

STOKES SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)

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FARMER APPRECIATION – THURSDAY, APRIL 9 – SOUTH STOKES HIGH SCHOOL

Mark your calendars – The 2015 FARMER APPRECIATION EVENT will be held at South Stokes High School on Thursday, April 9 from 6-9 PM; FREE FOOD (BBQ or Chicken and all the fixins'), ENTERTAINMENT & DOOR PRIZES. Please call 593-8179 or 593-2846 ext. 3 by April 1 if you plan to attend...we need a count for food preparation ♦

EAST, NELSON & CAVANAUGH TO SERVE ANOTHER 4 YEAR TERM ON BOARD



The Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District would like to congratulate Johnny East, Willard Nelson, and Marvin Cavanaugh as they all begin a new 4 year term on the Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District Board. Mr. East and Mr. Nelson won their seats in the November 4th election while Mr. Cavanaugh was reappointed by the NC Soil & Water Conservation Commission at it's November 19th meeting in Raleigh. Pictured to the right is the swearing in ceremony held on Monday, December 1, 2014 at the Stokes Co. Courthouse ♦ *Pictured - L to R: Hazel & Willard Nelson, Gary & Johnny East, Marvin & Nancy Cavanaugh*

ATTENTION LIVESTOCK OPERATORS

If you have livestock that use surface waters (creeks, streams, ponds) for their drinking water, you can improve the health of your animals and improve water quality by excluding the animals from surface waters. Installing fence to control access will decrease the risk of diseases such as salmonella, BVD, foot rot and mastitis. Fencing the animals out of the creeks will decrease manure and urine deposits and reduce streambank erosion, thus improving the water quality on your farm and your neighbors' farms downstream.

You may be eligible for technical and cost share assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to install the fence and provide an alternate water source, such as a well, pipeline and water tanks.

Another practice that benefits livestock is proper forage management which includes rotational grazing that allows adequate time for plants to accumulate top growth, which helps them maintain a healthy root system. A minimum of four paddocks is recommended for rotational grazing. Livestock needs to be removed from fescue paddocks when the grass height reaches 3 inches. The paddock should not be grazed again until the grass is 6-8 inches high, usually a rest period of 2-4 weeks.

Adding clover to an existing pasture can help lower your nitrogen needs and increase the nutritional value for your grazing animals. Taking a soil test prior to planting is also recommended so that you can get your pH level correct.

Consider adding warm season grasses to your pastures. Adding native warm season grasses to pasture systems has resulted in increased gains on yearling cattle and improved performance of cow-calf herds during the summer when cool season grasses (fescue, bluegrass) stop growing.

Cost share assistance for all these practices is available through EQIP to eligible producers. For more information, contact Dede DeBruhl at 336-593-2846 ext. 3. ♦

PROGRAM FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR LANDOWNERS

The Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are now accepting applications for cost share assistance for the installation of best management practices that reduce erosion and protect the water quality on your farm. Approval of applications is based upon the highest need of water quality improvement with the Stokes Soil & Water District Board making final decisions. Applications must be approved prior to work beginning so please contact our office at 336.593.2846 ext. 3 for more information today. ♦



Pictured above is a severely degraded creek due to cattle access. Poor water quality for drinking.



Pictured here is a properly installed water tank on upland (far away from the creek) for cattle.



Pictured here cattle are anxiously waiting for the day when they are rotated into the next paddock.

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*

Rodney Wright, *Watershed Coordinator*

Janice Pack, *Adm. Asst./Education Coordinator*

STUDENTS WIN LOCAL CONTESTS, ADVANCE TO REGIONAL COMPETITION

On October 30, 2014 the Stokes SWCD held its annual county-wide poster contest (for students in grades 3-6) & essay contest (for students in 6th grade). This year's contest theme was "Wetlands are Wonderful". Congratulations to the following students who placed:

3rd GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Logan Fagg – 1st Place (Nancy Reynolds Elem.)
Caroline Phipps – 2nd Place (London Elem.)



3rd GRADE

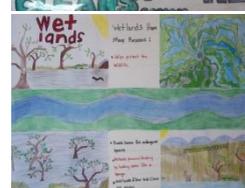


4th GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Emma Bingman – 1st Place (Lawsonville Elem.)
AJ McHone – 2nd Place (Nancy Reynolds Elem.)



4th GRADE



5th GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Elijah Cone – 1st Place (Lawsonville Elem.)
Abby Tilley – 2nd Place (Lawsonville Elem.)



5th GRADE



6th GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Sloan Mounce – 1st Place (SEMS)
Jaden Tuttle – 2nd Place (PGMS)



6th GRADE



6th GRADE ESSAY CONTEST

Rachel Overby – 1st Place (PGMS)
MaKayla Rogers – 2nd Place (PGMS)

First place winners from Stokes County will compete at the regional level on March 19 in Caldwell County. ♦

SWCD SUPERVISOR & STAFF RECEIVE "YEARS OF SERVICE" AWARD

On January 5, 2015 Tom Smith, District Soil/Watershed Conservationist received his 25 year service award from the NC Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts at its Annual Meeting held at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. Willis Overby, Soil & Water Board Member, was also recognized and awarded a plaque at the meeting for 30 years of service to the Stokes Soil & Water Board. Congratulations to you both. ♦

Pictured to the left - L to R: John Langdon (NCASWCD President), Willis Overby, Tom Smith



WILLIS OVERBY RECEIVES "Order of the Long Leaf Pine" AWARD FROM GOVERNOR

Among the honors and awards the Governor of North Carolina can bestow, none is more valued than **The Order of the Long Leaf Pine**. Since its creation in 1963, it has been presented to honor persons who have a proven record of service to the State of North Carolina and to others as a gesture of friendship and good will. In January, 2015, Willis Overby, Stokes Soil & Water Board member, received this great honor from Governor Pat McCrory. Congratulations Willis and thank you for a lifetime of service to your community and the citizens of North Carolina ♦

DIG IT! The Secrets of Soil...coming to North Carolina!!!!

North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences May 16 – August 16, 2015

This is the **ONLY** opportunity we will have to view this one-of-a-kind exhibit in NC.

The Smithsonian's acclaimed exhibit has been traveling the USA and will be in North Carolina this summer. The "Dig It" exhibit transports visitors to the world beneath their feet with displays, videos and more. It features over 50 different soil monoliths representing each state, a hands-on soils display with infrared gas analyzers, touch-screen interactive displays and even a chef challenge which shows how different soils are formed from the same ingredients.

As human population continues to move from the farm towards urban centers, the general public has lost a vital connection to the soil. "Dig It" helps visitors understand how food is connected to soil and how our physical environment is largely determined by soil. Our clothes, homes, electronics, cars, and almost everything we touch comes from the soil.

2015 marks the International Year of Soils as declared by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. Over 250,000 visitors are anticipated to experience "Dig It" at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences from May 16 to August 16, 2015. Exhibition staff and volunteers will help interpret the information and provide valuable interaction with visitors. Additionally, educational outreach for K-12 classroom-related enrichment activities includes youth summer camps, FFA, Envirothon, 4-H groups and other programs designed to enrich student learning. View a video about "Dig It" exhibit and how it excites! <http://soilscience.info/dig-it/> ♦

FREE Soils Education Materials...

"International Year of the Soil" educational material is now available online to kick off the 2015 year of celebration and education about soils. Material is available at <https://www.soils.org/iys/educational-materials-kit> ♦

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