

Conservation Comments



January
2017

Winter Edition

Alleghany Soil & Water Conservation District

“Essentially, all life depends upon the soil... There can be no life without soil and no soil without life; they have evolved together”

Charles E. Kellogg, USDA Yearbook of Agriculture, 1938

SWCD Supervisors Take Oath of Office

SWCD
Oath of Office

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NCASWCD
Annual Meeting



Bobby Evans and Alvin Dixon were recently sworn in as supervisors on the SWCD Board.

Bobby was re-elected and serves as Chairman of the SWCD board and Alvin was reappointed to the board.

Congratulations Bobby and Alvin!

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The NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts held its 73rd Annual Meeting January 8-10, 2017, in Charlotte. This meeting of conservation partners from across North Carolina provides an opportunity to come together and address the needs of the association while providing training opportunities for district supervisors, staff, and members of the conservation partnership. The theme for this year was “Catch the Vision” and was presided over by State Association President Ben Knox, Vice-Chairman SWC Commission and SWCD Supervisor from Rowan County.

Activities included a memorial service for those across the state who have passed in 2016; presentation by Jim Richardson, National Geographic Photographer; 2019 International Envirothon update; seven breakout training sessions were provided; Resource Committee Meetings were conducted; Commissioner Steve Troxler, NC Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services, gave the key note address, “Comments From The Top”, and provided an update on departmental priorities and legislative issues; featured speaker was Mike Brown, Executive Director, National Association of State Conservation Agencies; Length of Service, NCASWCD Outstanding Awards, Earth Team Awards and Conservation Farm Family awards were presented. 2016 President Ben Knox welcomed incoming NCASWCD President, Chris Hogan.

10th Annual Allegheny County Envirothon



Students from Allegheny County school system recently participated in the 10th annual county-wide Envirothon competition sponsored by the Allegheny Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). This program is a competitive event in which high school and middle school

teams of up to five members compete in a natural resources and ecology field day. The competition covered the following resource subjects: forestry, soils, aquatics, wildlife, and current environmental issues which included such topics as: "Can cover crops help farmers cut back on fertilizer?", "Best management Practices of Environmental Farming" and "Powering up renewable energy on public lands".

A total of 32 teams gathered at the Lions Club in Sparta to compete in the environmental education training: 4 teams from Allegheny High School, "Like A Moss", "Otter Chaos", "Do You Even Sift Bro?", and "Gator Done", team advisors Hannah Ward and Danny Jones; 3 teams from Blue Ridge Christian School, "Mind Benders", "Eureka" and "Environmental Warfare", team advisors Elizabeth Davis and Joseph Edwards; 7 teams from Glade Creek School, "The Specimens", "Soil Slayers", "Enviro Squad", "Water Warriors", "H₂O", "Environmental Attitude", and "Forestry Fighters", team advisors Hope McClure and Melissa Gibson; 8 teams from Piney Creek School, "Avada Kedavra", "The Envirothings", "Cub Scouts", "Pollution Police", "Scienteers", "Enviro Warriors", "The Hobo's?", and "The Rolling Stones", team advisor Becky Sanders; 10 teams from Sparta School, "overELMingly awesome", "pHenomenal", "Cod do better", "unbeLEAFable", "Eco Friendlies", "Treehuggers", "Envirobubbles", "FlowerPower", "Frogs", and "NaturePower", team advisors Jessica Holyfield and Chris Brady; the advisors rotated through each station with their students during the morning sessions.

At the Soils station, Everett Coates, Soil Scientist, taught the students how to use a soil survey to determine which soils were suitable for growing crops. In Forestry, Russell Choate, NC Forestry Service, taught the students to identify different species of trees. In Wildlife, Mike Edwards, Stone Mountain State Park, discussed what was needed to maintain healthy habitats. In Aquatics, Scott Robinson, New River State Park, taught students important facts about water quality and quantity. In Current Environmental Issues, Amy Lucas, Allegheny County Extension, discussed facts about how some farmers are trying to cut back on the coal and gas they use and make our food system more energy efficient, how to use Best Management Practices of Environmental Farming to protect our soil and reduce sediment and nutrient runoff, and the Bureau of Land Management currently has 23 pending wind energy development applications on over 275,000 acres of public land.

