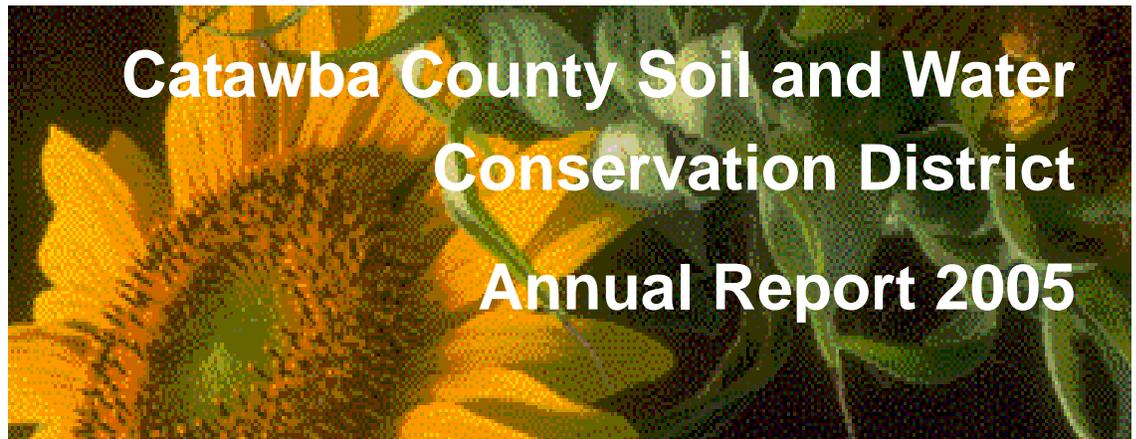


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This report is a condensed summary of the Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District's activities for fiscal year 2005 which covers the period from July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2005.

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a governmental subdivision of the State of North Carolina and is governed by a five-member Board, three of whom are elected and two appointed. North Carolina law charges them with the responsibility of planning and carrying out conservation activities that will best conserve the natural resources of Catawba County. They meet monthly, at 10:00 AM the first Friday Morning of each month on the third floor of the Agricultural Resources Center in the District/Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Newton. All meetings are open to the public.



*Current members of the District board are L-R: Gene Wilson-Sec./Treasurer; James Hardin- Vice Chair.; Ray Henderson- Chairman; Worth Killian- Member; Tom Bollinger- Member*

Jacob Fork Middle School Envirothon Team



## Envirothon

The Envirothon is an annual competition held for high school students. Eight area competitions are held across the state in the fall and early spring and a statewide competition is held in the late spring. Winners of the state competition attend the national competition during the summer. Designed as a way to teach kids about environmental education, high school teams come together to compete with one another in five subjects: Wildlife, Forestry, Soil, Aquatics, and Current Environmental Issues. See pg. 6

## RESOURCE CONSERVATION WORKSHOP



Pictured is Jeremy Lee - Resource Conservation delegate and (right) Board member Worth Killian of the Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District at the Sept 2, Board meeting. Jeremy presented a favorable report of the workshop he and Adam Sherrill (not pictured) of Bandy's High School attended at North Carolina State University in Raleigh for a week in June. Jeremy plans to return to NC State as a Ag student in the future.

The Resource Conservation Workshop is presented each year by the Division of Water Quality and the North Carolina Soil and Water Conservation Districts. At least one student is sponsored by the Catawba Soil and Water District so that they may attend a week of intensive study and participation in a wide range of conservation topics including Soil Characteristics, Wildlife & Fisheries, Forestry, Water Quality and Watershed Management with the primary objective of learning about natural resources and their management in today's environment.

