



Beaufort Soil & Water Conservation District

Conservation Services: Highlights of 2011

The Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Annual Report showcases the highlights and many accomplishments during 2011. Through many partnerships, frugal management and teamwork we have maintained full service to Beaufort County citizens in these complicated financial times. Please review our report below as it comes with our appreciation for your support of conservation efforts in our county.

USDA—NRCS

Through the partnership between Beaufort Conservation District and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Beaufort County landowners are protecting water quality, wildlife, soils, and prime farmland through the Farm Bill. Recently, Beaufort County has been the top money recipient in the state for Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP) funds through USDA-NRCS amounting to \$4.2 million! (p. 3) Also see on the ground conservation installed with cost share for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). (p. 2) Also read about activities on the Okatie 319 grant and the Local Work Group. (p.3)

Education Outreach

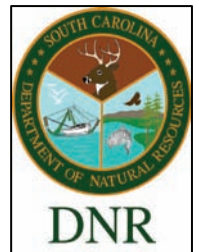
Beaufort SWCD continues to exceed in providing quality hands on science education programs to area children and adults. Read about the numbers of programs and citizens served, Eco Camp, Festivals worked and grant awards. Make sure you read the Excellence in Education Awards article that highlights two of our very special educators. (See p. 4)

Water Quality Coalition-Together for Beaufort

Beaufort SWCD continues to chair the Together for Beaufort Water Quality Coalition. This true working group is comprised of key environmental agents in Beaufort County that convene to discuss water quality issues, share findings, and work together to improve our area waters. (See p. 3)

SC DNR & Beaufort SWCD

The Beaufort SWCD continues its strong partnership with SC Department of Natural Resources to stay connected with the state activities and other Soil and Water Districts. DNR keeps us active in education events and staff training. DNR also helps with important commissioner guidance and staff information as well as important natural resource information in South Carolina. DNR publications are available at our office or check the DNR Website at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/>.



Maps, Soil Surveys & Technical Assistance

The district continues to provide technical assistance to engineers and planners working in the county providing historical aerial photos, Wetlands Inventory Maps and other maps. Engineers from all over the southeast United States working in Beaufort County always visit Beaufort SWCD office for assistance. Call our office for after hours appointment if needed.

Beaufort Conservation District Mission:

To help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment by promoting wise land use practices, environmental education, and technical assistance.



Forestry BMP'S

Tree Establishment



Fire Breaks



Cropland BMP'S

*Cover crop
planted into residue*



Fencing, right, to keep animals out of the marsh

USDA—NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS and Beaufort SWCD provided technical and financial assistance to agricultural landowners in Beaufort County. The benefit of this assistance is clean water, reduced sedimentation into nearby waters, threatened and endangered species protection, and land preservation through purchased easements.

In FY2011 NRCS and the District provided \$113,058 in cost share to landowners in Beaufort County to install Best Management Practices (BMP's).

NRCS and the District purchased and protected 271 acres of prime farmland under the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP) from future development for \$1.5 million. See p.3 for additional FRPP purchases.

The following BMP's were installed in FY2011 voluntarily by landowners with financial assistance from NRCS and Beaufort SWCD. **The majority of the installed BMP's listed below are located in the SCDHEC 303d Impaired Watersheds:**

Forestry BMP's

- Prescribe Burning- 600 Acres
- Forest Stand Improvement - 78 acres
- Upland Wildlife Management – 81 acres
- Tree/Shrub Site Preparation & Establishment – 14 acres
- Firebreaks-22,392 feet
- Pest Management –33 acres

Cropland BMP's

- Conservation Cover – 17 acres
- Cover Crop – 30 acres
- Irrigation Water Management- 18 acres
- Pest Management –20 acres
- Nutrient Management- 23 acres
- Micro-Irrigation System –31 acres

Pasture BMP's

- Prescribe Grazing – 5 acres
- Pipeline-8,934 feet
- Water Well – 1
- Watering Facility - 3
- Fence – 6,081 feet
- Heavy Use Protection – 3

NRCS Field Office serving Beaufort & Jasper Counties:
7554 West Main Street, Room 128, PO Box 190 Ridgeland, SC 29936
Phone: (843) 726-8148 Fax: (843) 726-5763
Beaufort residents non-long distance phone number— 524-8227



Farm and Ranchland Protection Program—FRPP



The primary purpose of FRPP is to protect agricultural soils, including prime farmland soils and the viability and productivity of agriculture within Beaufort County. Over the past two years, NRCS and Beaufort SWCD placed over 1100 acres of prime farmland under FRPP easements with NRCS paying out roughly \$4.2 million. The Beaufort Open Land Trust and Rural and Critical Lands partnered with NRCS and Beaufort SWCD, contributing additional funding to purchase the easements. We are very fortunate to have such a hard working NRCS staff. The success



of the FRPP program has attracted the making of several promotional films on St. Helena Island featuring local small farmers, fishermen, and other local cultural subjects. Use the following link below to view the films.

