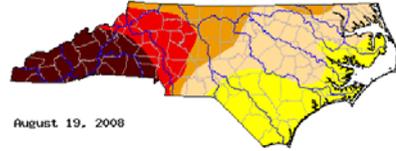


STOKES SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)
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STATEWIDE DROUGHT CONTINUES

Driving through the countryside of Stokes County it's not hard to see the devastating effects the ongoing drought has taken on our farms, fields, yards, streams, lakes and ponds. But what you may not realize is that according to the NC Drought Management Advisory Council, we are in worse shape this summer than last. In fact Stokes County is now categorized as D2 (Severe Drought) status as of August 19, 2008. Last year on August 21, 2007 the Advisory Council had Stokes County categorized as D1 (Moderate Drought) status. Many people from this area say it is the worst drought they've ever seen but hopefully with the impending forecast of rain we will soon have relief. For more information on the current drought status and statistics go to www.ncdrought.org.



Drought Classifications
D0 - Abnormally Dry
D1 - Moderate Drought
D2 - Severe Drought
D3 - Extreme Drought
D4 - Exceptional Drought

Although the drought has caused hardships on many; farmers in our area, and all across the state, have especially been effected by the lack of rainfall on their crops and pastureland. Recognizing these hardships, our state appropriated funding to soil & water districts through the NC Drought Program to help those agricultural producers most impacted by offering cost share assistance to implement best management practices. Applications were accepted throughout the summer with the greatest request in Stokes County being for pasture renovation. This practice involves planting grass on drought stricken pastures at the recommended rates and applying lime and fertilizer according to soils tests. Qualifying producers also have to remove livestock from renovated areas to allow the grass adequate time to thrive and grazing below 3 inches is not allowed. Those who can meet these state requirements and have had their applications approved by the soil & water board, will begin reseeding pastures this fall. For more information on the Drought Program contact the soil & water office at 593.2846 ext. 3.



NEW PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO Ag. PRODUCERS

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) has expanded westward to include the Roanoke & Yadkin River basins. This unique voluntary program encourages producers to convert cropland and pastureland, adjacent to streams or water bodies, to permanent vegetation. Eligible conservation practices include tree planting, filter strips and riparian buffers. To be eligible the land must have been planted to an agricultural commodity four out of the last six years. The participant will receive annual rental payments (based on the county soil rental rates) and 50-100% of the cost of establishing practices depending on the length of the contract. Producers can enroll in 10 yr., 15 yr., 30 yr. or permanent easements. Additional bonus payments are available for those who choose to enroll in 30 year of permanent easements. Converting land adjacent to streams from agriculture production to grasses, trees or other permanent vegetation reduces sediment and nutrient pollution, improves water quality and provides valuable habitat for wildlife. CREP is a joint effort of the NC Division of Soil & Water Conservation, NC Division of Forest Resources, NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

STOKES SWCD RECEIVES DAN RIVER 319 GRANT

The Division of Soil & Water Conservation (DSWC), on behalf of Stokes, Rockingham and Caswell Soil & Water Conservation Districts, has been awarded a three year 319 Grant to implement best management practices (bmp's) throughout the Dan River Watershed to address water quality issues and restore waters not meeting state standards. In 2006 the Dan River was listed on the 303(d) impaired list because of high levels of turbidity and fecal coliform bacteria. Erosion and sedimentation from agriculture has been identified as a potential source. Landowners interested in installing bmp's such as: heavy use area protection, livestock exclusion fencing, water tanks, field borders, grassed waterways, long term no-till, streambank stabilization (plantings), wells, cropland conversion (grass/trees), etc. should contact the Stokes SWCD at 593.2846 ext. 3 before work begins to submit an application for cost assistance. Funding for a new employee to administer the grant in Stokes County, for the 3 year term, has also been awarded through the 319 grant program.

NO TILL DRILL AVAILABLE for RENT

The Stokes SWCD through the Foundation for Soil & Water Conservation has received a Truax FlexII-88 No-Till Grass Drill from a grant awarded by the North Carolina Council of State and the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The goal is to help farmers get drought damaged pastures and hayland back into full production as quickly as possible. The drill can also be a useful tool for wildlife plantings and establishing warm season grasses and will be available to all farmers wanting to reseed affected areas on their farm under short term rental agreements. Rental fees are \$10/acre or \$50 minimum. A \$50 deposit is required at the time of drill pick-up (open-hole pin hitch required for towing). A 40+ horsepower tractor with hydraulics is also required to operate drill.



