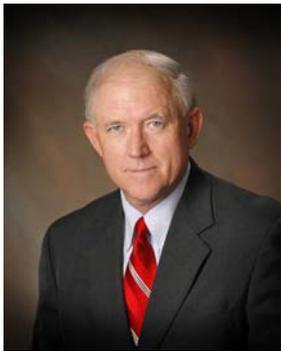


From the office of  
**State Conservationist**  
**Niles Glasgow**



**Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year**  
**Thanks to the SC Conservation Partnership  
for your efforts in 2008 to  
Help People Help the Land**

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**Merry  
Christmas  
from the  
SC NRCS  
Family**

# Notes from the Field



## EQIP Provides Lee County Farmer with Incentive to Adopt Residue Management

by Amy O. Maxwell, SC NRCS Public Affairs and Outreach Specialist

Chip Clanton farms 700 acres in Lee County, along with his good friend David Holland, whom he's known since high school. "David was always a straight-A student, so I knew he would make a great business partner," remarked Clanton, who farms full-time. Together, the farming duo produce soybeans, corn, and wheat. Clanton worked with NRCS Conservation Program Manager Lori Bataller in the Lee County USDA Service Center to establish field borders, filter strips, and implement residue management with financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). By establishing a protective cover crop of rye, Clanton is preventing soil erosion and improving soil health by adding organic matter. Also known as crop residue management, the practice is one of the most important conservation tillage factors for improving soil's physical and chemical properties.

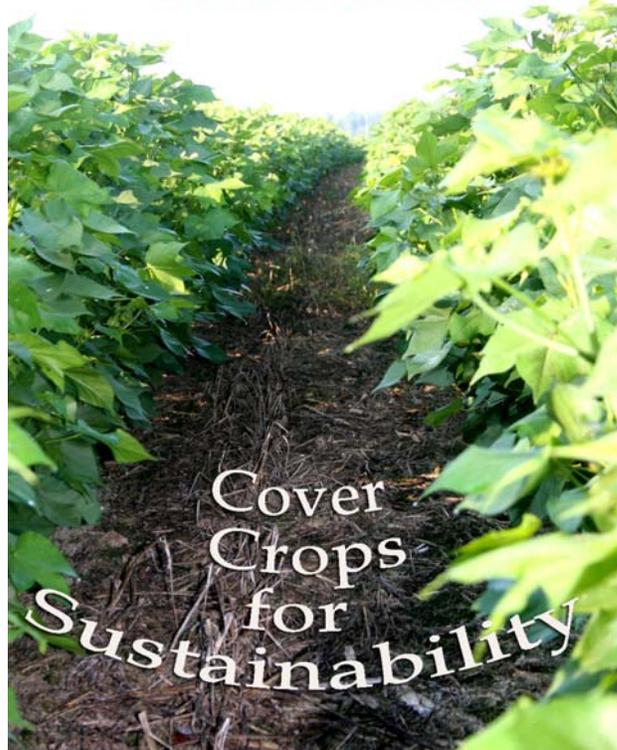
"I grew up around farming, and it's something I've always wanted to do," explained Clanton. A typical day around the farm starts at 7 a.m. and ends about 8:30 p.m. "It's a labor of love, but I can't imagine doing anything else." Clanton has proven his dedication to protecting natural resources through implementation of no-till farming. He permanently adopted 100% no-till conservation into his farming technique by implementing residue management. No-till leaves the soil and crop residue undisturbed except for the row where the seed is placed in the ground.

"Chip is serious about soil and water quality protection, and by planting cover crops, and installing field borders and filter strips, he's really making a difference in the health of the land. Even after receiving all his cost-share, he's continued to farm his land with conservation in mind, and he's a great role model for other farmers," explained Bataller.

Clanton planted the rye cover crop for several reasons, including the fact that it helps hold soil in place against the forces of wind and water. The roots of the rye also prevent soil compaction, and can help control weeds. Bataller says, "This no-till, cover cropping system saves on labor, fuel costs, conserves and protects water, and improves the soil structure of his cropping systems. So, it's really a win-win situation for him." Plus, extra time not spent in the field tilling, less wheel traffic, and the conservation of water are all big benefits. Rye is an excellent cover crop because it quickly produces a protective ground cover, and improves soil tilth. Clanton says, "Economically, adoption of no-till has helped us become successful, increase our yields even in

drought situations, and lower our costs." The end result means a lower per unit cost of production.

