



# Beaufort Soil & Water Conservation District 2013 Annual Report

*SCACD's District of the Year for 2012*

## Board of Commissioners:

Alan A. Ulmer Jr. , Chairman

Claude McLeod, Jr., Vice Chairman

Denise Parsick, Secretary/ Treasurer

Mac Sanders, Member

Luke Inabinett, Member

## Associate Commissioners

Art Holland                      Dean Moss

Carol Murphy                  Jon Rembold

## On the Ground Conservation & Education

SC DNR NERR with many volunteers work on an oyster build at Factory Creek for the ACE Basin NERR Living Shoreline Project .



## *FY 2013 Highlights*

- ◆ NRCS and Beaufort Conservation District provided \$113,499 in cost share to landowners in Beaufort County to install Best Management Practices as well as working on preserving 387 acres of prime farm land totaling \$1.5 million . See pages 2 & 3.
- ◆ NRCS and Beaufort Conservation District put on a Farmer & Landowner workshop at Penn Center. ***St. Helena, SC, A Better Place*** premiered at the Workshop and was supported by Minority Landowner Magazine.
- ◆ Beaufort Conservation District was chosen the Soil & Water District of the Year by SC Association of Conservation Districts among it's 45 SC county peers.
- ◆ NRCS, Beaufort Conservation District and Beaufort County Landowners met with **US Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack**, and **SC Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers** to discuss the new USDA Strikeforce Initiative Program and how it will help Beaufort County.
- ◆ Local Clean Marine Grants & Beaufort Conservation District's Boat US Foundation Grant paid for cleaning up over 30 tons of trash & derelict boats, including several tons of Hunting Island Beach debris.
- ◆ 323 environmental education programs were taught, of which 233 were water quality & water related programs
- ◆ Over 8500 children & adults attended programs & events.
- ◆ Education Staff presented their 24th Eco Camp, 2 ACE Basin programs, judged several science fairs, and presented at 6 festivals.

## Staff:

Shelby Berry, District Manager

Pam Floyd, Education Coordinator

Debby Way, Education Specialist

Phyllis Atkins, Community Health, Safety  
& Trails Coordinator

## Office Info

817 Paris Avenue, PO Box 70

Port Royal, SC 29935

Set office hours: 8—noon M-F

Public Monthly Board meetings:

2nd Thursday, Jan—Nov

Call monthly for information.

Phone: (843)522-8100

Fax: (843) 522-0585

*Mission: Help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment by promoting wise land use practices, environmental education and technical assistance.*



## USDA—NRCS

# Natural Resources Conservation Service

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NRCS and the Beaufort Conservation District provide 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.

NRCS and Beaufort Conservation District provided \$113,499 in cost share to landowners in Beaufort County to install Best Management Practices (BMP). This is a 30% increase from FY 2012, resulting in more conservation on the ground.

NRCS and Beaufort Conservation District have requested \$1.5 million to protect 387 acres of prime farmland under the Farm & Ranchland Protection Program to protect the land from future development.



*FRPP easement boundary sign*



*Brush Management of Invasive Chinese Tallow or popcorn tree*

The following BMP's were installed voluntarily by landowners with financial assistance from NRCS and Beaufort SWCD.

### FORESTRY BMP'S

Prescribe Burning- 691 Acres  
Forest Stand Improvement - 124 acres  
Tree/Shrub Establishment – 68 acres  
Tree/Shrub Site Prep 89 acres  
Native Warm Season Grass Establishment – 2.5 acres  
Brush Management 361 acres

*Controlled burn*



*Seasonal High Tunnel*



*Sudan Grass—Cover Crop*



### CROPLAND BMP'S

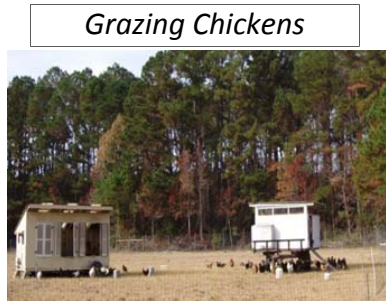
Pest Management –15.5 acres  
Cover Crop – 474 acres  
Nutrient Management- 3 acres  
Seasonal High Tunnel – 2,178 sq. ft.

### PASTURE BMP'S

Water Well – 1  
Fence – 2,724 Feet  
Pumping Plant -1



*Water Pump*



*Grazing Chickens*



*Fencing*

USDA-NRCS was established to improve farming methods to correct the land damage from the Dust Bowl. Soil & Water Conservation Districts were established to work locally with NRCS in every state .



