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Preface

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PREFACE

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When I moved to Texas, I noticed a bumper sticker that said "I wasn't born here, but I got here as fast as I could." Although I don't feel exactly that way, I do feel similarly about quail country: "I wasn't born in quail country, but I got here as quick as I could." The more deeply I become involved in quail related issues, the more I contemplate what previous quail researchers and managers have thought and felt during previous decades as they addressed the status and plight of quail populations in North America. It is clear from their writing that they had concerns regarding habitat loss and declining populations, as we still do. In some ways, I feel helpless and inadequate regarding the current quail situation. Many agencies face similar problems, financial shortcomings, staff cutbacks, and the list could go on and on. However, just as in previous times, today's quail problems can't be fixed by just simply throwing money or people at them. Any serious attempt to address the quail decline at a state, regional, or national scale will logically require a systematic approach that addresses not only quail habitat, but all factors biotic and abiotic that affect that habitat. What challenges we have.

The proceedings of Quail V: Fifth National Quail Symposium is hopefully one of the many, and positive products that comes from the symposium held in Corpus Christi, Texas, 23–27 January 2002. The National Quail Symposia are meetings where researchers, managers, biologists, hunters, and quail enthusiasts come together to share current ideas on "hot topics" in the quail world and to discuss the direction of future quail research and management efforts. The first (1972) and second (1982) symposia were held in Stillwater, Oklahoma, the third (1992) was held in Kansas City, Missouri, and the fourth (1997) in Tallahassee, Florida.

I attended my first National Quail Symposium, at Quail III in Kansas City. We have come a long way since then. Since that time, we have expanded our body of knowledge about quail and their habitats—

based on both good and bad research. Previously, quail population "booms" were an artifact of man and his use of the land. However, times have changed and quail are now disappearing from much of their former range.

I believe that we have the knowledge to manage quail in many ecosystems. However, many of the management techniques used in vast areas of suitable quail habitat are not effective in the ever-changing, social, political, and financial world we live in today. To my knowledge, a viable quail population has never been restored in the world! Once they disappear, they seem to be lost forever. The landscape has changed. In the future, we will need to better understand the proximate causes of and the scale issues related to quail and the landscapes which they occur.

One hundred twenty-five authors provided 31 manuscripts for oral presentations, 4 abstracts for oral presentations, 3 manuscripts for poster presentations, and 13 abstracts for poster presentations. Authors and reviewers are to be complemented for their promptness and professionalism. All materials published in the proceedings have been held to the highest professional standards, and hopefully, with the proceedings of previous symposia, will serve as a valuable reference for biologists, managers, researchers, and students who have an interest in quail.

In closing, northern bobwhites have blessed me with many things. They have allowed me to achieve many of the professional goals that I set for myself when I began my wildlife career in 1984. They have brought me many new friends and colleagues. They have allowed me to work in 2 of the top quail states in the country. They have humbled me and my dogs. They have caused me to stop, ponder, and question current dogma. I sincerely hope that someday I can contribute to the stability, and hopefully abundant populations as partial repayment for what I have received from them.