

# Stanly Soil & Water Conservation District

Fall Edition  
October 2014



26032-C Newt Road  
Agri-Civic Center  
Albemarle, NC 28001  
704-986-3059



## 2014 Agriculture Awareness Days

Where can 3rd grade students learn about Soils, Forestry, Livestock, Wheat, Bees, Cotton, Soybeans, Environment, Poultry, and Corn Shelling all at one place? At the Stanly County Agri-Civic Center during Ag Awareness Days. This field trip was attended by almost 100% of Stanly County's 3rd graders - 693 students. During the event, students rotated through 12 hands-on agriculture stations where they learned about different aspects of agriculture and the environment. Ag Awareness Days spanned three days, Tuesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. until 2 p.m. What a great fun way to learn about agriculture outside the classroom!



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Nathan Lowder	District Conservationist
Miranda McDaniel	ATAC Admin. Support Asst.

## **EPA and the Corps of Engineers' Attempt to Regulate Waters**



Puddles, ponds, ditches, ephemerals (land that looks like a small stream during heavy rain but isn't wet most of the time) and isolated wetlands dot the nation's farmland. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) on March 25 issued a proposed rule that would expand its regulatory authority under the Clean Water Act (CWA) to these types of land features and waters, giving the agencies the power to dictate

land-use decisions and farming practices in or near them. The rule will make it more difficult to farm or change a farming operation to remain competitive and profitable.

**HOW DID WE GET HERE?** Congress passed the CWA in 1972, banning discharges of pollutants from a point source (i.e., a single source or conveyance) into navigable waters without a federal permit. The CWA has established a system of cooperative federalism that gives federal agencies—mainly EPA and the Corps—the authority to regulate navigable waters such as interstate rivers. The law calls these “waters of the U.S.” State and local governments have jurisdiction over smaller, more-remote waters, such as many ponds and isolated wetlands, because state and local governments are more accountable to their citizens and more in touch with local environmental and economic situations. ~From [ncfb.org](http://ncfb.org)

You have the opportunity to voice your concerns. Comment on the rule at [ncfb.org](http://ncfb.org)

## **South Stanly Senior Attends Resource Conservation Workshop**

Nathan Moose was chosen to attend the Resource Conservation Workshop which was held July 22-27, 2014. Nathan is a rising senior at South Stanly High School. He is the son of Howard and Sonya Moose. His plan is to major in some field of agriculture. This was a perfect opportunity for him to explore possibilities in all areas of natural resource studies. The RCW is a unique opportunity for a week of intensive study and hands-on conservation activities. Students are required to submit an application and are chosen for participation by the Stanly SWCD Board of Supervisors. Rising high school juniors and seniors are eligible to apply. Students are housed in NC State University campus dormitories under the guidance of live-in counselors.



The primary objective of the workshop is to learn about natural resources and their management in today's environment. The District provides sponsorship which pays for registration, lodging, food and travel.

**“We learned conservation practices and put them into use. I made new friends, and made connections that will help me in college and my future career.” Nathan Moose**

## **2015 Grass and Apiculture Reporting Deadline Nov. 15**

**November 15<sup>th</sup>** is the deadline to report acreage planted to perennial covers (grass for hay and/or grazing) and apiculture (honey bees). To be eligible for FSA programs, including the Livestock Disaster Assistance Programs, producers must have a complete acreage report for the entire farm which often includes grass fields and pastures. Failure to report your grass and apiculture crops timely may result in a late filed crop report penalty. Visit the Stanly County Farm Service Agency before November 15<sup>th</sup> to complete your crop reports on grasses and apiculture.

## **Peak-season Soil Fee Period Announced for 2014-2015**

**RALEIGH** - Growers and home gardeners or landscapers are reminded to send in their soil samples to the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Agronomic Services Lab by Nov. 25 at 6 p.m. to avoid upcoming peak-season fees. There will be a \$4 fee per sample for those received during the lab's peak-processing time of Nov. 25 through March 31. Samples received before Nov. 25 or after March 31 will be processed without a fee. Most soil samples for home grounds and gardens can be collected April through November when the fee is not in effect.

In 2013-2014, the Soil Testing Section analyzed around 330,000 samples, with turnaround times of one to two weeks by the first of February. In previous years, there was still a significant backlog of samples to be processed through mid to late March, making it difficult for growers waiting for results to plan for nutrient applications.

**“We implemented the peak-season fee in 2013 to better manage the processing of soil samples and help ensure growers get their information in time to plan for the upcoming season,”** said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler.

During the fee period, sample drop-off times at the Eaddy Building will be between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. There will be no after-hours access on the weekends. Growers are encouraged to submit sample information forms online and pay with a credit card using a secure online payment service called PayPoint.

Online submission can be accessed through the PALS homepage at [www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/PALS/](http://www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/PALS/) after a user account is established under the Utility link. Payment can also be made with an escrow account.

If faster turnaround time is needed, the lab offers an expedited soil testing service on a limited basis. Growers can purchase expedited shippers, which can hold up to 36 soil samples, for \$200 each while supplies last. The expedited shipper comes with a guaranteed turnaround time of two weeks upon delivery at the lab, excluding the Christmas holiday season where three weeks is guaranteed. Samples arriving in expedited shippers are excluded from the peak-season fee. Contact the Agronomic Services Division office at [919-733-2655](tel:919-733-2655) for questions regarding the peak-season soil testing fee, online sample submission, escrow accounts or the purchase of expedited shippers.



## **USDA Reminds Farmers of 2014 Farm Bill Conservation Compliance Changes**



Changes mandated through the 2014 Farm Bill require producers to have a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (AD-1026) on file.

For farmers to be eligible for premium support on their federal crop insurance, a completed and signed AD-1026 form must be on file with the FSA. Since many FSA and Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) programs have this requirement, most producers should already have an AD-1026 on file. If producers have not filed, they must do so by June 1, 2015.

When a farmer completes the AD-1026, FSA and NRCS staff will outline any additional actions that may be required for compliance with the provisions. The Risk Management Agency, through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), manages the federal crop insurance program that provides the modern farm safety net for American farmers and ranchers.

Since enactment of the 1985 Farm Bill, eligibility for most commodity, disaster, and conservation programs has been linked to compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions. The 2014 Farm Bill continues the requirement that producers adhere to conservation compliance guidelines to be eligible for most programs administered by FSA and NRCS. This includes the new price and revenue protection programs, the Conservation Reserve Program, the Livestock Disaster Assistance programs and Marketing Assistance Loans implemented by FSA. It also includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and other conservation programs.

FSA recently released a revised form AD-1026, which is available at USDA Service Centers and online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). USDA will publish a rule later this year that will provide details outlining the connection of conservation compliance with crop insurance premium support. Producers can also contact their local USDA Service Center for information.



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