

Another Conservation Success Story...

Cobb County, Georgia

November 2006

Farming in the Midst of Urbanization

Most people would think that there were no farms left in Cobb County; however, Gerald W. Wallace would beg to differ. Wallace moved to this 80 acre tract of land in Powder Springs in 1969. When he moved here, there was no development around him and there was very little traffic to disturb his quaint environment.

Over time, development began to creep toward the southwest corner of Cobb County. Land prices increased making it difficult to continue farming in this area.

Due to increased development, flooding along Sweetwater Creek began to affect portions of his lower pastures. Despite all of the challenges, Wallace continues to make a go of his farm.

At first, he was skeptical about working with government programs – too much paper work–too much government intervention. After several meetings, he agreed to let us develop a basic conservation plan for his farm. His conservation plan included his primary goals and objectives for his farm. After explaining and reviewing NRCS programs and his conservation plan, Wallace decided to participate in government programs.

In 2002, Wallace requested information from our local Marietta field office on the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP).

Wallace applied for CCRP and was approved to fence out 15.8 acres of bottom land pasture to restore a riparian buffer along

Sweetwater Creek near his pasture. Not only did this provide an avenue to increase wildlife habitat, but it removed live-stock access to Sweetwater Creek and reduced stream bank erosion.

Additional practices, such as a watering facility and pipeline, were installed to provide adequate water for his livestock.

In addition to CCRP, Wallace applied for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to assist him with additional practices that were not funded under CCRP. Under EQIP, additional measures were funded such as a well, pasture and hayland planting, heavy use protection, fencing and prescribed grazing.

Wallace stated that, “without programs such as EQIP and CCRP, most farmers would not be able to put conservation on the land”. “The cost of materials, labor and gasoline has increased so much that these costshare programs helps us to protect our land and be good stewards of what we have.”

“Thanks to these programs, I have clean water for my livestock to drink, management of my pastures has improved through rotational grazing, soil erosion of the streambank has been reduced and the growth of vegetation in the riparian buffer has made a difference since I have fenced out the livestock from the stream.”

Wallace’s Farm is the first Farm to be approved for the CCRP in Cobb County.



“After” photo showing the Riparian buffer in place.



“Before” photo showing streambank erosion before installation of the buffer.

What is the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program?

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner.

The program provides assistance to farmers and ranchers in complying with Federal, State, and tribal environmental laws, and encourages environmental enhancement. The program is funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

CRP is administered by the Farm Service Agency, with NRCS providing technical land eligibility determinations, conservation planning and practice implementation.

The Conservation Reserve Program reduces soil erosion, protects the Nation's ability to produce food and fiber, reduces sedimentation in streams and lakes, improves water quality, establishes wildlife habitat, and enhances forest and wetland resources.

It encourages farmers to convert highly erodible cropland or other environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover, such as tame or native grasses, wildlife plantings, trees, filterstrips, or riparian buffers.

Farmers receive an annual rental payment for the term of the multi-year contract. Cost sharing is provided to establish the vegetative cover practices.

 **NRCS** Natural Resources
Conservation Service
770-792-0594

**Cobb County Soil And Water
Conservation District**

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