

For Immediate Release

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NRCS Announces North Georgia Irrigation Pilot Program

ATHENS, GA, May 31, 2013 — State Conservationist James E. Tillman Sr., of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), announced today that financial assistance was approved under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for the North Georgia Irrigation Pilot Program (NGIPP) to help farmers and landowners conserve and preserve water. Applications must be in by June 12.

The two areas of improvement are water conservation - for irrigation improvements to reduce strain on area aquifers; and water quantity - to increase the availability of water sources for irrigation.

The NGIPP provides both technical and financial assistance to farmers interested in improving the water quality and quantity of their operation. The financial assistance can include payments for management activities and cost-share for the installation of certain conservation practices not to exceed \$40,000. The conservation practices and activities for the irrigation initiative are (this list is not inclusive): micro-irrigation systems, irrigation water management plans, roof runoff management, and irrigation reservoir planning.

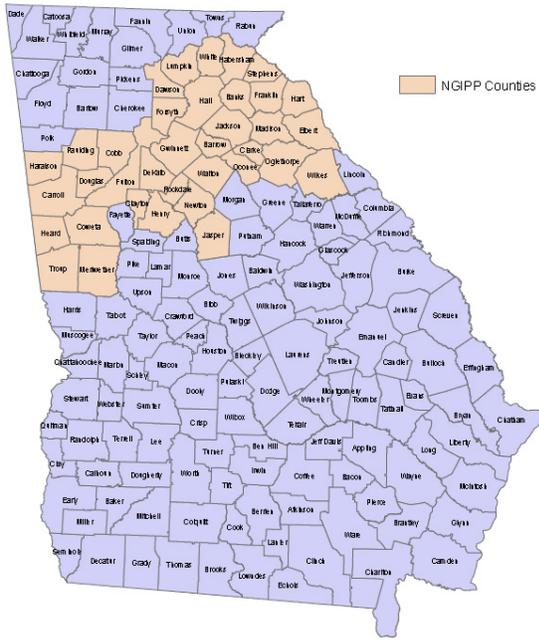
For water conservation, producers must have an irrigation history of two out of the last five years and apply for a system that is more efficient than the one currently utilized.

For water quantity and applying for an irrigation reservoir, producers must be presently utilizing an irrigation system and meet the requirements agreed upon in the Field Level Agreement between the US Army Corps of Engineers; Savannah District and the NRCS dated Oct. 5, 2006 which includes but not limited to:

- 10 acres or less in size
- Size of reservoir does not exceed the need shown in a NRCS Water Budget.
- Land must be currently in production and irrigation equipment on site.
- Applicant must meet Producer Eligibility requirements of EQIP.
- Structure does not exceed Georgia Safe Dams requirements.

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Applicable counties are; Haralson, Carroll, Heard, Troup, Paulding, Douglas, Coweta, Meriwether, Cobb, Fulton, Dawson, Forsyth, Gwinnett, DeKalb, Clayton, Henry, Rockdale, Newton, Jasper, Lumpkin, White, Habersham, Stephens, Hall, Banks, Franklin, Hart, Jackson, Madison, Elbert, Barrow, Clarke, Walton, Oconee, Oglethorpe and Wilkes Counties.

Since 1935, NRCS' nationwide conservation delivery system works with private landowners to put conservation on the ground based on specific, local conservation needs, while accommodating state and national interests. For more information about NRCS' programs, initiatives and services in Georgia, visit us online at <http://www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov> or visit your local NRCS Service Center.

Map of the 2013 North Georgia Irrigation Pilot Program Area.

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