



2001 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Program Focus — Using input from citizens, groups and agencies, these four major concerns were identified in Virginia:

- 1) Loss of over 80% of Bobwhite Quail population (since the 1940's), and about 50% of bird species dependent on grassland and early successional vegetative areas (since the 1960's);
- 2) Risk to threatened and endangered species in Southwest Virginia from declining water quality; (several streams contain the largest concentration of threatened and endangered aquatic species in the US);
- 3) Decline of the renowned Chesapeake Bay/ Eastern Shore bird migration corridor;
- 4) Numerous rare and declining habitats and species statewide.

Based on these concerns, four priority habitats were selected for improvement: early successional/grassland, riparian habitat, bird migration corridors and rare and decreasing habitats.

Virginia Summary

Overview

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop or improve wildlife habitat on private lands. It provides for both technical assistance and financial assistance through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). WHIP continued to be very popular throughout Virginia in 2001. Due to limited funding, 11 suitable sites with practices valued at about \$21,000 could not be funded. Over 85 percent of all WHIP applications have been approved for funding

Accomplishments

During 2001, 89 conservation plans and contracts were funded covering 2,949 acres. Since 1997, 421 contracts covering 9,844 acres have been funded for a total of \$1,227,808. The most common practices adopted include native grass planting, field borders, hedgerows, and prescribed grazing.

Program Benefits

In 2001, \$292,600 in WHIP cost share was provided to 89 participants statewide. Another \$94,200 was provided by the participants themselves. Most of these funds were used to pay for local supplies, labor and materials. In addition, other partnering agencies provided about \$3000 in direct financial assistance, as well as an estimated 250 hours of on-site technical assistance. This year's environmental benefits included: about 200 acres of Threatened and Endangered species habitat; 2925 acres of upland habitat; over 3 miles of stream corridors; 5 acres of managed wetland habitat created.

State contact

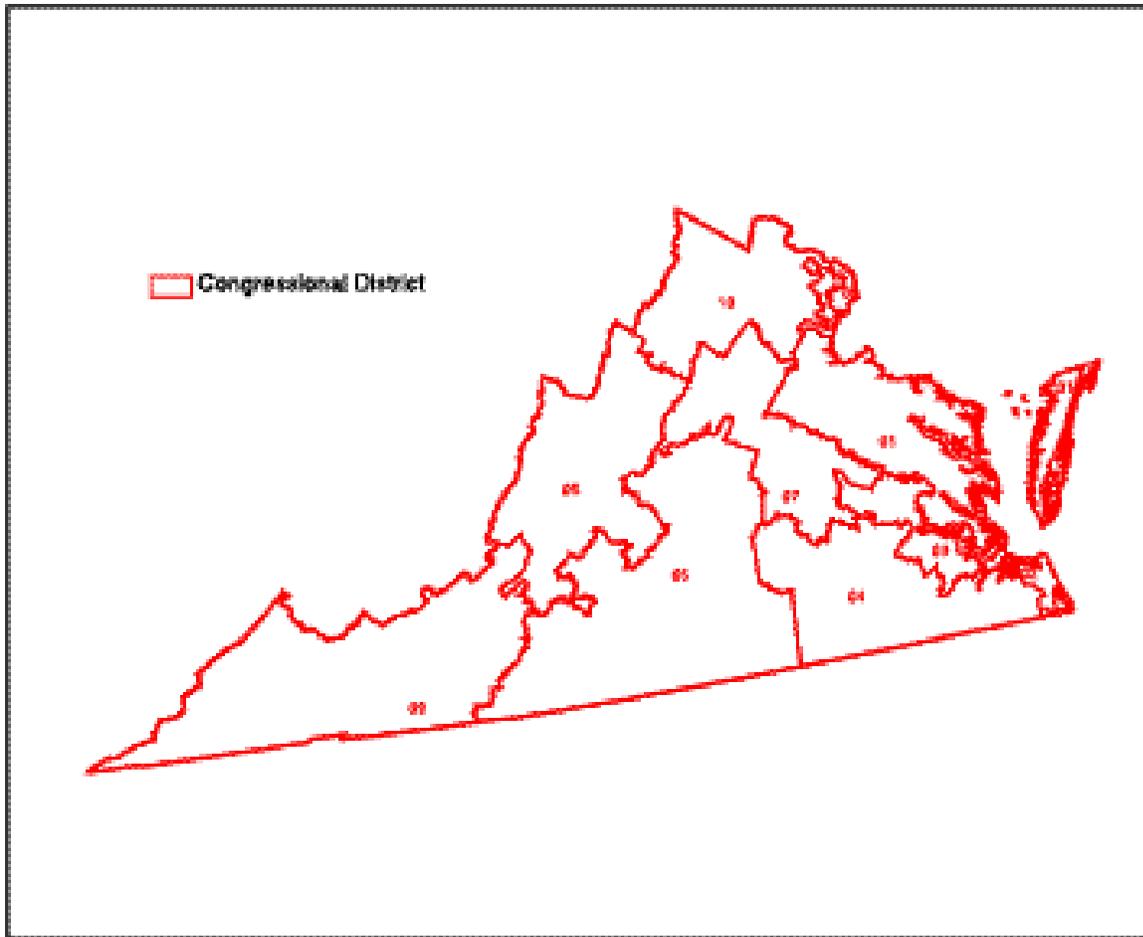
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(Left) Mixture of grasses and forbs enhances wildlife habitat

(Right) NRCS Conservationist John Dille checks planting of native warm season grasses

Virginia WHIP Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District



Virginia WHIP Dollars and Contracts

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2001		Cumulative Total (95-01)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	19,484	5	108,226	29
District 2	0	0	1,923	1
District 3	17,961	3	34,061	8
District 4	52,000	17	103,933	44
District 5	79,153	28	337,202	139
District 6	24,476	8	85,124	31
District 7	34,203	6	155,287	33
District 8	0	0	0	0
District 9	19,554	10	264,269	95
District 10	45,758	12	127,453	38
District 11	0	0	10,330	3
State Totals	292,589	89	1,227,808	421

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