

Another Conservation Success Story...

Taylor County, Georgia

April 2008

Partnership Helps Save the Land

Jack McGlaun was raised and lived on a farm outside the community of Butler, in Taylor County, until he completed high school. He went to college and became a teacher only to find himself teaching for 30 years and farming at the same time. McGlaun says he has been farming since the 60's, but when you talk with him you can tell in his heart he has been farming longer than that.

"I grew up in the country and my grandparents had cows and I had some of my own, I mean my father had some since 1960. My grandparents farmed, my cousins-this whole community within a few miles-are cousins and relatives that have farmed through the years. At one time, this was all cotton when I was growing up and a few cows and some corn. But now this whole area back in this part of the county for the most part is livestock and timber, some soybeans. But the soybeans are ground up and used as feed for the livestock."

McGlaun said he first learned about the conservation technical assistance provided by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through employees of the NRCS. "I learned through Ray Jones, district conservationist for the NRCS, other NRCS members, and Jim Willis, an elected Soil and Water Conservation Office board member. As a matter of fact, before Jim, I didn't really know that much about the NRCS-nobody knew. I learned about the NRCS about two years ago. But, I kind of knew of it through discussions of the old Soil Conservation Service."



Above is the cow path showing the erosion that took place over years of use by the cattle. Below is the new path after the Partners for Fish and Wildlife and the NRCS completed the project.



Standing next to the fence that was constructed for the cattle, Jack McGlaun shows a water box, buried under the water, that he constructed to hold water for his cattle during the dry season. He says "The box will have water in it during the summer with the smallest trickle of water."

He had a natural resource concern that he was ashamed to show to anyone. "I realized that I had an extremely horrible wash. I told Ray when he first came out that I was ashamed to show it to him. It was one of the few places I

had on my whole place that had a strange erosion where cattle had been going down to a creek and a wetland area. It was so bad, it was literally

head high. Since I was in the eighth grade cows would go through there. I remember when it was flat. That was why I called the NRCS. Plus it was good to fence the cows out of the wetland area for wildlife protection and restrict the cows and where you can find them easier," McGlaun said.

The erosion was a gradual process and McGlaun didn't realize it was getting that deep. "I didn't realize it. It was a path. Cows are going to follow the same path and they kept following the same path. They would go down this lane several times a day and water would run down the hill and the path would wash deeper and deeper; after a while it was a gorge there just about."

Another natural resource concern was his grazing land. He has around 500 acres and runs 70 brood cows and had no rotational grazing plan.

Using the cost share from Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) he planted a mixture of forage and installed cross fencing.

McGlaun said, "The big thing about EQIP, I could use those resources (money) to do that with and that would free up other resources. I used that money to put that fence in but I used my money to put other fences in to aid in the rotational grazing."

In order to repair that extremely horrible wash Jones said, "We partnered with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife. They provided the money

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and we supplied the technical expertise to build a ramp with geo-textile fabric, six inches of GAB gravel, cut the trees back, smooth the land flat and build fences to keep the cattle out of the water."

"The concerns were addressed through use exclusion and creating a wildlife buffer. The water ramp addressed the water concerns by giving a fixed area for the cattle to drink water. Using EQIP, we addressed the prescribed grazing through cross fencing," said Jones.

By using both the EQIP and Partners for Fish and Wildlife, McGlaun said his operation has benefited through the application of the conservation treatments. "It has allowed me to increase my cross fencing and rotational grazing. It has allowed the livestock to have better accessibility to the creek, to a watering area, and the water quality is better."

McGlaun believes his conservation philosophy is unique. "I would like future generations to prevent and stop all erosion and try to improve water quality. This is mine and it should be theirs."

 **NRCS** Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Ocmulgee River Soil And Water Conservation District