

NRCS Alabama

# Current Developments



Fall 2007

## From The State Conservationist - Gary Kobylski

What an interesting year we have had helping landowners put conservation on the ground. Even with the continuing drought and the severe conditions farmers have had to endure, we have been able to assist many. As we reflect on Fiscal Year 2007, I want to thank each of you for your tremendous efforts in helping implement the many conservation practices that we strive to do each day. Through the dedication and hard work of all of our employees, partners, and volunteers, we exceeded ALL of our performance goals in Fiscal Year 2007. Alabama has always been a leader and I commend you for the work you are doing.

Last year, we obligated over \$31 million for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP). EWP allowed us to help many local entities and landowners affected by Hurricane Katrina. This year we successfully implemented \$17 million of this EWP work. Over 23 miles of channels were cleared and 200,800 tons of debris and downed timber removed. We also obligated

over \$12.3 million for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) which resulted in 1,263 contracts.

Fiscal Year 2008 promises to be a challenging year with budget cuts and implementation of the new Farm Bill. We still do not have a budget and are working under a Continuing Resolution until November 16. In all probability this will be extended.

As you look back on the many accomplishments of NRCS during the past year, there is much work to be done. Do take time in this season of Thanksgiving to reflect on the countless contributions your expertise and dedication make to the citizens of Alabama. We live in a great state and we have much to be thankful for. Each of us at the State Office looks forward to working with you in the upcoming year ahead.

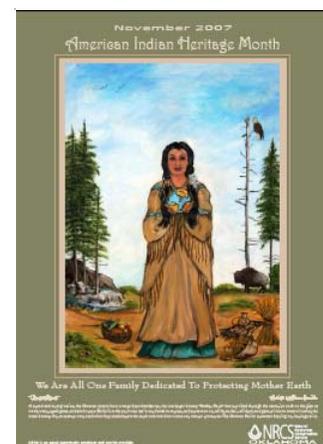
*Gary*

## Celebrating Native American Heritage Month

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) celebrates American Indian Heritage Month in November. A painting by an American Indian Tribe artist is chosen each year to be featured on the poster. The poster is designed and distributed by as part of the American Indian Heritage Month celebration.

The artist that painted the 2007 poster is LaDon Smith of Boswell, Oklahoma.

LaDon Stated " I am proud to be of Choctaw descent and happy to be part of a contest that reflects a subject very important to me and has meaning to all of us. There must be a combined effort by all to help preserve and protect our natural resources for others who will follow us."



# Land Judging Contests

Land judging contests are important tools to help young people connect to the land. Land judging is designed to help students learn more about land, difference in soils and their capabilities, methods of soil conservation and improvement, treatments to help in obtaining higher production, and selection of suitable home sites.

Four separate sites are judged: cropland, pastureland, forestland, and home site. For each of the areas, students are given soil tests; information for ph, phosphorus, and potassium; and the number of problems, practices, and land uses. After the teams receive the ground rules, they have fifteen minutes to judge each site.

First and second place winners at the county level compete in the district event, and the district winners compete in the state finals.

The champion state team will represent Alabama in the International Event in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in the spring.

## Lamar and Fayette Counties Land Judging

By April Hill, DC, NRCS, Fayette, AL

Fayette and Lamar Counties held their annual land judging contest on September 25. Students from three high schools in Fayette County and two from Lamar County attended the event. It was a hot day, but it did not discourage the students as they visited the four pits that had been dug for the contest.

From Fayette County, Berry High School came in first place, Hubbertville High School second place, and Fayette High School third place. From Lamar County, Sulligent High School came in first place and Lamar County High School second place.



Students complete score cards at the land judging contest in Fayette

## Lauderdale County

By Brenda Hand, DAC, SWCD, Florence, AL

Whites Farm was the location for the annual land judging contest in Lauderdale County in October. The Lauderdale County SWCD/NRCS hosted the event.

Four high schools participated: Lauderdale County, Lexington, Rogers, and Florence Freshman Center.

Florence Freshman Center captured first place, Lauderdale County placed second, and Lexington was third. It was a great educational opportunity for all the students.



Participants have 15 minutes to complete score cards for the four sites.

