

# Another Conservation Success Story...

## Floyd County, Georgia

May 2010

### Riverbend Farm; Conservation at Work

Riverbend Farm is a crop and timber farm of over 1,260 acres, located on the Coosa River in Floyd County.

The farm is owned and operated by James (Jamie) and Kelly Jordan. Other family members that work on the farm are Jordan's son Jesse, his brother Phil and close family friend Felipe Portelo Morales. On Riverbend Farm everyone looks for a better way to run the farm to help protect our natural resources.

This is evident by the awards that Jamie has received over the years. In 1998, Jordan won the Atlanta Farmer's Club Farmer of the Year Award. In 2001, the farm received the Merit Award from the Georgia Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. The farm



Flowers in front of an old school house serve as one of many pollination areas on Riverbend Farm.

also received Certified Forest Steward designation from the Georgia Forestry Commission in 2008. In 2010, they were honored as the Region I winner for the Governor's Agricultural Environmental Stewardship Award.

In a typical year, the crops grown on Riverbend Farm include 200 acres of cotton, 400 acres of corn, 500 acres of soybeans and 250 acres of wheat. Jamie and Kelly also have two horses, which they enjoy riding on the farm.

Jordan has participated in many Farm Bill programs including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP).

Some of the conservation practices installed through these programs include: conservation tillage, conservation crop rotation, irrigation sprinkler system retrofit, irrigation water management, nutrient and pest management, and cover crop. He has also implemented many practices to enhance wildlife habitat including prescribed burning, creation of forest openings, tree and shrub establishment, wetland creation and wildlife wetland habitat management.

Jordan believes they would not have gotten this far without the help of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). "Without the assistance of the NRCS we would not have been able to accomplish as much as we have. NRCS has great programs that every farmer should be using on their farm," said Jordan. "This is one of the first farms in the Rome area to implement no-till farming practices."

Jordan is a 5th generation farmer who grew up on a 3,000 acre farm in Centre, Alabama. His family has been in the cotton ginning business since the late 1800's. Jordan earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture from Berry College. It took him seven years to earn his degree because of having to help with the farming and ginning in the summer and fall.

After completing college at the age of 25, Jamie received his calling. "I received my calling as a caretaker of the land. I first farmed Horton Bend Farm in North Floyd County and two farms on the Coosa River then finally accomplished my lifetime dream when I purchased and began farming Riverbend Farm," said Jordan.

One of the managed wetland areas on Riverbend Farm. The farm has two wetland areas manage for waterfowl.



James Jordan (right) working with a contractor to retrofit his center pivot irrigation system.

Jordan has dreams for improving the farm. "Jamie's desire is to make Riverbend Farm better by building up his organic material, improving fertility, leveling the land, providing drainage to help with erosion, improving his road system, and providing better habitat for wildlife by managing the timberland," said Sheri Teems, NRCS district conservationist in Rome.

Jordan's focus is not of today but for future generations. "My calling, my goal, my lifetime commitment is to turn Riverbend Farm into the most beautiful, most productive, most efficient farm in the Southeast. To do this takes vision, hard work, and resources - especially money. I don't see myself as a manager or farmer, but as a bridge builder for those that follow. For I would not be where I am without the sacrifices of stewards that came before me," said Jordan.

**"NRCS has great programs that every farmer should be using on their farm," said Jordan**



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