Another often-overlooked benefit of no-till agriculture is an increase in the quality and quantity



of wildlife habitat. Couple this with the fact that Clanton also established field borders and filter strips and it's obvious that his operation is providing enhanced wildlife food and cover. "He's planted a variety of native herbaceous plants and grasses in order to protect and improve water quality, and this also provides critical habitat for bobwhite quail, rabbits, songbirds, and many other species of wildlife," remarked Bataller. Similar to field borders, filter strips are bands of vegetation adjacent to ditches or other water bodies that trap sediments, chemicals and nutrients. They also provide nesting and brooding cover for quail, and allow birds to access the interior of larger fields.

Clanton and his good friend David are doing their part to protect the land. "Even though our land out here is relatively flat, erosion is still a problem," said Clanton. "But with NRCS assistance, and with the help of EQIP, I was able to implement residue management, and now I can't imagine farming any other way."

**EQIP participant Chip Clanton said, "Economically, adoption of no-till has helped us become successful, increase our yields even in drought situations, and lower our costs." The end result means a lower per unit cost of production.**



### Cooperative Conservation at Work in SC

*NRCS and SC Forestry Commission Sign Memorandum of Understanding*

USDA-NRCS and the South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) entered into an agreement to provide increased assistance to forest landowners. "This partnership will help promote forest management, advance conservation on forestlands, and improve delivery of technical assistance to private landowners in the state," said NRCS State Conservationist Niles Glasgow.

This is the first formal agreement between the federal agency and the state agency. Staffs from both agencies have worked together at the local level for many years. This agreement recognizes this cooperation, and lays the groundwork for more detailed agreements to share staff and financial resources.

Glasgow notes that, "NRCS administers many federal programs that can benefit forest landowners. Under these programs, the agency provides technical assistance as well as financial incentive payments." NRCS and the Forestry Commission can assist landowners with activities including establishing riparian buffers, prescribed burning on existing pine stands, planting hardwood and softwood trees, including longleaf pines, and applying conservation practices to stabilize logging roads and other forest harvest sites.

State Forester Gene Kodama says, "This agreement will strengthen the relationship between the Forestry Commission and NRCS, and promote a more efficient cooperation when it comes to providing technical assistance, information, training, and educational opportunities."



SC State Forester Gene Kodama (left) and State Conservationist Niles Glasgow strengthened the partnership between NRCS and the Forestry Commission with a formal agreement.

### Foothills RC&D Council Receives Outstanding Project Award

The Foothills Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council received the Outstanding Project Award at the Southeast RC&D Conference in Wytheville, Virginia. The conference took place September 10-12, 2008.

The Foothills RC&D Council submitted their successful *Partners for Trout* project, which then competed with ninety other RC&D Councils in nine Southeastern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

*Partners for Trout* is a partnership of federal and state agencies, non profits and landowners that have been working together for ten years to restore and enhance the trout waters in South Carolina. To date, nearly \$1.3 million has been spent to improve SC's trout waters.

Darrell Harrison, Foothills RC&D Secretary-Treasurer, said, "I am very pleased and humbled to receive this award on behalf of the Council at the Southeast Conference in Wytheville."



Foothills RC&D Coordinator Dave Demarest (left) and Secretary/Treasurer Darrell Harrison (right) accepted the Outstanding Project Award from National Association of RC&D Councils President Joan Smith-Freeman.

## Lowcountry RC&D News

The Lowcountry Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council has been busy both receiving and presenting awards. They recently were honored by the National Association of RC&D's with presentation of a *Circle of Diamonds* Certificate. They are the second SC RC&D Council to receive this honor (in addition to Foothills RC&D), and were recognized for their positive impact on the quality of life for the citizens in the counties of Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, and Jasper.

