

# Chesterfield

## SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### Biggest Achievement of 2023

In October, Chesterfield Soil and Water Conservation District held their annual banquet and recognized Joel Rivers as the 2023 Conservation Farmer of the Year. Rivers has been farming for over 35 years and currently farms 1,027 acres (224 acres of corn, 447 acres of cotton, 356 acres of soybeans) in Chesterfield County in addition to 683 acres across neighboring county lines. His primary conservation practices include the use of cover crops, no-till farming, residue management, in addition to nutrient and pest management.

A special presentation was made during the banquet in memory of Administrative Assistant Susan Felts who passed away suddenly in June. The District Commissioners and staff wore matching polo shirts and blue jeans in honor of Susan.



### Other Notable Accomplishment



Chesterfield Soil and Water Conservation District and the Sandhills Longleaf Pine Conservation Partnership (SLPCP) hosted a few landowner field days in 2023. One field day educated landowners on pine straw production. Charles Babb, SLPCP Coordinator, gave a presentation on taking advantage of management decisions that help with the overall health of the forest. Clemson Extension Forester, Ryan Beam, presented topics related to income, pest management, and nutrient deficiencies that can happen with intense straw raking.

### Conservation by the Numbers

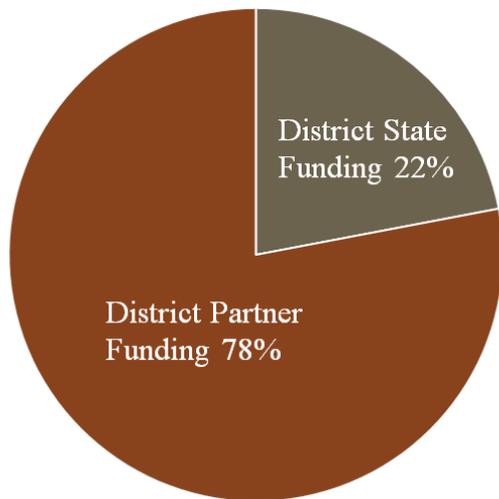
- 140 participants assisted with EQIP and CSP contracts to protect 23,033 acres in Chesterfield County
- 25 landowners funded with NFWF grant agreements to improve 1,159 acres of longleaf habitat
- More than 500 elementary students reached with long leaf pine presentation at Edwards Elementary School Farm Day
- 2 new employees - Nicole Austin and Thomas Babb

### 2024 District Plans

- Update website and implement social media presence
- Increase community and education involvement
- Participate in NACD Poster Contest
- Continue to assist landowners in establishing and managing longleaf habitats

# South Carolina Soil and Water Conservation Districts - 2023 Impact

## State FY24 Conservation District Funding



**For every \$1 of state appropriated funds to Conservation Districts, \$3.40 on average is leveraged to implement conservation programs in South Carolina.**

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Conservation Districts assist with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Farm Bill Programs which brought more than **\$55 million** to South Carolina's private lands for conservation implementation in federal FY23.

**More than 190,000 students** were reached by conservation district youth oriented programs such as school gardening, seed libraries, SC Envirothon, Arbor Day and Earth Day events, stormwater education, scholarships, and conservation related contests, etc.

**More than 2 million adults** were educated on conservation topics including Farm Bill Programs, pollinator promotion, stormwater mitigation, invasive species control, prescribed fire, water quality and conservation, habitat restoration, land easements, etc.

**More than 10,000 acres** statewide were impacted by conservation rental equipment available through conservation districts (no-till drills, prescribed fire equipment, hog traps, etc.).

SC Envirothon State Champions from Spartanburg Day School represented South Carolina at the 2023 international NCF-Envirothon Competition competing against teams from the US, Canada, Singapore and China.

Programs involving land easements, habitat restoration, invasive species removal, water conservation, watershed improvement, litter removal, and conservation education are just a handful of the vast conservation topics implemented statewide by Conservation Districts.