

CONSERVATION *Showcase*

Conservation Program Helps New Woodland Owner Manage/Improve Forest

Huntingdon County, PA

October 2012

Milton Morgan III bought 214 acres of woodland in central Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania in 1993. As a new woodland owner, he was interested in improving his property, both for future wood products and wildlife. He just didn't know where to start. A neighbor told him about the Bureau of Forestry and Milt arranged to meet with a Service Forester to walk and evaluate the woodland. "I learned that my land had been high graded and that invasive plants were starting to take over," said Milt. "To me everything looked green and nice, but my woods had problems." That meeting led Milt to hire a consulting forester to develop a forest management plan. It was this forester who directed Milt to USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 2011.

"The plan was written and I knew what had to be done, but I never got started," lamented Milt. That is until he received assistance through the NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). "Receiving an EQIP contract was a real incentive; it got me motivated and helped me focus on the specific items in my plan." Milt's EQIP contract included a variety of practices: Brush management to control Japanese Barberry and Multiflora rose (invasive plants); a vernal pool (i.e., temporary wetland) for plant and animal habitat; tree planting for establishing evergreen thermal cover; as well as fence and forest stand improvement. An old log landing was also smoothed and seeded with warm season grasses and wildflowers for pollinator habitat. "The wild flowers and grasses are really nice," said Milt. "We took a piece of ground that was bare and useless and made it productive again."

The contract was completed near the end of 2012 with the creation of the vernal pool. The problems that the forester had identified several years ago are becoming a thing of the past for Milt. The implementation of a variety of forest and wildlife management practices has returned this property to an optimal balance of land uses, including forest management, hunting, recreation, and soil conservation.



Treated Japanese Barberry



Timber Stand Improvement



Aspen Regeneration



Flagging Fence Location



Fence Installation



Pollinator Planting

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