

Another Conservation Success Story...

Clay County, Georgia

March 2007

Natural Resources Conservation Service Helps Businessman Turn Land into Wildlife Habitat

Carl Childs, a retired businessman from Bellsouth, decided to hang up his suit and head for a quieter, healthier environment several years ago. He moved to Ft. Gaines, Georgia.



Carl Childs turned cutover timberland with erosion problems into a wildlife habitat with potential for future income.

Childs jumped right in to the Ft. Gaines community, becoming active in the Economic Development Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, and the Ft. Gaines Methodist Church. He has also been just as active on his own property, turning what was cutover timber and erosion problems into a wildlife habitat with the potential for future income.

Childs had a good friend that was a program technician with the Farm Service Agency (FSA). When Childs wanted to improve his land for wildlife habitat and to generate a future income, his friend advised him to call NRCS.

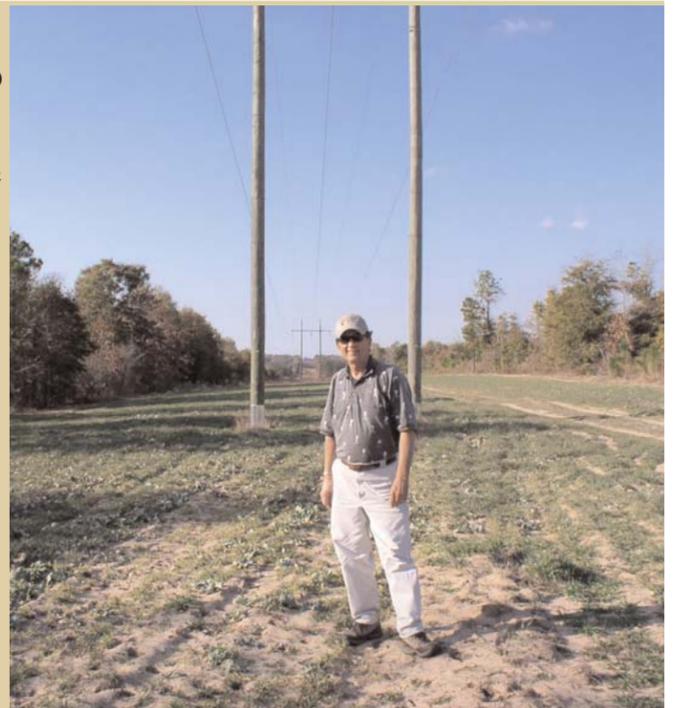
He signed up for the WINGS

Program and began planting annual food plots under a large transmission line. He also utilizes chemical brush control on some of the unplatable acres. NRCS gave him information on the Partners for Wildlife also. He was approved for that program and planted longleaf pines, both for wildlife habitat and potential income in the future.

Childs also received Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding and planted some

of his annual food plots into permanent vegetation. He also planted more longleaf pines through EQIP and addressed some soil erosion problems by installing terraces.

As a result of Childs' efforts, with advice and funding from NRCS, the wildlife habitat on his property has been greatly improved. It is not a surprise that Childs was selected as Conservationist of the Year for 2002 in Clay County!



Carl Childs planted annual food plots under these transmission lines to improve wildlife habitat

"Take care of the land and future generations will benefit from it!"—Carl Childs

Project WINGS

Project WINGS is a rights-of-way management campaign designed to create new wildlife lands beneath electrical transmission lines. WINGS stands for "Wildlife Incentives for Non-game and Game Species." Four utilities fund the project in Georgia. The project works by offering cash grants and professional wildlife management advice to groups and individuals committed to three years of rights-of-way wildlife management.

Transmission lines are essential to our economy and standard of living. Underneath these lines are rights of way which vary in width from 50 to 500 feet, representing thousands of idle acres. These rights of way must be routinely managed in such a way as to prevent the unwanted growth of tall plants and trees which could reach power lines and interfere with the delivery of electricity. The utilities and the Two Rivers RC&D Council have partnered with many other wildlife groups and agencies to offer cash incentives and management expertise which will enhance wildlife habitat while ensuring the safe and efficient delivery of electricity.

Landowners, hunting clubs, wildlife organizations and other individuals committed to the conversion and management of electric transmission rights of way may apply for a grant. Applications are accepted May 15 to July 15 each year, and they are available at all Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) offices. Applications are ranked and reviewed on a competitive basis. Individuals receiving grants must be willing to manage these acres for three years as outlined by their customized plans prepared with the local NRCS staff.

 **NRCS** Natural Resources Conservation Service
229-732-6211

Lower Chattahoochee River Soil and Water Conservation District

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