



**Natural Resources
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News Release

Release No.: 0000022.15

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Kurt Simon named Acting State Conservationist following William Puckett's Retirement from the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Alabama

AUBURN, Ala., July 15, 2015– Alabama's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) today announced that Kurt Simon of Knoxville, Tennessee will begin serving as Alabama's State Conservationist on Monday, July 27, 2015.

Simon currently serves as the Tennessee NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations (ASTC-FO) in Knoxville. He holds degrees in wildlife management and agronomy from Hocking College and Ohio State University, respectively. Simon began his career in conservation as a Conservation District Technician in Ohio and was later hired as a Soil Conservationist with NRCS.

Over the next several years, Simon held roles as District Conservationist and Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Coordinator in Ohio and West Virginia. After these career moves, he then transitioned into a role with NRCS' National Ecological Sciences Division. During this time, Simon worked on multiple teams and projects in more than 40 states. Before becoming an Assistant State Conservation for Field Operations in Tennessee, Simon served as liaison to the National Wild Turkey Federation and The Nature Conservancy.

Simon has been married to his wife Stephanie for 25 years and they have two daughters, Kari and Stacy who are currently enrolled in college.

"I am looking forward to working with Alabama's farmers, community leaders and conservation partners. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the State's innovations in conservation," Simon said.

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Simon will be filling in after former State Conservationist Dr. William E. Puckett retired from NRCS after 31 years of service to the agency and six years in Alabama. Charles Ramsey, Alabama NRCS's ASTC-FO for the West Team is currently serving as State Conservationist until Simon's assignment begins. Simon will be serving for 120 days or until a permanent State Conservationist is announced.

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