<http://vimeo.com/channels/facesofsainthelena>

319 Okatie Watershed Grant

Beaufort Conservation District and NRCS completed their first year of a three year 319 Grant to reduce manure run off into the Okatie River which is impaired for Fecal coliform. Outreach for Okatie Watershed landowners with horses, cattle, pigs, or sheep will include help with pasture management improvements, heavy use pads, and possibly a manure stacking & composting shed that will be available to local farmers and gardeners. Lowcountry Council of Government manages the grant and several other partners in Beaufort County are working on other sources of fecal coliform entering the Okatie River.

Salkehatchie NRCS District Work Group

Beaufort Conservation District helped NRCS organize the annual meeting of the Salkehatchie Watershed Working Group Team which included stakeholders from the six surrounding counties. Soil & Water Districts, Farm Service Agencies, Farm Service Committee Members, SC DNR, SC Forestry, SC DHEC, and landowners are invited to provide input. The members developed natural resource ranking questions in order to prioritize conservation funding for the installation of best management practices in Beaufort County.

Water Quality Coalition, Together for Beaufort Initiative



The Beaufort Conservation District continues to chair the Water Quality Committee for Beaufort County. This committee joins agencies and organizations throughout the county with a common goal of protecting the quality of our waters. In 2008 the committee reviewed the Clean

Water Task Force Report from 1997 and updated the needs of our surrounding waters. They developed “The Next 10 Steps” and a specific action plan to carry out those 10 steps towards improved water quality in Beaufort County. We are currently working with the county and municipalities on implementing these 10 Steps through the new updated form based code up dates.

Our members include:

- Beaufort Conservation District
- BJWSA
- Beaufort County Stormwater
- Beaufort County Solid Waste & Recycling
- Beaufort County Planning
- Clemson Extension
- USDA-NRCS
- SC DHEC
- Town of Bluffton
- Town of Hilton Head
- Friends of the Rivers
- Lowcountry Institute
- Coastal Conservation League

Water Quality Coalition

For more information about water quality in Beaufort County, call or email us.

Education Outreach with LONG ARMS!

District Educators Receive Excellence in Education Award from Beaufort Middle School

Beaufort Conservation District Educators Pam Floyd & Debby Way were invited to a special program at Beaufort Middle School and were very surprised when they were awarded the Excellence in Education Award by Beaufort Middle School Principal. Beaufort

SWCD has been teaching environmental science classes at Beaufort Middle for one school quarter for the past several years. Standardized Science test scores were notably higher this past spring in their Environmental Conservation Class. The education staff credits their

success to fun hands on science approach. They do take their science very seriously and are always exploring new avenues to teach children and adults about environmental science. Congratulations to Pam & Debby for a job Very Well Done!

Outreach Numbers

272 hands on education programs were taught to 6762 children & adults.

BSWCD Commissioners and staff made 104 contacts with technical assistance, community meetings & workshops.



Eco campers pretending to be loggerhead turtles, burying their eggs in the "wet sand". (Really vanilla pudding & marshmallows.)

2011 Community Festivals

- Kid Fest
- Earth Day, Port Royal Farmers Market
- Soft Shell Crab Festival, Town of Port Royal
- Critter Fest, Lowcountry Estuarium
- Festival of the Sea, Town of Port Royal
- Festival of the Trees, Caroline Hospice
- Health Fair, Port Royal Elementary School
- Clean Water Festival, Hilton Head Prep. School

****Watch for NEW event for 2012:**
World Oceans Day (see p. 5)

McCracken Scholarship

The H.E. McCracken Memorial Scholarship was established in honor of the late Emmitt McCracken in 1984 to benefit Clemson University students from Beaufort enrolled in Agriculture or Natural Resource studies. Donations to this scholarship fund can be mailed to:

Clemson University
Foundation
P.O. Box 1889
Clemson, SC 29633



On check include
Reference # B0539
McCracken Scholarship
Fund

Eco Camp 2011

Beaufort SWCD presented a very successful Eco Camp in July at the Technical College of the Lowcountry. Over 60 kids signed up and we had to close the enrollment. Of the 15 classes (3 a day) favorites included dolphin Necropsies (simulated), sea mammals and sea turtle presentations, making sundials, learning about critters up close & personal from the Lowcountry Institute, seeing the planets and stars in the Star Lab Planetarium from SC State U, and much more. Sign up for the 23rd Eco Camp will begin in late spring before school is out and the theme for this year will be World Oceans Day activities.

