

# Beaufort Conservation News

**Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District**  
Agricultural Center 155C Airport Road  
Washington, NC 27889

January-March  
2020

## Board of Supervisors

James E. Allen, Chairman  
Pantego, NC

Joseph E. Rogers, Vice-Chairman  
Washington, NC

Tracy B. Warren, Sec.-Treas.  
Chocowinity, NC

Sid M. Cayton, Supervisor  
Aurora, NC

Archie Griffin, Supervisor  
Washington, NC

## District Staff

Ann Williams  
Office Manager

Nathaniel Woolard  
District Resource Specialist

Debbie Boyd  
Education Coordinator

## USDA-NRCS

Doug Wassum  
Acting Team 14  
Supervisory Soil Conservationist

Anthony Hester  
Soil Conservation Technician



## Supervisors and Staff Update

*In addition to holding their regular meetings, the Supervisors also attend other meetings and training to keep informed of the priorities and upcoming issues in the field of soil and water conservation.*

## CONGRATULATIONS!



Anthony Hester has completed all requirements and has become a Certified Conservation Planner. All conservation plans developed for NRCS purposes, with the assistance of NRCS and partner employees, will be approved by a NRCS or partner certified conservation planner. A certified conservation planner is a person who has demonstrated the necessary skills, training, and experience to assist clients to identify resource problems, to express the client's objectives, to propose feasible solutions to resource problems, and leads the client to choose and implement an effective alternative that treats resource concerns and meets their objectives. Currently, Anthony is the only Certified Conservation Planner for Team 14, which covers ten counties.

## ***NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts’ 2020 Annual Meeting***

The 76th Annual NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts’ meeting was held January 5-7, 2020 at the Hilton Charlotte University Place in Charlotte, NC. “Communication-Telling Your Story” was the theme this year. Myles Payne, 2019 NCASWCD President, presided over the meeting. Samuel Green, Jr. was sworn in as the NCASWCD 2020 President. Representing the Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District were James Allen and Tracy Warren, Supervisors, and Nathaniel Woolard, District Resource Specialist.



*“Soil and Water...Yours for Life”*

## ***2020 NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts’ Area 5 Spring Meeting***



The Area 5 Spring Meeting was held on February 20, 2020 at the Cale Retreat and Conference Center in Hertford, NC. Chairman Manly West called the meeting to order. Susan Buzzard, Interim Program Director for the Cale Retreat and Conference Center, welcomed everyone to the area. A business session followed. Chairman West introduced morning guest speakers Stan Riggs, Coastal & Marine Geologist, who spoke on the topic of Control over the Lower Roanoke River Flooding, and Bryan Evans, NC Association Executive Director, who spoke on The Visioning Delivery System. Reports were given by Vernon Cox, Division Director, Blount Knowles, 1st Vice-President of the NC Association of SWCD, representing Samuel Green, NC Association of SWCD President, Franklin Williams, NACD Representative, and Tim Beard, NRCS State Conservationist. Lunch was catered by Southland Restaurant and Catering. Attending from the District were Supervisors James Allen and Joe Rogers; Debbie Boyd, Education Coordinator; and Rodney Woolard, NCDA & CS Farmland Preservation Field Specialist and NRCS ATAC.

# Program News

## GETTING CONSERVATION ON THE LAND



### **Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP)**

For Program Year 2020, the District was allocated \$48,154 by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission for AgWRAP practices. During January, February and April meetings, the District's Board approved 4 applications and contracts for irrigation wells, and one application and contract for an ag. pond.

### **Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP)**

For program year 2020, the District was allocated \$66,010 by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission for ACSP practices. During September's Board meeting, one supplemental filter strip and six cover crop applications and contracts were approved by the District. The District received an additional eight ACSP applications for practices including water control structures, land smoothing, cropland conversion, precision agrichemical application and crop residue management. During January, February, and April meetings, the District Board approved, one application and contract for land smoothing and water control structures, one application and contract for a water control structure, two applications and contracts for precision agrichemical application, two applications and contracts for cropland conversion and one application and contract for crop residue management. Additional ACSP activities performed during this period included annual spot checks of active contracts and addressing a maintenance issue on an agricultural pond repair contract.