One of the projects which the Council is most proud of is the annual *Environmental Education for Youth* grants program which provides grants to entities who promote environmental education. Nearly \$55,000 has been presented over the past four years to deserving applicants. The Council recently announced the 2008 grant recipients, which awarded \$15,000 to 17 selected entities. Grants ranged from between \$250 and \$2,000. Lowcountry RC&D Coordinator Steve Edwards said, "We are proud that over 25,000 students throughout the state of South Carolina will directly benefit from these grant funds."

## The Good, the Bad, and the Dirty

*SC NRCS Helps SC FFA with Soil Judging Events*  
by Myra Jones, Soil Scientist, Laurens Soil Survey Office

I have heard there is a group of individuals out there who think you must be crazy to want to be a soil scientist. Some might think soil scientists are out there bickering over what appears to be just "dirt," and all the while, they are enjoying the argument. Well, for one group of high school students, they too might be on a path to becoming future soil scientists.

The South Carolina FFA Association conducts four Regional Soil Judging Career Development Events (CDE) annually, and one State Soil Judging CDE. Each year, the SC FFA turns to the South Carolina's NRCS Soil Scientists, District Conservationists, Soil Conservationists and Soil Technicians for help in securing soil judging sites, judging the soil, and determining slope and land practices for the area.

On October 2, 2008, the Piedmont Soil Judging CDE took place in Anderson County at Joey Martin's Farm. The event started early with Savannah Watershed Supervisory District Conservationist Mike Banks, MLRA Soil Survey Leader Lance Brewington, Resource Soil Scientist Emory Holsonback, Soil Scientists Myra Jones and Corry Calderone, and retired Greenville NRCS Soil Scientist **D e n n i s** DeFransesco.

Then, on October 7, 2008, the Mid-State Regional Contest was held in Newberry County at Satterwhite Farms. NRCS **D i s t r i c t** Conservationist Staci Henry, Soil



*SC FFA conducts four Regional Soil Judging Career Development Events annually, and NRCS assists with site preparation and judging.*

Conservationist Michael Sampson, Soil Conservation Technician Charles Barr and Education Coordinator Annette Davis assisted. A special thanks to Satterwhite and Martin for hosting these events and providing equipment to prepare the pits.

The eager students arrived, and were excited to dig into the pits to get started. After the judging was completed, students enjoyed snacks provided by the Anderson and Newberry SWCD's, and the winners were announced. The top six teams in Anderson County were (from first to sixth place): Woodmont High School, Crescent High School, Abbeville High School, Calhoun Falls, Belton-Honea Path High School and Abbeville County Career Center. The highest scoring individual was Corry Watt (Crescent High School). The top six teams in Newberry County were Pelion High School, York High School, Strom Thurmond High School, Blacksburg High School, Newberry Career Center and Cherokee TC. The highest scoring individual was Dakota Woodcock (Pelion High School).

### Soil Science Society of South Carolina Reunites and Encourages New Members to Join

Current and retired NRCS soil scientists converged in September in an effort to revitalize the Soil Science Society of SC (SSSSC).

Current officers are Charleston NRCS Resource Soil Scientist Randy Fowler as President, retired State Soil Scientist Ben Stuckey as Vice President, and retired Soil Scientist Bob Eppinette as Secretary/Treasurer.

During the Fall meeting, Caroline Edwards, President of the Consulting Soil Scientists of the Carolina's, distributed a draft of the Soil Science Practice Standards, and pledged her support to the SSSSC.

The Society is looking for new members, and is currently offering memberships at \$25 (professional), \$15 (associate), \$5 (students), and \$50 (businesses). If you are interested, contact Eppinette at (843) 908-3533, or email him at bobepinette@yahoo.com, or you can download and complete an application form by accessing page four at this link: [www.dnr.sc.gov/land/pdfs/SoilFall08Winter09Newsletter.pdf](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/land/pdfs/SoilFall08Winter09Newsletter.pdf).

### South Carolina Soils to Grace Cover of 11th Edition of *Keys to Soil Taxonomy*

by Jackie Reed, Soil Scientist

The Bishopville Soil Survey Office participated in a day-long adventure to prepare a soil profile to be photographed for the cover of the 11th edition of the *Keys to Soil Taxonomy*.

