

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USDA ANNOUNCES WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM SIGNUP

Nashville, TN— The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Tennessee announces that agricultural producers who want to apply for 2008 funding for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) should do so by Friday, February 8, 2008. Sign up for the WHIP program is year round, but applications receiving 2008 fiscal year funding need to be received by February 8th.

WHIP is a voluntary program which encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitats supporting wildlife populations of National, State, Tribal, and local significance. Through WHIP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and others to develop or enhance upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat areas on their property.

"The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program helps landowners protect and improve wildlife habitats on private working lands in Tennessee," said Kevin Brown, Tennessee's State Conservationist. "WHIP offers cost share to landowners who want to apply approved conservation measures."

All applications will be ranked as quickly as possible in order to fund successful applications prior to March 15th. A conservation planner will develop a contract and conservation plan for each contract that is approved. Producers who have been awarded contracts can then begin implementing the approved conservation practices this year.

Local NRCS field offices have complete details for their county. Additional information about WHIP can be found at www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/.

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