## Cullman County Hosts County and District Events

By Johnny Granthem, Public Relations Specialist, Cullman County SWCD

During October, the Cullman County SWCD/NRCS sponsored the Cullman County and the North District FFA land judging contests.

The Cullman County contest was held October 4 on the Brian Kress farm. Four teams competed: Holly Pond, West Point, Hanceville High Schools and Cullman Middle School.

The Holly Pond High FFA team won first place, Hanceville High second, Cullman Middle third, and West Point High fourth.

Seventeen teams from the 20-county FFA North District met at the St. Bernard Farm on October 30 for the land judging competition. The district winner was the Speake High School team, Falkville High School was second, Winfield High school third, and Colbert Heights High School placed fourth. These four teams will compete at the state level.

# Highlighting Conservation Education

## North Alabama State Fair Features Conservation

By Brenda Hand, DAC, SWCD, Florence, AL

Personnel from the Lauderdale and Colbert Counties SWCD/NRCS set up a joint information booth at the North Alabama State Fair.

During the week-long event in late September, information was distributed on backyard conservation, buffers, and web soil survey. Coloring books and bookmarks were available for the younger fair-goers. Many of the distributed handouts were in English as well as Spanish.

In an effort to personally address all questions, the booth was manned each night by NRCS/SWCD personnel.

The Lauderdale County SWCD donated a bird feeder that was given away by drawing after the event. Mr. and Mrs. Bill Davis, from Spruce Pine, won the feeder.



*The Backyard Conservation display was the centerpiece of the Lauderdale and Colbert Counties SWCD/NRCS joint information booth at the North Alabama State Fair.*

## Limited Resource Farmer Display

By Merry Buford, DC, NRCS, Oneonta, Alabama

The Blount County SWCD/NRCS held a public meeting to review the Watershed Assessment conducted by Danny Williams (retired NRCS employee).

A display showed conservation programs and practices that are implemented in Blount County. The display also showed special opportunities such as the Small Scale Farm Initiative and the 319 Dry Creek Watershed Grant Project.

The Small Scale Farmer display (centerpiece of the exhibit) is available for use by Alabama field offices. Contact Fay Garner in Public Affairs Section of the State Office (334-887-4506).



*The Oneonta Field Office used the Small Scale Farmer display as the centerpiece of their Watershed Assessment information exhibit.*

## Lee County SWCD/NRCS Sets Up Display At The County Fair

By Anne Miller, DAC, SWCD, Lee County, AL

The Lee County Fair attracts an assortment of individuals and provided an ideal opportunity for the Lee County SWCD to educate the general public about the services available from the local district office.

Earth Team Volunteers partnered with Lee County NRCS/SWCD to decorate and staff a booth at the fair.

This year's theme for the booth was "Helping People Help the Land through Education and Assistance."

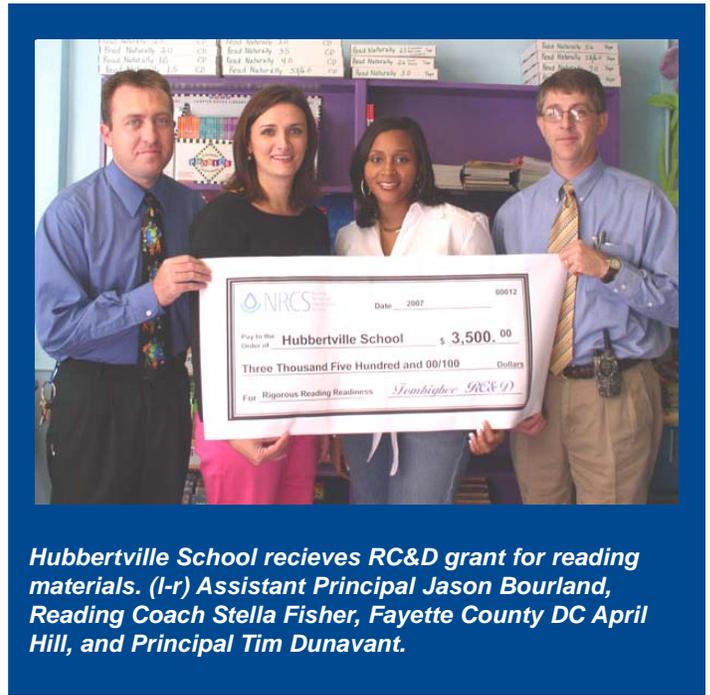
The booth included material relative to NRCS conservation programs and technical assistance available to landowners. The booth also provided a showcase of the conservation efforts going on in Lee County. The booth contained pictures and information about Earth Day celebrations with local schools and the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Lee County Water Festival.

