

2018

Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District

Annual Report



The Stanly County Soil and Water Conservation District proudly presents our 2017-2018 Annual Report. Partnering with local, state and federal governments, we offer cost sharing opportunities and economic incentives to Stanly County landowners, with an emphasis on educating the public about conservation practices. We believe conservation education nurtures an attitude of good stewardship in the hearts and minds of children who are the future caretakers of our natural resources. We are confident that the upcoming year will bring us even closer to our goal of making all citizens of Stanly County more aware of how important our resources are to our existence and of the programs and services available to them through our office.

Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District



The Stanly SWCD Board of Supervisors hold regular monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 8:00 a.m. at the AgriCivic Center in Albemarle, NC. The meetings are open to the public. Anyone interested in conservation is encouraged to attend. Any change in meeting dates is posted at the SWCD office and on our website, www.stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water.

Mission Statement

The mission of Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide education, information and technical assistance to citizens of Stanly County for the conservation of our soil and water resources.

History of Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District



I, THAD EURE, Secretary of State of the State of North Carolina, in compliance with Section 14 of Chapter 139 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, do hereby certify that an application for the creation of a soil conservation district has been filed by the duly appointed supervisors of the STANLY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT in the office of the Secretary of State, said district being one of five such districts formed out of the BROWN CREEK SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT, the latter having been organized and having filed appropriate documents in this office on August 14, 1937; that the name STANLY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT does not conflict with and is not deceptively similar or identical to that of any other soil conservation district in this State; that there is attached to said application a statement by the Chairman of the State Soil Conservation Committee, all of which have been examined and are found to comply with the requirements set forth in the said Section 14 of Chapter 139 of the General Statutes providing for the dividing of large soil conservation districts into two or more districts; and that the organization of STANLY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT has been duly completed incident to its being constituted a governmental subdivision of this State and a body corporate and politic, all as provided in the Act herein before referred to.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal.

DONE IN OFFICE at Raleigh, this 16th day of October, 1961.



Secretary of State

“In the early 1930s, along with the greatest depression this nation ever experienced, came an equally unparalleled ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl. Following a severe and sustained drought in the Great Plains, the region's soil began to erode and blow away, creating huge black dust storms that blotted out the sun and swallowed the countryside. Thousands of “dust refugees” left the black fog to seek better lives. But the storms stretched across the nation. They reached south to Texas and east to New York. Dust even sifted into the White House and onto the desk of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. On Capitol Hill, while testifying about the erosion problem, soil scientist Hugh Hammond Bennett threw back the curtains to reveal a sky blackened by dust. Congress unanimously passed legislation declaring soil and water conservation a national policy and priority. Because nearly three-fourths of the continental United States is privately owned, Congress realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners would guarantee the success of conservation work on private land. In 1937, President Roosevelt wrote the governors of all the states recommending legislation that would allow local landowners to form soil conservation districts. Brown Creek Soil

& Water Conservation District in North Carolina was the first district established. The movement caught on across the country with district-enabling legislation passed in every state. Today, the country is blanketed with nearly 3,000 conservation districts.”
from <http://www.nacdnet.org>

The rest, as they say, is history. Our history. The Brown Creek District included Anson, Stanly, Union, Montgomery and Richmond Counties. “On June 28, 1961, the State Soil Conservation Committee approved the application to divide the Brown Creek District into five one-county districts. On the basis of the information contained in the petition, the State Committee has determined the operation of the Stanly Soil Conservation District to be administratively practicable and feasible.” David S. Weaver, Chairman of the North Carolina State Conservation Committee, to J. T. Mabry of Norwood.

As can be seen in the document above, Thad Eure, Secretary of State, signed into being the Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District on October 16, 1961

NC Association SWCD Holds 2018 Annual Meeting

The 74th Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts was held at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham, NC. This year's theme was "Embrace the Challenge." The featured speaker for the General Session on Monday morning was Allen Nicholas, NC Forest Supervisor with the US Forestry Service. Comments from NC Ag Commissioner Steve Troxler finished up the meeting. A variety of breakout sessions offered something for everyone. Committee meetings filled the afternoon agenda and an education awards banquet brought the day to a close.

