

Tennessee Conservation SHOWCASE



Helping People Help the Land

Springfield Producer Joins Conservation Effort

by Janet Coleman, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Murray Dale Watts, Farm Service Agency

People are motivated for different reasons and farmers are no exception. Rabbits and bobwhite quail are Harmon Jones' motivations. Harmon, a Springfield farmer, worked with the USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to enroll four tracts of his farms in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) because it offers a wide assortment of plans that can be tailored to meet a landowners' specific needs. CRP is a good solution for creating or improving wildlife habitat on area farms.

Jones had numerous conservation goals for his farms. In addition to increasing the wildlife population on his farm, he wanted to establish native plants and reduce soil erosion.

His first step was getting a conservation plan for his farm that allowed him to address those goals. Jones worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop four conservation plans covering 216 acres on his Robertson and Cheatham County farms. Planned conservation practices include Upland Wildlife Habitat Management, Field Borders, and Conservation Cover which will provide nesting, brood rearing and security cover for upland birds. His conservation efforts also control erosion and reduce storm-water runoff.

According to Farm Service Agency personnel, these practices have resulted in an increase in quail numbers only a year and a half after the first practices were established.



Jones wanted to increase his rabbit and bobwhite quail population. CRP was a good solution to help him create wildlife habitat on his farms.



Jones enrolled four tracts of his farms in the Conservation Reserve Program to meet his conservation goals. This tract in Cheatham County is planted in Native Warm Season Grasses to increase his wildlife population.

Mr. Jones was also interested in trying different seed mixes and plants on different tracts of land to determine the most effective plant cover. He planted Crab Apple, Elderberry and Wild Plum trees on about 25 acres, developed fire breaks for prescribed burns and established wildflower fields and field borders on 160.9 acres.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) celebrates its twenty-fifth birthday in 2011. Twenty-five years after its inception, the conservation benefits and advantages continue to grow. Conservation benefits include improved wildlife habitat which results in an increase in number of wildlife, and reducing soil erosion which results in less runoff in our streams and rivers and ultimately provides cleaner drinking water.