

Projects . Successes . Partnerships

 **NRCS** Louisiana
Conservation Update
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March 2012

**Turkeys,
Quail, and Deer
... and Longleaf
Pine**

**2011 Investment
in Conservation in
Louisiana**

Award Winning Farmers

**Puppets Teach
Conservation**

A cooperative partnership with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts and
Resource Conservation and Development Councils (RC&D)

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

On the Cover



In 2009, Richard Gary Vincent visited the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) DeRidder Field Office with one thing in mind—well actually, three things—turkeys, quail, and deer. What he found was the Longleaf Pine Initiative. See Vincent's story on pages 4 and 5.



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Quote of the Month

**"All for one,
 one for all!"**

Motto of Alexandre Dumas'
The Three Musketeers



State Conservationist Kevin Norton is on detail assignment to Washington, DC, to work on Senator Debbie Stabenow's staff to help draft the language of our nation's next Farm Bill.

Notes from the Acting State Conservationist

Nationwide, the conservation partnership is a successful blend of federal, state, and local entities that has served America's agricultural community for over 77 years. In Louisiana, the conservation partnership ensures Louisiana enjoys abundant and clean sources of water, fertile agricultural soils, healthy wildlife populations, and a bright agricultural future.

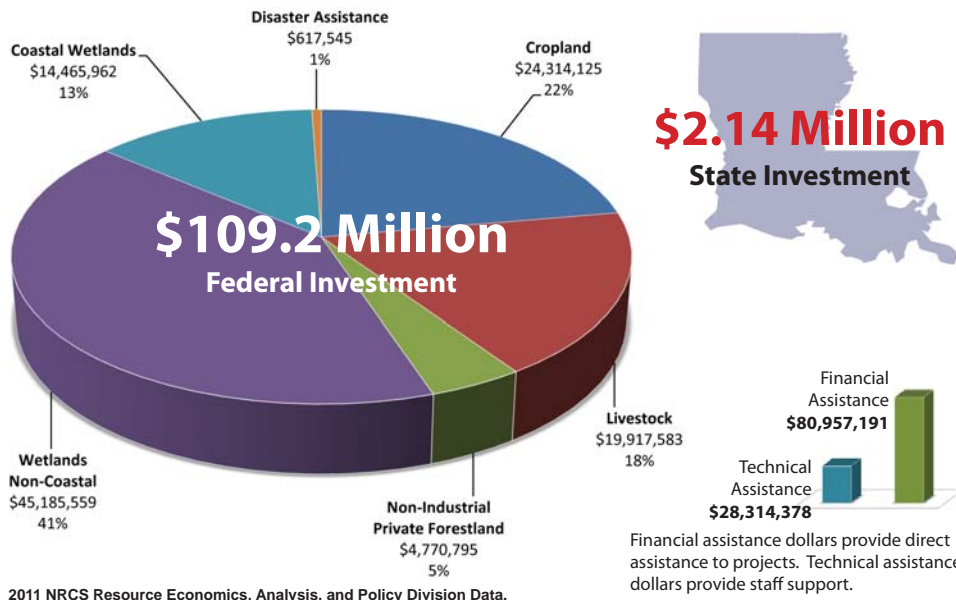
Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field office staff stand on the front line of Louisiana's conservation partnership in field offices across Louisiana. These frontline conservationists work with Louisiana's agricultural producers each day to assess resource concerns and develop conservation plans to help producers meet their business and resource goals.

If you are interested in learning more about the conservation partnership, assessing resource concerns on your farm or ranch, or developing a conservation plan for your farm or ranch, visit your local SWCD or NRCS office.

Sarah Haymaker
Acting State Conservationist - Louisiana

Contact information for NRCS offices is included on the back page of this publication.

2011 Investment in Conservation in Louisiana



The **Conservation Update** is distributed monthly by mail and e-mail.

