

THE GEORGETOWN SOIL AND WATER

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

“Promoting natural resources conservation through the use of public notification, conservation education, sound technical information, and direct personal assistance.”

Board of Commissioners

Chairman - Mark Johnson

Vice Chairman - Peggy Williams

Secretary/Treasurer - Morris Johnson

Commissioner - Marty Avant

Commissioner - Josh Baxley

Associate Commissioner

Kenny Williams



Staff

District Coordinator - Denise Smith

District Conservationist - Debbie Mann

Soil Conservation Technician -

Amelia Farrell

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Camp Wildwood

Camp Wildwood is a high energy hands on outdoor environmental camp. It is a fun filled week in which students can experience many aspects of their natural environment. In the summer of 2022 Jennings and Jenna-Kay Avant were sponsored by the Georgetown Conservation District to attend. They reported that they enjoyed the week-long camp which kept them busy. They had classes about Wildlife Management, Fish and Wildlife, and Hunter Safety. Also, they were taught how to measure a tree and to shoot guns, the bow and arrow, and darts. The students were taken on a midnight hike and enjoyed many other activities including swimming, playing ball and skits.

Jennings Avant has been accepted to the SC Commissioner's School for Agriculture. FFA Advisor, Mr. Howard, noted that both students have excelled and received awards. While at Camp Wildwood, the students discover that we are a part of nature and everything we do in some way affects the natural balance.

Scholarships

Two students were selected to receive the Georgetown Conservation District's Scholarship in 2022. Matthew Oxendine and William Hartley were both awarded the \$500 scholarship. Both are students at Horry Georgetown Technical College studying Wildlife Management. The criteria for selection includes: grade point average, community involvement, career goals and a required essay. Both plan to continue their



education after graduating from HGTC with Hartley attending Clemson and Oxendine attending Glenville State College.

Partnership Conference

Each year the SC Association of Conservation Districts hosts a Partnership Conference for all District Commissioners. The conference is held in conjunction with the SC Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. All three agencies can get updates from their partners, share ideas, and present new program information. Commissioner Morris Johnson and District Coordinator Denise Smith attended the conference to get program information and updates. In 2022 the conference guest speakers were the Peterson Farm Brothers. The brothers farm together and produce entertaining and educational videos on YouTube. They post farming and video updates. They felt the need to correct the many misconceptions about modern day farmers, so they travel around the country advocating for agriculture as they speak to crowds and produce informative videos. They also blog about misunderstood topics in agriculture and give tours of their farm in Kansas. Their goal is to educate the general public on where their food comes from and what a real farm family is like. You can view their website and watch their videos at <https://petersonfarmbrothers.com/about-us/>



Essay Contest

The Georgetown Soil and Water Conservation District holds an annual essay contest for all 6th grade students in Georgetown County. The purpose of the contest is to help youth learn about our natural resources and ways they can help protect them. In 2022 the topic of the contest was “Healthy Soil – Healthy Life”. The students’ essays investigated what makes the soil healthy and the ways we depend on it. The winners were from Lowcountry Preparatory School – Levi Hakes and from The Georgetown School of Arts and Sciences – Jackson Dugan. Nolan Cheek won 2nd Place and Zoey Baker was Honorable Mention.



Levi Hakes

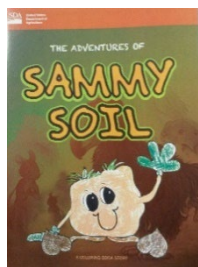


Zoey Baker, Jackson Dugan,
Nolan Cheek

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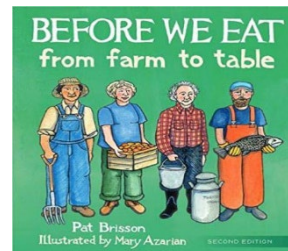
Earth Day

Earth Day is a day to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth. It is celebrated on April 22 each year. It was founded by Senator Nelson after he observed a horrific oil spill at Santa Barbara. Senator Nelson announced his idea for a nationwide day of awareness for the environment and hoped that he could convince others how concerned Americans were about the environment. The first official Earth Day was observed in 1970 and has been celebrated every year since. In an effort to spread the conservation message, the Georgetown Conservation District donated Sammy Soil coloring books to students at Brown's Ferry and Sampit Elementary Schools. The books explain the importance of conserving our natural resources



Book of the Month

Book of the Month is a program sponsored by the SC Farm Bureau Women's



Committee. It is a literacy outreach program with ag-related resources to utilize in the classroom. Every month, a new book is available with accompanying activities that are aligned with SC State Standards. The Georgetown Conservation District is pleased to sponsor school libraries in the county to receive the informative and ag-educational books making them available to all students at the schools. The Kensington Elementary School, Coastal Montessori Charter School and McDonald Elementary School libraries were sponsored by the Georgetown Conservation District in 2022 to participate in the learning program.

Poster Contest

Each year the District sponsors a Poster Contest for third grade classes. The posters are a class project, and the winning class receives their choice of a pizza or ice cream party. The contest was open to all third-grade classes in the county and the topic of the contest was "Healthy Soil – Healthy Life". The winning class was Mrs. Cannon's class at Pleasant Hill Elementary School.



Conservation District Board of Commissioners

Conservation District Commissioners are charged with promoting the wise use of soil and water within their Conservation District. Conservation Districts provide customer service to local landowners, conservation related education and outreach opportunities, and serve as conservation advocates for the community. They meet once a month to discuss issues and projects in the county. Conservation Districts are the voice for locally led conservation!