On October 15, 2008, John A. Kelley, Re-

gional Data Quality Specialist from Raleigh, NC, traveled to Bishopville to find the perfect shot of a diagnostic soil characteristic called lamellae. According to *Keys to Soil Taxonomy*, Lamellae is an illuvial horizon less than 7.5cm thick. Each



The 11th edition of *Keys to Soil Taxonomy* will feature a South Carolina soil characteristic called lamellae.

lamella contains an accumulation of oriented silicate

clay on or bridging sand and silt grains (and rock fragments if any are present). A lamella has more silicate clay than the overlying eluvial horizon. This unique characteristic is common in the Sand Hills of South Carolina.

After a long day of preparing the face of the soil profile, Kelley captured the perfect shot with help from SC Soil Scientists Charlie Ogg, Caleb Gulley and Jackie Reed.

### Switchgrass Takes Off in Marlboro County

Douglas and Margaret Newton farm over 1,000 acres in Marlboro County and saw a tremendous future in Switchgrass seed production due to its demand for biofuel production. Switchgrass is known to be difficult to establish, however, that has not been the case at the Newton farm. So, they purchased seeds from Ernst Seed Company, and planted 115 acres in the Spring of 2008 on marginal crop fields.

Ernst Conservation Seeds Company Founder Calvin Ernst visited these fields during the SC Bioenergy Summit and was stunned by the success. He said, "This is the best first year Switchgrass stand from Florida to Pennsylvania." Switchgrass seeds for bioenergy could be an exciting new venture for South Carolina farmers.

For more information, contact Marlboro County District Conservationist Frank Stephens at (843) 479-4552, or NRCS Conservation Agronomist Tibor Horvath at (803) 253-3893.



left to right: Marlboro District Conservationist Frank Stephens and Soil Conservationist Daniel Griffin inspect Switchgrass that was established last Spring in a marginal crop field.

### SC NRCS Length of Service Awards Luncheon Hosted in December

On December 4, 2008, SC NRCS employees embraced a day away from the confines of office phones and computers, and enjoyed great food and fellowship at a Christmas themed *Length of Service* ceremony. SC NRCS State Conservationist Niles Glasgow recognized employees for their dedication and commitment to the agency by presenting Length of Service awards. Awards were presented to employees reaching milestones of 5, 10, 20, 25, 30, 35, and even 40+ years of service.

Special recognition was given to NRCS Soil Conservation Technician Hollis Berry who has worked a combined total of 45 years with his federal and military employment. He served 23 years and five months in the Air Force, and has now worked 22 years with NRCS. Also recognized was State Office Hydraulic Engineer Al McNeill for 41 years of service, and State Office Planning Engineer Luke Nance for 43 years of service. Nance was also bid a warm farewell by Glasgow, as he plans to retire as of January 2009. Also retiring in January is Darlington Soil Conservation Technician John Bennett who will depart after 33 years of service.

Congratulations to all the employees who were honored for their years of service to USDA.



1. Luke Nance was thanked by SC NRCS State Conservationist Niles Glasgow for 43 years of service and congratulated on his upcoming January 2009 retirement.  
 2. Al McNeill was presented with an award for 41 years of service to NRCS.  
 3. Hollis Berry was congratulated for 45 years of combined federal and military service.

### Emergency Watershed Protection Project Celebrated in Greenville County

Greenville County, SC, was the site of a press conference on November 20, 2008, during which cooperating entities gathered to celebrate the completion of an Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) project.

EWP is an emergency response program administered through USDA-NRCS that addresses threats to life and property due to damaged watersheds following natural disasters. The program provides technical and financial assistance to reduce potential damages, and is funded through Congressional supplemental appropriations only after disaster strikes. In the case of this Greenville based project, homes and businesses in the Seth and Orr Streets vicinity of Greenville were being flooded during rain events.

A channel in the affected area was full of debris and sediment, thus making flooding more frequent. Homes in the area had to be vacated during flooding, displacing residents, many who were lower income residents of rental properties. EWP projects require a local sponsor, in this case Greenville County. They worked closely with NRCS to communicate with local residents, provided 25 percent of the cost of the project, and will assume operation and maintenance to ensure the channel is kept clear of debris. Now that the channel is clear, residents and business owners in the area can relax when rain is on the way.

