

Another Conservation Success Story...

Chattahoochee County, Georgia

July 2006

River of Mud Becomes a Stream of Traffic

Armored tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles maneuvering on Fort Benning bring a whole new meaning to what the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) terms heavy use area protection.

With a little rain, just getting these ground shaking vehicles out to the training area can leave a dirt road or tank trail virtually impassable to a standard 4x4 truck.

Even the armored vehicles themselves are steered around the deepest ruts and gullies, expanding the problem. When it rains, these trails can literally become a river of mud.

The tank trail in the A7 Training Compartment was a prime example of where an especially bad segment of the trail was located adjacent to Martin Range.

Even though it was a primary travel route out to the mechanized training areas, over time the severity of the damage and concerns for safety forced all traffic to be detoured to a longer secondary route. Routine maintenance per-



Before - March 6, 2003

formed by Fort Benning on the site provided only temporary relief.

The NRCS was asked to assist in permanently correcting the damage and stabilizing the site to provide all-weather access for mechanized vehicles. After a thorough investigation of the site, a plan was developed by NRCS and the representatives of the Army to remedy the problem.

To stabilize the site, it was first necessary to remove approximately 2 feet of unconsolidated mud and soil.

Once the sub-grade preparation was complete, a 12 inch layer of No.3 coarse aggregate stone was put down on a geotextile fabric to form a foundation.

The coarse aggregate stone also provided drainage relief for wet weather seepage. This stone was then covered with 9 inches of finely graded aggregate base material, crowned, and compacted to provide a smooth durable two lane driving surface.

The ditches, shoulders and road banks were reshaped to provide for stable surface drainage and all disturbed areas were vegetated.

By extending NRCS's traditional concept of heavy use protection to accommodate the foot print of a 60 ton tank, the A7 tank trail is back in use and is holding up well in all types of weather.

Part of the planning on this site included the consideration of the maintenance capabilities of Fort Benning. An advantage to the type treatment used is that it can be maintained through their normal trail grading program and easily repaired should it become damaged.



After - April 22, 2003

Two Rivers RC&D
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