The booth provided an opportunity for students to share their conservation experiences.

Over 18,000 people attended the Lee County Fair. Adults and children alike found items of interest at the fair booth.



*Ben Burton, Lee County Farm Bill Technical Assistant and Lee County Earth Team Volunteer assisted with the Lee County Fair booth.*



*Hubbertville School receives RC&D grant for reading materials. (l-r) Assistant Principal Jason Bourland, Reading Coach Stella Fisher, Fayette County DC April Hill, and Principal Tim Dunavant.*

## RC&D Grant Helps Improve Reading Program

By April Hill, DC, NRCS, Fayette, AL

The Hubbertville School officials in Fayette County knew that their students did not read at the same level. The school needed reading materials in a broad range of levels. A grant from the Tombigbee RC&D Council provided funds for school officials to purchase different levels of reading materials for students K-6th grade. The materials included a set of 432 non-fiction books and 271 fiction books to be used in small group reading lessons.

When children are successful readers, they become excited about reading and will increase their fluency and comprehensive skills.

Hubbertville School can now provide students with reading material appropriate to their individual reading level, in a variety of subjects.

As an Alabama Reading Initiative School, Hubbertville's goal is 100 percent mastery of grade level reading. The material purchased with this RC&D grant will allow them to push toward that goal.

# Bibb County Soil Survey Complete

By Jerome Langlinais, MLRA Project Leader, MLRA Soil Survey Office, Tuscaloosa, AL

A “Last Acre Ceremony” was held on October 16, 2007, to celebrate the conclusion of the mapping of soils in Bibb County, Alabama. The celebration was held at the Park in the Six Mile Community. Various state and federal agencies participated. The event was coordinated by the NRCS MLRA in Auburn, Alabama, and the Bibb County NRCS/SWCD.

Charles Love, State Soil Scientist from the NRCS MLRA office in Auburn, explained the benefits of the soil survey. “A soil survey is an acre-by-acre inventory of the soil resource. It is developed by a professional soil scientist who covers the land on foot, examines the soil in detail, and classifies it according to a national system of soil taxonomy. The location of each kind of soil is plotted on aerial photographs. Each soil is then interpreted or translated in regard to how it will respond when subjected to various uses and management. Soon, the soil survey will also be available via the Web Soil Survey giving access at your finger tips,” said Love.

For many years, soil surveys have been used by farmers to determine the capability of the soil to support certain kinds of crops, and for installing soil and water conservation systems. Surveys are still of extreme value for these uses. In more recent years, however, the value of soil survey information has

been realized by many nonagricultural users. Engineers, appraisers, realtors, foresters, and city officials have come to value soil data to make responsible decisions when selecting sites for housing, highways, airports, schools, factories, parks, cemeteries, recreational areas, and other uses.

State Representative Cam Ward participated in the event and said, “We are very pleased with the product of a soil survey for Bibb County. The soil data is very valuable to the citizens of Bibb County and is information that we have needed for many years. We appreciate the leadership NRCS has made in making this data available to Bibb County landowners.”

USDA-NRCS provides free technical assistance to help people conserve, maintain, and improve natural resources and the environment. Alabama landowners have access to NRCS technical assistance through a local county office.



*A golden augur was presented to LaRue Bert, the Bibb County District Chairman, to mark the Last Acre Ceremony.*

*l-r: NRCS ASTC-Central Team Charlie Ramsey; NRCS DC Kent McCray, Tuscaloosa; Dan James, Bibb Co. District Supervisor, Sec/Treas; Jerome Langlinais, MLRA Project Leader, Tuscaloosa SS; Bibb Co. District Supervisor Billie Ragland; Bibb Co. District Supervisor/Vice Chairman Joe Owings; SS Project Leader Lawrence McGhee, Tuscaloosa; State Representative Cam Ward; Bibb Co. District Supervisor/Chairperson LaRue Burt; District Supervisor Don Harmon; and MO Leader/NRCS State Soil Scientist Charles Love, Auburn.*



# Demonstrations - Workshops - Field Days

## Fence Demonstration Held in Fayette County

By April Hill, DC, NRCS, Fayette, AL

Fayette County NRCS/SWCD hosted a Fence Demonstration at the farm of local landowners, Mr. and Mrs. Grady Peoples. The demonstration helped to educate small farmers on the proper techniques of fence building. Attendees and volunteers got hands-on experience in fence building.

