

# Current Developments



USDA Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

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July 2003

*From the Office of the Tennessee  
State Conservationist*



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## *Message to NRCS Employees:*

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank each NRCS employee for your hard work and extra efforts, and please convey my thanks to our Earth Team volunteers, Soil Conservation District Employees and Conservation Partners.*

*We finally received a fiscal year 2003 budget with increases over FY2002. With three-fourths of the fiscal year already passed we have a huge challenge ahead with only a short period of time to obligate program funds.*

*The Tennessee NRCS Management Team is dealing with multiple challenges at the present time that include, the evaluation of commercial outsourcing of jobs, field office closures or consolidations, Information Technology consolidation, and many other items. NRCS employees need to be aware of changes and stay informed, but as Chief Bruce Knight recently suggested "we need to retain a sense of unwarranted optimism." We will strive to keep employees informed concerning these issues as we receive information.*

*Through the years, NRCS and Soil Conservation District employees have been widely admired and respected for their work and the manner in which they performed their jobs. Again, thank you for everything you do and let's continue that tradition.*

*James W. Ford  
State Conservationist*

## “Pandamonium” Growing In Memphis, Tennessee!



John Charles Wilson, Chairman of the Shelby County Soil Conservation District Board and President of Agricenter International is shown in the photo to the left with bamboo being grown at Agricenter International to help feed a pair of rare Panda Bears from China now located at the Memphis Zoo.

Le Le, a two-year-old female and Yah Yah, a four-year-old male are from two separate provinces in China, and are on loan to the Memphis Zoo for 10 years. The two pandas arrived at the Zoo in April and are part of a \$16 million dollar China Exhibit that is working to support giant panda conservation projects in China.

“Agricenter International has partnered with the Memphis Zoo to grow six different varieties of bamboo on the farm,” says Wilson. “This is a research project to determine which variety the Pandas like best and which variety is the best adapted to this area. The bamboo has been growing at Agricenter for three years and the research is continuous.” Pandas can consume from 20 to 40 lbs. of bamboo daily along with other food while in captivity. In order to have an abundant supply, bamboo is also being grown at the Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials in Coffeeville, Mississippi and by a local landowner. Agricenter International, NRCS, and Soil Conservation Districts in Mississippi and Tennessee are cooperating on the effort to feed the pandas. Educational packets are also being developed for teachers, a video is being prepared about the project and tours are being planned. The China Exhibit at the Memphis Zoo is now open to the public.



### Upcoming Events

**August 5-6, 2003**

**Farmland Protection  
Workshop for Limited  
Resource Farmers**

Memphis, TN

Contact: Gerry Cohn,  
SE Regional Director,

American Farmland Trust

Email: [gcohn@farmland.org](mailto:gcohn@farmland.org)

Website: [www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org)

**August 7-8, 2003**

**Tennessee RC&D Council  
Annual Meeting,**

Columbia, TN.

Contact: Charlene Shelton

Email: [chacha@tncharter.net](mailto:chacha@tncharter.net)

**October 21-22, 2003**

**East Tennessee Expo**

White Pine, TN

Website: [www.east-tenn-expo.com](http://www.east-tenn-expo.com)

**Dec. 7-10, 2003**

**Second National**

**Grazing Lands Conference**

Nashville, TN

website: [www.glci.org](http://www.glci.org).



Greg Brann, Grazing Lands Specialist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Nashville, TN is shown in the photo above with Highlander Eastern gamagrass in Montgomery County, Tennessee.

Greg Brann, Tennessee NRCS Grazing Lands Specialist, has been involved in the collecting of plant materials useful to landowners for a number of years. One native species that he collected in 1990 in Montgomery County, Tennessee—Highlander Eastern gamagrass—out yielded Tifton 44 bermudagrass and Alamo switchgrass when cut on a 45-day interval. Tifton 44 yielded more when cut on a 30-day interval.

Eastern gamagrass is a native grass that can be found from Massachusetts, west to Illinois and Nebraska, and south to the West Indies, Central America, and Brazil. Highlander eastern gamagrass forms large clumps, with thick, knotty, rhizomes. Mature foliage height ranges from 1.5 to 5 feet tall.

Highlander is recommended for forage production. It is best used as a hay crop; however, it can be grazed if given appropriate management (i.e. rotational grazing) to prevent damage to the plant stand. It also has potential as a perennial silage crop and as a source of biomass for bioenergy production. It can be used in many types of conservation plantings, such as buffers and vegetative barriers.