If you would like to receive monthly issues of the **Conservation Update**, please send your mailing address or e-mail address to:

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Turkeys, Quail, and Deer . . . and Longleaf Pine



In 2009, Richard Gary Vincent visited the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) DeRidder Field Office with one thing in mind—well actually, three things—turkeys, quail, and deer. Vincent wanted to find a way to improve the wildlife habitat on a 10-acre clear cut on his land and entice turkeys, quail, and deer to return. What Vincent found at the DeRidder Field Office was the Longleaf Pine Initiative (see page 5 for more on the Longleaf Pine Initiative).

District Conservationist Corby Moore worked with Vincent to determine ways he could address the resource needs of Vincent's land and improve the wildlife habitat, and all roads led to planting longleaf pine.



"The longleaf forest is one of the most ecologically diverse forest systems in North America," said Moore. "By establishing longleaf pine on his land, Mr. Vincent increased its wildlife potential tremendously."

Vincent was awarded a Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) contract to establish not 10, but 17 acres of longleaf pine through the Longleaf Pine Initiative, and in recent weeks, he planted native grasses and forbs to establish a source of food and cover for wildlife.



Knowing Mr. Vincent's objectives, the DeRidder Field Office staff developed a Resource Management Level Conservation Plan to address Early Successional Habitat Development, Prescribed Fire, Forest Stand Improvement, and Upland Wildlife Management.

"NRCS has been with me every step of the way, from developing the plan to putting the trees in the ground, and now planting cover," said Vincent. "My first goal was bring the wildlife back to my land, now I am bringing back the wildlife and the forests of my ancestors. You can't get better than that."

Richard Gary Vincent Conservationist



“What I have is a 17-acre food plot.”

Richard Gary Vincent



Longleaf Pine Initiative

Conservation Beyond Boundaries

Longleaf pine forests once encompassed more than 90 million acres of the North American landscape. Today, only three percent, or 3.4 million acres, remain and, yet, longleaf pine forests represent some of the world’s most biologically diverse ecosystems. The longleaf pine ecosystem provides critical habitat for 29 threatened and endangered species.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Longleaf Pine Initiative began when an interdepartmental Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among USDA, the Department of Interior, and the Department of Defense identified the longleaf pine ecosystem as a priority resource concern.

As part of the initiative, NRCS and its conservation partners in nine states are helping private landowners improve the sustainability and profitability of longleaf pine forest ecosystems. The following important conservation practices improve the forests’ health: forest stand improvement, prescribed burning, restoration and management of rare or declining habitats, and tree/shrub establishment.

NRCS Farm Bill conservation programs provide landowners technical and financial assistance. States involved in the initiative include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.

Through the **Longleaf Pine Initiative**, Richard Gary Vincent has successfully established 17 acres of longleaf pine.

He recently planted native grasses such as big bluestem, little bluestem, green sprangletop and Indiangrass; native forbs such as Illinois bundleflower, Engelmann daisy, partridge pea, maximillion sunflower; and a mix of purple, yellow and white clover.





Master Forage Producer Award Presented to Ted Miller

The Louisiana Forage and Grassland Council recently awarded Ted Miller the Master Forage Producer Award.

Ted and Melissa Miller began their Louisiana grass-based dairy in partnership with the Charles Opitz operation by converting 1,100 acres of cropland to 'Russell' bermuda, fescue, and red clover. To meet their goal of establishing and operating a grass-based dairy, the Millers have become master forage managers—but it was a learning process.

The Millers learned growing multiple species of forages that thrive in one climate has unique challenges. They learned that when meshing a cool season forage production system with a warm season forage production system, issues with competition and grazing management arise. They also learned that to properly manage

grazing, they must be on their pasture continuously evaluating conditions.

The Millers have utilized the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program to install several conservation practices including: Pasture and Hay Planting to facilitate pasture establishment, Watering Facility to establish water troughs, Heavy Use Area Protection to limit erosion and mud in gate openings and around water troughs, and Fence to facilitate rotational grazing.

The Millers hosted a field day to provide educational opportunities for area forage producers, and Ted recently filmed an interview for presentation at the National Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Steering Committee meeting. This interview was used to educate and inform committee members about conservation concerns in North Louisiana.