### *Catawba Soil and Water Conservation Contest Winners for 2005*

*Winners of this years Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District Speech, Poster and Essay contest held February 10, at the First United Methodist Church in Newton. Competition followed a dinner prepared by members of the Parker Sunday school class.. The theme for this years contest was The Living Soil.*



L.: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade speech winner Sara Mofford  
R. 7<sup>th</sup> Grade speech winner Daniella Mytsa

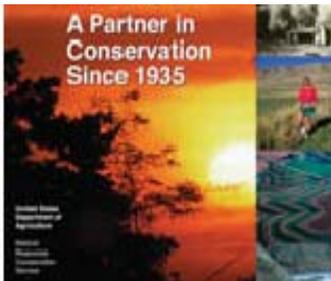


Above left: 5<sup>th</sup> grade poster winner Zachary Young and 6<sup>th</sup> grade poster winner Harrison Bowne



Above: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay winner Sabrina Summers

### 2005 NRCS Annual Report *Catawba County, North Carolina*



*"Out of a long list of nature's gifts to man, none is perhaps so utterly essential to human life as soil." - Hugh Hammond Bennett, First Chief, Soil Conservation Service, 1939*

I proudly present this 2005 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) annual report to you. We continue to make significant strides towards protecting our state's natural resources. Passage of the 2002 Farm Bill greatly increased funding for conservation programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Farmland Protection Program (FPP), the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP).

NRCS employees work in every county of the state. We are committed to helping our clients achieve their resource goals through a voluntary, incentive-based approach to land stewardship. This is the foundation of our conservation programs and each year's gains take us closer to our objective of maintaining a productive land in harmony with a quality environment See Pg 4.

# NORTH CAROLINA AG COST-SHARE PROGRAM



Cattle causing stream bank erosion and loss of water quality

Non-point source pollution has been identified by the NC Division of Water Quality as the primary source of degradation of freshwater rivers and streams in North Carolina. According to the North Carolina Non-point Source Assessment Report, agriculture is the largest source of stream-use impacts in the state. Of the 30% of stream miles, which are impacted negatively, agriculture is suspected of impacting approximately 65%. In addition, agriculture is suspected of being the primary source (60% of impacted acres) of NPS pollution in estuarine areas.

The approach taken in North Carolina for addressing agriculture's contribution to the non-point source water pollution problem is to primarily encourage voluntary participation by the agricultural community. This approach is supported by financial incentives, technical and educational assistance, research, and regulatory programs.

This program is intended to reduce the input of sediments, nutrients, animal wastes and pesticides (agricultural non-point source pollution) into the watercourses of our state.

By helping agricultural producers improve their level of on-farm management through the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). These include vegetative, structural or management systems that are used to improve the efficiency of farming operations



Stream bank restoration with fencing and buffers



Cattle in Streams

by reducing potential pollutants into surface water. Popular BMPs offered include strip cropping, animal waste management systems, poultry composters, stream crossings, spring developments, and cropland conversion. An agricultural producer participating in this program will be reimbursed by the State for 75% of the average cost of each BMP installed. The remaining 25% of the cost is the responsibility of the producer.

On May 6, 2005 Supervisors Worth Killian, Ray Henderson, Gene Wilson, Tom Bollinger and the staff of the District conducted spot-checks of four farms for compliance. The practices included water tanks, wells, fencing out of cattle, stocktrail and crossings. All were found in compliance with the guide lines of the program.

A summary of results of the Program Year 2005 work toward improving water quality: - \$ 56,183.00 contracted

- 4 State approved conservation plans
- 1 Spring/Well Developments
- 4 Stream Crossings
- 2 Stock Trails
- 4 Watering tanks
- 356 Acres Affected



Watering Tank for Livestock

Since October, 1989, \$1,2110.73 has been allocated to Catawba County through the NCACSP. The planned BMP's save 8,978.83 tons per year of soil, and exclude more than 7,900 cattle and over 500 goats from free roam of the streams. More than 800,000 chickens were accounted for in poultry waste management practices.

## **NRCS Annual Report for Catawba County Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA)**

In FY-2005, the conservation partnership in Catawba County assisted over 400 land users, consultants, and units of government with solving natural resource problems. Over 975 acres of Cropland had one or more Conservation Systems planned, and almost 646 acres of Pastureland had one or more Conservation Systems planned. There are 444 acres of Grazing Land that have one or more Conservation Systems Applied. Our programs reduced soil erosion on Catawba lands by 1830 tons.