At a banquet on Tuesday evening, the winning Outstanding NC Conservation Farm Family was recognized. The Piedmont Region winner is Windy Hill Farms in Randolph County. The Mountain Region, and also the State winner, is Hunsucker Farms in Catawba County. The festivities ended with 2017 President, Chris Hogan, handing the gavel over to Dietrich Kilpatrick, incoming 2018 President.

The week ended with an Executive Breakfast on Wednesday morning.

Soil & Water District Supervisors Re-Elected

Terry Blalock won his re-election race in November and will serve as Chairman of the Board for the upcoming year, a position he has held since 2008. His tenure as Supervisor began in 2002, giving him 18 years of service on the SWCD Board. His farming expertise is a valuable asset to the Stanly Soil & Water Conservation District. Mr. Blalock, a life-long Stanly County farmer, lives in the Cottonville community.



Curtis Furr was also re-elected in November, making him a veteran of 10 years on the Board. His first term began by appointment in 2008. Mr. Furr, along with his son Chris, is owner of Big Bear Creek Farms, Inc. An enthusiastic advocate for no-till farming, Curtis has shared his innovative practices with both veteran and novice farmers across the country. He lives in the Ridgecrest community.

Congratulations to Jody C. Smith on his re-appointment as Soil & Water Supervisor for a second term. He is a graduate of NC State University with a MS degree in Poultry Science. Currently, he is employed with Carolina Farm Credit as a Commercial Ag Loan Officer. Jody will serve as Treasurer for the up-coming year.



District Supervisors

Terry Blalock,
Chairman

Curtis Furr
Vice-Chairman

Jody Smith
Treasurer

Chester Lowder
Supervisor

Aaron Burleson
Supervisor

District Staff

Amanda Kirby
Cost Share Technician

Rita Little
Administrative Education
Coordinator

NRCS Staff

Charles Dunevant
Soil Conservationist

Lin Taylor
Civil Engineer
Technician

District Funding

Local districts, such as Stanly Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), receive funding from federal, state and local governments and independent fund-raising efforts. Funding sources include:

Local: Stanly SWCD receives funding from the Stanly County government which includes appropriations for office space, personnel, equipment, training and supplies.

State: North Carolina provides technical and administrative assistance and some equipment through the Division of Soil and Water Conservation. Financial assistance is also provided by the State and administered by the NC Soil and Water Conservation Commission with staff assistance from the Division. Funding is available through:

- Matching funds to Soil and Water Districts
- Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP)
- Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP)
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Federal: The Natural Resource Conservation Service provides Stanly SWCD with personnel, technical assistance and equipment in support of district conservation programs. This assistance comes through federally initiated conservation programs implemented through the local districts.

Independent Fund-Raising: Stanly SWCD sells pine tree seedlings once a year and rents a no-till drill to help fund education and conservation materials. Newsletter ads are also sold to help defray the cost of printing our quarterly newsletter.

All funds received by a district are public monies. As a governmental body, Stanly SWCD properly administers and accounts for all funds.

Complimentary District Services

Each year the Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District provides numerous services to local producers and the general public at no cost. These services include but are not limited to:

- Soil sample boxes and information
- Burning permits
- Writing waste utilization plans
- Creating and updating certified conservation plans
- Resource conservation consultations
- Field Days and Ag Awareness Day
- Educational presentations for school age children and civic organizations
-

The SWCD also provides technical assistance to producers looking to update or retrofit best management practices on their farms.

Public Information Initiatives

Newsletter- The Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District publishes a quarterly newsletter in January, April, July and October. Total circulation for each issue is approximately 400. The newsletter provides information about District activities as well as programs available through various agencies. Advertising opportunities are available for businesses and individuals by purchasing ad space. The ads are printed in every newsletter which is also posted on our District website www.stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water.

To sign up for newsletters by email, contact us at rlittle@stanlycountync.gov.