### **2020 Best Management Practices (BMP) Spot Check and Conservation Tour**

The Program Year 2020 Annual Spot Check and Conservation Tour of permanent practices still under maintenance for ACSP, AgWRAP, and the Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP) was carried out on January 29, 2020. Six active contracts for ACSP, AgWRAP, and CCAAP were randomly selected for site visits to ensure that cost share practices were being maintained as required by program regulations. In addition, attendees toured a new Animal Mortality Facility constructed through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

### **2016 Disaster Recovery Program**

Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III stream debris removal under this program has been completed. Additional work under Phase IV has been approved but the scope of work continues to be revised to add additional areas for storm debris removal. The Division and the District continue to work toward finalizing the scope of work so that Phase IV can be completed this year.



# USDA-NRCS NEWS

## Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)



We have received applications for the CSP program for 2020. These applications are evaluated according to the number of national resource concerns that are currently being met or not being met as stewardship thresholds are determined. Each applicant must be meeting stewardship thresholds for at least two resource concerns on each land use at the time of application. The applicant must also agree to address one additional resource concern for each land use by the end of the contract to be eligible.

NRCS will present a variety of CSP conservation activities for the participant to consider implementing on the offered land, based on the resource stewardship thresholds they would like to meet or exceed. The variety of CSP conservation activities that are offered give you many options for selecting enhancements or practices that help you improve your current management system, increase profits, and meet your stewardship goals. These improvements work naturally with the land to bring out the land's best potential. Once your operation has been evaluated, is found eligible for CSP, and you have chosen the conservation activities you will adopt, your application will be ranked to determine how well your current and future management system will address national, state, and local natural resource priorities. Your application will be rated against other eligible applications that have similar resource challenges in the same local ranking pool, with the highest scoring applications receiving contract offers first.

## Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

At this time, applications have been taken but no pre-approvals have been issued for Beaufort County. Pre-approvals should be issued later this year. Once they are considered pre-approved, these participants are required to sign a contract and agree to implement the planned conservation practices to NRCS standards and specifications as scheduled. Starting a practice prior to written contract approval will result in the ineligibility of that practice for EQIP assistance. If you have resource concerns that need to be addressed on your land, please contact our office.





## ***Farm Service Agency (FSA) Updates***

### **USDA Safety Net Program Enrollment for 2019 and 2020**

Agricultural producers now can enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs – two U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety net programs – for the 2019 and 2020 crop year. Producers have an opportunity to make a new election, Agriculture Risk Coverage or Price Loss Coverage, on the FSA base acres for each farm. The new election is for 2019 and 2020. After crop year 2020, producers will make the program election yearly.

Signup for the 2020 crop year closes June 30, 2020. We will contact you when contracts are ready for signature.

### **USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for North Carolina Farmers Hurt by 2018, 2019 Disasters**

Agricultural producers affected by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019, including Hurricane Dorian, can apply through the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+). Sign-up for this U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program began Sept. 11. The local County Office is currently processing these applications. We will call when your application is ready for review and signature. Please let us know if you have any questions.

On March 23, 2020 it was announced that excess moisture and drought are now approved disaster events under the WHIP+ program. The FSA Office will be reviewing all completed 2018 WHIP+ Applications for the addition of excess moisture losses. We will contact you if signature is needed.

### **Reminder to Complete Crop Acreage Reporting Requirements to FSA**

Producers are reminded to report all planted to acres to FSA by the applicable final crop reporting date. Acreage reporting is important and required for program participation and compliance.

May 15th	Cabbage (PP 1), Green Beans (PP 1), Strawberries, Potatoes
July 15th	Corn, Soybeans, Tobacco, Cotton, Peanuts, Sorghum, Sweet Potatoes
	Sweet Corn, Cucumbers (PP 1), Squash (PP 1), CRP and all other crops
September 15th	Cabbage (PP 2), Cucumbers (PP2), Green Beans (PP 2), Squash (PP 2)
September 30th	Aquaculture, Flowers, All Value Loss Crops
January 15th	Wheat, Oats, fall planted small grain

*USDA is an equal opportunity lender, provider and employer.*

# 2020 Education 2020

## Area 5 Envirothon Training Day at Goose Creek State Park

An Area 5 Envirothon Training Day was held on March 5, 2020 at Goose Creek State Park. Eighty-two students from area Middle Schools and High Schools attended the event to prepare for regional and state Envirothon events. Middle School students and advisors attended from Oakwood Middle School in Pitt County, Central Middle School in Gates County, and Northeast Middle School in Beaufort County. High School students and advisors attended from Oakwood High School in Pitt County, Northside High School in Beaufort County, Beaufort County Early College, and Mattamuskeet Early College. A special thank you to our presenters, Russ Chesson, Carl Crozier, Amanda Nelson, Joe Hawley, Joe Martin, Joni Young-Torres, Carrie Ortel, and to Goose Creek State Park for hosting the event.

