

District Board Meetings

The Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District Board meets at 4:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month except December at the USDA Service Center conference room, 123 Park Road, Lexington. The public is cordially invited to attend.

Phone: (803) 359-3165 ext 3

Website: www.lexswcd.org

Mission Statement: To promote the wise use and care of natural resources for the benefit of the citizens of Lexington county.

The Functions of the Conservation District: To take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local user for conservation of soil, water, and related resources.

FISH PONDS

Fish ponds are starting to wake up after the winter months. Aquatic plants are showing new growth already and the pond water temperatures are moving up into the 60's. You do not have to eradicate all aquatic plants. Control aquatic plants just to the point that they do not interfere with your use of the pond. Some plants however are quite aggressive. So just be observant of what is going on in your pond and don't wait until the problem gets real bad before trying to bring them back under control.



Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District News and Views

April 2011

Volume 14 Issue II

Kathy Hensley, Chair "A WORD"



At our February meeting, the District Commissioners elected me as Chair of the Lexington Conservation District. I appreciate this opportunity to lead the District and will strive to meet our challenging mission of providing the citizens of Lexington County with advice and assistance for the wise use of our natural resources. In this newsletter, you will read about several of our education programs. In partnership with the US Department of Agriculture, the SC Department of Natural Resources, and the Lexington County Council, we make available to farmers, homeowners, businesses, and schools in Lexington County some of the best expertise to be found in the state on issues related to soil and water. Our staff welcomes your calls for assistance.

Let me take this opportunity to thank each of our affiliate members. Your generosity is critical to the success of our programs. I am proud of the programs you help us to accomplish. Our education programs that involve the schools and students and the workshops for citizens are of special significance. We could not do it without your assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact our staff or my fellow Commissioners, Larry Nates, Dwight Davis, Fred Taylor, and Brent Weaver along with our Associate Commissioners Wayne Grooms and Hugh Caldwell and Commissioner Emeritus Raymond Caughman.

Kathy Hensley
Chair

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

The Soil and Water Conservation District has partnered with the SC Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Stormwater Division of Lexington County to install two Wetland Graphic signs at two DNR Heritage Preserve locations in Lexington County.

Brett Moule and Brian Long, DNR biologists, and Wade Hall, Engineering Associate with the Stormwater Division, Conservation District Associate Commissioners Wayne Grooms and Hugh Caldwell, along with Conservation District staff Tina Blum and Bill Melven recently erected the educational signs at the trail heads of Shealy's Pond and Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve. Shealy's Pond is located on Boiling Springs Road. Congaree Creek Preserve is located at the end of Old State Road South of Cayce.



Congaree
Creek Heritage
Preserve

Left to Right:
Bill Melven,
Wade Hall,
Brian Long,
and
Hugh Caldwell

Two other Wetland Graphic signs have been erected in the County. One is at the Hendrix Street Recreation area and Walking Trail. The other is at the Saluda Shoals Park on the Irmo side of the Congaree River on Bush River Road. All of these places are excellent outdoor education outings for the family.

Shealy's Pond

Left to Right:
Brett Moule, Bill
Melven, Wade Hall,
Hugh Caldwell, and
Wayne Grooms



All federal, state and local programs and services provided through the Lexington Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.

Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District
News and Views



123 Park Road
Lexington, SC 29072

Lexington Soil & Water Conservation District

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Biologically Speaking

by Bill Melven

Beavers and Wild Hogs were the focus of a management workshop recently. We had speakers from Clemson University, SC Department of Natural Resources and USDA – Wildlife Resources. Approximately 35-40 attended the presentations and watched demonstration about how to set traps for these two nuisance wildlife species. We had individuals attend our workshop from twelve counties.



If you own a pond you should inspect the pond dam especially for sign of beaver activity. If one builds living quarters in the dam and there

are large trees especially on top and on the back side of the dam the potential for problems is greatly increased. Decaying tree roots and fluctuating water levels in the pond could cause serious and economic problems.

Wild hogs have increased to now being in every county in South Carolina. Population numbers vary greatly. Bill Blackston, retired Clemson Extension Service has placed the



Power Point presentations on his web site. If you attended the workshop or if you missed the workshop, and want to see what the speakers said, go to www.clemson.edu/carolinaclear/lcsc. You may want to save, in your computer file, what you see for future reference or to share with others.

We will be scheduling another workshop soon that discusses the management of the coyote so watch for that date.

Commissioners

Kathy Hensley, Chair
Dwight Davis, Vice-Chair
Brent Weaver, Treasurer
Larry Nates
Fred Taylor

Associate Commissioners

Hugh Caldwell
Wayne Grooms

Commissioners Emeritus

Claude Barden
Raymond Caughman
Venning Morrison

Chaplain

Reverend Jerald Sanders

District Staff

Bill Melven, District Manager
Tina Blum, Administrative Assistant

USDA - NRCS Staff

Rafael Mendez, District Conservationist
Tommy Stone, Conservation Technician

USDA - OCIO - ITS Staff

Randy Taylor, IT Specialist

SC DNR Conservation Districts

Marc Cribb, Program Manager

Beaver & Feral Hog Speakers



Left to right: James Edens - USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services; Dr. Greg Yarrow - Clemson University; Noel Myers - USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services; Charles Ruth - SC DNR Biologist; and Jay Butfiloski - SC DNR Biologist.

Septic System Maintenance

SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has literature about septic systems. They say that these systems can last a long time as long as they are properly maintained.

There are three important health reasons for maintaining your septic system. The first reason is the health of your pocketbook. Poor maintenance results in failed systems requiring repairs at a minimum and sometimes system replacement. Periodic inspection and pumping costs are minimum compared to the replacement costs.

The second reason is the health of your family and the environment. These are extremely important reasons. Sewage water contains disease-causing bacteria and viruses, among other things. We have observed failing septic drain fields that have surface water standing in the yards where children are playing.

What could possibly be causing system problems? The Lexington County DHEC staff determines if the soil can adequately handle the waste water generated at the home. This site review is the first step to determine if the water will “perk” into the ground. Waste water from the house should be primarily from toilets, bathtubs and kitchen sinks. Septic tanks have biological activity going on inside the tanks that help break down the solids in the waste water so that only water goes into the drain field. In rural areas, septic systems should not have garbage disposals contributing waste water to the system. There is just too much grease for the system. Another source of possible grease in a system might be the automatic dish washer too. TV advertisements suggest that you can put extremely greasy, dirty cooking pots and pans in the washer and they come out sparkling clean. We think this practice might cause drain fields to fail because they cannot handle the grease in the waste water.

The third reason is the health of our environment. Failed systems pollute water supplies and shellfish beds and recreational areas which all relate to our quality of life.

PUMPING YOUR SEPTIC TANK IS PROBABLY THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOUR SYSTEM. USE A LICENSED SEPTIC TANK CONTRACTOR.