Greenville SWCD Chairman William Earle moderated the event, and thanked NRCS and the County for working together to make the project a success. SC NRCS State Conservationist Niles Glasgow addressed the crowd and said, "This is a great example of urban conservation made possible through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program which helps safeguard lives and property from events like drought, severe erosion, fire, and flooding, which was the case at this downtown Greenville site."



SC NRCS State Conservationist Niles Glasgow informed members of the press on the details of the Greenville EWP project.

## SC Farm Family Honored at National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees Conference

by Amy O. Maxwell, SC NRCS Public Affairs

Darryll Jenkins is an outstanding small farmer from Neeses, South Carolina, (Orangeburg County). He worked with a strong alliance of conservation partners, including USDA-NRCS, the Orangeburg Soil and Water Conservation District, and Clemson University's Cooperative Extension Service (CES), to achieve his soil and water conservation goals.

He implemented EQIP practices including pasture and hayland grass plantings, nutrient and pest management, installation of heavy use areas, water troughs, and pipeline, as well as fencing. He also established recordkeeping as a routine practice to maximize his profits, and ensure proper resource management.

Jenkins takes pride in his cow/calf breeding operation, and says, "The quality of my product is so important, so this assistance has really helped me to ensure that I can raise good livestock." He added, "Small farmers contribute in a positive way to today's market, and the assistance I get from NRCS is helping me stay in business."

Mr. Jenkins is a small farmer, but also an outstanding steward of the land. He understands that his choice to adopt sound conservation practices is making a positive difference on his operation. He has chosen a way of life that affords

his family, especially his youngson, the privilege to rise each day and take pride in the fact that they are doing their part to protect and improve soil and water quality. Mr. Jenkins and his wife traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008, to be honored at a special



*left to right: NOPBNRCSE Interim President Drenda Williams, award recipients Willette Jenkins and Darryll Jenkins, and SC NRCS State Conservationist at the December 9th awards luncheon in Atlanta, Georgia, during which the top three small farmers in the country were recognized.*

awards luncheon. Their nomination video was featured during the ceremony, and they received a standing ovation for their dedication and stewardship. Congratulations to the Jenkins family!

## Indian Creek WHIP Project Honored with National Award

The National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) presented the Enoree Ranger District with the national John McGuire Award for outstanding work in natural resource management on the Indian Creek Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative (ICWHRI). The Cooperative Conservation Partners of the Indian Creek Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative include federal, state and local agencies/organizations who seek to restore and improve habitat for declining species that depend on grasslands and similar habitats. The project is possible through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) which provides landowners with technical and financial assistance to develop habitat for upland wildlife, threatened and endangered species, fish, and other wildlife in South Carolina.

The cooperating agencies initiated a landscape restoration project which sought to restore habitat for species that depend on grasslands, including bobwhite quail and songbirds such as prairie warbler, loggerhead shrike, and Bachman's sparrow.

NRCS State Conservationist Niles Glasgow said, "WHIP has improved and protected over 2 million acres of important wildlife habitat since it began in 1998. Indian Creek is a great example of what can happen when people and agencies work together in the name of conservation—the impact is huge, and the benefits will be great for a number of different wildlife species." Glasgow attended the awards ceremony along with Forest Service Chief Abigail Kimbell, Regional Forester Liz Agpaoa, NAFSR Board Chair George Leonard, Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests Forest Supervisor Jerome Thomas and Enoree District Ranger Elizabeth (Beth) LeMaster.

**Outdoor Classroom Honors  
Lee County Steward of the Land**

*Reprinted from The Item, Sumter County  
by Staff Writer Randy Burns*

The late Blain Player spent his life farming and promoting the virtues of practicing good stewardship of the land and its natural resources. An outdoor classroom at Robert E. Lee Academy in Lee County, complete with a covered pavilion and desks, will serve as a lasting memorial to the late Player and his widow, Nelle, for their commitment to soil and water conservation.

