

Hamilton County Farmer Applies Practices

Wallace "Aubie" Smith, Jr. owns and leases over 400 acres in the Ooltewah community. His operation includes over 200 acres of hay, 100 acres of wheat straw, and 100 acres of corn silage and he no-tills over 90% of his crop acreage each year.

Smith applied for and will receive cost-share funding under the USDA-NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for practices including three beef stacks, three stream crossings, pasture and hayland planting, cross-fencing and alternative watering sources. He currently utilizes conservation tillage and manages his animal waste. Application of these practices help reduce soil loss, improve forage utilization, improve water quality, improve income and enhance wildlife and fish habitat.



Smith has obtained assistance from the Hamilton County Soil Conservation District/NRCS Field Office in the application of innovative new Best Management Practices (BMPs) on his farm, which he has demonstrated to others in the community. His initiative has led to the improvement of water quality in the Long-Savannah Watershed.

Due to agriculture related impairments in the Long-Savannah Watershed, it has been targeted by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) for grant funds through the Hamilton County Soil Conservation District (SCD) for cost-sharing of BMPs. Smith used those grant funds to install practices including heavy use area protection, which reduces soil erosion and improves water quality, air quality, aesthetics, and livestock health.

USDA-NRCS is presently conducting Tupelo soil studies on the Smith farm for use in reclaiming heavy metal contaminated soil sites in downtown Chattanooga.