Awards were presented after testing in each category. The team receiving 1st place in the high school competition was "Otter Chaos" from Allegheny High School; team members, Sydni Smith, Katie Gibson, and Cameron Hawkins. 1st place in the middle school competition was presented to "The Envirothings" from Piney Creek School; team members Hanna DeBord, Mary-Beth Burgiss, Abbe Bourne, and Ally Hanson. Scores from the county Envirothon may determine which teams will be eligible to compete with teams from the twelve other counties in Area 2 at the McGee Educational Center in Wilkes County on March 30, 2017.

The local competition is an annual event which will serve as training for the regional and state competitions held in late March or early April each year.

1st Place Winners
High School & Middle School Competitions

(L to R)

**Katie
Gibson**

**Cameron
Hawkins**

**Sydni
Smith**



“The Envirothings”
Piney Creek

(L to R)

**Hanna
DeBord**

**Ally
Hanson**

**Mary-Beth
Burgiss**

**(Not Pictured)
Abbe
Bourne**



Thank You!



Sponsors



Volunteers

Whitney Greene
Jim Winfield
Jake Miller

Allegheny County Schools Presenters

(L to R)

Mike Edwards - Stone Mountain State Park
Scott Robinson - New River State Park
Amy Lucas - NC Cooperative Extension
Everett Coates - Soil Scientist
Russell Choate - NC Forest Service



Allegheny County Rural Community Safety Field Day

4th grade students from the Allegheny County School System participated in the Rural & Community Safety Field Day hosted by Allegheny Cooperative Extension October 13th at the Allegheny Fairgrounds. The event is designed to develop safe practice habits around the home, on the farm, and in rural communities and to educate youth on accident prevention.

Soil and Water Education Director, Janie Woodle provided presentations on water safety.

Fun and educational presentations were provided on the following topics:

- ◆ **Safety Smarts**—To increase awareness of potential hazards associated with animals and to increase safe practices around animals
- ◆ **Chemical Safety**-To increase knowledge of the potential hazards associated with chemicals and drugs
- ◆ **Gun Safety**-To increase safe and age appropriate gun handling and storage practices
- ◆ **Bicycle Safety**-To improve bike safety habits
- ◆ **Wildlife/Nature**-To reduce exposure to critter hazards in and around the home
- ◆ **Machinery/Equipment**-To reduce the number of injuries associated with machinery and outdoor equipment including farm tractors, power take offs and lawn tractors
- ◆ **Animal Safety**-To increase awareness of potential hazards associated with animals and to increase safe practices
- ◆ **Fire Safety**-To reduce the number of fire related injuries through increased knowledge of fire prevention, detection and escape
- ◆ **Water Safety**-To increase knowledge of pond and river safety and procedures for water related emergencies
- ◆ **Team Building**-To encourage the ability to work together with others, to promote self development, positive communication and leadership skills



Water Safety Station





Our Mission Is...

...to promote the conservation of natural resources in Alleghany County through education, information, technical assistance, and available economic incentives.

The Alleghany Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a governmental subdivision of the State of North Carolina found under GS-139, charged with the responsibility of promoting soil and water conservation and establishing conservation programs in the District. The District partners with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to carry out these responsibilities. As a local organization we work with citizens, agencies, and land owners to plan and direct programs for the conservation and development of our natural resources. We also work closely with other state, federal, and local agencies, such as NCDA&CS, Resource Conservation and Development, US Army Corp of Engineers, NC Forest Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, NC Cooperative Extension, to provide effective natural resource management and environmental education.

Alleghany District Board of Supervisors

Bobby Evans / Chair

Chris Huysman / Vice-Chair

Terry Hall / Secretary - Treasurer

Alvin Dixon / Member

Bill Osborne / Member

District Staff

Linda Hash, Director/Conservationist

Janie Woodle, Admin. Assist./Ed. Director

NRCS Staff

David Tucker, District Conservationist



Yours for Life

NCDA&CS

Division of Soil & Water Conservation

Rob Baldwin, Western Regional Coordinator

Please contact our office for more information about any of our programs

ALLEGHANY SWCD

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