## Okatie Watershed 319 Grant

## NRCS - 75 years of Helping People Help the Land

### USDA-NRCS Field Office

Serving Beaufort & Jasper Counties  
Diane Leone, Supervisory District Conservationist  
7554 West Main Street, Room 128, PO Box 190  
Ridgeland, SC 29936  
Phone: (843) 726-8148 Fax: (843) 726-5763



*Manure Composting Facility*

technical assistance to the agricultural portion of the 319 Okatie River Watershed Grant. The technical assistance includes construction of a manure composting facility, survey and design of 21 heavy use areas, improving an access road and developing a Certified Nutrient Management Plan. The benefits of these BMPs will result in reduced sediment and polluted runoff into the Okatie River.

### **Salkehatchie NRCS Watershed Work Group**

USDA-NRCS and the Beaufort Conservation District organized and met with Jasper, Colleton, Dorchester, Berkeley and Charleston Counties' Soil & Water Conservation Districts, SC Forestry Commission, SC DEHC, and the Farm Service Agency (**Salkehatchie Working Group**) to develop and prioritize ranking questions to determine which Farm Bill applications receive financial assistance to local landowners. Water quality was set as a priority and will help fund cost share for landowners within watershed areas on the 303d impaired list.



Beaufort Conservation District continues to chair the **Water Quality Committee** for Beaufort County and participates with Community Services under the Human Services Alliance. This coalition

joins agencies and organizations throughout the county with a common goal of protecting the quality of our waters. Members compiled a 6 year progress report based on "The Next 10 Steps" towards water quality in Beaufort County. Check out this report to see how the members of this coalition work together to find better ways to protect our waterways and better educate our constituents about water quality.

<http://www.bcgov.net/departments/Community-Services/human-services-alliance/documents/Coalition%20Reports/Final%20Water%20Quality%202012%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

### **St. Helena Island, SC; A Better Place**

NRCS, Beaufort Conservation District and University of SC made and produced a film featuring landowners and producers on St. Helena Island called **St.**



**Helena, SC, A Better Place.** <http://vimeo.com/channels/abetterplace/46084848>

NRCS and the Beaufort Conservation District with support from **Minority Landowner Magazine** hosted a daylong farmers and landowners workshop at Penn Center focusing on marketing crops, heirs' property issues, farm financing, and an overview of NRCS cost-share and easement programs. Experts throughout the state came and presented at this well attended workshop held at Penn Center.

### **SC DNR & Beaufort Soil & Water Conservation District**

The Beaufort SWCD continues its strong partnership with SC Department of Natural Resources to stay connected with the state activities, education events, SWCD laws & procedures, and staff training. Local DNR staff provides education outreach to area students. DNR publications are available at our office or go to <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/>.



*Beaufort Soil & Water Conservation District partners with NRCS & SC Department of Natural Resources, and together we are members of SCACD, the SC Association of Conservation Districts.*

Beaufort SWCD planned Earth Day 2013 at Port Royal Farmers Market with local environmental partners. The Farmers Market has proven to be a great venue for the community to shop for local grown foods while checking out the different environmental agencies in Beaufort County. Partners this past year included Beaufort County Solid Waste & Recycling, KBCB, FSA, NRCS, Sea Grant, Clemson Extension, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Coastal Discovery Museum, Parris Island Natural Resources, MCAS Natural Resources, BJWSA, Lowcountry Estuarium, and Fripp & Hunting Island Sea Turtles.

Other important festivals that the District attended were Kid Fest, Soft Shell Crab Festival, Festival of the Sea, Bluffton May River Sweep/Earth Day with Experience Green, and Coastal Carolina Clean Water Festival by HH Prep.

## Community Outreach



Debby Way plays a marine litter game with kids at Earth Day called "How Long does it take to decompose". Below, Denise Parsick shows Whale Branch Middle Students the ACE Basin Map. Below right, Claude McLeod, helps kids in the Ag Simulator at Kid Fest.



Beaufort Conservation District also works on several community committees such as KBCB (Keep Beaufort County Beautiful), the advisory board for the ACE Basin NERR Living Shoreline Project, Friends of Hunting Island, and the Kid Fest Advisory Committee. The District also provides support to schools for special programs events, Scouting Organizations & events. Staff regularly attend or view Beaufort County Stormwater Board meetings, and stay informed about issues pertaining to water quality.



Join other Beaufort County volunteers & contact us about being a CoCoRaHS Rain Gauge reporter! Just a few minutes a day.



