

Lexington Soil & Water Conservation District

News & Views

DATE: SEPTEMBER 2022



Our Mission

To promote the wise use and care of natural resources for the benefit of the citizens of Lexington County.

LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETING

On July 26 Melanie Shull, of Aiken SWCD, and Robyn Amie, of NRCS, directed LSWCD's Local Work Group to discuss the resource concerns faced in Lexington County. Light refreshments were served during the two-hour meeting to keep the participants fueled as they outlined the most pressing concerns facing landowners and producers in Lexington County.

It wasn't long before both white boards were filled to the brim with concerns. NRCS separates resource concerns in to four main groups pasture, cropland, forest and animal waste/poultry. Our Local Work Group (LWG) identified 6 – 8 issues for each category then worked to narrow down the top three priorities in each category. Some issues, such as erosion and water quality, have caused concerns in more than one category.



PASTURE

1. Management
2. Fencing
3. Vegetation health

CROPLAND

1. Soil Health
2. Erosion
3. Water quality/quantity/Irrigation efficiency

FOREST

1. Plant Productivity
2. Forest Health
3. Land conversion

ANIMAL WASTE/POULTRY

1. Waste collection and containment
2. Water Quality
3. Erosion

While our LWG worked diligently to outline the problems NRCS has the large task of trying to address them and thankfully they offer many programs to help residents of Lexington County such as:

- EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) – an incentive program designed to encourage people to implement good conservation practices like stacking sheds and cover crops.
- CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) – 5-year contract to encourage stewardship. This program enhances conservation practices that are put in place through EQIP.
- CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) – 10 to 15-year contract through FSA that assists agricultural producers in preventing environmentally sensitive agricultural land from being farmed or railed.
- ACEP (Conservation Easement Program) – has 2 components: agricultural land easements and wetland reserve easements.

Meetings, Meetings & More Meetings

HOLLOW CREEK WATERSHED PUBLIC HEARING

Hollow Creek Watershed budget for FY 2023 - FY2027 has been adopted.

BOARD MEETING

The Board of Directors met August 4 and they discussed: fence line maintenance, invasive Vasey grass on the dam structure, election of 2 Directors in the November election and the possible change in hazard classification by DHEC.

DHEC DAM SAFETY MEETING

The Hollow Creek Watershed met with DHEC to discuss changing the Dam's hazard rating. After much discussion the Board accepted DHEC assessment and made plans going forward.

NRCS MEETING



On July 28th, SCACD took the initiative to work with Mr. Tillman, the Southeast Regional Conservationist for NRCS, on coordinating four meetings to hear from landowners and conservation districts who have experienced challenges as it relates to landowner service issues.

The meetings had representation from SCACD, Conservation Districts, landowners, federal congressional and senate staff, and other conservation partners. Through these stops, Mr. Tillman listened and gathered the concerns from all parties, in which he was very receptive. He voiced his support to address the concerns and dialogue has begun with SCACD on plans for improvement.

Excerpt from a letter by Jeff Wilson, SCACD President

EXTRA EXTRA!!

PART TIME EDUCATION PROGRAM ASSISTANT

As our district continues to grow it is our responsibility to educate future generations on responsible ways to conserve and enhance Lexington County's natural resources. To this end, we have been actively searching for a qualified individual to fill our new position. In June, County Administration approved the position and in July the position was added to the Lexington County Jobs page. We had our first interview in August and we are hoping to have our newest member join us in September.



AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

It's that time again, when we commit to our programs for the new fiscal year. We have dedicated ourselves to promoting the wise use and care of the natural resources in Lexington County and we hope you will join us in accomplishing our mission. Our state has an abundance of natural resources and by becoming an Affiliate Member of the Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District you can be a part of the growing list of supporters that help us preserve them.

As an Affiliate Member, your financial contribution helps to provide funding for our variety of programs such as:

- Helping county students attend conservation workshops and camps.
- Providing monetary support for our state Envirothon.
- Providing scholarships for students pursuing environmental related majors.
- Planting trees for Arbor Day.
- Sponsoring photography and poster contest that highlight environmental topics.



In an effort to improve the environmental growth and stability of Lexington County in a responsible manner, we work with community leaders and schools to educate citizens on water quality and quantity issues, erosion control and sedimentation issues. Our District has organized workshops on tree care, rain barrels, beaver/wild hog/coyote management, and the importance of bees and pollination. With your support we hope to provide more classroom and community programs, future summer activities and workshops.

To our recurring affiliate members, we truly appreciate all of your support throughout the years. Your contributions have helped us impact our community in positive ways. We hope that with your continued support and that of new affiliate members we can promote more programs.



If you are concerned about what is happening to our environment and would like to help us mitigate the impact we have on our environment, please visit our website <https://www.lexswcd.org> to print out an affiliate membership form and mail it to 123 Park Rd, Lexington SC 29072.

Your contribution is tax-deductible, and memberships of more than \$50 will receive two admissions to the 2023 Annual Recognition Banquet.

Lexington Soil & Water Conservation District



123 Park Rd, Lexington, SC 29072 803-358-8682

BUT WAIT THERE'S MORE

NEW LOGO



Many thanks to our Administrative Assistant, Nick Walker, for working on our new logo. We're still getting things finalized but it is our hope that next year we will have a logo that represents our core values.

BEE RESCUE

Once again, our District Manager John Oxner had to stage a daring rescue of the observational hives at Heathwood Hall, Clinton Sease Farms and Dutch Fork Elementary.

Ok, maybe the situation wasn't *that* dire, but he did have to remove/provide maintenance on their observational hives. Although these hives are excellent educational tools, they require a lot of time and energy to maintain and they can cause a wide variety of problems for the bees themselves. Because of their small size any change in population or food supply can greatly upset the balance in an observational hive. Luckily for us (and the bees of course) John Oxner is diligent in making sure that our little buzzing buddies get the care that they need to thrive.

Looking Ahead

September 1 – Affiliate Drive Begins

Once again, we ask the residents of Lexington County to join us in our mission to promote wise use and care of our county's natural resources.

December 10 – Bradford Pear Bounty Tree Exchange

They may be pretty but they sure don't smell it and they are highly invasive. LSWCD is cooperating with Clemson Extension Service & Dominion Energy to replace these trees with native plants that will be more beneficial to our area.

District Board Meetings

The LSWCD Board meets at 4:30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Lexington County Auxiliary Administration Building.

The public is cordially invited to attend.

Please call (803) 358-8679

Commissioners

Larry Nates, Chair

Jamie Gunter, Vice-Chair

Barbara Padgett, Treasurer

Kathy Hensley

Hugh Caldwell

District Staff

John Oxner, *District Manager*

Nick Walker,

Administrative Assistant

Associate Commissioners

Bill Melvin

Peter Lauzon

Lanneau Siegling

Fred Taylor

USDA-NRCS

Robin Amie,

District Conservationist

Taylor Holmes,

Soil Conservationist

Chaplain

Pastor Mike Watson

SCDNR

Tyler Brown,

Program Manager



IN COOPERATION WITH