Highlander was initially evaluated at the USDA-NRCS Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center (PMC), Coffeerville, Mississippi, from 1992 through 1994. A total of 73 accessions, collected from nine states in the Southeast and southern Great Plains of the United States, were included in the study. From these initial evaluations, Highlander was determined to have superior vigor, growth form and development, and disease resistance.

Highlander was then selected by the PMC for inclusion in a regional trial comparing 13 eastern gamagrass accessions from southern and western seed sources. This trial was conducted from 1996 through 1998 at nine PMCs, including the Jamie L. Whitten PMC. Yield data was collected at of these six sites. Plants of all accessions except Highlander died in the winter of 1997 or the early spring of 1998 at the Coffeerville location due to a disease problem.

Breeder seed will be maintained by the USDA-NRCS Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center in Coffeerville, MS. For additional information, contact the PMC, or Greg Brann, Grazing Lands Specialist, NRCS, Nashville, Tennessee.



Join us in Nashville  
for the Second  
National Grazing  
Lands Conference  
December 7-10, 2003.  
For additional  
information, visit the  
GLCI website at:  
[www.glci.org/](http://www.glci.org/)

## **Regional Conservation Easement Workshop for Estate Planners, CPA's and Tax Attorneys in Northeast Tennessee...**

*Submitted by Roy Settle, RC&D Coordinator, Appalachian RC&D Area*

We are pleased to report on the success of our training workshop for Estate Planning Professionals. This event was held on Monday – May 19, 2003 at Ridgefield's Country Club in Kingsport, Tennessee. We originally estimated that we would attract approximately 40 members of our target audience to this event. We were fortunate enough to form an alliance with Blackburn, Childers & Stegall, PLC; Appalachian Chapter of CPA's and the Tri-City Estate Planning Council. Through this partnership we were able to sell both groups on the concept of making this the program for their semi annual meetings. This led to a highly successful event that **attracted 89 professionals** in the field who now have the beginnings of a detailed understanding of what a Conservation Easement is.



Interest was high and many questions were asked of Mr. Marshall Peterson, Holbrook & Peterson, PLLC and Ed Williams – Attorney at Law and Conservationist. We have arranged for one of the Attorney's in attendance to write an article that will be printed in the "TriCities-Business Journal" on the topic. This will reach a large audience that will be made aware of this conservation and estate planning tool. Thanks to Tennessee Department of Agriculture support they will be able to contact many professionals who can guide them through the process.

## **Buffalo-Duck RC&D Council Assists "Communities Tomorrow" Initiative...**

*Submitted by Larry Lofton, RC&D Coordinator, Buffalo-Duck RC&D Area*

Local leaders of Hickman, Lewis, Perry and Wayne Counties recognized the need to work together to address a wide variety of economic and community development issues. A united regional initiative called "Communities Tomorrow" evolved as a process to seek out local input for establishing a vision of what communities want to be, and defining goals and initiating actions to make that vision a reality. The initiative places a strong emphasis on strategic planning and effective partnering between local governments, businesses, organizations, and state and federal agencies.

A strategic agenda for the four counties was developed through public input workshops facilitated by staff from the Tennessee Valley Authority, USDA Rural Development, the Buffalo-Duck RC&D Council, and the South Central Tennessee Development District. A significant part of the initiative involves "regional – based" collaboration in education and training, recreation, tourism, and transportation. "Communities Tomorrow" is an on-going process, but the benefits of increased cooperation between counties and communities are already being realized with several community development projects underway.

## **Meeting Held To Discuss Resource Conservation and Development Area Expansion...**

A meeting was held on April 21, 2003 with representatives from Carroll, Weakley, Henry, Benton, Crockett and Gibson counties to discuss expansion of the RC&D Program in West Tennessee. Interest has been shown by local government officials from these counties to form a new RC&D area. NRCS RC&D program manager, Chickasaw-Shiloh RC&D coordinator, Division I area conservationist and the district conservationists from the six counties are working with county officials to initiate the application phase. Stay tuned...



## Conservation: A Family Tradition for Meadows Family, Lauderdale County...

For over 25 years, George Meadows and his father and sons have been looking for ways to keep problem spots on their cotton-corn-soybeans operation from slipping away after a good rain. They began with terraces and sediment retention basins. Meadows says that after 25 years the basins are still “working like champs.” He also has installed diversions, grassed waterways and rock drop structures allowing water to safely leave the field. Meadows is especially impressed with the rock drop structures’ easy maintenance.