Submitted by Jason Hardie, District Conservationist, Winnsboro Field Office



Puppets

Teach Conservation to 4th Graders

145 fourth graders from Baskin Elementary, Family Community Christian School, Franklin Academy, and Gilbert Elementary in Franklin Parish enjoyed a 20-minute puppet presentation on conservation.

The presentation focused on products obtained from trees—including tree-based chemicals in food and drink products and non-edible products—the parts of a tree, and forest wildlife. Tree "cookies" (cuts from the cross-section of a tree) were passed around for the children to examine and count tree rings.

Stephanie Cruse, Soil Conservationist at the Winnsboro Field Office, assisted with a PowerPoint presentation while Dan Brunson, Northeast Soil and Water Conservation District Conservation Technician, and Judy Mackey, Northeast Soil and Water Conservation District Secretary, served as puppeteers. Salita Johnson, NRCS Student Intern, also served as a puppeteer at the Baskin Elementary program.

After the presentations each student was given a tree with instructions for planting. The trees were donated by Northeast Delta RC&D and Cypress Brake Tree Farm of Rayville, Louisiana. The children also received a coloring sheet showing the parts of a tree, a booklet entitled "DIG IT! The Secrets of Soil," and a "Conservation Across Louisiana" tattoo.

Submitted by Judy Mackey, Northeast Soil and Water Conservation District, Winnsboro



"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."

John F. Kennedy

Around the State



Hank Rabb (center) accepts 2012 Louisiana Farmer of the Year Award from Don Molino with Louisiana Agri-News Network as wife Patricia Rabb looks on. Photo by Linda Benedict, LSU AgCenter.

Hank Rabb Named 2012 Louisiana Farmer of the Year

Tensas-Concordia Soil and Water Conservation District Board Member Hank Rabb was recognized as Louisiana's 2012 Farmer of the Year at a banquet held at Chef John Folse's White Oak Plantation in Baton Rouge on Thursday, February 23.

The award was presented by Louisiana's Agri-News Network the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, the LSU AgCenter, and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. Rabb is a fourth generation farmer who currently farms corn, cotton, and wheat on more than 5,000 acres primarily in Tensas Parish.

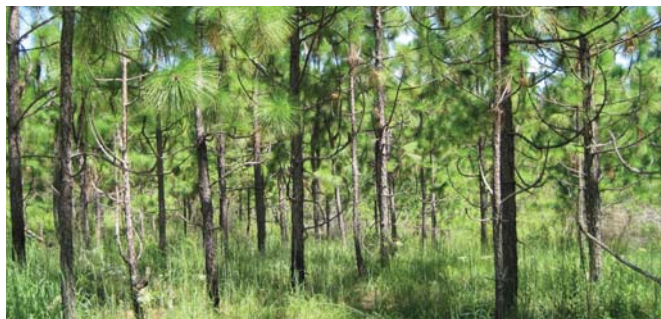
Feb 29

Locally Led Meeting - On February 29, 2012, the Franklin Field Office and St. Mary Soil and Water Conservation District hosted a meeting to discuss local conservation concerns. 34 people attended the meeting, including a State Representative, local ranchers, sugarcane farmers, landowners, and the Parish President.



Mar 12

Rural America Rally - On March 12, 2012, Representatives from Southern University and USDA gathered with local officials and local farmers to network and discuss current farm practices at a "Save Rural America" rally at the Florida Parishes Arena in Amite. District Conservationist Tony Beauboeuf attended the rally and provided information on NRCS programs and services.



Working Lands for Wildlife

In March, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW), a new partnership with farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to use innovative approaches to restore and protect the habitats for wildlife, including seven at-risk species. As part of this partnership project, three parishes in Louisiana were targeted as WLFW high-priority focal areas for restoration and protection of the gopher tortoise: Tangipahoa, Washington, and St. Tammany. NRCS funds from the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) will share the cost of conservation practices with landowners in this area. Interested producers and landowners in Tangipahoa, Washington, and St. Tammany Parishes should contact their local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office.