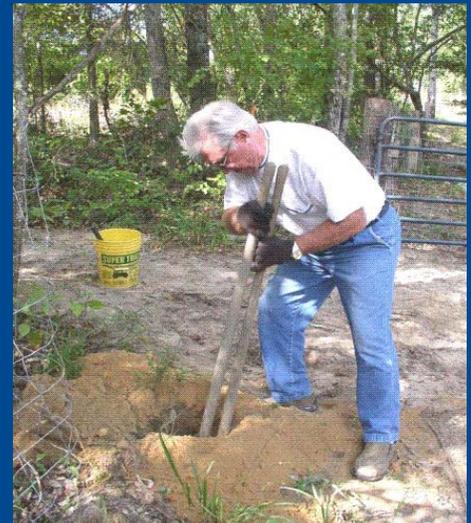
The demonstration started with some technical information and a talk about the NRCS standard on fence building. NRCS personnel then demonstrated how to complete braces, the proper spacing, how deep the post should be in the ground, and on which side of the post to place the wire.

The participants gleaned valuable information that they can carry back to their own farm and initiate.



Mr. Peoples sits on tractor while demonstration attendee guides the auger while digging a fence hole.

Volunteer Jimmy Roberts hand-digs a fence post hole.



## Fayette County Watershed Assessment

Fayette County held a watershed assessment public meeting in September to present assessment results, receive public input on their concerns, incorporate these into the assessment, develop priorities for watersheds, and program delivery for the district. Also discussed was a future strategy to accomplish natural resources conservation in the county.



DAC Margaret Brown gives an overview of the watershed assessment.



A concerned group of people attended the meeting. I-r NRCS DC April Hill, NRCS Soil Con Tech Jimmy Butler, Mayor of Belk Ronald Waldrop, Fayette Co. FSA Executive Director Cindy Owens, Fayette Co. DAC Margaret Brown, Fayette Co. ACES Joan Weaver, Commissioner Rodolphus (Sonny) Cotton, District Supervisor Kay Roberts, Mayor of Berry and District Supervisor Roy Dobbs, and District Chairman of Fayette Co. SWCD Richard Galloway.

## Alabama Sheep And Meat Goat Producers Association Attend Oklahoma Workshop

By Eddie B. May, DC, NRCS, Talladega, AL

I had a great opportunity to travel to Langston University in Oklahoma in September with eleven other Alabamians to participate in a Goat Breeding Workshop and a tour of the school's Goat Research facilities. The workshop was sponsored by the Alabama A&M University Small Farms Research Center.

The three-day workshop focused on goat management, principles of goat nutrition, breeding and selection, herd health, external parasites, goat budgets, control of internal parasites, and a hands-on goat insemination class and demonstration. All of the participants performed the insemination process on at least one goat.

Our host for the event was Terry Gipson, Interim Goat Specialist. Lionel Dawson, goat specialist from Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine, spoke on the health and maintenance of small ruminants. Les Hutchens of Reproduction Enterprises, Inc. headed the insemination workshop.

Each participant came back home with tons of information in handouts as well as practical training and experience.



*Randolph County SWCD Supervisor Dean Wysner, Mason Wysner, and SWCD DAC Susan Baldwin view a presentation using the Enviroscope model at the field day.*

## Randolph County Young Farmers Field Day

By Susan Baldwin, DAC, SWCD, Wedowee, AL

In April, the Randolph County Young Farmers held a Farm Field Day at the Wedowee Kiwanis Park for over 400 fourth graders from throughout the county. The students visited stations featuring different farm animals, honeybees, tractor equipment, youth loan information presented by FSA, and natural resources information presented by county NRCS/SWCD staff. Randolph County participants included SWCD Supervisors Dean Wysner and Wayne Huddleston, DAC Susan Baldwin, and NRCS Technician Scotty Noles. (con't page 8)



