

Another Conservation Success Story...

Columbia County, Georgia

June 2007

Barron Cattle Farm Restored

William Barron purchased a 150-acre tract of cut-over timber ten years ago and has worked consistently toward his goal of turning this property into a productive cattle farm and a conservation-oriented farm as well. Even more significant is that he is doing it all without cost-share assistance.

Since purchasing the farm, Barron has worked closely with the Columbia County District and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). He first developed a conservation plan with technical assistance from NRCS and then completed the clearing and land preparation for the hay and pasture areas.

Approximately 30 acres of Tift 44 was sprigged for the hay field and Tift 9 Bahia grass was planted for the pasture fields.

Several structural improvements have been completed. A large hay barn/machinery storage building is complete and now stores ample hay for this winter. The perimeter fencing is complete. An NRCS designed 3-acre pond for watering has also been built.

Barron is also committed to protecting the farm pond and streams by installing conservation buffers and excluding cattle from the water bodies. He also manages each pasture for grazing by using temporary fencing to create paddocks.

Because of his ongoing conservation work, the Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District selected William Barron as the Conservationist of the Year in 2002.

More practices are planned for his farm. Among them are the installation of a corral system, prescribed grazing, cross fencing, installation of pipeline and water troughs with heavy use, nutrient and pest management, forage harvest management, and use exclusion and prescribed burning.

“Bill Barron, Columbia County SWCD 2002 Conservationist of the Year, is an excellent example of how one individual’s personal commitment to conservation can improve and protect Columbia County’s natural resources.”—Rick Crawford, Columbia County SWCD Supervisor



Ervin Hart of NRCS and William Barron of Barron Cattle Farm

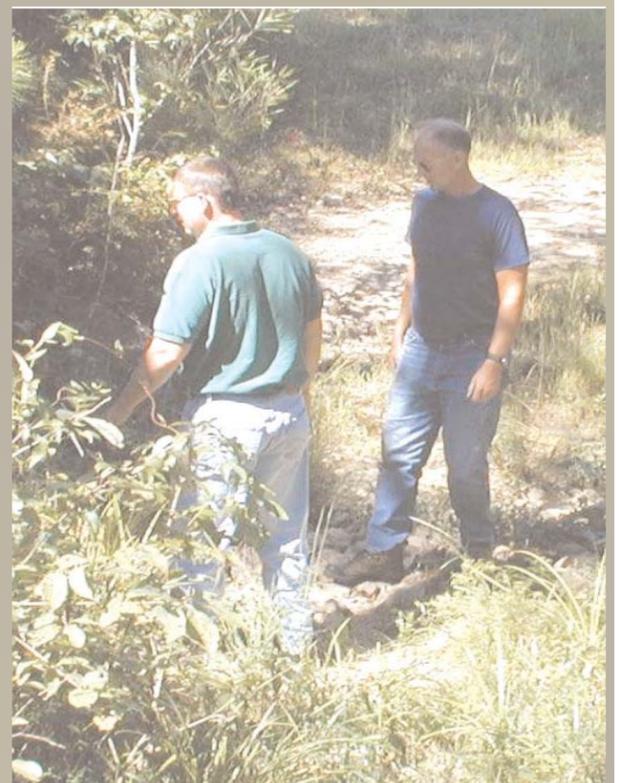
What is EQIP?

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of ten years. These contracts provide incentive payments and cost-shares to implement conservation practices. Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. EQIP activities are carried out according to an environmental quality incentives program plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice or practices to address the resource concerns. The practices are subject to NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions. The local conservation district approves the plan.

EQIP may cost-share up to 50 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices. Incentive payments may be provided for up to three years to encourage producers to carry out management practices they may not otherwise use without the incentive. However, limited resource producers and beginning farmers and ranchers may be eligible for cost-shares up to 90 percent. Farmers and ranchers may elect to use a certified third-party provider for technical assistance.

“The Natural Resources Conservation Service provided me the technical assistance I needed to develop a productive cattle farm.”—William Barron



Richard Barrett, Former District Conservationist in Augusta, and Bill Barron of Barron Cattle Farm investigate a stream crossing.

Central Savannah RC&D
706-798-7967

 **NRCS** Natural Resources
Conservation Service

706-798-4070

Columbia County Soil and Water
Conservation District