### Clean Marine Debris Clean-up

Beaufort Conservation District, partnering with Beaufort County Public Works and Sea Grant Consortium, applied for grants for Marine Debris removal. The District received \$4,000 from Boat US Foundation and other funds went to Sea Grant Consortium. Together, the partners with the help of many volunteers, cleaned up over 30 tons of marine debris to help clean up our local waterways.



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. Mail donations to

Clemson University Foundation, P.O. Box 1889, Clemson, SC 29633  
On check include Reference # B0539 McCracken Scholarship Fund



I am a senior at Clemson University majoring in Animal and Veterinary Sciences with a Pre- Veterinary Medicine concentration. I am Vice-President of the Clemson University Poultry Science club while also being involved with the CU Dairy Science Club, CAFLS (College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences) Peer Mentor and am a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority. This summer I interned with Tyson Foods in Monroe, NC and learned all about the poultry industry, from the chicks being placed at the farms to them being processed and ending up at your local grocery store. I am a devoted equestrian and have been riding and showing horses since I was five. I love working with animals. This fall I am applying to vet school and will hopefully be practicing in the low country area in a few years.

**Kaitlyn Neumann, Bluffton, SC- McCracken Scholarship recipient.**

*Community partnerships are paramount to presenting a strong program of on the ground conservation education to the citizens of Beaufort County.*





Students got to observe & touch a baby alligator.

*Observe, Explore, Experiment,  
Create, & Discover at Eco Camp*

## ECO CAMP XXIV BACKYARD HABITATS

July 2013

*Look for information coming out on our  
25th Eco Camp this spring, 2014.*



Students learned about bee keeping & processing honey. The best part was tasting the honey!



Pam Floyd teaches campers about bird watching.



Students examined mosquitoes under the microscope.



Students dissecting Owl Pellets work on identifying the bones of the owls' prey.



Cool snakes from Lowcountry Institute.



To learn the different ways birds hunt, this "bird" caught a snake (rubber) to eat.

Beaufort Conservation District continues to deliver excellent environmental science programs to area children and adults. Over 8500 children & adults came to 323 programs and festival outreach. The district offers over 20 environmental science programs as well as leading Project Wet and Wild activities. A strong emphasis is placed on water quality programs, which include the Enviroscape Model, Groundwater Model, and the ever popular Soil Tunnel. A variety of other science programs and activities can be seen at our website at <http://www.beaufortconservationdistrict.org/>.

Beaufort Conservation District works with the Beaufort County Science Fair Judging committee to help provide judges to as many school science fairs as we can. We provided judges 11 times in FY 2013. The District also partners with the Farm Bureau Women's Committee to provide a safety day each summer to the children of migrant farmers working in the county. Our favorite presentation is Eco Camp held every summer for one week. See 2013's camp pictures above.



ACE Basin Alive! is a program designed by the Conservation District to teach upper elementary and middle school students about the importance of the ACE Basin. This program was funded through a youth education grant from Lowcountry R C & D. (Resource Conservation & Development). Above, students examine baby horse crab molts. Other topics included alligators, snakes, SC Furs, Sea Turtles, Wetlands, & marine litter. Presenters came from Friends of Hunting Island, Parris Island Natural Resources, Clemson Extension, and SC DNR. All students & teachers received an **ACE's Activity Book** developed by SC DNR NERR.



Exploring "underground" in the Soil Tunnel.



**2013 Progressive Agriculture Safety Day**

*Mission: Help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment by promoting wise land use practices, environmental education and technical assistance.*

## Affiliate Member Application

Supporting — \$35.00      Sustaining—\$50.00      Patron —\$100.00      Associate—\$100 +

Circle Level of support      Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks Payable to: “Beaufort Conservation District”

Mail to: PO Box 70 Port Royal, SC 29935

Call : 843-522-8100 Fax 843-522-0585 or Email: [bswcd@islc.net](mailto:bswcd@islc.net) or [shelby.berry@sc.nacdnet.net](mailto:shelby.berry@sc.nacdnet.net)

[www.beaufortconservationdistrict.org](http://www.beaufortconservationdistrict.org)

Name & or Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your support!

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!

### Affiliate Members

Bay View Farms	Beaufort County School District	Clemson Extension
Holly Hall Plantation	McLeod & Sons, Inc.	Dr. & Mrs. Tom Ogle
Mr. & Mrs. William Murphy	Ulmer Brothers, Inc.	

*Sign up Today!*

**Come see us! Office Hours: 8:00 am to Noon or call for an afternoon appointment.**

***Conservation Partnership — working for you!!! Please Join Today!***



Beaufort Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
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Port Royal, SC 29935