<b>Agricultural Lands Managed for the Protection of Species with Declining Populations</b>	<b>4 ac</b>
<b>Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans - WRITTEN</b>	<b>#4</b>
<b>Conservation PLANS for CROPLAND</b>	<b>975 ac</b>
<b>Conservation PLANNING for GRAZINGLANDS</b>	<b>646 ac</b>
<b>Conservation APPLIED on GRAZINGLANDS</b>	<b>444 ac</b>
<b>Reduction of CROPLAND Soils Damaged by Erosion</b>	<b>546 ac</b>
<b>Soil Erosion Reduced (tons)</b>	<b>1830 ac</b>

Conservation Practices	Planned	Applied
Access Road	1600 ft	225 ft
Animal Trail and Walkway	40 ft	440 ft
Channel Stabilization	10600 ft	10600 ft
Composting Facility	1 #	
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan	3 #	
Conservation Cover	31 ac	31 ac
Conservation Crop Rotation	856 ac	466 ac
Cover Crop	22 ac	
Critical area Planting	1 ac	
Early Successional Habitat Development	4 ac	4 ac
Fence	18515 ft	19640 ft
Field Border	8900 ft	10750 ft
Forest Stand Improvement	51 ac	
Grade Stabilization Structures	2 #	
Heavy Use Area Protection	6 ac	3 ac
Dead Poultry Incinerators	2 #	
Long Term No-till		
Nutrient Management	554 ac	173 ac
Pasture and Hay Planting	178 ac	81 ac
Pest Management	567 ac	
Prescribed Forest Burning		
Prescribed Grazing	648 ac	442 ac
Crop Residue Management	99 ac	
Crop Residue Management (Seasonal)	568 ac	369 ac
Roof Runoff Structures	4	2
Spring Development	1	1
Stream Crossing of Farm Use	1	
Tree Establishment	162 ac	162 ac
Underground Outlet	40 ft	
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	279 ac	
Animal Waste Storage Facilities	1	2
Animal Water Well's	1	1
Animal Watering Facilities	13	6

## Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible National goals. Through EQIP, farmers and ranchers may receive financial and technical help to install or implement structural and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural land. Using five to ten year contracts, USDA may cost share up from 50 to 90 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices, depending upon eligibility.

North Carolina received \$ 14.2 million in EQIP funds for 2005. In Catawba County there were 5 applications for cost share assistance on practices ranging from dead poultry incinerators, poultry litter storage facilities, wells, water tanks, access roads, All eligible applications are scored and ranked after conservation plans and estimated cost share amounts was calculated. Four applications were selected for funding, allocating \$112073 in cost share funds to active farms in Catawba County.

EQIP Sign up		Applications Received	Applications Funded	Dollars Cost Shared
1	June 12- July 11, 1997	18	7	\$ 21446
2	April 1, 1997- May 15, 1998	133	30	\$ 64589
3	Oct 1, 1998 - March 12, 1999	19	19	\$ 82743
4	March 14, 1999- April 14, 2000	4	3	\$ 45871
5	April 14, 2000- March 20, 2001	7	1	\$ 1458
6	March 20, 2001- March 10, 2002	24	11	\$ 23048
7	March 10, 2002- Sept 30, 2002	3	3	\$ 54770
8	Sept 30, 2002- March 15, 2003	95	2	\$ 102206
9	March 15, 2003- March 30, 2004	4	4	\$ 98731
10	March 2004- March 2005	5	5	\$112073
TOTALS		312	85	\$ 606935



**Horse Manure Composter**



**Dead Poultry Incinerator**



**Animal Watering Facility with**

## Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)

Two WHIP contracts provide habitat and habitat improvement to 12 acres and received cost sharing of \$18990.00

***The CP33 UPLAND BIRD HABITAT BUFFER*** program began his year. This new Conservation Reserve Program practice will benefit farmers, bobwhite quail, and other declining populations of grassland and brush land songbirds in North Carolina. This program pays farmers to establish habitat buffers around existing cropland. These strips (buffers) of volunteer vegetation on field edges provide valuable structure, nesting and brood cover for bobwhite quail and other songbirds and other wildlife and food for birds in a farm landscape.

## Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Catawba County has had over the past 20 years about 4,005 acres enrolled in **CRP** and the **Continuous CRP** programs. There are currently 58 contracts active, on 1312.9 acres, with annual payments totaling \$53,511. Over the ten year life of these 58 contracts this amounts to \$530,511. CRP removes highly erodible cropland from production and established either a vegetative cover or trees. The Continuous CRP program promotes the installation of buffers along streams in the watersheds by providing technical and cost-share assistance.