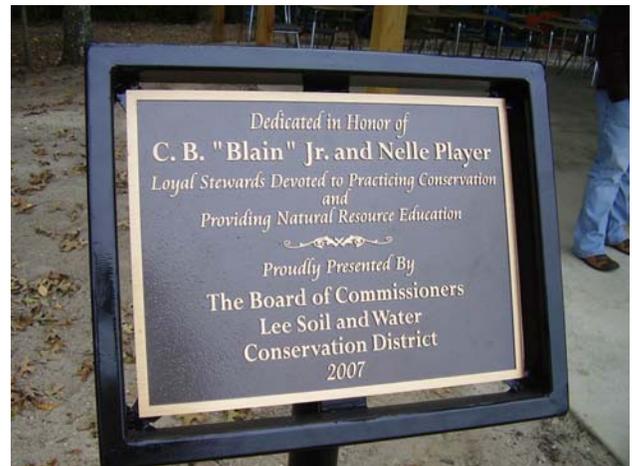
A dedication ceremony this Fall at the school paid tribute to the family that has been actively involved in soil and water conservation and education for more than 50 years.

Don Grant, chairman of the Lee Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), said the plaque and outdoor classroom were presented to honor the Player family. "It's a beautiful place in a beautiful setting, and it is an appropriate way to honor the memory of Mr. Player and to recognize Nelle as well."

Nelle taught at Robert E. Lee Academy and said some of her fondest memories involved participating in soil and water conservation projects. She described young people's talent and energy as inspiring. "I remember one project where we planted shrubbery in front of the school, and today their children are attending this school, and I hope they learn the importance of conservation at this outdoor classroom. This will teach young people to make conservation an important part of their life."

The Player family continues to play an active leadership role on the Lee SWCD. Son Pete Player, who operates the family farm in St. Charles, was re-elected to serve on the SWCD board of commissioners. He represents the fourth generation to serve on the conservation board. His great-grandfather was an original member of the board.

The two Player sons have dedicated themselves to careers in agriculture. Son Kirby Player is director of Alumni and Donor Services at the College of Agriculture at Clemson University. At the dedication ceremony, he remembered participating in various projects sponsored by the Lee SWCD.



*A dedication ceremony this fall paid tribute to Lee County's Player family. They have been actively involved in soil and water conservation and education for more than 50 years. An outdoor classroom and plaque were erected in memory of the late Blain Player.*

**Early Bird Registration for  
January Conference due  
by December 22nd!**

**[www.dnr.sc.gov/conservation/  
conference/index.html](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/conservation/conference/index.html)**

**There are two conferences coming up in  
January that you just don't want to miss.**

You can visit the link above for all the info. you need to find out the topics, download registration forms, and make your hotel arrangements at the Myrtle Beach *Embassy Suites*. Don't forget, you must register by **Monday, Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>** to receive the early bird registration rate!!!! Hotel arrangements must be made by **December 31<sup>st</sup>**, and don't forget to register for the January 13<sup>th</sup> SWCS Symposium. **See you at the beach!**



### A New Way of Life

*York County Couple Increases Productivity with Help From EQIP*

*by Sabrenna Bryant, Public Affairs Specialist*

When Mark and Shannon Robinson moved to their home and farm in Edgemoor, SC (York County), in 1998, the place was run-down and needed major repairs. When they initially purchased it, their intention was to have a home in the country to raise their family. Both were working full-time jobs while they restored the home. From time to time, they would help the existing tenants with various farm chores, and as these tenants aged and stopped farming, the Robinson's decided they wanted to manage the farming operation that the tenants started. Fast forward ten years, and the couple now operates over 300 acres of farmland between York and Chester counties, with a total of 120 head of cattle.

The Robinson's signed their first Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract in 2005 in Chester County, and installed conservation practices like cross fencing, buffer strips, and a well and watering troughs. After realizing the benefits and efficiency of the conservation practices, the couple decided to sign up for EQIP on their York County farm (which is on the county line and has 197 acres in York and approximately 7 acres in Chester).

Conservation technical assistance from York NRCS Soil Conservationist Jessie Thomson and District Conservationist LaKeisha Hill resulted in the Robinson's newest conservation plan which will enable them to cross-fence their farm into smaller paddocks and install nine watering troughs. "The installation of fencing will allow us to practice rotational grazing effectively, and give the grass a chance to grow properly," said Shannon. The couple also installed heavy use areas at high-traffic areas, and at each of the watering troughs. These replaced the once unsightly mud holes and eliminated soil erosion that was occurring in these high traffic areas.