Local Newspaper - Much of the District's success is dependent upon local newspaper coverage and communications. The District is very appreciative of the excellent cooperation from the Stanly News and Press. This is an excellent way to stay informed of the District's conservation programs and opportunities.

Partners in Conservation

The District is charged with the responsibility of educating citizens, promoting soil and water conservation, and establishing conservation programs in the county. This task would not be possible without the cooperation of other agencies and local units of government. We would like to thank the following agencies for their services and support:

- Stanly County Board of Commissioners
- Stanly County Manager and administrative personnel
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- NC Cooperative Extension Service
- NC Forest Service
- Stanly AgriCivic Center Staff
- Rural Economic and Community Development Service
- NC Division of Soil and Water
- NC Association of Soil and Water Districts
- NC Department of Agriculture
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- Stanly County Schools
- Area VIII Soil and Water Conservation Districts



Thank you to our Newsletter Sponsors

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First Bank

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NC Agriculture Cost Share Program Year 2018

The Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District was allocated \$54,141 for the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP) and \$7,500 for the Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP). All in all, the District received \$61,641 from the North Carolina Division of Soil and Water in 2018.

Program Year 2018 \$61,641 allocated

Agriculture Cost Share (ACSP) - 5 contracts written

1	Livestock Exclusion	\$18,161
1	Incinerator	\$ 3,160
1	Cropland Conversion	\$ 3,614
1	Lagoon Bio-solid Removal Incentive	\$25,000
1	Critical Area Planting	\$ 2,466
	Unencumbered	\$ 1,740



Agricultural Water Resource Assistance Program

(AgWRAP) - 2 contracts written

1	Water Supply Pond	\$ 2,500
1	Pond Sediment Removal	\$ 5,000



The District performed spot checks on 5% of existing North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share contracts. These included contracts for livestock exclusion, watering tanks, litter shed, litter spreader and pasture renovation. An AgWRAP water supply well was also spot checked. All were found to be compliant.

Voluntary Agricultural District

The Stanly SWCD assists the Agricultural Advisory Board with the administration of the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD). As of July 2018, total acreage in the Voluntary Agricultural District is 3545.44 acres with 18 farms participating. Total acreage in the Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD) is 4228.21 acres with 24 farms participating.

Members of the Advisory Board are Chester Lowder (Chairman), David Underwood (Vice-Chairman), Terry Blalock, Ronnie Burlison, Curtis Furr, Frank Lee and David Talley.

Anyone wishing to make application for either the VAD or the EVAD program should contact the Stanly SWCD office or the Stanly County Cooperative Extension office.

Ag Cost Share Programs Available

Soil and Water Conservation Districts implement four cost share programs, all of which share a common goal of increasing water quality. These programs include the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP), the Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP), the Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP), and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The District accepts applications year round for each of these programs. Received applications are ranked based on various criteria and conservation concerns. The highest ranking application is provided assistance to install best management practices.

ACSP-The major cause of water quality problems in the area is non-point source pollution. Damage to our water resources comes from soil erosion, excessive fertilizer use, animal waste contamination, and improper use of agricultural chemicals. The Agriculture Cost Share Program helps address nonpoint source pollution by providing technical and financial resources to local producers to aid in the installation of various best management practices.

AgWRAP-Water quantity concerns are also a point of focus for the District. The Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program was recently created in order to address these issues. Producer concerns include water to be used for cropland irrigation, and livestock watering. Multiple best management practices are available to assist producers increase their water use efficiency, availability and storage.

CCAP-Nonpoint source pollution stemming from non agricultural sources is also addressed through cost share programs. The Community Conservation Assistance Program is available to address water quality issues that are present in urban, suburban and rural areas. Assistance is available to implement best management practices which address and increase overall water quality.

CREP-Lastly, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program is available to protect environmentally sensitive cropland and marginal pasture land long term. This is accomplished through 10, 15, and 30 year conservation easements.



