

**Buffalo/Duck RC&D - "Perry County Family Trees"
Celebrates History, Heritage and the Future of Tourism for Local Communities**

A small rural county in Tennessee has reinvented how its local communities see themselves and their future. "Perry County Family Trees" is an ongoing initiative celebrating family history and cultural heritage. The initiative was inspired by the historic linkage of the area's forests and rivers to the early settlers, and the many talents of these hardworking people whose skills are exemplified through a legacy of music, folk and utilitarian arts.



The concept of Perry County Family Trees was developed by the Buffalo/Duck River RC&D Council in partnership with the county's communities. The Council applied for and was awarded a partnership grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Forest Service to support a festival highlighting the county's culture. Additional technical assistance was provided by the Tennessee Art's Commission and the Land Between the Lakes Forest Service area.

The festival was held on June 18-20, 2004 and featured over thirteen activities including historic cemetery tours, genealogy and folk plants workshops, quilt shows, an arts & crafts fair, an antique farm tractor show, a Native-American pow-wow, mule pulls, bluegrass and gospel music concerts, comedy theater, and historic & heritage exhibits.



Over 3,000 people attended the festival which was described as an enormous success illustrated by the fact that there are only 7,700 residents in the county. Even more significant is that the planning and implementation process for this large community event has created new energy and enthusiasm toward making Perry County a tourist destination.

Community capacity has increased dramatically to address improving the downtown areas of Linden and Lobelville, providing support funding for a chamber of commerce, preserving historic sites, development of tourist based businesses and infrastructure as well as the development of community arts and music programs.

Perry County Family Trees shows how partnerships between local communities and government can have a tremendous impact in rural areas.