In June the commissioners and staff met at Sandy Island to view the shore restoration work which was previously done through NRCS. They walked on the road which is in need of repair work through the infrastructure act and were given information about the water levels and damage done to the road. They



were then given a tour of the island by Charles Pyatt and showed some points of interest along with some historical facts. They saw the old island schoolhouse and visited the island church.



Conservation is a cause that has no end. There is no point at which we will say our work is finished.

Rachel Carson



All programs and services of the Conservation District, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and DNR-Land Water and Conservation Division are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, national origin, religion, gender, disability, age, marital status, or political beliefs.

Pee Dee Area Meeting

The Williamsburg District hosted the 2022 Pee Dee Area Meeting on October 11, 2022. Guest speaker Louis Drucker gave a presentation of the new state park being established. The Black River is the park with stops along the river which will include environmental stations, education centers, bike paths, walking trails, kayak inputs and more. He gave an overview of the project from the beginning and what it will look like when finished. Garrett



Howard, the FFA advisor at Carver's Bay High School, spoke and FFA leader Sara Emilee Goude gave a report on the group's success and accomplishments. Several members of the FFA were in attendance. Speakers included the Pee Dee Area



Director Justin Woodard, SC DNR Conservation Districts Program Manager Tyler Brown, DNR Climatologist Elliott Wickham and NRCS State Conservationist Ann English and Area Director Reginald Liddell.

No-Till Grain Drill

The District has a no-till grain drill for rent. It is a Great Plains 10' Grain Drill that can be rented for planting cropland. It is located at the farm of Bobby McDaniel. The rental fee is \$9.00 per acre. Call the District Office at 546-7808 ext. 3 to rent the drill or for more information. No-Till cropping is based on the concept of keeping the soil covered at all times. It includes the use of crop rotations, cover crops, and planting into a seed slot created by coulters. The seed slot will include no more than 30% of the total surface. No-till can be practiced continuously without any additional tillage for seed bed preparation. This benefits the producer by increasing profit and by reducing costs associated with conventional tillage such as fuel and labor costs. It benefits the land by increasing soil quality, soil organic matter and moisture content. No-till reduces soil erosion because the soil isn't being turned over, less soil blows away and less washes away. The vegetation cover left behind helps control the loss of topsoil on slopes from runoff and helps prevent wind erosion.

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Conservation Technical Assistance CTA - Although the CTA program does not include financial or cost-share assistance, clients may develop conservation plans, which may serve as a springboard for those interested in participating in USDA financial assistance programs.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program - EQIP offers cost share for implementing conservation practices which help with water quality, soil health, water conservation, and livestock management. Practices include, but are not limited to: conservation tillage, nutrient management, cover crops, conservation tillage, nutrient management, livestock water, fencing and pasture management. Assistance is also available to specialty crop producers including vegetables. In 2022 there were 9 new EQIP contracts on 1,220 acres.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - ACEP

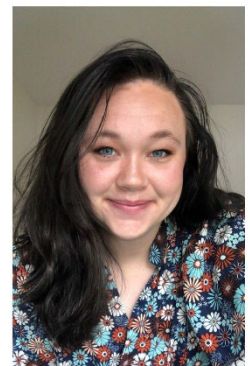
Wetland Reserve Easement

The Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE) is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private land in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The program provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to restore, protect and enhance wetlands. In 2022, 967 acres of wetlands were approved for the program.

Conservation Stewardship Program - CSP offers incentives based on current conservation activities and accomplishments and requires producers to enhance their operations with additional conservation practices to improve and protect natural resources, predominately soil and water quality, and forest wildlife habitat benefits for cropland, pasture, and forestland. In 2022 there were 14 new CSP contracts on 3769 acres.

New NRCS Employee

In September of 2021 the Georgetown NRCS office gained a new employee. Amelia Farrell became the new Soil Conservation Technician for the county. Amelia was born and raised in Waynesville, North Carolina which is in the western part of the state. She graduated from Western Carolina University in December of 2020 with a bachelor's degree in Natural Resource Conservation and Management. Amelia will be assisting with the workload in Georgetown and helping the producers to get conservation practices on the ground.



Our 2022 Affiliate Members

The Georgetown Soil & Water Conservation District would like to recognize our Affiliate Members who are a vital part of our conservation team. Without the monetary support given by the Affiliates, we would not be able to carry out the many programs to promote conservation stewardship within the county. The Conservation District is committed to helping the landowners and educating the students of Georgetown County.

Endowing Membership

Mount Pleasant Plantation LLC
Bob & Mary Roberts
Dr. & Mrs. Wallace Vaught – Hobonny Fields Farm
Charles Ingram Lumber Company
Anna Kate & Hayne Hipp
Prevatte & Associates, Forest & Land Consultants

Sustaining Membership

S2 Farms, LLC
Santee Cooper
Estherville Farm
Hobcaw Barony
Annandale Plantation
Fred R. & Janice Powell
Big Dam Plantation

Supporting Membership

Charles C. King
Ron Charlton
Black River, LP
Gray Lady at Pawleys Island
Floyd & Joyce Rowe Tyler

Regular Membership

Samuel O. Cribb
Jimmy & Linda Capps
Rubeth Earl & Patsy R. Williams
Wardie & Sybil Collins
Owens Farm
Kyle & Jodi Daniel