"Jessie and I are excited to be working with this family. They realize the benefits of conservation and the positive effect it has on their bottom line, and to the health of natural resources overall," stated Hill. "It makes my job that much easier when the customer understands and appreciates the value of conservation."

As the Robinson's farm grew, so did the demand for their time. Shannon quit her full-time job two years ago to dedicate all her time to the farm and now spends between 60-80 hours a week maintaining the operation. Mark continues to work full-time, but spends at least 40 hours a week helping Shannon run the farm. He plans to farm full-time upon retirement. In addition to the cattle (which are raised for commercial beef) the Robinson's also produce hay. They create square and round bales of hay from 320 acres of neighboring farmland to sell for profit. Aside from occasional help from their son and Shannon's father, the Robinson's run the farm primarily on their own.

They love what they do and are confident that the beauty of their land and productivity of the farm is well worth the investment of time and energy. "EQIP helped us install practices that will provide us with an efficient and effective farm," said Mark.

For more information, please contact the York USDA Service Center at 803-684-3137.



*EQIP technical and financial assistance enabled Shannon and Mark Robinson to improve the efficiency of their 300 acre beef cattle operation with installation of cross-fencing and soil erosion prevention and water quality improvement conservation practices.*

## Welcome to SC NRCS!

*New Soil Conservationists in Field Offices*

**Jayson Mas** was selected as a Soil Conservationist in the Lancaster Field Office this August. Originally from Mayaguez in Puerto Rico, he received a Bachelors Degree in Animal Science from the University of Puerto Rico (Colegio).

His past work experiences include three years of military active duty as a mechanic at Fort Lewis in Washington State; five years in the Puerto Rico National Guard; and employment at a veterinary clinic for three years while studying for his Bachelor's Degree.

Mas enjoys going to the beach, traveling, and spending time with his family and friends. "I took this opportunity because I wanted to put what I learned in college into practice. I look forward to working with NRCS, the citizens, and the conservation partnership in Lancaster County. Our natural resources are very important to us, and I hope to assist people in implementing good conservation practices on their land." **Welcome to SC NRCS Jayson!**



*Jayson Mas  
Soil Conservationist  
Lancaster County*

**Brad Horn** was hired as a Soil Conservationist in the Laurens Field Office. He earned a Masters in Plant/Soil Science from Arkansas State University. He and his wife Michelle have two sons, Nick (15) and Alex (8). He says he really enjoys outdoor activities with his family including hiking, camping, canoeing, gardening, and fishing. He spent much of his youth exploring the neighboring hills, mountains, and floating the Caddo River in the Ouachita Mountains of Arkansas, and later the Ozark Mountains as an adult. Currently, he is enjoying the SC mountains, and plans to spend as much time as possible hiking the mountain trails and floating the streams of the Palmetto State. **Welcome to SC NRCS Brad!**



*Brad Horn  
Soil Conservationist  
Laurens County*

## SC WHIP Projects Featured at Sixth Eastern Native Grass Symposium

*by Sudie Daves Thomas, Wildlife Biologist, SC NRCS*

The 6<sup>th</sup> Eastern Native Grass Symposium was held in Columbia, SC, this October. The semi-annual symposium brings together researchers, land managers, landowners, biologists, botanists, and native plant enthusiasts to discuss and highlight efforts to restore native grassland communities in the East, use native grasses for forage, energy production, and carbon sequestration, and share project successes.

The symposium was truly a success, due in great part to the fantastic field trips. Several of the field trip sites were areas that had been impacted by NRCS' Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP).

The group visited the WHIP project of Dorchester County landowner George Way which boasted beautiful longleaf, loblolly, and pond pine stands within a historic range of pine savanna and pine flatwoods. Way's WHIP plan prescribes frequent burning which in turn produced vibrant floral diversity. The site supports native herbaceous plants like wiregrass, toothache grass, little bluestem, chalky bluestem, pitcher plants, and wildflowers galore. The land is located near Bronson Forest, which supports a large population of the Federally Endangered Red-Cockaded Woodpecker.

Another WHIP site in Dorchester County owned by the Charleston Natural History Society (a chapter of the Audubon Society) offered symposium participants a look at old crop and timber land that is being restored to longleaf pine and native grass habitat through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, and WHIP.