(Left) Continuous CRP buffer beside creek is planted in trees with fencing to protect the frees from cattle.



(Right) CRP planting of wildlife mix on Cropland

## Envirothon



The Jaguars Envirothon Team from Jacobs Fork Middle School (Left) and the Grandview Eagles Envirothon team from Grandview Middle School (Right) participated in the NC State Envirothon Competition on April 22-23, 2005, at Cedarock Park in Alamance County. The Jaguars placed FOURTH and the Eagles placed SIXTH in a field of 52 teams. Jaguars team members include: Samantha Craig, Joshua Martin, Victoria Ott, Craig Watts, Hunter Whittington and



Roger Yang. Their advisors are Barbara Arndt, Miriam Butts, Tom Gould, Mary Phillips, Lee Robbins and Beth Roland. Eagles team members include: Ryan Richardson, Sara Phillips, Dorothy Hart, Rachel Harris, and Sebastian Sigmon. Their advisors are Diane Owens and Mary Ann Upton.

## Environmental Awareness Week

EAW Commissioners Proclamation:

Whereas, the Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District and the Catawba Cooperative Extension Service host 2 Environmental Awareness Week Field Days for the Fifth graders in Catawba County during this week each year. Field Days give students the opportunity to learn conservation practices first hand from experts in their fields. Held at South Park in Newton in September: Workshops included Forestry, Wildlife, Water Quality, Beekeepers, Animals/Livestock, Catawba County Landfill.



## Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

There are 10 RC&D areas covering 62 counties in North Carolina.

Carolina Land & Lakes RC&D serves, Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Lincoln and Iredell counties in the foothills of Piedmont North Carolina. The office is located in Conover, just off I-40 at the Fairgrove Church Road exit.



"Paddlers" getting started

Several projects are in the works or being proposed in Catawba County and include: a greenway project along the Henry River between the Hickory Soccer complex and Old Shelby Road; we have been exploring the potential for "Canoe Paddle Trails" on both the Henry and Jacob Fork Rivers, which would provide recreational, economic, and water quality benefits; and we are exploring the possibility of a 319 project for Clarks Creek to address urban runoff.

## Outdoor Learning Center

The District was involved with the design and installation of an outdoor learning center at Mill Creek Middle School and South Newton Elementary. The District along with the schools applied for an educational grant from The North Carolina Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation. These funds provide resources that can be used to enhance environmental education in an outdoor classroom setting.



## Meetings and Presentations

The fall area 2 meeting held in Rural Hall NC Oct, 2004 was attended by the staff of the District along with Worth Killian, James Hardin, Ray Henderson, and Charles Wike.

Larry Williams, Randy Willis and Nancy Smyre attended the District Employee's Workshop Asheville NC in Aug. 2004.

Randy and Larry presented a display at the Riverfest at Geitner Park in Hickory on Sept. 11 2004.

Larry and Randy attended a Horse Field Day in Morganton on Sept 30.

The annual meeting of the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation held in Raleigh in January was attended by James Hardin.

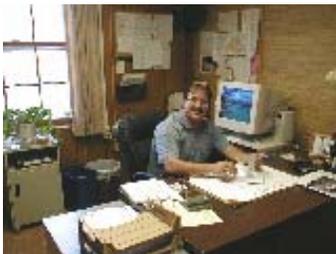
Rick, Larry and Randy attended the Ag District meeting on February 8, 2005

Ray and Larry met with Senator Auston Allran on March 18th, 2005

March 29th the District staff did a Mini-Course on Government presentation .

Randy and Kate took part in the Area Envirothon in Wilkesboro on April 7th 2005.

## New Employee's at the District:



Randy Willis hired August 2, 2004



Kate Peragine hired March 2, 2005

Catawba County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
PO Box 389  
Conover, NC 28658

Annual Banquet February 9, 2006! Call for details



<http://www.catawbacountync.gov/depts/soilwater/>

Phone (828) 465-8950 Fax (828) 465-8953

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