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FEDERAL CONSERVATION AGENCY DISTRIBUTING AN ADDITIONAL \$3.5 MILLION IN CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM FUNDS

ATHENS, GA , June 13, 2011 — James E. Tillman, Sr., State Conservationist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Georgia today announced that the NRCS will has received \$3.59 million additional funding to be distributed via the 2011 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

“We were able to get these funds because of the smart work and dedication of our NRCS employees, Georgia’s Soil and Water Conservation Districts and our outstanding conservation farmers,” Tillman said.

The funds will go to farmers who applied, were approved, but did not get funding during the program signup in January 2011. Of these funds, \$223,977 will go to 60 counties designated by the Secretary of Agriculture as top priority counties. The counties were selected as they have some of the highest poverty rates in the state.

The CSP is a voluntary conservation program designed to encourage agricultural and forestry producers to adopt additional conservation practices and improve, maintain and manage existing ones.

Applications in Georgia were ranked based on four priority natural resource concerns; Water Quality, Water Quantity, Soil Quality and Soil Erosion. Two ranking pools were established to rank applications with similar resource concerns, one for north Georgia and one for south Georgia

For more information about the CSP, please visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html. For more information about conservation programs in Georgia, please visit www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov

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