USDA's Commitment to Equality

USDA believes every farmer and rancher should be treated equally and fairly, and we are committed to resolving all cases involving allegations of past discrimination by individuals.

Referral Guide for USDA Settlements and Claims Adjudication Process

Women and Hispanic Farmers and Ranchers Claims Adjudication Process

If you believe that USDA improperly denied farm loan benefits to you for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000 because you are a female or because you are Hispanic, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. To request a claims package by telephone, call 1-888-508-4429. To request a claims package online, please visit www.farmerclaims.gov

Native American Farmer and Rancher Class Action Settlement (Keepseagle v. Vilsack)

If you are a Native American who was denied a farm loan or loan servicing by the USDA between January 1, 1981, and November 24, 1999, you may be eligible for benefits from a Class Action Settlement. To request a claims package by telephone, call: 1-888-233-5506. To request a claims package online, or for more information, please visit: www.indianfarmclass.com

African American Farmer and Rancher Class Action Settlement (Pigford II)

If you are an African American farmer (a) who submitted a request to file a late claim on or between October 13, 1999, and June 18, 2008, under the 1999 USDA settlement in the earlier class action known as Pigford v. Glickman ("Pigford") and (b) who did not receive a merits determination on your discrimination claim, you may be eligible for benefits from a Class Action Settlement. To hear information by telephone, call 1-866-950-5547 or 1-866-472-7826. To find information online, please visit: www.blackfarmercase.com

Contact Our Offices

Parish	Field Office	Soil and Water Conservation District	Address	Telephone
Acadia	Crowley	Acadia SWCD	157 Cherokee Drive, Suite C, Crowley, LA 70526	(337) 783-5823, ext. 3
Allen	Oberlin	Allen SWCD	309 North 1st Street, Suite 1, Oberlin, LA 70655	(337) 639-4850, ext. 3
Ascension	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2274 Highway 70, Suite C, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Assumption	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD	2274 Highway 70, Suite C, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Avoyelles	Marksville	Avoyelles SWCD	629 Tunica Drive West, Marksville, LA 71351	(318) 253-9445, ext. 3
Beauregard	DeRidder	Calcasieu SWCD	597 Mahlon Street, Suite B, DeRidder, LA 70634	(337) 463-8555, ext. 3
Bienville	Minden	Saline SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Bossier	Benton	Bodcau SWCD	200 Burt Boulevard, Suite 101, Benton, LA 71006-4901	(318) 965-2185, ext. 3
Caddo	Shreveport	Caddo SWCD	1402 Hawn Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71107	(318) 676-3461, ext. 3
Calcasieu	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	1400 Highway 14, Suite B, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 436-5020, ext. 3
Caldwell	Columbia	Boeuf and Dugdemona SWCD	7128 Highway 165 South, Suite 2, Columbia, LA 71418	(318) 649-2651, ext. 3
Cameron	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	1400 Highway 14, Suite B, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 436-5020, ext. 3
Catahoula	Jonesville	Catahoula SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Claiborne	Minden	D'Arbonne SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Concordia	Ferriday	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	8331 Highway 84, Ferriday, LA 71334	(318) 757-2455, ext. 3
DeSoto	Mansfield	DeSoto SWCD	211 Washington Avenue, Mansfield, LA 71052	(318) 872-4949, ext. 3
East Baton Rouge	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	2191 Tower Drive, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 664-1430, ext. 3
East Carroll	Lake Providence	East Carroll SWCD	406 Lake Street, Suite C, Lake Providence, LA 71254	(318) 559-2604, ext. 3
East Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Evangeline	Ville Platte	Evangeline SWCD	205 Court Street, Ville Platte, LA 70586	(318) 435-6020, ext. 3
Franklin	Winnsboro	Northeast SWCD	616 Riser Road, Winnsboro, LA 71295	(318) 435-6743, ext. 3
Grant	Colfax	Grant SWCD	510 Main Street, Colfax, LA 71417	(318) 627-9903, ext. 3
Iberia	New Iberia	Iberia SWCD	2617 Northside Road, Suite 600, New Iberia, LA 70563	(337) 369-6623, ext. 3
Iberville	Addis	Lower Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1 South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
Jackson	Ruston	Dugdemona SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Jefferson	Boutte	Crescent SWCD	14246 US Highway 90, Boutte, LA 70039	(985) 758-2162, ext. 3
Jefferson Davis	Jennings	Jefferson Davis SWCD	2003 Port Drive, Jennings, LA 70546	(337) 824-0975, ext. 3
Lafayette	Lafayette	Lafayette SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
LaFourche	Thibodaux	LaFourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
LaSalle	Jonesville	LaSalle SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Lincoln	Ruston	D'Arbonne SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Livingston	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	2191 Tower Drive, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 664-1430, ext. 3
Madison	Tallulah	Madison SWCD	1900 Crothers Drive, Tallulah, LA 71282	(318) 574-4158, ext. 3
Morehouse	Bastrop	Morehouse SWCD	9604 Marlatt Street, Bastrop, LA 71220	(318) 283-7626, ext. 3
Natchitoches	Natchitoches	Natchitoches SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3
Orleans	Boutte	Crescent SWCD	14246 US Highway 90, Boutte, LA 70039	(985) 758-2162, ext. 3
Ouachita	Monroe	D'Arbonne/Boeuf River SWCD	2410 Old Sterlington Road, Suite B, Monroe, LA 71203-2668	(318) 343-4467, ext. 3
Plaquemines	Boutte	Plaquemines SWCD	14246 US Highway 90, Boutte, LA 70039	(985) 758-2162, ext. 3
Pointe Coupee	New Roads	Upper Delta SWCD	180 East Main Street, New Roads, LA 70760	(225) 638-7746, ext. 3
Rapides	Alexandria	Rapides SWCD	3734 Government Street, Building C, Alexandria, LA 71303	(318) 473-7856, ext. 3
Red River	Coushatta	Red River SWCD	1311 Ringgold Avenue, Coushatta, LA 71019	(318) 932-4352, ext. 3
Richland	Rayville	Boeuf River SWCD	141 Industrial Loop, Rayville, LA 71269	(318) 728-4451, ext. 3
Sabine	Many	Sabine SWCD	570 Highway 171 By Pass, Many, LA 71449	(318) 256-3491
St. Bernard	Boutte	Crescent SWCD	14246 US Highway 90, Boutte, LA 70039	(985) 758-2162, ext. 3
St. Charles	Boutte	Crescent SWCD	14246 US Highway 90, Boutte, LA 70039	(985) 758-2162, ext. 3
St. Helena	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
St. James	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2274 Highway 70, Suite C, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
St. John	Boutte	Crescent SWCD	14246 US Highway 90, Boutte, LA 70039	(985) 758-2162, ext. 3
St. Landry	Opelousas	St. Landry SWCD	5832 I-49 North Service Road, Opelousas, LA 70570	(337) 942-2530, ext. 3
St. Martin	Lafayette	St. Martin SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
St. Mary	Franklin	St. Mary SWCD	500 Main Street, Franklin, LA 70538	(337) 828-1461, ext. 3
St. Tammany	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Tangipahoa	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
Tensas	St. Joseph	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	1223 Plank Road, St. Joseph, LA 71366	(318) 766-3502, ext. 3
Terrebonne	Thibodaux	LaFourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
Union	Farmerville	D'Arbonne SWCD	604 East Water Street, Farmerville, LA 71241	(318) 368-8021
Vermilion	Abbeville	Vermilion SWCD	3221 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite H, Abbeville, LA 70510	(337) 893-5664, ext. 3
Vernon	Leesville	Calcasieu SWCD	1100-C South Third Street, Leesville, LA 71446	(337) 239-2193
Washington	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Webster	Minden	Dorcheat SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
West Baton Rouge	Addis	Upper Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1, South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
West Carroll	Oak Grove	West Carroll SWCD	208 South Constitution Street, Oak Grove, LA 71263	(318) 428-9303, ext. 3
West Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Winn	Natchitoches	Dugdemona SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3

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