Contact the Stokes SWCD office at 593.2846 ext. 3 to reserve a date to rent the equipment or for more information.

DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

James Booth, *Chairman*
Marvin Cavanaugh, *Vice Chairman*
Willis Overby, *Secretary/Treasurer*
John East, *Member*
Willard Nelson, *Member*

STAFF

Dede DeBruhl, *District Conservationist*
Tom Smith, *District Soil/Watershed Conservationist*
Sara Jo Durham, *District Technician*
Janice Pack, *Adm. Asst./Education Coordinator*

STATE & FEDERAL COST SHARE FUNDS AVAILABLE

The Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District has received state funding through the NC Agricultural Cost Share Program. The program emphasizes water quality, in an effort to reduce the input of agricultural non-point source pollution from sediment, nutrients, animal wastes, and pesticides into streams, rivers and other water sources throughout Stokes County. This program pays 75% of a predetermined average cost for approved Best Management Practices (bmp's). These practices include installation of anything from grassed waterways, critical area planting, field borders, cropland conversion to trees or grassland, strip cropping, to fencing livestock out of streams and creeks; or anything having an on-site water quality problem. The program has been a complete success for Stokes County during the past years and applications are now being taken for future allocations of money. Approval of applications is based upon the highest need of water quality improvement with the Stokes Soil and Water District Board making final decisions. Contact Tom Smith at 593.2846 ext. 3 if you are interested in this program.

Another cost share program available to agricultural producers is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). EQIP provides technical and financial assistance to eligible participants to install conservation practices. To be eligible the applicant must be engaged in livestock or ag. production and have produced at least \$1,000 of ag. products annually from the farm. NRCS is taking applications now for 2009 contracts. All applications will be ranked according to the proposed environmental benefits. If you have questions please contact Dede DeBruhl at 593.2846 ext. 3

SOIL & WATER GIVES OUT AWARDS

The following people were recognized at the 2008 Soil & Water Awards Banquet in May for their outstanding efforts in conservation: the Conservation Farm Family of the Year award was given to Bob, Tilda, Paul & Matt Lindsay of King; the Forest Landowner of the Year was given to Dean & Shelia Priddy of Walnut Cove; and Chelsey Coleman of Sandy Ridge was recognized for representing Stokes County in the annual Resource Conservation Workshop at NCSU in Raleigh on June 22-27. Congratulations to you all!

The Lindsay's



Dean & Shelia Priddy



Chelsey Coleman



RAINBARRELS FOR SALE

Did you know every inch of rain that falls on 1,000 square feet yields 623 gallons of water? During a rain, roofs act as large funnels, channeling hundreds of gallons of water through gutters and downspouts, and eventually onto the ground. Are you interested in harvesting or collecting this water and using it for watering flowers as well as vegetable gardens? If so, contact the Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) to purchase your very own 55 gallon rain barrel to collect water for use during dry months. **Barrels cost \$70 each (this includes tax)** and comes complete with lid, gutter attachment and spigot. We will only be selling the barrels twice a year, in the spring and fall.

The deadline to put in your order for the fall shipment is SEPTEMBER 19. To place your order, call us at 336.593.2846 ext. 3. Pre-Payment is required, so once you call in your order please put your check in the mail. All checks should be made payable to Stokes SWCD and mailed to PO Box 98, Danbury, NC 27016. You will be contacted when your barrel(s) arrive and a scheduled time will be set for pick up.

BIG SWEEP VOLUNTEERS SET TO CLEAN UP LITTER IN OCTOBER

NC Big Sweep for litter-free watersheds is Saturday, October 4 from 9AM-12PM. All volunteers will be furnished with data cards, pencils, bags and gloves for the environmental event. Last year volunteers collected 17,650 pounds of litter from Stokes County highways and watersheds. If you know of an area that is trashed, would like to donate funds, challenge other civic, church or scout troops or for more information, please call Sara Jo Durham, Stokes Co. Big Sweep Coordinator at 593.2846 ext. 3. Remember we all, working together can make a big difference. Visit www.ncbigssweep.org.

BE SURE AND CHECK OUT THE STOKES SOIL & WATER FAIRBOOTH AT THE STOKES COUNTY FAIR (top floor of Ag. Bldg.) AT THE AMERICAN LEGION IN KING ON SEPTEMBER 8-13.



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