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ALL PROFILES WRITTEN BY FRANK MCINTOSH

CHARLIE DUNKIN

Charlie Dunkin and his family own lands in the black belt region of Alabama that have two and a half miles of river frontage along the scenic Cahaba River. Dunkin felt it was important that this river always be protected and he and his family protected the land and watershed with a conservation easement of more than 2,000 acres in Dallas County, Ala., held by the Alabama Land Trust.

The land outside the areas reserved for the protection of the river is primarily used for timber and cattle production.



Charlie Dunkin and grandson Allston Allred



Old Silo on Dunkin's black belt farm

There is also now one plot of around 240 acres in row crop cultivation since Dunkin's 14-year old grandson, Austin Allred, presented him with a business plan and a request that he be allowed to put in soybeans and corn. Dunkin reports that the crops are doing quite well and that the grandson, armed with a combine that was the one piece of equipment required in the business plan, should be bringing in a pretty good crop.

Dunkin says that his grandchildren “are as passionately committed to the land as I am” and that the key to this commitment to the land is “having them involved.”

The passionate commitment shown by the Dunkins has helped carry forward their love of the land and helped keep this rich black belt land productive and protected.