

Another Conservation Success Story...

Camden County, Georgia

October, 2006

Ivanhoe Plantation Gets Help to Improve Wildlife Habitat

Ivanhoe Plantation is an old rice and timber plantation located in Camden County along the Satilla River, north of Woodbine, the county seat.

Ivanhoe is owned by a group of businessmen from Brunswick and St. Simons Island.

It is utilized mostly as a hunting plantation and nature preserve, with the two primary goals of preserving the plantation and improving the wildlife habitat.

The owners requested assistance from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to improve wildlife habitat, both on the uplands and in the wetland fields where rice was once

grown, while producing income from the timberland on the property in a sustainable manner.

Beginning in 1999, NRCS worked with the owners to develop a

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wildlife management plan that would allow them to cut enough timber to finance the needed improvements to their plantation and to enhance the existing wildlife habitat.

EQIP funds from the Coastal Priority Area were used to replant cut-over areas in longleaf pine, establish wildlife food plots, conduct prescribed burning in older planted pine stands, maintain riparian buffers along the Satilla River, and preserve stands of mast producing hardwoods.

The EQIP contract is almost complete, with only some prescribed burning remaining.

In January of 2004, the young longleaf pines were burned for the second time in order to release them from competition, largely from volunteer slash pine that had come up in the old field.

In the fall of 2002, the Brunswick NRCS office began working with the owners to update the wildlife management plan for Ivanhoe Plantation and incorporate some of the old rice fields into the plan.

Funds were approved in 2003 for wetland enhancement through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP).

The diversity of vegetation on 150 acres of managed, diked wetland will be improved to benefit migratory waterfowl, shore and wading birds, including Woodstorks, an endangered species.

Biologists from NRCS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Ducks Unlimited as well as private consultants specializing in vegetative management, assisted in developing the wetland enhancement plans.

Future proposed enhancements include improving water circulation and management within the rice fields.

Bill Kirby, one of the Ivanhoe owners, recently expressed how

NRCS staff has assisted in achieving conservation and management objectives on the property: “Without the assistance from NRCS, all we could have done was cut and replanted our timber. What happened, and what we have today, would not have happened.

There would be no food plots, no longleaf pine planted, and no natural wildlife corridors.

The NRCS staff taught us what best management practices are and how to use them. In addition, their assistance was invaluable in translating what the contractors that we hired to work on our land were saying.”

The owners look forward to the next phase of enhancing their wetlands and to a long and productive relationship with NRCS as they continue to practice sustainable forestry and wildlife management on their property.



This young longleaf pine will thrive with prescribed burning, while the competing slash pine in the foreground will not.



Longleaf pine seedling on the Ivanhoe Plantation



The Satilla River at Ivanhoe Plantation looking upstream towards the rice fields.

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 **NRCS** Natural Resources
Conservation Service
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Satilla River Soil and Water
Conservation District

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