



# Conservation Comments



**2015  
Spring Edition**

## Alleghany Soil & Water Conservation District

*"In every glass of water we drink, some of the water has already passed through fishes, trees, bacteria, worms in the soil, and many other organisms, including people...Living systems cleanse water and make it fit, among other things, for human consumption"*  
~ Elliot A. Norse, in R.J. Hoage, ed., *Animal Extinctions*, 1985

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### ***"Promises for Tomorrow's Agricultural Future"*** **Area 2 Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts Spring Meeting**

The Area 2 Spring Meeting was held March 12, 2015, at the Midway Baptist Church in West Jefferson; SWCD Supervisors Bobby Evans, Terry Hall, Alvin Dixon and staff Linda Hash and Janie Woodle, attended the meeting.

Sam Yearick, Ashe County Manager, extended a warm welcome to Area 2; Mike Fenley, Field Representative for U. S. Senator Richard Burr's Office, spoke during the Business Session; Tracy Taylor provided a presentation on the Upper Mountain Research Station; reports were provided by the Area Treasurer, District Issues Committee, NCCDEA, NW Envirothon Committee, NC Foundation, NRCS, NACD, Association President Manly West and Association Executive Director, Dick Fowler.

Area 2 Awards and Area 2 Contest results were presented by Area 2 Chair, John Walters, and James Booth, Area Vice-Chair.

### **Resource Conservation Workshop**

Garrett Wishon is among a select group of North Carolina high school students who will attend the Resource Conservation Workshop at NC State University June 21-26.

Garrett was chosen based on his academic achievements and interest in pursuing a career in natural resource management or a related field. The Resource Conservation Workshop is provided by North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Educational programs.

## “Wetlands are Wonderful” Soil & Water Conservation Contest Winners

The Allegheny Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) recently sponsored educational contests for students in Allegheny; environmental educational programs and resource materials were provided as requested in the 5th - 9th grades of each school. The 5th graders competed in a poster contest, 6th graders in an essay contest, 7th and 8th graders competed in public speech contests and 9th graders competed in the computer designed poster contest. The school winners received certificates and cash awards from Allegheny SWCD.

The first place poster, essay and speech winners from each school competed in a county-wide competition March 9th. Results of the county competitions are:

5th Grade Poster winners: 1st place-Hannah Christensen, Sparta School; 2nd place-Kendra Hunt, Piney Creek School; 3rd place-Lauren Hettleman, Blue Ridge Christian School; 4th place-Diana Montes, Glade Creek School

6th Grade Essay winners: 1st place-Ally Hanson, Piney Creek School; 2nd place-Chloe Pruitt, Sparta School; 3rd place-Jeremy Walton, BRC School; 4th place-Jaycee Henderson, Glade Creek School

7th Grade Speech winners: 1st place-, Hope Gambill, Piney Creek School; 2nd place-Sydni Smith, Glade Creek School; 3rd place-Zach Hash, Piney Creek School

8th Grade Speech winners: 1st place-Lucy LeMasters, Piney Creek School; 2nd place-Will Vestal Sparta School; 3rd place-Nyah Allen, Glade Creek School

9th Grade Computer Designed Poster winners, Allegheny High School: 1st place-Karla Jones, 2nd place-Bianca Carranza, 3rd place-Karly Stoker

The first place competitor in each event competed in a 13 county Area competition in Caldwell County March 19th. Allegheny's students placed as follows in the Area Contests:

Hannah Christensen, Sparta School, won Honorable Mention and received a certificate in the 5th grade Poster Competition

Ally Hanson, Piney Creek School, won 3rd place in the 6th grade Essay Competition and received \$25 and a medallion

Lucy LeMasters, Piney Creek School, won 1st place in 8th grade Speech and received \$75 and a medallion

Karla Jones, Allegheny High School, won 1st place and received \$75 and a medallion

**Lucy LeMasters won 1st place in the  
State Speech Contest in Raleigh on May 8th**

**Karla Jones won 2nd place in the State Computer  
Designed Poster Contest**

### Awards Banquet

An awards banquet was held May 5th at the Sparta VFW to recognize all those who competed in the county competition



## SWCD Contest Winners — School Level



### Alleghany High School

9<sup>th</sup> Computer Designed Poster

(Pictured L to R)

**Karla Jones**

**Bianca Carranza**

**Karly Stoker**



### Blue Ridge Christian School

5<sup>th</sup> Poster - 6<sup>th</sup> Essay  
(Pictured L to R)

(Front Row)

**Lauren Hettleman ~ Autumn Hirschy**

**Cadin Bottomley**

(Second row)