*Eddie May (r) gets hands-on experience in goat insemination at the Goat Breeding Workshop in Oklahoma.*



*At the Young Farmers Field Day, students gathered around hit and miss engine (a type of four-stroke internal combustion engine commonly used in the early 1900s) and a corn sheller as Mr. Bain demonstrates how they operate.*

(con't from page 7)

Using the Enviroscope, (a landscape model that shows what can happen to soil when using poor conservation practices) Scotty Noles demonstrated some improper conservation practices. He used examples of the farmer plowing and spreading fertilizer too close to the water, and people changing oil and cutting grass and not properly disposing of it. Then Scotty demonstrated the proper conservation practices that keep chemicals from entering streams and water. "Water is necessary for life, and water education is vital to maintaining our water resources" is the message that was given to the students during the day at the Young Farmers Field Day.



*Bob Burlison, County Commissioner (background) and NRCS DC Wade Hill assemble intake for a 10-inch pump.*

### Red Water Blues Field Days

by John Harris, DC, NRCS, Autaugaville, AL

Over 130 attendees spent the day in Prattville at one of three Red Water Blues Field Days this year. Participants were able to attend the Qualified Credentialed Inspector School followed by a bus tour of a "HomePlace" development. Four stops were visited where storm water products were displayed by seven vendors from two states.

After lunch, technical presentations were given on erosion control practices and products.

The two other field days were held in Cullman and Spanish Fort with a similar number of attendees. Red Water Blues field days are sponsored by the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee and partners including NRCS and local SWCDs.



*Vendors displayed and demonstrated erosion control products and practices at the Red Water Blues field day.*

### Preventing a Potential Dam Failure

By Judy Hill, ASTC-FO North, and Jeff Allred, Res Engineer, NRCS, Decatur, AL

Quick action by a host of local partners averted a potential failure of a watershed dam in Marion County recently. Little New River Site #2, located on Bostick Creek, completed in 1960, is one of the oldest watershed dams in Alabama. Its primary purpose is for flood protection and prevention.

The condition of the reservoir was compared to that of July 2006, when annual mowing maintenance was completed. At that time, the pool level was very low and the riser was several feet above the water level, but in April 2007, the riser was underwater. Spring rains were minimal, but the reservoir was up to the crest of the emergency spillway, as much as 20 feet above normal. Jeff Allred, NRCS Engineer, surmised that something was clogging the riser.

The Marion County Commission installed a siphon pipe and began drawing down the reservoir so that the riser could be inspected. The drainage process was very slow. A 6-inch rain in August again filled the pool to more than eight feet above the riser.

Marion County NRCS DC Wade Hill helped secure two 10-inch irrigation pumps, in addition to two 6-inch pumps the county had rented. The pumps ran 24/7 until September when the water finally receded below the riser and it could be inspected.

The Marion County SWCD hired a contractor to remove the blockage from within the riser and are working with a local contractor to install a new trash rack, a cover for the riser access, and repair the valve.

No single agency could have solved this problem alone. Thanks to the efforts of local partners - the Marion County Commission, NRCS, and the Marion County SWCD - a potential crisis was averted.

## Love Completes Term on “National Civil Rights Committee”

By Alice Love, Soil Conservst, NRCS, Auburn, AL

In October 2004, I was selected to serve on the National Civil Rights Committee (NCRC) through a nationwide application process to find candidates to serve in six different categories on the committee. My three-year term expired in September 2007. I cannot give justice to how this experience has enlightened my knowledge of Civil Rights from a national perspective.

During my term on the committee, I had the opportunity to work with two NRCS State Conservationists (Rosendo Trevino III; former NCRC Chair, and Joyce Swartzendruber, Present NCRC Chair) and two USDA-NRCS Chief’s (Bruce Knight, former Chief and Arlen Lancaster, present Chief). They all were a joy to serve under.

I also had the opportunity to work with several National NRCS Office divisions regarding Civil Rights issues or concerns submitted to the committee. They were always willing to assist the committee. In my opinion, they demonstrate good customer service to their internal customers (NCRC members).

NCRC meetings are held at various locations and are supported through a National Budget Allocation. This gives the committee an opportunity to visit with NRCS offices throughout the country to observe



NCRC and Advisors with the Maine CR Committee.

conservation methods used in different states toward Civil Rights in USDA-NRCS program delivery, etc.