The group also had the opportunity to visit the award winning Indian Creek Wildlife Habitat Restoration Initiative area in Newberry County. Thanks to everyone for their efforts in restoring native grasslands in SC, and helping to showcase these efforts at this successful symposium.



*Symposium attendees visited WHIP sites in Dorchester and Newberry Counties.*



# Conservation Photo Contest Winners



*"Cool Day by the Stream" by Amanda Roberts, Lancaster SWCD*



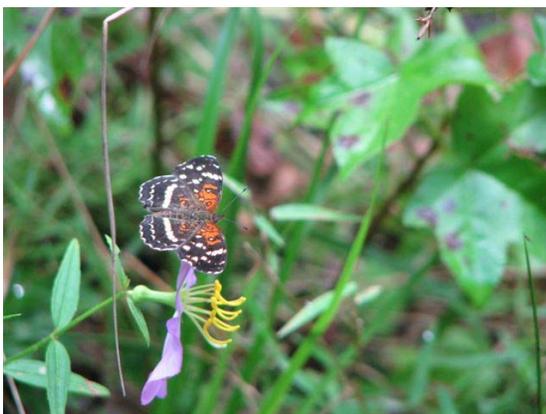
*"Hidden Hive" by Emily Pohlman, Aiken NRCS, photographed in Jackson, SC*



*"Just Pickin Flowers" by Sue Griggs, NRCS Chesterfield, SC*



*"All Aboard" by George Sullivan, Columbia, SC*



*"Texan Crescent" by Ann Bentley, NRCS, Charleston, SC*



*"Wading in the Water" by Ann Bentley, NRCS, Charleston, SC*



*"HeeHaaw" by  
Lynette Savereno,  
RC&D, Darlington, SC*



*"All in Favor! The Ears  
Have It!" by  
Eddie Martin, NRCS,  
Greenville, SC*



*"Good to the Last Drop" by  
Sue Griggs, NRCS,  
Chesterfield, SC*



*"Fall Colors" by Dave Demarest, RC&D, Greenville, SC*

## Personnel News

### New Employees

**Bradley Horn** was selected as a Soil Conservationist, GS-0457-07, in the Laurens Field Office, effective October 26, 2008.

**Eric Fleming** was selected as State Conservationist Engineer, GS-0810-13, in the State Office effective September 28, 2008.

**Natalie Bowyer** was selected as a Financial Technician, GS-0503-07, in the State Office, effective November 9, 2008.

### Promotions

**Benjamin Padget** was promoted to Soil Conservationist, GS-0457-7, in the St. George Field Office, effective August 3, 2008.

**Brandon Durant** was promoted to Soil Conservationist, GS-0457-07, in the Chesterfield Field Office, effective August 3, 2008.

**Odessa Armstrong** was promoted to District Conservationist, GS-0457-11, in the Orangeburg Field Office, effective November 9, 2008.

**Steven Maness** was promoted to Programs Assistant, GS-0326-05, in the State Office, effective December 7, 2008.

### Reassignment

**Charles Banks**, District Conservationist in the Spartanburg Field Office, was reassigned to Soil Conservationist located in the Greenville Field Office, effective October 26, 2008.

**Harvey Campbell**, District Conservationist in the Conway Field Office, was reassigned to Soil Conservationist located in the Georgetown Field Office, effective October 26, 2008.

**Michael Sampson**, a Soil Conservationist in the Kingstree Field Office, was reassigned to the Newberry Field Office, effective August 17, 2008.

## South Carolina NRCS Employee Appointed to National Committee

Congratulations to York County NRCS District Conservationist Lakeisha Hill who was chosen to serve as a member of the National Civil Rights Committee. Appointed by NRCS Chief Arlen Lancaster, appointments were



made by selecting applications from a lengthy list of hopeful candidates. Hill previously served as the Black Emphasis Program Manager (BEPM) for South Carolina.



December 19, 2008

*Dear Santa,  
I've been a good boy this year. I completed my audit requirements! All I want for Christmas is some more folders for my office. Do I need to submit an AD-700 to order these?"*

*Thanks!, Cliff*