Envirothon is the most widely recognized hands-on environmental education program in the nation. Middle and high school students immerse themselves in a year-long learning process that combines curriculum with hands-on field experiences facilitated by resource professionals such as soil scientists, foresters, and wildlife specialists. This intense training culminates in a competition where teams are tested in five subject areas: soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and current environmental issues. Scores determine winning placements.

Debbie Boyd, Education Coordinator for Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation in Washington, and organizer for the event said, "This event gives students an opportunity to prepare for our Coastal Envirothon event at Weyerhaeuser's Cool Springs Environmental Education Center. During that event, teams rotate through stations just like training day, but this time are tested. The top seven highest scoring high school teams in our area (Area 5) and in Area 6 qualify for the State Envirothon Competition at Cedarrock Park in Alamance County. Additionally, the top seven Middle School teams from Area 5 and Area 6 qualify for the State Envirothon Competition. Also, the top scoring High School FFA team from each area qualifies."



Students take time out from their learning stations to enjoy a pizza lunch in the Educational Center lobby at Goose Creek State Park. The meal was served by Area 5 representatives, Carolyn Garris, Debbie Boyd, Sherry Harris, Cathy Barber, Ashley Preedy, Debbie Cahoon, Celeste Maus and Goose Creek volunteer Loretta Hayden.

# 2020 Education 2020



Russ Chesson, Operations and Programming Specialist at the North Carolina Estuarium, talks with area students about aquatic ecology.



Carrie Ortel, Pitt County Agriculture Extension Agent, shares current environmental issues with students.



Carl Crozier, retired NCSU soil scientist, talks with area students about soils/land use.



Goose Creek Ranger Joe Martin shares forestry information with students.



Amanda Nelson with NC Wildlife shares information on wildlife with students.



Students observe wildlife displays in the library at Goose Creek State Park.

2020

# Education

2020

The following events have been cancelled for 2020 due to the COVID-19 virus and social distancing/quarantine measures.

- ◆ Coastal Envirothon
- ◆ North Carolina State Envirothon
- ◆ Resource Conservation Workshop

## BEAUFORT SWCD PROMOTES SOIL AND WATER STEWARDSHIP WEEK

The **Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District** wants to remind you that each of us has a connection to our natural resources. In partnership with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), the BSWCD celebrated the 65th year of Stewardship Week April 26-May 3, 2020. The 2020 Stewardship Week focused on the theme “Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators?”

Pollinators form the underpinning of a healthy and sustainable future for food and the environment, but they have shown disturbing signs of decline in recent years. When pollinators shrink in number, many plants either produce less seed or no seed at all. Most plants depend upon pollinators to reproduce. There are more than 100,000 species of insects, including bees, flies, moths, butterflies and beetles, and over 1,000 species of other animals such as birds, reptiles and mammals, including bats, that pollinate plants. Your local conservation district can assist you in maintaining or developing habitat for pollinators.

“Pollinators play a critical role in our ecosystems every day,” **NACD President Tim Palmer** said. “It’s important that we work to learn how we can protect their habitat in our communities.”

Free, downloadable Stewardship Week resources celebrating the theme “Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators?” are available on NACD’s website at [www.nacdnet.org/store/](http://www.nacdnet.org/store/)

*The National Association of Conservation Districts is the non-profit organization that represents the nation’s 3,000 conservation districts, their state associations, and the 17,000 men and women who serve on their governing boards. For almost 70 years, local conservation districts have worked with cooperating landowners and managers of private working lands to help them plan and apply effective conservation practices. NACD’s website is at [www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org).*





**Board meetings are open to the public and are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month, except July and August, at 6:00 p.m. in the office of the:**

**Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District  
Beaufort County Agricultural Center  
155C Airport Road  
Washington, NC 27889**



***Board of Supervisors***

*(L to R) Archie Griffin, James Allen, Chairman,  
Joe Rogers, Vice-Chairman, Tracy Warren Sec./Treasurer, Sid Cayton*

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***If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would have only four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more ...***



***Mission Statement:***

*The mission of the Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District is to promote the wise use and management of the natural resources within its boundaries by providing dedicated leadership, technical excellence and educational information to the citizens of Beaufort County. Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District is committed to providing equal services to all clients without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.*

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