



Walter Sprinkle, Jr. Laura's Meadow Farm

Local Farmer Sees the Need for Better Water Quality

For Walter Sprinkle, Jr., water quality isn't just a local issue for citizens of Smyth County. It's personal. Sprinkle grew up on the land he now farms and is committed to seeing clean water flowing through Laura's Meadow once more.

Walter contacted the NRCS staff at the Marion Service Center to help him develop a strategy for improving water quality on his beef operation. Tom Smith, District Conservationist, and Kevin Cornett, Soil Conservationist, identified Walter's winter feeding area as a major source of contamination, and recommended conservation practices to address the problem.

With NRCS technical and financial assistance, Walter is now installing a new hilltop feeding facility with a concrete pad that can be scraped to store manure over the winter for later use as fertilizer. The pad helps reduce erosion in the pasture, and the scraping process eliminates runoff of highly concentrated manure into the nearby stream.

A new rotational grazing system with waterers will allow for better pasture management. The paddocks will be over-seeded with legumes and the denuded feeding area will be graded and seeded to prevent further erosion and sediment loading to the stream.

Walter's conservation plan also includes a riparian forest buffer planting and fencing to exclude his livestock from the stream. He looks forward to enjoying the long-term benefits of those practices as clean water flows in his stream once more.



Farm Products

- Beef Cattle

Installed Practices

- Livestock Pipeline
- Watering Facilities

Planned Practices

- Waste Storage Facility
- Animal Mortality Facility
- Access Road
- Animal Trail or Walkway
- Critical Area Planting
- Fence
- Forage and Biomass Planting
- Heavy Use Area Protection
- Mulching
- Nutrient Management
- Riparian Forest Buffer
- Roof Run-off Structure
- Roofs and Covers
- Tree and Shrub Establishment
- Underground Outlet