

Another Conservation Success Story...

Upson County, Georgia

March 2009

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Helps Farmer Improve Farm

Terry Hollis grew-up on a farm in Upson County, learning about farming from his father and uncles and began a love affair with farming that exists today. "I grew up on this farm watching my dad and uncles' row crop and raising cattle. When I got old enough, I started to help out around the farm. I guess that was when the love for farming began to grow inside me," said Hollis. Hollis's father passed the farm to him in 2002.

Hollis had some concerns about his farm and he wanted to make it productive but the

cattle had run in one big pasture and rutted the land badly causing an erosion problem that had to be repaired. This area was fast becoming a gully."

Many practices were recommended by the NRCS, all of which Hollis completed. He used cross fencing to set up a rotational grazing system with eight paddocks and also to fence out two streams on the land. Once this was done, a prescribed grazing system was established.

The cattle were using the streams as a watering place causing ruts to form on the land. To fix this and give the cattle limited access, water ramps were made using heavy use protection and gravel.

A well was drilled and watering troughs placed in each paddock where streams were not available. Pipelines were laid to each trough and heavy use areas were installed so the cattle would have fresh water available.

The area around the working facility and the path the cows used from the working facility to the bottom pasture was rutted out and eroded from many years of neglect. The area was graded and reseeded using critical area plant-



Terry Hollis sitting on his tractor.

ing was done on each paddock to extend the winter grazing.

Hollis has seen many benefits with the use of EQIP on his farm.

"With the help of EQIP, I have been able to put in a watering system, fence out streams, build watering ramps, over-seed existing pasture, put up cross fences, and start a rotational

With the help of EQIP, it is growing into a productive and environmentally sound farm,"—Terry Hollis.

grazing system. This has allowed me to run more cattle on less land and be more productive. With the help of EQIP, it is growing into a productive and environmentally sound farm," said Hollis.

Oliver says Hollis is committed to conservation and very happy with the NRCS. "He was dedicated in the very beginning and committed to restoring the farm to its full potential.

He took all the ideas and the conservation plan that the NRCS offered and applied them. He has been very receptive to any recommendations that the NRCS has made and is well pleased with the outcome," said Oliver.

Hollis' conservation philosophy is to preserve the land for future generations.

"To provide stewardship to all earthly resources in order to restore, protect, and enhance; so that present and future generations may benefit from our conservation practices. The land is one of our greatest resources

and as a farmer, it's a blessing to be able to produce food from that resource — I want to preserve that for generations to come," said Hollis.

Besides raising cattle, Hollis owns and operates four poultry houses on land he inherited from his mother in Crawford County.



Cattle grazing in one of the eight paddocks.

only places he knew where to go was the local Farm Service Agency (FSA).

"The farm had been a hobby farm and provided a small supplemental income for dad. I, like him, was a factory worker at the time and I wanted the farm to be a more productive operation. The first step in doing that was a trip to my local FSA office and that is where I learned about the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)," said Hollis.

When he visited the Barnesville field office to find out about the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) he went prepared to do what was needed. "When Terry came into the office to apply and find out what EQIP was, he brought with him a farm plan, he had a vision and that is where he has taken his farm," said Carol Oliver, soil conservation technician for the NRCS in Barnesville.

Oliver went on to say, "The cattle farm was in need of many repairs. Over the years, the



Watering ramp to one of the streams.

ing and a heavy use area was installed around the feeding tanks.

Because of overuse, very little maintenance and neglect over the years, the pastures were worn-down.

A plan was established to reseed the paddocks and establish a hay field and over-seed-

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