



FULTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

EDITOR'S NOTE

This past year has been unprecedented to say the least, as COVID-19 has brought many unexpected hardships to our community members. As an organization rooted in serving the local people, Fulton County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) acknowledges how taxing this year has been. Nevertheless, we know the work of conservation must continue. And if this year has shown us anything, it's this: our community is powerful, adaptable, and resilient.

We want to extend our deepest thanks to all of our community members who have helped make this year and our achievements possible- regardless of the circumstances. You all inspire us to continue pushing towards a brighter future in conservation.

Successful conservation takes all of us. Thank you all for your continued support, and please enjoy reading through our work from this past year.

Signed,

Fulton SWCD Board of Supervisors.

Alan Toney, Chair
Ralph McDonald, Supervisor
Cory Rayburn, Supervisor
Walter Rekuc, Supervisor
Jason Ulseth, Supervisor

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INTRODUCTION

Following the aftermath of the Dustbowl in the 1930's, Congress declared soil and water conservation a priority nationwide. This declaration, along with President Roosevelt's support, directly caused the formation of Georgia's Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Thus, in 1937, the Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation District was formally created. Fulton SWCD is currently one of the 40 districts across the state of Georgia charged by the State Constitution to help support citizens with the management and improvement of our natural resources.

Our District encompasses 16 political jurisdictions, over 1 million citizens, the central economic engine for the Southeastern United States, as well as the headwaters of three major river systems that provide the primary source of fresh water to 10 million people, in three States. Fulton County is the most populous county in Georgia, boasting the state's capital in Atlanta. We are stewards of the waters shared by citizens, industry, and agriculture.

The Board of Supervisors of the State Soil & Water Conservation District – Fulton County is proud of the accomplishments during the 2020 fiscal year. These accomplishments are summarized in this Annual Report.

PARTNERS

Our partners provide the foundation to help us accomplish our conservation programs. We are especially grateful for their support and assistance to the District.



POLITICAL JURISDICTIONS

- Alpharetta
- Chattahoochee Hills
- City of Atlanta
- College Park
- East Point
- Fairburn
- Hapeville
- Johns Creek
- Milton
- Mountain Park
- Palmetto
- Roswell
- Sandy Springs
- South Fulton
- Unincorporated Fulton County
- Union City

WATERSHED DAMS

The Fulton County Soil & Water Conservation District currently help manage the 10 Watershed Dams within the county. Some work on these dams from the past year can be seen on this page.



LITTLE RIVER DAM #25

Little River, Dam #25 (LR-25) is a dam the district is currently working closely with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to ensure the public safety of the community. LR-25 was designed and constructed in 1960, and although a compliance study found that the existing dam is safe and operating as designed, the dam does require minor repairs to the embankment and principal spillway. The next step in the process is an NRCS Watershed Plan Update.

DAM CLEARINGS

It is expected that as dams age, the district will work with the proper entities to continue the upkeep of the dam property. Removal of vegetation along the bank (clearing) and selective removal of snags, drifts, or other obstructions (snagging) from natural or improved channels and streams are required to ensure safe and working dams.

This past year, three dams of note in Fulton were cleared of debris and excess vegetation. These dams include Little River Dam #24 (LR-24) at White Columns, Little River Dam #35 (LR-35), and Little River Dam #30 (LR-30) at the Potterstone Subdivision.