My most memorable visits were in the states of Montana and Maine. In Montana, I gained exposure by working with tribes and addressing their conservation needs. Water resources were a very high concern in many areas in Montana. We visited a reservation that had just completed an EQIP dam project.

During my last meeting in Maine, I learned about wild blueberry farming. I must say, from my observation, this is a labor intense crop. We met a small scale organic wild blueberry farmer and large scale wild blueberry farmer and learned about the harvesting and marketing process of wild blueberries. Maine is number one worldwide in wild blueberry production.

The committee received invitations from state NRCS offices willing to serve as hosts during one of the four NCRC meetings held each year. To serve as a host state, a letter (from State Conservationist or with their concurrence) must be submitted to the NCRC Chair.

Information about the NCRC activities is on the my.NRCS website under Employee Resources.

I recommend that if you have an interest in serving on the NCRC, to apply as vacancies come available. (It is mandatory that an applicant be of the specific vacancy category.) Please do not get discouraged if you are not selected on your first try. I wasn't! I feel my determination and persistence eventually presented me with the opportunity to serve. I will forever cherish the opportunity and knowledge gained through this colateral assignment.



Above (l-r): NRCS DC David Garcelon, Washington County, Maine; Project Representative of the Passamaquoddy Tribe Blueberry Irrigation; and Phuc Vu (NCRC Asian American/ Pacific Islander). Right: wild blueberries in field.



# Rain Garden Installed At Coosa County School

By Annette Spivey, Soil Consvt Tech, NRCS, Alex City, AL

NRCS, the Coosa County SWCD, the Lower Coosa River Clean Water Partnership, and the Coosa Valley RC&D gave a hand in a different way to help control soil erosion at the Central Elementary and Middle School in Coosa County.

I had several hats to wear for the Rain Garden Project, I just didn't know how many, as I sold the idea of a "Rain Garden" to the Superintendent of the Coosa County School System. The project was initiated to solve an erosion problem that had existed for several years at the school in Hanover. Because the drought was on everyone's mind this summer, when discussing the project the question was asked, "Is it going to make it rain?"

No, it did not make it rain! However, it turned out to be a great project and worked very well when it finally did rain this summer.

A topographic survey and soils investigation was completed on the proposed area by Bob Beaty, Resource Soil Scientist and myself. The schools had two areas where roof runoff was causing erosion at the back of the buildings.

To establish the garden, we dug a hole 3 feet deep and replaced the soil with a mixture of 1/3 sand, 1/3 soil, and 1/3 mulch until it measured 12 inches



*Mrs. Buttram's summer daycare class came out to lend a hand in planting the plants.*



*Before the project.*

*After the Rain Garden project was completed.*

deep. Then we put in a 4-inch perforated pipe that is connected to an underground drain. The pipe was covered with the mixture until the hole was filled. The mixture will allow runoff to settle in the rain garden for a longer period of time before the excess runs into the drain pipe. The area was then mulched and planted with native plants that tolerate moisture and full sun.

Even though the main purpose of the garden is to control erosion, filter out pollutants, and be aesthetically pleasing, it will also be used by science and math classes to study drainage, slopes, native plants, and landscaping.

A special "thank you" goes to Tommy Futral, ACES/Tallapoosa County, for helping get the project started, and to the Coosa County Highway and Engineering Department for the use of their equipment and expertise! Also thanks to the extra helping hands from the Middle Tallapoosa River Clean Water Partnership, Coosa County Forestry Commission, and Mrs. Buttram's class. Funding was provided through a Coosa Valley RC&D Grant through the Lower Coosa River Clean Water Partnership.

If you're interested in installing a rain garden, we'll be glad to offer our information or technical assistance on site evaluation and layout, plants, materials, and cost.

# Cultural Resources News

By Teresa Paglione, Cultural Resources Specialist, NRCS, Auburn, AL

## Jackson County Archeological Site Explored

In July, I supervised eight Earth Team (ET) Volunteers in testing an archeological site on the Paint Rock River in Jackson County. A few months earlier, the site was discovered in a grass strip adjacent to a field road and cotton fields during a cultural resources survey for a proposed streambank stabilization.

