



CONSERVATION ON PRIVATE LANDS

Good for Wildlife, Good for Producers

New opportunity for Georgia landowners:

Georgia farmers and landowners can now improve their land, support wildlife, and receive conservation funding through the Open Habitat Initiative.

What is the Open Habitat Initiative?

OHI is a new conservation program that offers incentive payments to eligible landowners/tenants who implement practices that improve wildlife habitat. The program focuses on supporting habitat for grassland and savanna birds, pollinators, and other native wildlife.

- **Funding:** Provided through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).
- **Leadership:** Led and managed by the National Bobwhite & Grassland Initiative (NBGI), supported by NRCS and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR).
- **Technical Assistance:** Provided by the GADNR Private Lands Program and the NBGI Foundation.

Who can apply?

To qualify, landowners/tenants must:

- Be eligible for USDA farm programs.
- Have a current farm record and a valid farm number with the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

How do I start?

Project planning can begin anytime. Contact a GADNR Private Lands Biologist to get started today. Contact details are a scan away - see back of page for more information.

How do incentive payments work?

Landowners/tenants receive payments for completing approved conservation practices.

- Payments cover up to 95% of the standard cost for each practice.
- Practices that establish or enhance open habitat and/or pollinator habitat will be given priority.

How do contracts work?

- Contracts will be administered by the NBGI and signed digitally.
- Contract terms range from 1-3 years.
- Most contracts are finalized within 3 months, so that work can begin quickly.

Where can I get help?

GADNR Private Lands Biologists are available to help you explore conservation options and create a custom plan for your land.

Help is a scan away - see back of page for more information.

Conservation Options

Many conservation practices benefit both wildlife and producers. While even production-focused practices can help wildlife, small adjustments can make an even greater impact. Here are a few examples:



Brush Management

Reduction or control of woody plants to restore open habitat and support desired plant communities.



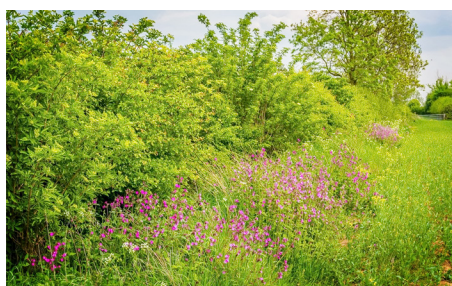
Early Successional Habitat

Management of plant succession to develop and maintain early successional habitat to benefit wildlife and/or natural communities.



Forest Stand Improvement

Selective thinning or management of trees and shrubs to achieve healthy, diverse forest conditions.



Hedgerow Planting

Establishment of shrubs in a linear design to provide food, cover, and connectivity for wildlife.



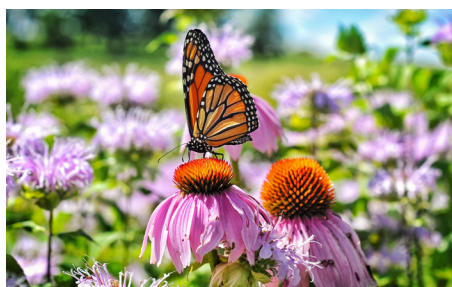
Herbaceous Weed Treatment

Control or removal of invasive, noxious, or undesirable herbaceous plants to restore or enhance habitat quality.



Prescribed Burning

Application of planned fire to a defined area to improve habitat, reduce fuel loads, and support ecosystem health.



Wildlife Habitat Planting

Establishment of native grasses, forbs, or shrubs to create, restore, or enhance habitat for wildlife.

- **Conservation Cover:** Permanent vegetation cover improves soil health and enhances water quality while supporting year-round habitat for wildlife.
- **Cover Crop:** Seasonal planting of vegetation to enrich soil, reduce erosion, suppress weeds, and support wildlife.
- **Firebreaks:** Permanent or temporary strips of cleared land that reduce wildfire risk and support prescribed burning.
- **Native Pasture Planting:** Establishment of drought-tolerant native perennials to improve forage quality, wildlife habitat, and ecosystem resilience.
- **Tree/Shrub Establishment:** Planting of native trees or shrubs, such as longleaf or shortleaf pine, to enhance agroforestry and wildlife habitat.
- **Tree/Shrub Site Preparation:** Treatment of planting sites to improve survival and growth of longleaf pine, shortleaf pine, or native shrub species.

Want to learn more?

The Open Habitat Initiative is an excellent opportunity to improve your land, support wildlife, and receive conservation funding. GADNR Private Lands Biologists are available to answer questions and help you design a plan that works for your goals.

Scan the QR code, visit the link, or call (229) 420-1183 for more information.



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