

Featured Landowner Success-CRP

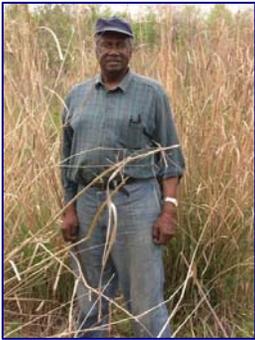
Featured Success: Improving Habitat for Northern Bobwhite Quail

Program: Conservation Reserve Program

Partners: NRCS

Date: June 2008

Providing Healthy Habitat for Northern Bobwhite Quail



Mr. Eli Brown
Franklin Parish
Landowner

Mr. Brown is a retired Franklin Parish school teacher and cotton farmer who has converted 122 acres of farmland to native grasses to improve habitat for Bobwhite Quail in Franklin Parish.

You may remember hearing exciting stories from friends and family about their fun days when they once hunted quail. Today, it seems that the stories of quail hunting are the only artifacts left that connect so many to the Northern bobwhite quail.

Fewer and fewer people are able to hunt quail--the native grassland specie--due to its declining population in the Southeastern United States. Over the last 40 years, population has declined over 80 percent, making the bird very limited throughout its range.

The Franklin Parish Field Office understands just how important quail is to Louisiana and to the Southeastern United States. Franklin Parish was once known for its great quail hunting and clear bayous that stretched across farms along the Macon Ridge. The Franklin Parish Field Office, eager to restore this area, has partnered with over 120 landowners throughout the parish with a common goal--to convert marginal cropland to wildlife habitat primarily to increase the quail population and reduce soil erosion. The Franklin Parish Field Office is playing an active role to increase the population of quail in the area. The Natural Resources Conservation Service's District Conservationist Jason Hardie tells us, "Quail represent a healthy and diverse landscape; if quail are on your land, then that is an indication that the natural resources in your area are doing good." To date, more than 3,424 acres of land have been established to native grasses and forbs, which have saved over 14,000 tons of soil annually from entering local stream bodies. Native grasses, a vital habitat for the Northern bobwhite quail, and forbs provide forage, security, nesting, and brood rearing, which are all essential to quail habitat.

Mr. Eli Brown has played a leading role in helping the Franklin Parish Field Office reach its goal. Mr. Brown converted 122 acres of farmland to native grass in 2004. After his retirement, Mr. Brown took great interest in improving wildlife habitat for the

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Native Grass on Mr. Brown's
farmland

Northern bobwhite quail and also for the Eastern wild turkey on his farm. His hard work and dedication have definitely helped in the effort to increase the population of the Northern bobwhite quail in Franklin Parish.

With the help of dedicated conservationists like Mr. Brown, the Franklin Parish Field Office will continue to thrive on increasing habitat for the Northern bobwhite quail in Franklin Parish.