In addition to these useful structures, however, Meadows has gradually revamped the overall management of the fields and soil, allowing much more of the rain to percolate in and raising the overall productivity of the fields. The entire farm is now “no or low” till and crop residue and winter cover crops further stabilize and enrich the fields. When combined with Meadows’ careful management of nutrients and pesticides this means a big contribution to Lauderdale County’s water quality.

Finally, just for “family recreation and to give a little bit to wildlife” Meadows floods a section of a field every winter to create a shallow water area for waterfowl and wildlife.

Meadows has participated in several farm conservation programs... Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), state cost share programs, Ducks Unlimited programs, and, of course, completed some of it on his own.



“We’re very pleased with the layout now,” says Meadows. “Our fields are in good shape and we have virtually eliminated washes. It costs a little more, but the benefits have definitely been worth it.”

## NRCS Assists Lauderdale County Landowner With Challenging Environmental Problems...

Marie Daniels, a landowner in the Durhamville Community of Lauderdale County, Tennessee recently received assistance from Tom Beasley, NRCS Agricultural Engineer located at the Jackson Area Office. Beasley was contacted to design and install a series of erosion control structures on some environmentally sensitive lands on her farm. Beasley stated, “Ms. Daniels was concerned about erosion occurring on her land. She contacted NRCS to assist with several structures and practices, such as, a rock weir grade stabilization structure, grassed waterways, and sediment control basins.”

Ricky Daniels, son of Marie Daniels who assisted in the installation of the erosion structures stated, “The structures were part of our conservation plan that we developed with Richard Cooke, District Conservationist at the Ripley NRCS Field Office.”

Cooke stated, “The Conservation Reserve Program is an excellent program to assist landowners to solve erosion problems on environmentally sensitive areas. The cost-share assistance to install the conservation practices on the land coupled with the annual rental payments provided for ten years by the Conservation Reserve Program serve as excellent incentives to encourage landowners to apply needed conservation practices on these environmentally sensitive lands.” “This is a popular program with landowners in Lauderdale County, and I encourage other landowners to plan and apply needed conservation practices under this program,” he added.

### Ducks Unlimited Great Outdoors Festival a Big Success!



The Shelby County Soil Conservation District and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service recently partnered on an exhibit entitled “2002 Farm Bill” at the Ducks Unlimited Great Outdoors Festival. The event was held May 31-June 2 at the Ducks Unlimited Headquarters located adjacent to AgriCenter International. The event draws over 100,000 attendees annually. The exhibit, set up in the Conservation Village area, was visited by landowners, wildlife enthusiasts, students, teachers, urban dwellers and others who were given information about conservation programs and services available.



### NRCS and 4-H Team Up for Wildlife...

On a windy spring afternoon a small group of dedicated youth from the Crockett County 4-H learned about wildlife habitat and erosion. They also learned how landowners can play a big part in quail population recovery using native plants that are both good for wildlife and erosion control. Mike Hansbrough, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Private Lands Biologist, gave the 4-H group an informative field tour and spoke about native warm season grasses and the habitat benefits of using these grasses. A conservation seed mix blended by USDA-NRCS and Quail Unlimited and funded by the Chickasaw Shiloh Resource Conservation and Development Council, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, allowed the youth to get some “hands-on experience.” The group sowed the wildlife friendly seed using hand-held seeders donated by Quail Unlimited...in hopes of providing future habitat for wildlife on a local Crockett County farm.

### EQIP Program – “A Natural” for Tennessee Landowner...

The EQIP Program was a natural for me since I always believed very strongly in the preservation of our environment,” says Brenda Fielder, landowner in Cheatham County, Tennessee.

Fielder contacted the Cheatham County Soil Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service for assistance with her 300-acre farm after her Dad passed away. Actually, the farm has been in the Fielder family for several generations.

Since Fielder was a little girl she had dreamed of moving to the farm and doing something productive with the land. She said her original idea

was to have her own pony farm. “At age 43, I finally made the move, but I did not have a clue where to start. I called Carolyn Dillard, NRCS District Conservationist, Ashland City, Tennessee, and she talked with me about the possibilities,” Fielder said. Fielder signed up in the EQIP program and was approved. She immediately bought 65 head of beef cattle. She had already completed some fencing, but continued with cross fencing and other best management practices.

