

Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership

Joint Watershed Restoration



TENNESSEE

2016–2018



New bottom-less arched culvert with natural stream bed

At the southern end of the Appalachian Mountains lies a region of Wild and Scenic rivers, blue ribbon fisheries, and spectacular aquatic diversity. However, threats from denuded riparian areas, excessive runoff from agricultural fields, and a degrading road system threatens these resources. Contributions from non-point source pollution are the focus of partnership of local conservation groups, including the Cherokee National Forest and NRCS. Restoring aquatic resources requires a concerted effort across ownership boundaries and with upstream coordination. This Joint Chiefs' project incorporated both outreach to individual landowners in the project boundary as well as major infrastructure improvements like culverted stream crossing replacements. Working with landowners helps mitigate the individually small sources, but cumulatively addresses large adverse impacts of nutrient and sediment runoff into the stream system.

PROJECT IMPACT:

152,753 feet

Linear feet of fence on private lands to exclude livestock and protect water quality.

USFS & NRCS JCLRP funds awarded 2016–2018: \$7,396,011
Total USDA and partner project funds: \$8,818,777

PROJECT RESULTS



Tennessee dace



Improving habitat for listed species: Restored stream connectivity for the endangered Tennessee dace fish by replacing road culverts and maintaining roads.



Protecting soil health: implementing conservation practices on family farms to manage nutrients, plant cover crops, and control non-native invasive weeds.



Public information meetings: 34 events were held to share information about conservation practices.

USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service are working together to improve the health of forests where public forests and grasslands connect to privately owned lands. Through the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, the two USDA agencies are restoring landscapes by reducing wildfire threats to communities and landowners, protecting water quality and enhancing wildlife habitat.

Photos in this document are public domain or stock imagery unless otherwise noted.

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JOINT WATERSHED RESTORATION



Participants gather during a field day

Community Outreach and Learning

Gerald Hyde, his wife Laura, daughter Aaron (Hyde) Sewell, son-in-law Tim Sewell, and great grandsons Lake and Camden, operate a 200 contiguous acre farm, known as Heritage Farms, where they raise grass-fed beef and Kiko meat goats in Monroe County, Tennessee.

Over the past five years, nearly 18,000 feet of exclusion and cross fence were installed to help improve the natural resources on the farm, which includes an impaired stream (under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act) in the Upper Conasauga Watershed. In addition, 4,000 feet of pipeline, five watering facilities, two catch corrals, heavy use areas, an access road, a well, pumping plant, 91 acres of crop conversion to pasture/hay, and wildlife habitat planting were also installed.

The purpose of this Joint Chiefs' partnership project was to improve water quality and at-risk aquatic ecosystems within the project area. The focus of the project aimed at turning discussions about restoration among diverse interests into on-the-ground implementation by various partners.

In 2017, Heritage Farms hosted an NRCS field day where approximately 30 participants from local and surrounding counties gathered to view the farm's grasses, forbes, shrubs, soils, woodlands, and wet areas. Along the way, specialists from NRCS and the USDA Forest Service were on hand to explain the strong and weak points of the farming operation.

"Following the field day, we now look at each of our paddocks differently," Hyde says. "We currently have 11 different paddocks on which we rotate 70-plus head of cattle and more than 60 goats."

Hyde believes that the tour was great validation for them and the improvements they have made on their farm.

For more information, please visit nrcs.usda.gov/JointChiefsReports



Before and after photo of field with five-species cover crop

Key Partners

US Fish and Wildlife Service
McMinn County Soil Conservation District
Monroe County Soil Conservation District
Bradley County Soil Conservation District
Polk County Soil Conservation District
Meigs County Soil Conservation District
Tennessee Division of Forestry

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