

Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (lmvjv.org)

The Lower MS Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV) is a self-directed, non-regulatory private, state, and federal conservation partnership that exists for the purpose of sustaining bird populations and their habitats within the Lower Mississippi Valley and West Gulf Coastal Plain/Ouachitas regions through implementing and communicating the goals and objectives of relevant national and international bird conservation plans.

Joint Ventures have supported the American Longleaf Initiative and actively participated as a member of the Longleaf Partnership Council. In that regard the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture has provided strong science and partnership support to both the range-wide Longleaf Initiative and the Texas Longleaf Implementation Team (TLIT) since 2010. The LMVJV serves as a member of the TLIT Steering Committee.

Conservation Delivery Networks (CDN) have emerged as the LMVJV's primary organizing units for effective, focused, and coordinated delivery of habitat conservation consistent with the partnership's priorities. While on the northern fringe of historic longleaf pine range, the Northeast Texas CDN partners have identified open pine management coupled with the regular introduction of fire as one of their high priorities within the CDN geography.

Pine forests and woodlands with low canopy cover, low basal area, and an open grassy or herbaceous understory are relatively uncommon in East Texas, yet provide important habitat for priority bird species and other wildlife. Formerly common, "open" pine habitat was historically maintained by periodic fires. With fire suppression and conversion of native pine forest to pine plantations planted at high stem densities, many of the bird species dependent upon this habitat have markedly declined. Priority bird species include Northern Bobwhite, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Bachman's Sparrow, and Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, among others. Therefore, conservation of open pine habitat is a high priority action for both the TLIT and the LMVJV.