows: cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), Down syndrome, heart conditions (such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies), immunocompromised from solid organ transplant, obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²), pregnancy, sickle cell disease, smoking, diabetes, or other medical conditions determined by the medical provider.

To register for an appointment at a Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) drive-through site, visit <https://covidvaccine.unc.edu> or call the MSDH COVID-19 Hotline at 1-877-978-6453 for additional assistance.

Howell to make acting debut in mini series



Olivia (Livi) Howell, 18 year old daughter of Scott and Tara Howell of Coxburg, was selected as a background actress for the ABC mini series Women of the Movement. Livi spent a week on set while scenes were filmed in and around the Emmett Till Courthouse on the square in Sumner, MS. Pictured above is a photo of Livi dressed in a 1950's costume for set.

ilities will be able to quickly access vaccines moving forward. We need the CDC to ensure the vaccine is readily available for new admissions as well as current residents who have since decided to get the vaccine, so they are able to visit with their families per the new CMS guidance. A steady, ongoing allocation of vaccines to long term care will also help ensure we continue to build upon the progress we have already made in reducing COVID in long term care.

"It is also critical we continue to educate staff, residents and family members, and the general public, about the importance of the vaccine, giving them the facts they need to make an informed decision. We launched the #GetVaccinated campaign in Decem-



CENTRAL HOLMES
 Central Holmes Christian School will host its annual Spring Auction on Wednesday, March 24 at Berman Gymnasium. The silent auction begins at 6:00 p.m. and the live auction begins at 7:00 p.m.

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ber to help in this effort, and providers are committed to increasing uptake among residents and staff."



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SUBSCRIPTION RATES
In Holmes County - \$35.00
In Mississippi - \$40.00
Outside Mississippi - \$50.00
Senior Citizen discount - \$1.00 off above rates



DANNY JOHNSON

Danny Johnson, 69, of the Horseshoe Community passed away at his residence on Monday, March 8, 2021.

He was born December 3, 1951 at the Holmes County Hospital in Lexington, MS to Morris Oliver and Margaret Johnson.

Danny graduated from Cruger Tchula Academy in 1970. Following his graduation, he married his wife of 50 years, Linda Jo Johnson.

Danny served in the United States Air Force and worked for the United States Postal Service. He was a member of Horseshoe Baptist Church, and he loved fishing, hunting and spending time with his grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Morris Johnson, Jr. and daughter in law Candi.

Danny is survived by his wife, Linda; his brother Larry Wayne Johnson; son Tim and his wife Amy of Cruger;

and three daughters, Jana and her husband Larry Hardy of D'iberville, MS, Traci and her husband Robert Hutton of Tchula, MS, and Emily and her husband Gerry Carter of Horseshoe, MS.

Danny will be dearly missed by his 11 grandchildren, Tayler (Kaylen), Dylan, Robert (Kasey), Seth (Ranna), Morgan, Rosalind, Ty (Hannah), Luke, Bella, Maggie and Gracie; and three great grandchildren, Ryleigh DuBose Hutton, Mary Rosalind Hutton, Robert Elliott Hutton III, his fourth great grandchild is due September 2021 to Ty and Hannah; two nephews; a niece; and many cousins.

The family received friends and family at 10:00 a.m. A service of remembrance followed at Southern Funeral Home in Lexington on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. Graveside services were held at Pinecrest Cemetery in Tchula, MS.