Animal Waste Storage Structure



Cistern



Livestock Exclusion



Cattle Water Tank



Lagoon Closure - After



Lagoon Closure - Before

Education Programs and Initiatives

Agriculture Awareness Days

Stanly County is a rural community, yet many youth are unaware of the source of their food and fiber.



Stanly SWCD participated in the 12th annual Agriculture Awareness Days hosted by the Stanly County Cooperative Extension on October 10-12, 2017. The purpose of the event is to educate local students about the different aspects of agriculture and the environment of Stanly County.



There were twelve hands-on stations correlated to the 3rd grade essential standards. Nearly 700 students rotated through the stations over the course of the three days.

Educational Outreach

Investing in our future...

It is the responsibility of each individual citizen to be good stewards of our natural resources. The main focus of Soil & Water Districts is to educate people of all ages about conservation practices that will ensure these resources will be available for generations to come. This year, the targeted grade levels were Pre-K through sixth grade in the public, private, parochial and home schools of Stanly County. Soil composition and conservation, along with water conservation presentations are available for both school and civic groups. A total of 2183 students participated in soil and water conservation presentations and activities this year.

The District sponsored a poster contest for fifth grade, a computer-generated slideshow (PowerPoint®) contest and essay contest for sixth grade. The theme for the contest was “Water, The Cycle of Life.” Special emphasis was placed on the water cycle and how important it is to our survival. The necessity for clean water was highlighted in each presentation, as well as how limited our supply of fresh water is.

Poster Contest

- 1st Place: Natalia Green, Badin Elementary
- 2nd Place: Luke Dennis, Norwood Elementary
- 3rd Place: Bella Wilkins, Awesome Academy Home School

Natalia’s poster went on to win 1st place in the Area VIII Competition.

PowerPoint®

- 1st Place: AJ Bombardier

Annual Education Awards Banquet

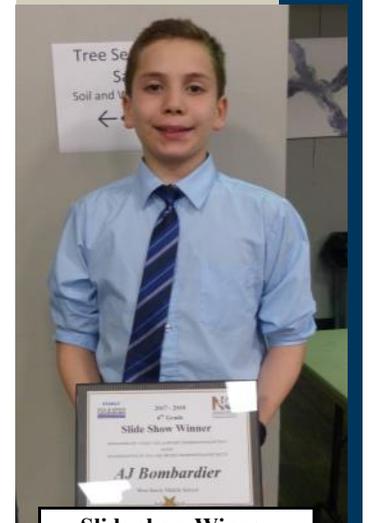
The Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District held its annual awards banquet February 26, 2018 at the AgriCivic Center in Albemarle. The purpose of the banquet is to reward the winners of the educational contests sponsored by the District, as well as recognize the Conservation Farm Family and the No-Till Corn Yield winner. Those present at the banquet included contest winners, District and NRCS employees, SWCD Supervisors, Stanly County Commissioners, Voluntary Ag District members, principals and teachers, and guests of participants. Other agencies represented at the banquet were Farm Service Agency, NC Forest Service, and the Stanly County Cooperative Extension.



Conservation Farm Family 2017
Herlocker Farms, Inc.



5th Grade Poster Winners: L-R, First place, Natalia Green; Second place, Luke Dennis; Third place, Bella Wilkins



Slide show Winner
AJ Bombardier

Envirothon 2018

Students from across the state converged in Alamance County on April 27-28 to participate in the 2018 State Envirothon. Close to 500 middle and high school students, in teams of five, competed at the event. A qualifying competition took place at Catawba College in Salisbury earlier in March.

The Envirothon is a competition for teams of middle and high school students sponsored by the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation.

In the high school division, the “Yellow Populars” team proudly took first place in the state competition. The team will represent North Carolina in the NCF National Envirothon in Pocatello, Idaho on July 22-28. The competition will be held at Idaho State University and will host winning teams from participating states, Canadian provinces and China. The homeschool team is affiliated with the Stanly Montgomery Home School Association. Advisors for the team are Susanne Burns and Angie Stiller.