**Jeremy Walton ~ Dahntay Choate**

**Ethan Snider**



### Glade Creek School

5<sup>th</sup> Poster - 6<sup>th</sup> Essay ~ 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Speech  
(Pictured L to R)

(Front Row)

**Diana Montes~Alyssa Hardin  
Kasden Hoffman**

**Jaycee Henderson~Taylor Allen  
Marshall Rea**

(Second row)

**Sydni Smith~Macy Davis~Abigail Keesling**

**Nyah Allen~Lauren Carpenter**

(Not pictured - Cortlyn Blythe)



# Continued from page 3 .... SWCD Contest Winners—School Level



6th Essay  
Ally Hanson



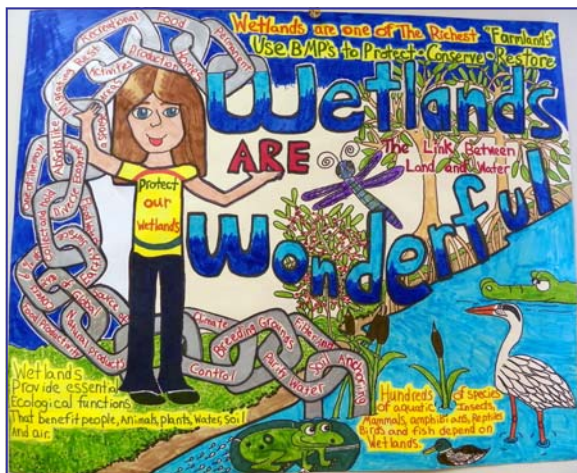
5<sup>th</sup> Poster-6th Essay-7th & 8th Speech  
**Piney Creek School**  
 (Pictured L to R)  
 (Front row)  
**Kendra Hunt ~Danielle Taylor~Tammy Edwards~Hannah Debord~Trinity Billings**  
 (Second row)  
**Tiffany Vargas~Alex Thomas~Hope Gambill~Lucy LeMasters~Haley Edwards**  
**Clay Busic~Karley Phipps**

5<sup>th</sup> Poster-6th Essay-7th & 8th Speech  
**Sparta School**  
 (Pictured L to R)  
 (Front row)  
**Principal Aaron Joplin**  
**Hannah Christensen~Felicity Sprague~Karis Howell~Chloe Pruitt~Jerry Saddler~Ashlin Williams**  
 (Second row)  
**Zach Hash~Rylie LaRue~Cole Murphy~Will Vestal~Cameron Hawkins~Katelyn Davis**



## Soil and Water Conservation

### 5th Grade Poster - 6th Grade Essay - 9th Grade Computer Designed Poster



Ally Hanson—1st Place  
6th Grade Essay  
Piney Creek School

#### ***Wetlands are Wonderful***

Wetlands are a very unique body of water. Take it from a person that should know! I am a Water Conservation Officer. I manage and monitor water to protect and help improve the environment where groundwater is critical; such as wetland habitats.

There are several characteristics that make the wetlands unique and interesting. Not only are they fascinating, they are also helpful in many ways. Wetlands give a home to a wide variety animals like catfish, herons, an assortment of other birds, and also aquatic species. They are home to plants like grasses and hardwood trees.

Wetlands are a huge help when an area has a flood because they hold most of the water before it hits a town or city. Wetlands can be a mix of saltwater and freshwater like an estuary. They also filter out toxins and sediment in the water. Some people may even refer to them as sponges. They call them that because they soak in and hold water and nutrients. Wetlands are very important to us, even though to some people, they may seem useless. I once thought the same before I became a specialist in water conservation.

Hannah Christensen—1st Place  
5th Grade Poster  
Sparta School

Some people and animals do not understand how essential they truly are which is why we need to help them. Many wetlands are turning into construction sites or stomping grounds for livestock. This is unacceptable and needs to come to a stop. My Environmental Agency and many other places have discovered ways to help.

My job is also in charge of BMP's. BMP stands for Best Management Practices. They are ways to help wetlands survive. Here are some of the very many BMP's that we use. Filter Strips are strips of grass planted in fields to hold the soil in place and to keep it from washing into the wetlands. Another really good BMP is Livestock Exclusion. Livestock Exclusion is when people put fencing around water, like the wetlands, to keep their livestock out of the water. BMP's are very useful and are a great help to wetlands.

I hope we take the right precautions and help save the Wetlands. They are very important to us and we need to protect and conserve them. I think it is clear to say, Wetlands are Wonderful!