“I do have to admit that I was resistant to some of the ideas in the beginning, such as too many fences and gates for freedom of pleasure riding, which was my original reason for moving to the farm in the first place. But, Carolyn was so patient and understanding and always took our priorities into consideration. By doing that, she won us over to the advantages of the EQIP practices we put into place.” Fielder stated.

Rotating the cows every few days has actually given Fielder an good excuse for an early morning ride a few times a week, one with a purpose in mind. She says, “Our running joke is we got the cows just to have a legitimate excuse to ride!”

“Carolyn Dillard is much more than just the “cost share lady”. Her job is to show us how these practices can actually benefit us all in the long run and help us accomplish our ultimate goal of sustainable agriculture and preservation of our centuries old farm land — too much is being lost to development, in my opinion,” Fielder added.



*In the photo above, Brenda Fielder is shown on the right as Greg Brann, NRCS Grazing Lands Specialist (left) provides technical assistance to Fielder and her employee.*

### Stones River National Battlefield Interagency Agreement To Increase Native Plants...

Recently, Larry Robeson, NRCS District Conservationist and Cory Hodge, Soil Conservationist of the NRCS Field Office in Murfreesboro met with Terri Hogan, Ecologist with the National Park Service along with John Vandevender, Manager, Warren Haynes, Technician, and Dan Pinkham, Technician from the Alderson Plant Material Center in West Virginia. The meeting was held at the Stones River National Battlefield to start up a five-year interagency agreement between the National Park Service and the Alderson Plant Material Center. Over the next five years the (PMC) staff will collect, evaluate, grow, and increase native plant materials to revegetate disturbed areas on the Battlefield

### NRCS/District Partner on Booth at Tennessee Lawn and Garden Show...

The Tennessee Lawn and Garden Show was held recently at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds. The Natural Resources Conservation Service partnered on a booth with the Wilson County Soil Conservation District.

Christy Luna, District Conservationist, Lebanon Field Office stated, “This is a very effective outreach effort to reach our non-traditional and potential customers.” The attendance at the event continues to grow with people attending from several surrounding counties. The attendance for the weekend was well over 20,000 people.

### Coffee County Landowners “Team Up” for Conservation...



*Shown the photo (left) are Steve and Margaret Cunningham.*

*They recently received the Conservation Farmers of the Year Award at the Coffee County Soil Conservation District Annual Banquet and the Southeast Regional Conservation Award from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

Steve and Margaret Cunningham, a husband and wife farming team in Coffee County, Tennessee own a 285-acre Holstein dairy heifer replacement operation. The Cunningham’s were interested in improving their land and the water quality on their farm. They contacted the Coffee County Soil Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service and enrolled in the EQIP program. To offset their out-of-pocket costs for conservation practice installation, they partnered with agencies and groups such as the Tennessee Dept. of Agriculture, Nature Conservancy of Tennessee, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Tennessee Division of Forestry, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Conservation Fisheries Institute, and Quail Unlimited of Tennessee. Best management practices were installed to exclude cattle from streams and wetlands and establish more wildlife habitat.

The Cunningham’s wanted to create and/or restore habitat for certain aquatic species, particularly the globally rare, Barrens topminnow. To accomplish this they agreed to restore, protect, and manage two springs, the adjacent runs, surrounding buffer zones, and create small pools, specifically for this species.

In addition to the streams and springs, they also converted ten acres of cropland and grassland to native warm season grasses to provide habitat for migrating birds, cottontail rabbits, and bobwhite quail. In the future, the Cunningham’s plan to dedicate a portion of their farmland to teach adults and students about fencing, watering systems, water quality of streams and springs, and protecting rare aquatic species and animals on private property.

Another result of their efforts include joining with seven contiguous landowners and enrolling in conservation programs to protect approximately four miles of riparian/spring habitat for the Barrens topminnow and other species including the federally endangered Cumberland pigtoe mussel and the state threatened flame chub.

The Cunningham’s have been widely recognized for their efforts in environmental stewardship and natural resource conservation, they have recently received the following awards: Conservation Farmers of the Year by the Coffee County Soil Conservation District and Southeast Regional Conservation Award from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### Rutherford County Soil Conservation District Partners to Develop School Greenhouse Project ...