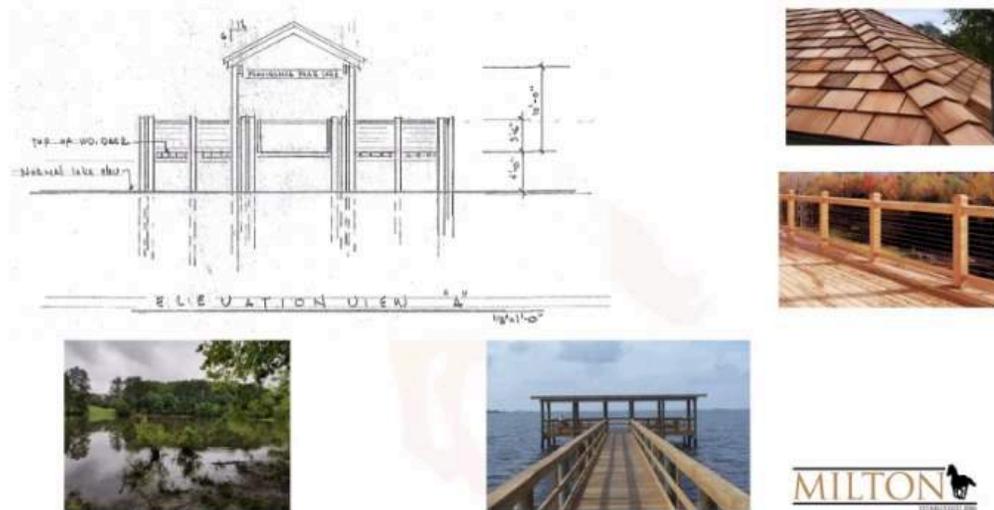
Dam LR-24 at White Columns (top), and Dam LR-30 (bottom) after clearing.

PROVIDENCE PARK BOARDWALK

The district recently approved the construction of a new fishing pier at Little River Dam #36 (LR-36) in Providence Park, located in Milton. Through working with the City of Milton and NRCS, the District is helping review plans and measures to ensure the safety of the community.

The fishing pier will include a wooden boardwalk that will connect to a trail system in the park. Construction of the project is projected to be started in the coming year.

DESIGN CONCEPTS OF FISHING PIER



LITTLE RIVER DAM #39

Fulton County SWCD approved a floating boom buoy system to act as a debris barrier, keeping the outlet of the dam clean. This ensures that no excess debris or pollution enters the districts water system. Additionally, an MOU (Memorandum Of Understanding) was drafted and signed with Brookfield West Country Club, located in Roswell, to ensure the upkeep of the dam.



URBAN AGRICULTURE



In 2017, the Fulton SWCD received a \$50,000.00 grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to convert underutilized power easements into urban farms within the City of Atlanta. Partnered with Groundwork Atlanta and the City of Atlanta's Office of Resilience, AgLanta Grows-A-Lot Urban Farm Program officially launched in 2018. From its launch, the AgLanta Grows-A-Lot Urban Farm Program has thrived. This past year, several of the farms provided community educational events and school visits at their farm sites.

The Fulton SWCD has funded a number of projects with the AgLanta Grows-A-Lot Urban Farm Program, including the installation of several pollinator plants. Plants such as Beauty Berry, Mountain Mint (seen to the right), and Bonesets attract several pollinator species that help the farmers ensure full harvests and seed production.

POLLINATOR PROJECT

In partnership with the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts (GACD), Fulton County SWCD will be installing two gardens in community parks- one pollinator demonstration garden and one habitat garden. In addition to these gardens, GACD will provide an educational curriculum to be used in conjunction with the gardens. The program aims to educate the public about the importance of pollinators in both the local community and worldwide.

The pollinator demonstration garden will be planted fall 2020 for spring blooming. The habitat garden will utilize a no-till smothering method of installation in the Spring of 2021, with planting taking place the following Spring.



POSTER CONTEST



In conjunction with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), Fulton SWCD sponsors an annual poster contest for students kindergarten through twelfth grade, providing students with an opportunity to convey their thoughts about soil, water and natural resource issues through art. The poster contest is open to public, private and home-schooled students.

This year's theme was "Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators?". Congratulations to our top 3 winners, who each received a monetary prize! The district winners advance to the state level, and then to the national level, where they receive recognition at NACD's annual meeting.

Seen to the left: Poster submission by Tanishka Pendkar (age 12) .

GCAP

The Georgia Conservation Assistance Program (GCAP) is a partnership between the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts (GACD) and the Fulton County SWCD, aiming to reduce nonpoint source pollution and the rate of stormwater runoff on urban, non agricultural lands.

The program will fund the installation of eligible Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as rain gardens, on single-family residential properties. BMPs are intended to capture and/or infiltrate surface runoff produced following rainfall, and are primarily designed to manage stormwater coming from a source on the property, such as a roof, driveway or lawn. BMPs eligible for funding include: cisterns, dry wells, rain gardens, downspout disconnects, and impervious surface removal.

The application period opens up Fall 2020, and installation of the practices will come after. Stay tuned for more information about the program in the future!