Mr. Paige uses his resources prudently. Because of longstanding water quality issues in Duplin County, he has worked with NRCS to adopt management practices that conserve water and help enhance water quality conditions on his farm. How is he doing this? He implements no-till techniques and plants cover crops. He also maintains 20 feet under vegetated boundaries that are not farmed, off-set from ditches and uses an integrated pest management system.

Furthermore, he understands that integrating wildlife habitat management into his operation will provide added resource benefits. Mr. Paige is working through the NRCS Longleaf Pine Initiative to restore Longleaf Pine habitats on his lands.

Mr. Paige’s voluntary conservation management practices have improved resource conditions on his farm, which help him to stand out. Therefore, when he applied for NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), a program that helps producers who are already demonstrating a high level of conservation resource management to further their efforts, he was a prime applicant for the program.

His efforts to improve resources on his farm and for Duplin County will not end. Mr. Paige is leaving a legacy of good farming and conservation practices for the county. In addition, his lands are currently in a state easement program to protect farmland from development.

“I want this land to be here,” said Paige. “I want this farm to be an example of what can happen and how it can work when you tend to everything while being aware of the impact farming has on the environment and take appropriate steps to protect it.”

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**Ranking Deadlines For Programs**

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<tbody>
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<td>General EQIP, EQIP Forestry, EQIP Longleaf Pine Initiative, All EQIP National Initiatives, WHIP WLFW – Golden Winged Warbler</td>
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<td>March 15, 2013</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>AWEP</th>
<th>CSP</th>
<th>CSIP</th>
<th>EQIP</th>
<th>WHIP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$3 mil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$9.3 mil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$12 mil</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$1.8 mil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$12.5 mil</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$1.65 mil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$12.6 mil</td>
<td>$230,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$1.6 mil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$13.8 mil</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$1.5 mil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$13.6 mil</td>
<td>$900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$1.3 mil</td>
<td></td>
<td>$12.4 mil</td>
<td>$860,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>$800,000</td>
<td>$1 mil</td>
<td>$12 mil</td>
<td>$580,000</td>
</tr>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$700,000</td>
<td>$1.9 mil</td>
<td>$16.7 mil</td>
<td>$1.1 mil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$650,000</td>
<td>$2.7 mil</td>
<td>$21 mil</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals $205,000 $10 mil $5.6 mil $138.9 mil $4.545 mil

TOTAL ALL YEARS = $159,250,000

*Estimated numbers - official numbers available upon request.*

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**WRP - Number of Contracts, Acres Enrolled and Restored**

- **Each Box Represent an Approved Enrollment for Fiscal Year**

**Acres Restored for Fiscal Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Projected</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>39 ac.</td>
<td>2,089 ac.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0 ac.</td>
<td>1,428 ac.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3,965 ac.</td>
<td>2,168 ac.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>6,400 ac.</td>
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*The Update | North Carolina - Page 5*
One in six Americans lives in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau—and 90 percent of counties with the highest poverty rates are in rural America. These are also communities with high numbers of Historically Underserved groups, like African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans.

Three years ago, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack launched the StrikeForce Initiative, a cross-agency effort to accelerate assistance to Historically Underserved groups. Through this initiative, USDA is working to ensure all producers have access to programs that can help them thrive, including proven conservation programs. North Carolina is now designated a StrikeForce State for targeted outreach to historically underserved and economically distressed communities.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce annually ranks the state’s 100 counties based on economic well-being and assigns each county a Tier designation. The 40 most economically distressed counties are designated as Tier 1, the next 40 as Tier 2 and the last 20 least distressed as Tier 3. When looking at North Carolina Tier 1 and 2 counties and US Census demographic data, 44 counties across the state have been identified as focus counties for USDA North Carolina StrikeForce outreach.


The objective of StrikeForce is to partner with local community-based organizations, three USDA agencies—Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency and Rural Development—and then work to improve USDA’s and our partnership’s outreach to these identified communities in order to increase their access to—and participation in—our valuable programs.

NRCS is working in three key areas to propel this initiative:

1. We’re expediting our service by placing a high priority on enrolling producers in StrikeForce counties quickly, so they can start implementing conservation.

2. We’re expanding outreach and participation, devoting staff resources to outreach and let producers know that assistance is available and help them understand what’s needed to take advantage of these programs.

3. We’re removing barriers, identifying regulatory roadblocks to getting service to the StrikeForce counties and getting assistance to Historically Underserved and Limited Resource producers.

Since USDA began this initiative three years ago, NRCS has helped hundreds of producers in StrikeForce counties make conservation work on their lands -- increasing productivity while also improving their bottom lines. In North Carolina, our increased outreach efforts has lead to 124% increase participation among Historically Underserved Landowner in Farm Bill conservation programs.
CONSERVATION FARM BILL PROGRAMS
2013 PROGRAM ROLL-OUT - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

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StrikeForce - Continued From Page 6

Recently we've started localize field office training on developing comprehensive county level marketing data that will help identify opportunities for outreach, as well as help our field offices and partnership build a collaborative marketing strategy for the following fiscal year.

NRCS is committed to ensuring all producers across the state have access to conservation programs. By working together with our partners, we can support a productive agricultural industry while also preserving the health of our environment and the sustainability of our natural resources. If you are interested in learning more about StrikeForce, Outreach Training or discuss opportunities to deliver outreach to Limited Resource and Historically Underserved landowners, please contact Stuart Lee at 919.873.2107 or by email at Stuart.Lee@nc.usda.gov.
Priority 5: Broaden Regulatory Predictability
NRCS is helping to define, shape and lead regulatory predictability. We are looking at how we can work with other Federal Agencies and partners to help landowners address resource concerns and improve conditions prior to the need for preemptive policy and regulation. Then those good works become the basis for proactive programs and initiatives that solve priority resource issues.

Priority 6: Harness Private Markets
In North Carolina and nationally, NRCS is moving forward by taking our technical capacity, our expertise and the public's trust in us, and exploring ways to harness the private marketplace to incentivize conservation. This can be seen in many of our Conservation Innovation Grants awarded in North Carolina. This process will take us to the next level so that we're not only providing financial assistance and technical assistance, but creating market forces that also incentivize landowners to make wise conservation decisions.

Priority 7: Deepen Strategic Partnerships to Better Leverage Outcomes
And, finally, the seventh priority is to deepen our strategic partnerships to better leverage our outcomes. Core partners, like NACD, state conservation agencies, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts will always be central to our mission and how we deliver conservation.

As we face the future together, I'm honored to have the opportunity to serve North Carolina. I'm here to work hard and look forward to assisting our agency and our partners do our best.

Terrance Rudolph
Acting State Conservationist

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CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

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