Karla Jones—1st Place  
9th Grade Computer Designed Poster  
Alleghany High School





**Area 2 Contest Night - March 19, 2015 - Caldwell County**



**Lucy LeMasters—Piney Creek School**  
**1st Place—Area Competition**  
**1st Place State Contest**  
**8th Grade Speech**  
 Master of Ceremonies ~ Ryan Huffman



**Karla Jones—Alleghany High School**  
**1st Place—Area Competition**  
**2nd Place State Contest**  
**9th Grade Computer Designed Poster**  
 Master of Ceremonies ~ Ryan Huffman

*Not Pictured*

**Hannah Christensen—Sparta School ~ Honorable Mention—5th Grade Poster**  
**Ally Hanson—Piney Creek School ~ 3rd Place-6th Grade Essay**

**Local Students Advance to State Competition**

Lucy LeMasters, an eighth grade student from Piney Creek Elementary School, won first place in the soil and water conservation State Level Public Speaking Contest on May 8<sup>th</sup> in Raleigh. Lucy was one of six 8<sup>th</sup> grade contestants delivering a speech on “Wetlands are Wonderful” to four judges and an audience of more than sixty.

Karla Jones, a ninth grade student from Alleghany High School, took second place in the soil and water conservation State Level Computer Designed Poster Contest.

Students competing at this level have advanced through three and sometimes four tiers of competition to represent their area against winners from across North Carolina.

First and second place winners are awarded \$200 and \$100, respectively, for their hard-work and dedication in reaching this level of competition.

Speeches must be from four to six minutes in length and demonstrate comprehensive subject knowledge, originality and the skillful use of facts.



**Karla Jones**



**Lucy LeMasters**  
 Dick Fowler  
 Executive Director NCASWCD

Contestants are also judged on appropriate body language, voice, diction and style.

Computer Designed Posters must display content relevant to the nature of soil and water conservation and demonstrate knowledge of agricultural practices known as “Best Management Practices (BMPs) that reduce or prevent pollution of surface and groundwater.

The Speech and Computer Designed Poster contests are one of many educational opportunities offered throughout the year by the Alleghany Soil and Water Conservation District.

## Allegheny teams compete in NW Envirothon

The Northwest Envirothon Competition, sponsored by the Area 2 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, was held Thursday, March 26, 2015, at the McGee Center in Wilkes County. This program is a competitive event in which high school and middle school teams compete in a natural resources and ecology field day. The competition covered the following resource subjects: forestry, soils, aquatics, wildlife, and current environmental issues.

A total of 62 teams, representing 9 of the 13 counties in Area 2, participated in this year's event. Allegheny had 16 teams registered for the event: 3 teams from Allegheny High School: "Environmentalists", "Spartan Enviro", and "Earth Warriors", team advisor, Whitney Greene; 2 teams from the Blue Ridge Christian School: "Enviro-army" and "S.A.S. (Serious About Science)", team advisor Janna Murphy; 6 teams from Glade Creek School: "Dangerous Deer", "Environmental Awesomeness", "Flower Assassins", "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles", "NC/Duke", and "Power Rangers", team advisors Hope McClure and Melissa Gibson; 3 teams from Piney Creek School: "Dream Team", "PVS (Player vs. Science)", and "Science Warriors", team advisor Becky Sanders; 2 teams from Sparta School: "C.S.I. (Creative Students Investigating)" and "The Legends", team advisor Elaine Reales.

The seven highest scoring teams in middle school and high school advance to the state competition. In the middle school competition, the "Science Warriors" from Piney Creek took 7<sup>th</sup> place and competed in the State Envirothon April 24-25 in Burlington at Cedarrock Park.

State competition is the highest level of competition for middle school teams; high school teams, however, compete for a chance to participate in the North American Envirothon which includes teams from all over the U.S. and Canada.

### 7th Place - "Science Warriors" Piney Creek L-R

Lily Gardner, Mary-Beth Burgiss, Ely Young, Mastin Sanders  
(Not pictured - Hannah Debord)



For more information please visit: [www.ncenvirothon.org](http://www.ncenvirothon.org)



### 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**

### SWCD Staff

**Linda Hash/Director/Conservationist**

**Janie Woodle/Adm. Asst/Tech/Edu. Coord.**

### NRCS Staff

**David Tucker/District Conservationist**



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

### ALLEGHANY SWCD

P O Box 127 (90 S. Main St., Room 200)

Sparta, NC 28675

Visit us on the web at : [Alleghany Soil & Water Conservation District](http://Alleghany Soil & Water Conservation District)

Phone: 336-372-4645 or 336-372-7777

Email: [Linda.hash@nc.nacdnet.net](mailto:Linda.hash@nc.nacdnet.net) or Janie Woodle [allegswcd@skybest.com](mailto:allegswcd@skybest.com)

Office Hours: 8 am-5 pm, Monday-Friday