The Rutherford Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service have formed a partnership with the Murfreesboro City Schools to help finalize the Hobgood Elementary School Greenhouse Project. NRCS will provide technical assistance for the project. The greenhouse will enable the school to have a working laboratory that will aid in developing the students’ economics, mathematics, language arts, and science skills. Hobgood Elementary has received an Atlas Grant that will provide approximately \$41,000 of the \$56,000 needed. The school has raised \$8000 of their \$15,000 goal. The student population at Hobgood Elementary is 47% minorities and 67% of the students participate in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. The success of this project will facilitate the students’ understanding the importance of agriculture and conserving our natural resources.

#### Historical Note...

President Roosevelt signed the Soil Conservation Act, Public Law 46-74, an act to provide permanently for the control and prevention of soil erosion and specifically directed the Secretary of Agriculture to establish an agency known as the Soil Conservation Service.

## Bradley County Conservation Field Day Held...

A conservation field day was held on June 5, 2003 in Bradley County, Tennessee on the farm of Varnell and James Beaty. The Beaty's are a father and son team, who have a poultry/dairy farm and plenty of environmental challenges, but with several conservation programs, they have been very successful in meeting those challenges! The tour



highlighted numerous best management practices that have been implemented on the Beaty Farm. The BMP's are part of a total resource management system planned to benefit both the landowner and the public.

Candies Creek, which is a 303d listed stream, flows through the farm. The Beaty's were concerned about the water quality and wanted improve and protect it. They contacted the Bradley County Soil Conservation District and NRCS for technical assistance primarily on how to install best management practices to protect the creek bottoms, build fences for proper pasture management, and construct stream crossings for the equipment and cattle.

James operates four poultry broiler houses which produce over 100,000 birds every six weeks or so. A couple of years ago, he constructed a dead poultry compostor and also a poultry litter storage building with both technical and financial assistance from USDA.

Presentations were made on the tour by several speakers from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bradley County Soil Conservation District, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, and Farm Service Agency.

Bill Dailey, District Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service located in Cleveland, Tennessee gave highlights of the tour and explained what the Beaty's had accomplished. He stated, "The farm is diverse in operation and has very challenging environmental concerns. Through their care and stewardship of the land, the Beaty's have implemented numerous best management practices."



Gregg Brann, NRCS Grazing Lands Specialist and Bill Dailey, discussed pasture management, pest management, alternative-watering systems, and cross fencing. In addition, they provided information about grazing sticks that were given to all attendees compliments of the Bradley County Soil Conservation District.

The Bradley County Soil Conservation District sponsored the tour along with other partners including Southeast Tennessee Resource Conservation and Development Council, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, UT Agricultural Extension Service, and the Farm Service Agency. Approximately 70 persons attended the event.

### Claiborne County Farm Tour--A Huge Success!



*In the photo above, (L-R) James Ford, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Jim Nance, Tennessee Department of Agriculture; and Jenny Adkins, Water Quality Specialist, Natural Resources Conservation Service discuss water quality improvements made in the Little Sycamore Creek Watershed as a result of efforts by Billy and Debbie Venable and other landowners.*

Billy and Debbie Venable of Tazewell were concerned with the natural resource problems evident on their farm, some of which included too few watering locations and severe creek bank erosion. Venable contacted District Conservationist Todd Reed and Soil Conservationist Bobby Ellison of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and representatives of the Claiborne County Soil Conservation District. Venable worked with NRCS to develop a plan to address the concerns he had on his farm.

Several agencies and programs were then brought together to help the Venables offset the cost of installing the conservation plan. Included were: Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Non-Point Source fund, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Reserve Program, and a Tennessee Valley Authority grant. The cooperating agencies involved with improving the



*Shown in the photo above are landowners and others who participated in a tour held recently on Billy and Debbie Venable's farm in the Little Sycamore Creek Watershed area of Claiborne County, Tennessee.*

water quality and other natural resources on this project were the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Claiborne County Soil Conservation District (CCSCD), Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Tennessee Department of Forestry (TDF) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

On May 1, 2003, the Claiborne County Soil Conservation District in partnership with NRCS and others held an educational tour to give landowners and others an opportunity to view what had been accomplished on the Venable farm in the Little Sycamore Watershed area.

