

# Another Conservation Success Story...

## Warren County, Georgia

November 2006

### Pre-Commercial Thinning Will Benefit Warren County Wildlife

Dan Crumpton, a Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District supervisor and owner of the Lockett Farm, is always looking for ways to enhance wildlife habitat.

At a Warren County District meeting last winter, Dan learned that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) would be offering landowners the opportunity to compete for cost-share through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to assist with thinning pre-commercial sized pines.

Automatically Dan thought of the Lockett Farm.

As a young man, Dan and his son hunted quail in the cotton fields that are now overstocked pine stands. The thick pines offer little benefit to wildlife other than low quality cover.

By reducing the stem count, sunlight would reach the forest floor and set off an early successional flush of herbaceous vegetation.

**“By utilizing the EQIP program and NRCS’ working land knowledge, I am on tract to reach my goals and one of them being to hunt quail on the Lockett Farm again.” —Dan Crumpton**

Quail desperately need this vegetation for food and cover.

Thinning the pines would also improve the timber quality in the remaining stand.

As it turned out, Dan was approved for the EQIP Program.

In late September, the thinning crew pulled out of the Lockett Farm after two days of hard sawing.

Two years down the road, after the felled trees have partially decomposed, the first of two prescribed burns will be implemented.

The burns will help keep the understory vegetation in early succession and return nutrients to the soil.



**District Conservationist, Cread Brown, with landowner Dan Crumpton pose in a recently thinned pine stand on the Lockett Farm**

These practices not only benefit quail but also deer, turkey, and many non-game species.

Dan is pleased with the progress so far and said, “By utilizing the EQIP program

and NRCS’ working land knowledge, I am on tract to reach my goals and one of them being to hunt quail on the Lockett Farm again.”

### What is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program?

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals.

EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of ten years.

These contracts provide incentive payments and cost-shares to implement conservation practices.

Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program.

EQIP activities are carried out according to an environmental quality incentives program plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice or practices to address the resource concerns.

The practices are subject to NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions. The local conservation district approves the plan.

For more information, contact your local NRCS office or visit [www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov).