

Did you know that you can remove rust from traps by soaking them in a bucket of crushed green magnolia leaves? (This tip compliments of TREASURE Forest owner Gary Fortenberry.) Or that you shouldn't plant corn in the spring until the leaves on an oak tree are as big as a squirrel's ear?

If you know of any food for thought, trivia, folklore, or country wisdom, please share it with us. Send your items to Coleen Vansant at www.vansantc@forestry.state.al.us.

For current information on the Southern Pine Beetle situation in Alabama visit the Alabama Forestry Commission web page at: www.forestry.state.al.us

WHIP Helps Develop and Restore Wildlife Habitat

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The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 authorized the establishment of the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. The purpose of WHIP is to provide financial cost-share and technical assistance to landowners to develop and restore wildlife habitat across America's farm landscape.

Congress originally authorized \$50 million nationally for implementing the program over five years. This is a lot of money, but when distributed across the nation, funds for individual projects were limited. Therefore, each state was required to develop an implementation plan that identified target wildlife species and habitats, especially those in decline. The bobwhite quail, for example, was identified as a priority wildlife species in Alabama, and the restoration of their native grassland/shrub habitats was assigned as a habitat priority. Threatened

and endangered species and declining natural communities such as wetlands and longleaf pine ecosystems were also given restoration priority.

WHIP is the only USDA conservation cost-share assistance program devoted totally to the development of wildlife habitats across the nation. It is unique among USDA conservation programs in that wildlife habitat development is the program's sole priority. Following WHIP's implementation, applications for projects quickly exhausted the funds that were available. Requests for assistance have greatly exceeded the program's capacity, demonstrating landowners' desires for wildlife and habitat restoration.

Because of its popularity, WHIP was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 with increased funding levels totaling \$360 million dollars through 2007. If you need information about the current Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, please contact your local USDA Service Center. 

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