Yellow Populars HS team Front row– Susanne Burns, Advisor), Malory Rogers, Angie Stiller (Advisor), Amber Stiller, Lexie Burns. Back row – Tyler Desosiers (Alternate), Erik Conrad, Maddy Davis.

2018 Conservation Farm Family of the Year



The NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Outstanding Conservation Farm Family award recognizes farmers and farm families who are actively taking the initiative to implement sound, innovative and cost-effective conservation techniques, and are actively involved in conservation education.

This year the award goes to Terry L. Blalock Farms for outstanding stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources through conservation, education and implementation of best management conservation practices. Terry and his son, Eric Blalock grow cotton, corn, wheat, and soybeans in Stanly and Anson County. They also raise beef cattle. Eric is the fourth generation to farm the land since his great-grandfather started farming in 1940. Terry and his wife Becky reside at 4691 Gaddys Ferry Road in Cottonville. Eric and family also live in Cottonville at 4940 Gaddys Ferry Road.

Resource Conservation Workshop (RCW)

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 District 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. Two local businesses, First Bank and Uwharrie Bank donated funds for sponsorship of two students who were selected to attend. The cost of registration, meals and travel is \$600 per student.



Amelia Martin and Erika Norris were chosen to attend the Resource Conservation Workshop which was held June 24-29.

Amelia Martin, daughter of Ward and Felicia Martin of Locust, is a rising high school junior. She plans to attend NC State University upon graduation.

Erika Norris is the daughter of Steven and Krista Norris of Stanfield. She is a rising high school junior. She appreciates the complexity of nature and the need to conserve it.



No-Till Corn Yield Winner

Burleson Farms

Bryan Burleson of B&D Farms was the winner of the no-till corn contest this year. Their yield was 215.60 bushels per acre on a farm in Stanly County.



Agri-Civic Center Day

The seventh annual Stanly County Agri-Civic Day, sponsored by the Friends of the Stanly County Agri-Civic Center (FACC), was held August 19th with attendance up from last year.

Agri-Civic Day is a celebration of the county's rich agricultural heritage. Many local sponsors contributed to the success of this event. Children enjoyed the animal races, mule jumps, a straw bale maze, face painting, balloon animals, Smokey the Bear and pony rides.

Adults also enjoyed livestock judging, goat and cow shows, food vendors, and of course the heavy equipment and farm machinery. Live entertainment was provided by the Hatley Family, Fox Branch Boys and Southern Express.

The event brings attention to and gathers support for the Agri-Civic Center. The facility provides services to the residents of Stanly and surrounding counties. Thanks to the support of many sponsors, admission was free.



Soil Health Workshop

Stanly SWCD sponsored a Soil Health Breakfast on August 16, 2017 at the Agri-Civic Center. There were approximately 70 people in attendance. The topic was "Cover Crops, the Secret to Soil Health". Speakers were Will Mann of Fishing Creek SWCD in Halifax County and Nathan Lowder, USDA/NRCS.

Will Mann spoke about how to improve our soils without reducing productivity, and how the job of the farmer is to use biology, moisture, and geological resources to transform solar energy into a sellable product.

Nathan Lowder gave a demonstration using a rainfall simulator and spoke on soil health. It's the continued capacity of the soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. Healthy soil reduces inputs, retains moisture, and increases infiltration, soil carbon, and organic matter.



No Till Drill Rentals

Stanly SWCD owns a Truax 88 seed drill that enables landowners to plant seed without tilling the soil, thus improving soil health and decreasing erosion. During fiscal year 2017-2018, the drill was used 21 times on a total of 206 acres with an income of \$3014.92. Maintenance expenses for the drill were \$177.86. The proceeds from drill rentals helped fund the District's conservation and education programs.





**STANLY
SOIL AND WATER
Conservation District**

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[http://
stanlycountync.gov/soil-
and-water](http://stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water)

*Soil and Water
~ Yours for life.*

**North Carolina Foundation for
Soil & Water Conservation, Inc.**



Yours for Life



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The nation that destroys its soil, destroys itself.

- Franklin D. Roosevelt