

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

Acting District Conservationist - Rebecca Harper

Soil Conservationist – Bradley Stokes

Soil Conservation Technician - Amelia Farrell

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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 2023 Naavah Piggott, was sponsored by the Georgetown Conservation District to attend. The camp teaches respect for our resources, heritage and the importance of protecting the environment. Naavah commented that activities included archery class, a night walk, swimming, and water games. They also had wildlife, hunter, forestry and fisheries classes. They learned about tree identification and controlled fires. Naavah thought the camp was a great opportunity as she is interested in pursuing marine biology. Naavah said, “This camp is a great opportunity for people interested in nature to learn about SC’s wildlife and natural resources and helps raise awareness of how the things we do can change their environment and affect them positively or negatively. It is also a great way to meet new people.”

SC Wildlife Magazine



South Carolina Wildlife magazine has a long tradition of helping young people and adults learn about the importance of the environment and the value of our state’s natural resources. The magazine’s statement of purpose, included on the Contents Page of each issue, says it best – “Dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of our wildlife and natural resources, and to the education of our people to the value of these resources”. The magazine is an extremely valuable tool to teach the youth, therefore the Georgetown Conservation District offers to donate a year’s subscription to school libraries or interested teachers in the county. This makes the magazine available to countless students for study and enjoyment. FFA Teachers Garrett Howard at Carver’s Bay High School and Jason West at Georgetown High School were sponsored to receive the magazine in 2023. Also, the Andrews High School library received the magazine.

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 is open to all third-grade classes in the county. In 2023 the topic of the contest was “Watersheds”. The students



brought the topic to life on an area of land that drains streams and rivers. These into larger ones, including body of water has a watershed. that water takes across the chosen as winners. They were classes at Pleasant Hill



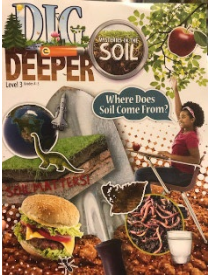
their posters. A watershed is rainfall and snowmelt into smaller bodies of water flow lakes, bays, and oceans. Every Gravity helps to guide the path landscape. Two classes were Mrs. William’s and Mrs. Miller’s Elementary School.

Partnership Conference 2023

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. District Coordinator Denise Smith attended the conference to get program information and updates. In 2023 the conference keynote speaker was Lt. Governor Pamela Everett, who said she wants her legacy to be protecting the environment. She spoke about the litter issue in the state and her grab a bag program to encourage litter pick up. She also gave information on the impact of eco-tourism in the state which brings 4.8 million dollars into our economy. She thanked the conservation family for protecting our outdoors, state parks, beaches, rivers, trails, and environmental tours which make our state beautiful and great and provides the avenue for the ecotourism. Everett stressed that she and Governor McMaster’s door is always open to anyone. Other speakers included Sterling Sadler with the Conservation Districts Foundation, Curtis Miller of Maranatha Farms, Jim Beasley of the University of Georgia, Dr. Buz Kloot of the University of South Carolina, and Rick Huffman of Earth Design.



Earth Day



Earth Day is a day to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth. It is celebrated on April 22 each year. 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 activity booklets to the 5th grade students at McDonald Elementary School. The booklets "Dig Deeper – Mysteries in the Soil" teach in a fun way the importance of soil. Soil has been called the "skin of the earth" because it is the thin outermost layer of the Earth's crust. Like our own skin, we can't live without soil.

To the farmer, soil is where crops grow.

To the engineer, soil is a foundation upon which to build.

To the ecologist, soil supports communities of living things.

To the archaeologist, soil holds clues to past cultures.

To the city dweller, soil nurtures grass and gardens.

To the soil scientist, soil is all of these things.



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, Maryville Elementary School, Andrews Elementary School, and McDonald Elementary School libraries were sponsored by the Georgetown Conservation District in 2023 to participate in the learning program.



Report a Litterbug

Ever see someone throw trash out of their vehicle window? Or found trash illegally dumped. You can help to catch the culprit by calling the Litter Busters Hotline. The number is 1-877-7-LITTER (1-877-754-8837). Just call, report the location, time and the litterbug's license number. The line is open 24/7 with an answering service to make sure you can report the crime. There is also an app you can download on your phone and use to report. You can go to the Palmetto Pride website to find it. You may also complete a form on their website to report a litterbug. www.palmettopride.org Just click on Litter Busters Hotline. With your support, we can make a difference in South Carolina.

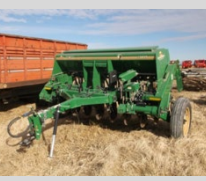
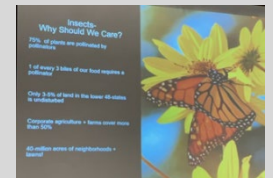
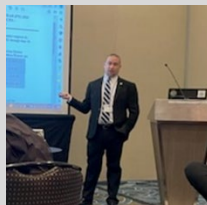


Scholarships

Two students were chosen to receive a scholarship from the Georgetown Conservation District. Ashley Rom and Allen Ledford are both Horry Georgetown Technical College students majoring in Forestry and Wildlife Management. Each student received a \$500 scholarship. Both are very involved in community activities and have received school honors.



Our Year in Pictures



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 Horry Conservation District hosted the Pee Dee Area Meeting in September of 2023. It began with a tour of the historic Horry County Museum which showcases a fish tank featured on the Animal Planet show “Tanked”. Horry Chairman Shane Willoughby opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Then guest speaker biologist Sudi Thomas with US Fish and Wildlife gave a presentation on Venus fly traps and pitcher plants. Updates were given by the SC Conservation Districts Foundation, the Pee Dee Area Director, The SC Conservation Districts Employees, SC DNR, NRCS and the SC Association of Conservation Districts. Dinner was served and door prizes were awarded.



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.

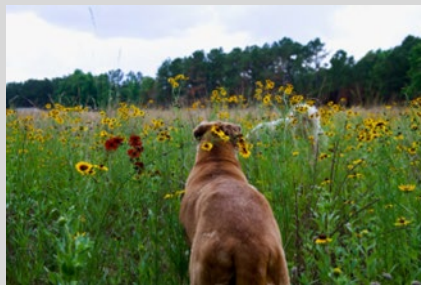
Environmental Quality Incentives Program - EQIP offers cost share for implementing conservation practices which help with water quality, soil health, water conservation, and livestock management. Practices include, but are not limited to: conservation tillage, nutrient management, cover crops, conservation tillage, nutrient management, livestock water, fencing and pasture management. Assistance is also available to specialty crop producers including vegetables. In 2023 there were 24 new EQIP contracts on 828.90 acres totaling \$287,727.00.

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.

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 2023 there were 41 new CSP contracts on 5056.70 acres totaling \$530,080.00.



Our 2023 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

Charles Ingram Lumber Company

Supporting Membership

Kyle & Jodi Daniel
Bob & Mary Roberts
Gray Lady at Pawleys Island
Legrand Owens
Black River, LP
Charles King
Floyd & Joyce Rowe Tyler
Raftelis Foundation

Sustaining Membership

Estherville Farm
H.E. Hemingway Jr. CPA
Prevatte & Associates,
Forest & Land Consultants
Dr. & Mrs. Wallace Vaught –
Hobonny Fields Farm
Hobcaw Barony – Baruch Foundation
S2 Farms, LLC
Santee Cooper
Fred R. & Janice Powell
China Grove Plantation

Regular Membership

Samuel O. Cribb
Sybil Collins
Jimmy & Linda Capps
Bob P. Cribb
Owens Farm
Patsy R. Williams