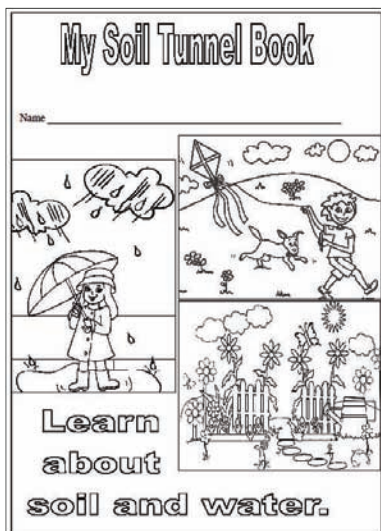


Eco Campers share findings with each other on the Dolphin Necropsy activity.

District Receives RC& D Grant for Soil Tunnel Booklet

Beaufort Conservation District was awarded another Youth Education Grant from Lowcountry RC& D (Resource Conservation & Development) to teach more environmental science to area students.

Our most popular program is our nationally acclaimed Soil Tunnel. We have always wanted an activity booklet for students to use during the presentations, to take back to class for post lessons, and then the booklet will hopefully go home for adult outreach from the Beaufort Soil & Water District. Now children can explore the 12 page activity book which features information on the water cycle, drinking wells, septic tanks, crops, animal homes, soils, and using water wisely. Students leave our program very excited about the Soil Tunnel Experience and we are thrilled to be able to make it even more enriching learning experience to take an activity book home.



Up Coming Events!

KidFest

March 31 at Cross Creek Shopping Center, 10 to 2
Lots of activities and info for parents.

Earth Day

April 14 at Port Royal Heritage Park with Port Royal Farmers Market in front of the Naval Hospital, 9 am to 12:30. Come see the multiple local natural resource and environmental agencies and their presentations. Bring your shopping bags for the Farmers Market <http://www.portroyalfarmersmarket.com/> and enjoy some music, breakfast or lunch, and have lots of fun.

World Oceans Day

Come Celebrate Beaufort County's 1st World Oceans Day! Several community agencies are planning activities both north and south of the Broad River to raise community awareness of Marine Debris in our coastal waters. Watch for announcements this spring, working up to a June 16th big event at Ribaut Square Shopping Center, in Beaufort. South of the Broad River will be announcing events soon. Numerous art, education, and community action activities are being planned for all ages. Please call or email us for updates or be added to the list serve for updates.

Board of Commissioners

- Alan A. Ulmer, Jr., Chair
- Claude McLeod, Jr., Vice Chair
- Denise Parsick, Secretary/Treasurer
- Ross "Mac" Sanders, Member
- Luke Inabinett, Member
- Art Holland, Associate
- Carol Murphy, Associate
- Jon Rembold, Associate
- Dean Moss, Associate

Beaufort SWCD Board meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 4:00 pm. Call 522-8100 for more information.

Staff Members

- Shelby Berry, District Manager
- Pam Floyd, Education Coordinator
- Debby Way, Education Specialist
- Phyllis Atkins, Community Health, Safety & Trails Coordinator

Thank you Supporters of Conservation

District Affiliates

- Michael Murphy, Preservation Tree Inc.
- Ulmer Brothers
- Ramsey Farm LP
- W. H. McLeod & Son
- Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Ogle
- Holly Hall Plantation
- Mr. & Mrs. William Murphy

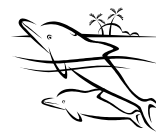


ECO CAMP XXIII

Dive into World Oceans Save the DATE! July 23-27 2012 More Details Soon!

Hands on Science Education & Crafts!

Rising Kindergartners to Rising 6th Graders



Dear Residents of Beaufort County,

Please be a Conservation Affiliate Today!
Help Educate Beaufort County about Conservation.
Donations go directly to local Environmental Science education programs for our area Students!
All donations are Tax Deductable.
Thank you for your support!
Sign up Today!

Affiliate Member Application

___ Supporting Member . . \$35.00 ___ Patron Member \$100.00
___ Sustaining Member . . \$50.00 ___ Associate Member . . . \$100.00 +

Total Enclosed: \$_____ Please make checks Payable to:

“Beaufort Conservation District” Mail to: PO Box 70 Port Royal, SC 29935

Email: bswcd@islc.net or shelby.berry@sc.nacdnet.net

Name & or Company _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Comments or Concerns _____

Conservation Partnership — working for you!!! Please Join Today!
Come see us! Office Hours: 8:00 am to Noon or call for an afternoon appointment.

Phone: 843-522-8100
Fax: 843-522-0585
E-mail: bswcd@islc.net



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Port Royal, SC 29935