Diagnostic artifacts such as a fluted Clovis (spear) point, was found, making this Paleo-Indian site potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Paleo-Indian is the earliest recognized period of occupation in Alabama. The highly mobile Paleo inhabited the southeastern United States between 12,000 and 10,000 years ago.

The ET Volunteers accumulated 96 hours mapping Site JA1104, taking elevations, placing pins along three transects at 10 meter intervals in the project area, excavating shovel tests, and conducting controlled surface collections at the site. Ten shovel tests were excavated within the project construction limits, or where ground-disturbing activities would occur.

The results of the testing procedure indicated no intact cultural strata so the stabilization project could proceed as planned. Portions of the site outside the project area were not tested; the remaining portion of the site is still considered eligible for the NRHP.

A cultural resources assessment report was submitted to the Alabama Historical Commission for review and comment and a special appendix of the report was produced for each volunteer to document their efforts to protect our environment and our national heritage – archaeological sites!



*Thirty oversized fiberglass fishing lures, decorated by local artists and sponsored by area organizations, were on display.*

*Paglione displayed archeological artifacts and other items in a booth.*



*Volunteers John Richburg, ASTC-FO West (r) digs while his son, Jason, screens soil for artifacts.*

## Hooked on the Alabama River

On a beautiful Saturday in September, the Alabama River Clean Water Partnership hosted “Hooked on the Alabama River” a festival to promote the Alabama River — the most spectacular natural resource in our region. The Riverfront Amphitheatre in downtown Montgomery was a perfect place to hold the event.

Booths were set up by numerous environmental groups and agencies. I set up a booth and the Montgomery County NRCS/SWCD set up a booth staffed by DC April Jones and DAC Alice Ward. We talked about the environment and archaeology to hundreds of participants, including recently transferred personnel from Maxwell Air Force Base, and even a few “Katrina” transplants.

The World Wildlife Fund, the Mid-South RC&D Council, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), Montgomery Water Works, and many other sponsors, helped make the day very successful.

# Conservation Tillage at the Sunbelt Agricultural Expo

By J. M. Dangler, NRCS, GA State Agronomist; and Ben Moore, NRCS, AL State Agronomist

The Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition (Expo) in Moultrie, Georgia, gives producers the opportunity to obtain information about the latest agricultural equipment, research, and technology. This year's event, held in October, was the 30th anniversary of the Expo. Once again, Georgia and Alabama NRCS participated in this "premier farm show in the world" as part of the Team Conservation Tillage group.

The Team Conservation Tillage group also includes representatives of Auburn University, three units of USDA-ARS, and The University of Georgia's College of Engineering Science AgP2 Program. The Georgia Conservation Tillage Alliance and the Alabama and Georgia Chapters of the Soil and Water Conservation Society were also involved.

Information provided by the team included implementing conservation tillage, applying the economics of conservation tillage in peanuts and other crops, capturing carbon by soil organic matter, improving soil quality, and reducing compaction and using cover crops.

Several new pieces of conservation equipment were on display. This year, there was a demonstration about using peanuts for biofuel and information about how crops produced under conservation tillage increase the efficiency of water use. Another demonstration allowed producers to see how soil loss is affected by the presence or the



*An attraction for the Conservation Tillage Team was a demonstration about using peanuts for biofuel.*

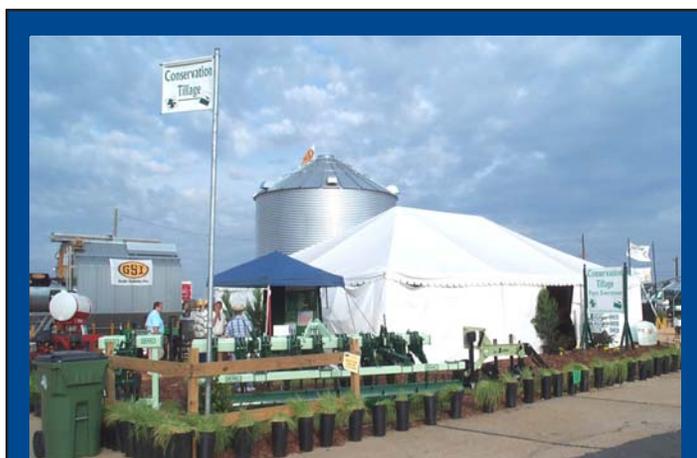
absence of a cover crop during the rainfall events typically experienced in the southeast.

