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Catawba County Soil & Water Conservation District

Annual Report 2011



This report is a condensed summary of the Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District's activities for fiscal year 2011 which covers the period from July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011.

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.



Catawba SWCD Staff:

Larry Williams SWCD
Randy Willis SWCD
Kelly Hoke SWCD
Rick Grant NRCS
Phil Hartis ACIS

Board Members of the Catawba SWCD



Pictured L-R: James Hardin, Joe Devine, Chris Fulbright, Cliff Isaac
Kelly Hoke

Voluntary Ag District



In 2008 Catawba County adopted the Voluntary Ag District Program, and in 2009 the County Commissioners appointed a seven member advisory board. This advisory board met extensively setting up the program, the application process and promoting the program to the farming community. In July of 2009 the first public meeting was held to promote the program and inform the public of its benefits at which time landowners were given the opportunity to sign up. Currently there are 61 landowners with 7,465 acres signed up in the district.

Catawba Soil and Water Conservation Contest Winners for 2011

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District Speech, Poster and Essay contest was held in February, at the Catawba County Agricultural Resource Center in Newton.



1st Place 5th Grade Poster



1st Place 6th Grade Poster



Speech Contestants

Speakers

Water Is Life

Paddle Trails

In a continuing effort to improve outdoor recreation in our area, The Catawba SWCD has been involved in developing a paddle trail in Catawba County. . In May/June of 2011 we installed a canoe launch on the Jacob Fork River at Finger Bridge with the help of Newton Parks and the Newton office of the NC Forrest Service with funding from the Catawba Valley Heritage Alliance.





Stock Trail to allow movement of animals without causing erosion

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 pesticide (agricultural non-point source pollution) into the watercourses of our state. Since October, 1989, \$1,405,461.00 has been allocated to Catawba County through the NCACSP

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 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 2011 Supervisors Cliff Isaac, James Hardin, Joe Devine and Chris Fulbright and the District conducted spot-checks of five farms and two CCAP sites for compliance. The practices included wells, fencing, HUA's, and cisterns. All were found in compliance with the guide lines of the program.

A summary of results of the Program Year 2011

- \$ 43,982.00 Ag Cost Share
- \$4,259.00 CCAP Funds
- 11 Contracts Total
- 1 Poultry litter spreader
- 1 Dairy Waste Spreader
- 6 Watering tanks
- 774 ft of fence
- 2 Cisterns (1000 gallon each)
- 1 Well
- 1 Well closure
- 1800 sqft HUA
- 307' Stock Trail

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.



Culvert Crossing to exclude animals from stream



Watering Tank for Livestock



Concrete Feeding Pad

Envirothon

The Area 2 Soil and Water Conservation Districts held the tenth annual Northwest Envirothon Competition in Wilkesboro. This environmental educational event sponsors middle and high school teams competing in environmental topics of Soils, Aquatics, Forestry, Wildlife, and Current Environmental Issues. Participation in last year's event was 110 teams with more than 700 students, advisors, resource people and volunteers participating in the 2011 event.



Grandview Middle School– Catawba County school to advance to the state competition

Environmental Awareness Week

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 each year. Field Days give students the opportunity to learn conservation practices first hand from experts in their fields.

The 2011 Field Days were held at Southside Park in Newton.

Workshops included Recycling, Air Quality, Bird Watching, Water Quality, and Soil Conservation.



Forestry



Beekeepers



Recycling

Community Conservation Assistance Program

Soil & Water Program Pays For Cisterns In Catawba County

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District has partnered with the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources to offer the citizens of Catawba County a new program. The program is entitled Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP), and it addresses nonpoint source pollution from private and public land.

Pressure from a rapidly expanding human population is the driving force behind water quality degradation in the Catawba River basin. The estimated population density is 356 persons/square mile, versus the average statewide population density of 163 persons/square mile, making this the most densely populated basin in the state.

The expanding population is accompanied by an increase in urban and built-up land cover that increases the rate and intensity of polluted storm water runoff.

Growing populations not only require more water, but they also lead to the discharge and runoff of greater quantities of waste and pollutants into the state's streams and groundwater. Thus, just as demand and use increases, some of the potential water supply is lost.

Storm water runoff is a primary carrier of nonpoint source pollution in both urbanized and rural areas. The impact of storm water runoff is particularly severe in developing areas where recently graded areas are highly susceptible to erosion and urbanized areas where storm water runoff is rapidly channeled through curb and gutter systems into nearby streams.

The Community Conservation Assistance Program is a voluntary program that targets urban, suburban and rural landowners to help them reduce their contribution to nonpoint source pollution. CCAP will not be used to aid new development, nor meet the requirements of existing regulations.

Practices that can be implemented through the CCAP are as follows: abandoned well closure, backyard rain garden, cisterns, critical area planting, diversions, grassed swales, pet waste receptacles, riparian buffer, stream restoration, stream bank and shoreline protection, bio-retention areas and storm water wetlands.

The City of Conover completed their CCAP contract for a cistern. The cistern is plumbed to a system that filters the water and from there it used to flush toilets. Also in the 2010/2011 year we also contracted 2 cisterns and one abandoned well closure.



Conover Station– Before



Conover Station– After

The Catawba Soil & Water Conservation District office is in the ARC building and can be reached at 465-8950. For more information on CCAP or rain barrels, visit the Soil & Water page under departments on the counties' main page.

Catawba County
Soil & Water Conservation District

PO Box 389
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Mission Statement

The Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is to administer a comprehensive conservation program to protect and conserve our natural resources of Soil and Water by providing financial, educational and technical assistance to citizens of Catawba County and to establish new programs in concert with other appropriate agencies and organizations to meet changing needs.



<http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/index.html>

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

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