The tour consisted of three sites where conservation best management practices were put into place. The best management practices showcased on the Venable farm were cross fencing for rotational grazing, spring development, alternate

watering system, heavy use area pad, stream bank stabilization, and riparian buffers. Tour stops included presentations by Todd Reed, District Conservationist, Clairborne/Union Counties, NRCS; Mike McElroy, District Conservationist, Greene County, NRCS; Jenny Adkins, Water Quality Specialist, NRCS, Nashville; Shannon O'Quinn, TVA; Tiffany Day, TVA, and Steve Roark, Tennessee Division of Forestry.

Sponsors of the tour were: Claiborne County SCD, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tennessee Valley Authority, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, and the Tennessee Department of Forestry. Approximately 130 landowners, local FFA students, and others participated in the tour. All participants received "Farm the Best, Buffer the Rest" teeshirts along with other items.

## NRCS Employees “Certified” across Tennessee...

Intensive training of NRCS employees has been carried out in Tennessee to enable employees to become certified conservation planners. Recently, the following employees were officially certified and presented certification awards:

### Area 1

Jerry Butler  
Mark Roberts  
Brad Denton  
Ron Harrison  
Doug Summers  
Charles Frost  
Craig Ellis  
Mike Hansbrough  
James Woodall  
Richard Cooke  
Gary Chandler  
Gary Blackwood  
Carter Andrews  
Mark Carroll  
Rick Cody  
Andy Neal  
Donald Roan  
Richard West  
Rona Needham  
Meredith Crosby  
Roger Smith  
Leslie McCool  
Ronald Perkins  
Matthew Denton  
Todd Reynolds  
Trent Cash  
Brad Grisham  
Nearlene Bass  
Chris Moyers

### Area 2

Bill Abbott  
Louis Boyd  
Kenny Childress  
Matt Crowell  
Carolyn Dillard  
Phillip Dixon  
Mark Garretson  
George Hofstetter  
Hugh Jackson  
Christy Luna  
Wynne Mitchell  
Gary Moore  
Charles Parris  
Odell Poyner  
Larry Robeson  
David Tapp  
Mike Tatum  
Greg Taylor  
Rusty Walker  
Phillip Wilson  
Ray Holyfield

### Area 3

Dewitt Simerly  
Kathy Daugherty  
Bill Dailey  
Johnny Sandefur  
Mike Shoffner  
Paul McQuade  
Tony Sexton  
Erik Suffridge  
Todd Reed  
Bobby Ellison  
Dwight Dickson  
Mike McElroy  
Chester Bush  
Darrell Beason  
Wayne Treadway  
Lorella Jennings  
Freddie Summers  
Jerry Frady  
Linda Bierley  
Terry Gupton  
Alicia Whitten  
Daymond Broyles  
Russell Kinser  
David Weakley  
David Meriner  
Randy Parnell  
Greg Quillen  
Katherine Sells  
Fred Walker  
Gloria York



In the above photo (l-r) Charles Adams, Regional Conservationist, NRCS, Atlanta, GA; James Woodall, District Conservationist, NRCS, Camden, Tennessee; and James Ford, State Conservationist, NRCS, Nashville, Tennessee are shown at the Area 1 Certification Ceremony on April 30, 2003.

“There is a direct correlation between competence and motivation. Those who believe they are good at something, and have a good shot at getting better, are measurably more motivated and satisfied.”

Source: *Reflections on Leadership, Retaining Good People*  
By Edward D. Miller



*Shown in the photo on the left is Donald Dotson, (standing) Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, NRCS, speaking to participants at a recent Tennessee Technical Committee meeting.*

The Tennessee Technical Committee meets regularly to gather input from individuals from a variety of natural resource sciences and occupations on NRCS programs and services. James Ford, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, chairman of the committee in Tennessee, stated “Meetings are normally held on a quarterly basis, but may be called to address pressing issues or concerns. NRCS encourages attendance at Tennessee Technical Committee meetings and welcomes recommendations and suggestions pertaining to its programs and services. NRCS strives to see that all interests are adequately represented on the committee and that committee recommendations are applied in a streamlined and cost-effective manner.” The next meeting is scheduled for July 15, 2003, at Ellington Agricultural Center in Nashville, TN. Topics to be discussed include: Conservation Reserve Program, Tennessee Livestock and Poultry Framework Plan, and the New Grassland Reserve Program. For additional information, contact Donald Dotson - Email: [ddotson@tn.nrcs.usda.gov](mailto:ddotson@tn.nrcs.usda.gov).

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