The Team Conservation Tillage tent was located along the main pedestrian thoroughfare of the fairgrounds, within sight of a major equipment manufacturer who displayed a \$590,000 cotton picker with an on-board module builder that permits continuous harvest of the crop. The team members watched the daily parade of antique tractors. "Conservation tillage is as relevant today in cropping systems as it was decades ago when this antique equipment was used", said Ben Moore, Alabama State Agronomist, as he watched the antique tractor parade.

The Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition is a family event and there is something of interest to all families, not just farm families. Many vendors sold products or informed people in all walks of life. There were also a number of vendors selling hot dogs and funnel cakes! This is an exciting, informative, and fun event. Make plans to attend next year - October 14-16, 2008.



*Exhibits in the tent made available information on a variety of subjects.*



*The Team Conservation Tillage tent attracted many visitors at the 30th Annual Sunbelt Expo.*

# Personnel

## Accessions

Joshua Elliott, Soil Conservst, Andalusia, AL  
Daniel Goins, Soil Conservst, Athens, AL  
Tammy Hussey, Area Admin Coord (East Team), Troy, AL  
Lee Stanfield, Procurement Tech, Auburn, AL

## Promotions

Jeff Allred, Res Engr, Decatur, AL  
Duane Andrews, Soil Conserv Tech, Linden, AL  
Richard Collier, RC&D Coord, Ozark, AL to Assistant State Conservationist (FO), East Team, Troy, AL  
Matt Copeland, Soil Conserv Tech, Hamilton, AL  
Randall East, Res Engr, Grove Hill, AL  
Shirley Hall-Cole, Budget Analyst, Auburn, AL  
Wade Hill, Soil Conservst, Moulton, AL to District Conservst, Hamilton, AL  
Randy Martin, Res Engr, Ozark, AL  
Linda McGraw, Area Admin Coord, Columbiana, AL  
Joe Norris, Cartographic Tech, Auburn, AL to Geographer, Auburn, AL  
Stephon Thomas, Soil Scientist (Landscape Analyst) (GIS Specialist), Tuscaloosa, AL

Timothy Williams, Res Engr, Guntersville, AL

## Reassignments

Zachry Adams, Soil Conservst, Cullman, AL to Soil Conservst, Geneva, AL  
Amy Bernauer, Agricultural Engr, Tuscaloosa, AL to Agricultural Engr, Auburn, AL  
Jamie Carpenter, Soil Conservst, Athens, AL to Soil Conservst, Moulton, AL  
Matt Copeland, Soil Conserv Tech, Hamilton, AL to Soil Conservst, Cullman, AL  
Anne Cross, Soil Conservst, Guntersville, AL to Soil Con, Rainsville, AL  
Don Nelson, Soil Conservst, Jackson, AL to Clayton, AL  
Heidi Richards, RC&D Coord, Oxford, AL to RC&D Coord, Birmingham, AL

## Retirements

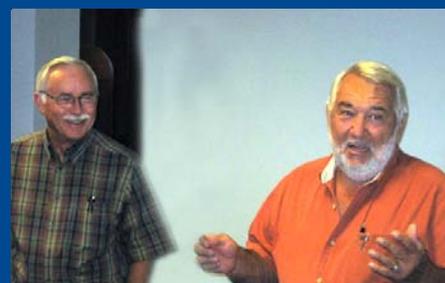
Julie Best, Public Affairs Specialist, Auburn, AL  
Rhoda Kerr, Soil Conserv Tech, Opelika, AL  
Roland Perry, District Conservst, Livingston, AL

## Retirees Honored



**Julie Best (r), Public Affairs Specialist in the State Office, retired August 31. A reception was held in the State Office on August 21. She and her husband, Roger, have moved into their new home in Tennessee.**

**Rhoda Kerr (front), Soil Conserv Tech in the Opelika Field Office, was honored with a reception on September 24. She retired October 3 after 30 years of service.**



**The West Team employees and some state office employees honored Roland Perry (r), DC in Livingston, on September 25 with a retirement reception during the Team Meeting. Roland retired on October 3.**

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