

Another StrikeForce Conservation Success Story...

Emanuel County, Georgia

September 2011

LLPI Helps Farmer to Replant Logleaf Pines

Over 70 years ago Clyde Stephens bought over 75 acres of land outside of Swainsboro and started farming. His farm consisted of pines trees and vegetable crops. The pine trees were tipped for the tar sap and the vegetable crops were used to help sustain the family and the tree farm. In 2005 Mr. Stephens passed away and left his land to his son and two daughters.

Over the years Brenda Webb purchased her siblings share of the land and five years ago clear-cut the forest, hoping to replant the pines with money from the cut. "I wanted to replant the pines with the money from the clear-cut,

"Sidney and Sonya both have been really helpful and really nice." – Brenda Webb

but by the time I got everything paid off I didn't have the money to replant," said Webb. "It had never been clear-cut, it was always thinned and the trees had reached maturity, so I clear-cut it to start over. Didn't realize how much it was going to cost to start over."

Webb had concerns with the lack of trees on her land. "Daddy always had a tree farm, he worked the trees, that's the way he made his living and he loved it and I got my love from daddy for the pines. He would have been upset to know that I had it clear-cut and then wasn't able to have it replanted. He was always concerned about natural resources of all kinds," said Webb.

Webb heard about the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service through her



A small lake surrounded by land that will be planted in longleaf pines.

son-in-law. "My son-in-law read up on it. He went out on the Web site and got some information and called Sidney (Sidney Lanier, district conservationist), then he told me about Sidney and the program," said Webb.

In March of 2011, Webb signed a contract under the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program-Longleaf Pine Initiative (LLPI) to replant 55 acres of her land. "Ms. Brenda was persistent because it took her three years and we wanted to help her because we knew she is a limited resource farmer. Her application had been deferred for three years before she was actually awarded a contract," said Lanier. "The resource concerns for her land are to increase the diversity of the tree species, by planting the native longleaf pine and to improve the wildlife habitat, by planting a species that is more wildlife friendly," said Lanier.

Webb likes what has been completed under the LLPI and the people that are assisting her. "They helped me - So far everything is wonderful! They did a really good job clearing the land and were real nice about everything. I'm looking forward to getting it sprayed for the undergrowth and the pines planted. Sidney and Sonya both have been really helpful and really nice."

Before the pines could be planted the land had to be cleared of debris from the clear-cut and plant growth. "They came in pushed up all the stumps, brush and scrub oaks and did a site prep," said Webb.

Lanier went on to explain. "To get it ready to plant the trees, it has to be cleared. We can do a light site prep where we go in and spray with chemicals or in her case, where it was so grown up, we had to do what we call heavy site prep, which is when you have to clear the land with machinery. Push it all up in a pile, burn those piles and then go in and replant."



Sidney Lanier, district conservationist in Swainsboro and Brenda Webb walk through Webb's property during one of Laniers visits.

With this year's drought, it's hoped that the planting can go forward by the end of the year. "Should be by the end of this year, we are waiting on rain right now, and they've got to have plenty of moisture to plant them. They need to get a good soaking" said Lanier.

Webb's philosophy is that we have been put here to be stewards of the land and conservation helps to replenish the land. "Conservation replenishes the earth and keeps everything going. I think that plants and trees are the first things God put here – he put us here to be stewards of it. Without conservation, I don't think we would have anything in the end. If the natural system is destroyed you might as well destroy the world," said Webb.

Webb is hoping that after the pines are planted that she can get into the wildlife part of the program to help bring back the Bobwhites to her land. "I would love to get in on the wildlife program part of this too - the quail. Things are disappearing and we all love birds and animals in this area," said Webb.



One of the many areas to be planted in longleaf pines. Notice the debris pile just below the treeline.

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Ohoopsee River Soil And Water Conservation District

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