

Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District News and Views

November 2010

Volume 13 Issue III

Environmental Competition Spawning New Interest



The **SC Envirothon** is making preparations for the 2011 competition to be held next spring. The high school environmental competition that promotes both academic and hands-on learning covers the areas of aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, oral presentation, and, for 2011, ***Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries***.

Did you know that estuaries are the spawning ground for the vast majority of aquatic life? Did you know that they filter water as it exits municipal areas both inland and on the coast? Did you know that they protect our residential areas from flooding, hurricanes, high tides and other natural disturbances? There is a lot to know and appreciate about estuaries, and the **SC Envirothon** is a great place to go to learn all about them!

As if that isn't incentive enough, do you like to travel? Do any of your students have a passport? Do you speak French? One talented team of students will win a trip to New Brunswick, Canada to compete with teams from about 50 other states and Canadian Provinces.

If you are interested in forming a team of between 3 and 5 students to ***Accept the Natural Challenge of the Envirothon***, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District for more information on how to get started. Teachers can register for a free, one-day training session which will be held in February by filling out the registration form on page 3 or by stopping by our Lexington office. You won't have to do it alone!

ALIVIA GUNTER LEAVES THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STAFF



The Lexington SWCD Board hired Alivia Gunter in June of 2003 after two part time employees left or retired. Alivia worked well under pressure, came qualified with her computer and program skills, was courteous and respectful to all she encountered, and worked hard to please everyone.

Over the years she became a part of our conservation family, honed and sharpened existing skills, and even learned new programs to meet the district's needs (namely the web page design program Front Page).

In September, Alivia accepted a position with Lexington County at the Stormwater Division. In these short months the district and partnership staff has realized just how much she did to make our programs and office run smoothly. We wish her well at her new location!

Affiliate Members We Thank You

Our Affiliate Members are truly great. They are a dedicated group of individuals and businesses that believe in what the Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District does related to the conservation of our natural resources. We are proud to partner with this group. So far this year we have over 70 contributing members. You are the ones that make our scholarships, soil stewardship materials and recognition awards, our financial support to the Envirothon high school teams, student workshops, and teacher recognitions possible.

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.

Biologically Speaking

by Bill Melven

“Green Clean”

The aquatic plant management season is gone for this year unless you do it mechanically. Chemical control does not work well when the temperatures start dropping and the plants are not growing very fast.

Several fish “kills” occurred this past summer. The problems were mainly associated with dense algal blooms dying off and reducing the oxygen levels in the pond water. Another algae problem showed up too in the form of dense growths of the Blue-green algae. These growths are more related to organic pollution coming from warm blooded animals in the runoff waters to the pond. The Blue-green algae’s have a bad smell and can release toxic substances in the water. These toxins affect warm blooded animals by causing intestinal problems. They can affect humans too.

BLUE
GREEN
ALGAE
→



There are products on the market however that do work specifically on the Blue-green algae and not on the other beneficial algae. One product on the market is called “Green Clean”. It is a product that has hydrogen peroxide in it. When it is removing the blue-green algae as it moves down through the water column it is giving off oxygen. This makes it a good product by not causing mortality to the good algae that is creating oxygen. A fish kill is usually averted.

SWAPA

Conservation Education is one of the Conservation District’s main objectives. **Joy Sullivan** continues to help educate school children about our natural resources. She uses the acronym SWAPA (**S**-soil, **W**- water, **A**- animals, **P**-plants, **A**-air) to get them involved in her classroom presentations. She really has a way with those children.

Lexington County Receives Grant to Improve Water in the Hollow Creek Watershed

Lexington County was awarded a grant from the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) to reduce bacteria levels in the Hollow Creek Watershed located near the Town of Batesburg-Leesville. The goal of the Hollow Creek Watershed Project is to work with local land owners on voluntary projects, which reduce bacteria from agricultural activities, failing septic systems and wildlife.

Hollow Creek is a recreational resource for Lexington County, as citizens enjoy fishing and picnicking along the banks of the creek and its tributaries. The watershed feeds directly into Lake Murray, which is directly impacted by the health of the creek. Hollow Creek is impaired due to high levels of fecal coli form bacteria. Fecal coli forms are an indicator of human and animal waste.

The project includes promotion of best management practices that help reduce bacteria levels and provides monetary assistance to farmers interested in the project. The project will provide up to 60% cost share assistance to livestock farmers to develop conservation plans and education on ways to direct animals away from waterways. Some conservation practices that qualify for cost share on grazing lands are fences, pipelines, water troughs and wells. Practices that could qualify for cropland are filter strips, grass waterways and waste storage facilities among others.

Project partners include the Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Hollow Creek Watershed Conservation District, Lake Murray Association and Saluda County.

Interested applicants can visit Lexington NRCS Field Office at 123 Park Rd Lexington SC 29072 or contact Rafael O Mendez, District Conservationist at (803) 359-3165 ext 3.



**2011 Coaches' Training
Registration Form**



***Accept the Natural
Challenge***

***Saturday
February 12th, 2011
Sandhill Center,
Columbia***

**Coaches' Training
Registration Form**

Complete this form and mail to
Joy Sullivan, Envirothon Coordinator
123 Park Road
Lexington, South Carolina 29072
by January 17, 2011.

Name _____

School Name & Address _____

School Tel # _____

Home or Cell# _____

Email _____

T-Shirt Size - _____

Lunch will be provided for participants.
Please indicate a meal preference:

Regular

Vegetarian



Normally the Conservation District would be posting an article about local students that attended the Carolina Coastal Adventure weekend camp. That camp is sponsored by the Berkeley Soil and Water Conservation District for students in grades nine and ten from across the state, and it is held on Lake Moultrie. The Lexington Conservation District sponsors local students to attend this camp to learn more about natural resource conservation while canoeing, examining marine creatures on the DNR Discovery Vessel, and descending through the lake locks. For 2010, this camp was not offered due

to staff reductions and reorganizations. The Berkeley District does plan to offer the program in 2011, so keep a look-out for the information in the July 2011 newsletter.

Lexington SWCD New Hire



The Lexington SWCD Board has hired **Christine Blum** as their new Administrative Assistant. She has recently moved back to South Carolina with her husband Norman.

Christine has worked as an Administrative Office Manager for a Church, a teller and a Visual Merchandising Manager for both Belk and Dillard's department stores.

Christine and Norman moved to Lexington in February. Glad to be near family. They have six children and seven loving grandchildren. Norman is retired and they both enjoy fishing and traveling.

Commissioners

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

Associate Commissioners

Raymond Caughman
Hugh Caldwell
Wayne Grooms

Chaplain

Vacant

District Staff

Bill Melven, Dist. Mgr.
Christine Blum,
Admin. Asst.

USDA - NRCS Staff

Rafael Mendez,
District Conservationist
Tommy Stone,
Conservation Technician

USDA - OCIO - ITS Staff

Randy Taylor, IT Specialist

DNR-LW&CD Staff

Joy Sullivan,
Program Coordinator

Phone:

(803) 359-3165 ext. 3

Website:

<http://www.lexswcd.org>

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving Day is almost here. Be thankful for what we have in this country.

THANK A FARMER!

If we don't have farms, we won't have food. Something to think about, isn't it? Share with others that are not as fortunate as we are.



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.

For information call 359-3165 ext. 3.

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123 Park Road

Lexington, SC 29072

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