

Lancaster

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Biggest Achievement of 2023

Increased outreach efforts were a huge achievement of Lancaster Soil and Water Conservation District in 2023. In partnership with the Lancaster County Library System, the district expanded the Sowing Seeds program. It was launched on social media and within the first week reached over 10,000 people through the post! The seeds were flying off the shelf so quickly shelves couldn't be restocked fast enough. The three library branches saw an increase in library cards and membership to receive access to Sowing Seeds. The district is so thankful for everyone who helped sponsor and make this program a success.

To increase pollinator habitat in Lancaster County, the district began selling pollinator packs for large scale projects. This saves the landowner money and is a great opportunity to promote pollinators. The seed selection is limited but are approved seeds for NRCS practices.

A fall scavenger hunt was launched in 2023 and it was so cool to see all of the engagement of the program. Awards will be presented to the winners in 2024. The district is looking forward to expanding these programs even more in 2024.



Other Notable Accomplishment



The district engaged with agriculture related teachers and school programs throughout 2023.

The district sponsored the Andrew Jackson High School FFA Team at the SC Envirothon Competition where they won 3rd place in the Wildlife Station!

Justin Reynolds, Buford High School Agriculture Teacher, received the District's Conservation Educator of the Year Award.

Conservation by the Numbers

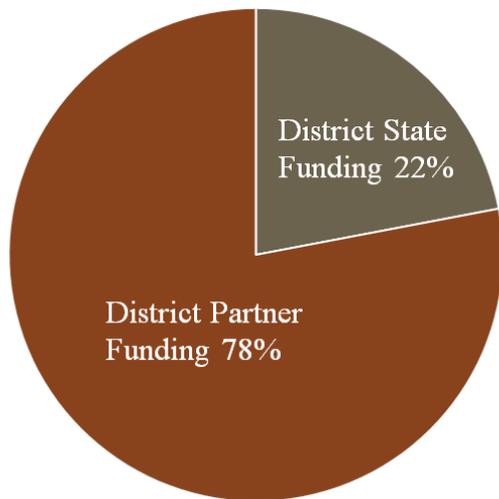
- Assisted with implementation of more than \$544,870 to implement conservation practice on 4,037 acres
- Awarded a \$750 Bill Ardrey Forestry Scholarship to Zoelle Gordon who will be attending Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
- Watershed Directors installed staffing gauges which will allow the board to better manage the dams. Gauges recorded water levels 7ft above normal pool after 3.5in of rainfall

2024 District Plans

- Increase participation in SC Envirothon, educational contests, scholarship programs, and Sowing Seeds
- Present Conservationist of the Year and Conservation Educator of the Year awards
- Increase education and outreach efforts
- Maintain 5 flood control lakes

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.

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.