

## Resource Conservation Workshop



Sierra Boggs, from Midway High School, Andrew Warren, Zach Darden and Sidney Simmons, all from Clinton High School, were sponsored by the Sampson Soil and Water Conservation District and received the Anna S. Sumner Award to attend the 2014 Resource Conservation Workshop (RCW). The workshop was held on the North Carolina State University campus in Raleigh the week of June 22-28, 2014. They spent a week studying the environment. The

RCW gives students from across NC an opportunity to meet natural resources professionals and a chance to learn about career opportunities in conservation.

## New Employees

Paige Seago began her career in the Clinton Field Office in January 2014. She is a NRCS Soil Conservationist and a recent graduate of Warren Wilson College. Paige enjoys gardening, cooking and hiking.



Gretta Steffens is our new ATAC employee. She came to work with us in April 2014. Gretta enjoys gardening, cooking, playing video games and acting in the community theatre.



Sampson Soil  
&  
Water Conservation District

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### District Supervisors

Craig Thornton,

Chairman

James Lamb,

Vice Chairman

Curtis Barwick,

Secretary/Treasurer

Tommy Hobbs,

Member

Henry E. Moore III,

Member

### District Staff

Tenna Autry,

Admin. Assistant

Melanie Harris,

Director, Soil Conservationist

Henry Faison,

Soil Conservation Technician

Dwayne Faircloth,

Soil Conservation Technician

### NRCS Staff

Renée Leech,

District Conservationist

Paige Seago,

Soil Conservationist

Gretta Steffens,

ATAC

# 2014 Annual Report

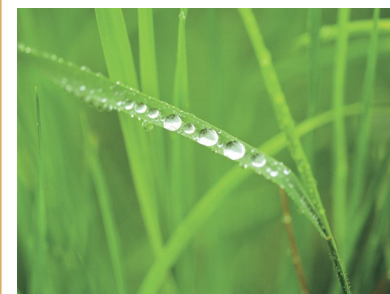
July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014

## Who Are We?

Sampson Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is comprised of a board of supervisors, of which three are elected in the general election and two are appointed by the NC Soil & Water Conservation Commission. The District supervisors are charged with the protection of the county's soil, water and related resources and establishing conservation programs in the county. The staff assigned to carry out the District's mission include one soil conservationist, two district technicians and an administrative assistant. A District Conservationist and Soil Conservationist is provided by USDA-NRCS. A part-time ATAC position is funded by USDA-NRCS through the Division of Soil and Water Conservation. The Sampson SWCD mission is also supported by several state and federal cost share programs that assist landowners in Sampson County with the cost of installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs). For the 2014 program year, these programs brought over \$650,000 into Sampson County in the form of direct payments and incentives to farmers and landowners to install on-farm conservation practices to solve natural resource concerns.



## Mission Statement



The mission of the Sampson Soil and Water Conservation District is to take available technical, financial, and educational resources and administer programs designed to encourage

individual responsibility to conserve, improve and sustain our soil and water resources for future generations.

Cropland Conversion to Bermuda grass made possible through Ag Cost Share.

## Agriculture Cost Share Program



The NC Agricultural Cost Share Program (NCACSP) is a state funded program that provides technical and financial assistance to address nonpoint source pollution. For the 2014 program year, the Sampson County Soil and Water Conservation District was allocated \$67,109 by the NC Soil and Water Conservation Commission. This money was used to cost share conservation practices such as cropland conversion and cover crop. A total of 11 contracts were obligated.

## Market Based Conservation Initiative



Sampson SWCD partnered with the NC Foundation for Soil and Water to promote the Market Based Conservation Initiative (MBCI) Pilot Program in Sampson County. The MBCI Program's purpose is to test alternative methods to protect rural land from development under an existing military flight path. For the second bid round, the District and NRCS staff assisted in the submission of 98 applications from interested landowners in the county. The District also participated in property site visits on applications from the first bid round.

## Soil Health Cotton Cover Crop Initiative



The District partnered with the NC Foundation for Soil and Water and Cotton Inc. on a Soil Health Initiative Project regarding the use of Cover Crops with Cotton. The primary goal of the project was to demonstrate to producers that a diverse mixture of cover crop species can be planted in a timely manner, allowed to grow and accumulate biomass and nitrogen, and then be terminated without using tillage.



## Summary of Federal Programs FY 13-14

The funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) program year 2014 was approximately \$588,000 and was used to cost share practices such as an Animal Mortality Facilities, Waste Storage Facilities (Litter Sheds), Seasonal High Tunnels, Conservation Crop Rotation, Cover Crop, Tree/Shrub Site Preparation, Tree/Shrub Establishment, Prescribed Burning, Firebreaks, Forest Stand Improvement and-Farmstead Energy Improvement. A total of 21 EQIP contracts were obligated. NRCS and the Sampson District staff continue to assist the Farm Service Agency (FSA) by writing conservation plans for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Payments for all active federal contracts in this fiscal year totaled over \$1.5 million.



Seasonal High Tunnels are used to extend the growing season. Pictured is one installed through EQIP cost share assistance.

## Sampson Outreach Meeting

In September 2013, Dwayne Faircloth, SWCD Soil Conservation Technician and Renée Leech, NRCS District Conservationist participated in a Sampson Outreach meeting hosted by James Hartsfield, Farm Management Agent with NC Cooperative Extension. Staff provided participants with resources and information on federal and state cost share programs. There were approximately 25 in attendance.

## Resource Rodeo

The Sampson District along with NRCS participated in a Resource Rodeo in September that was sponsored by The Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI). Approximately 35 rural veteran farmers attended.

## Conservation Employee Training (CET)

In October 2013, Melanie Harris, District Director, Henry Faison and Dwayne Faircloth, District Soil Conservation Technicians, attended the CET in Nags Head, NC.



## NC State Fair



Tenna Autry, District Administrative Assistant, Henry Faison and Dwayne Faircloth, District Soil Conservation Technicians, volunteered to work at the Soil and Water Conservation Booth in October 2013.

## NCASWCD Area 7 Fall Meeting

The Sampson SWCD hosted the Area 7 Fall meeting in November 2013. Craig Thornton, SWCD Board Chairman was the Area 7 Chair. Tenna Autry coordinated the meeting and was also the Area 7 Planning Coordinator for 2013.

## NCASWCD Annual Meeting

The annual meeting for the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to develop policy and elect leadership was attended by Renée Leech, Henry Faison, Dwayne Faircloth and the District Board of Supervisors in January 2014.

## Envirothon

Envirothon is a natural resources competition for middle and high school students. Tenna Autry, Melanie Harris, Dwayne Faircloth, Henry Faison and Renée Leech, volunteered to help with the 2014 Area VII Envirothon held at Raven Rock in Lillington, NC. 32 teams participated in the event.

## Cooperative Extension Community Ag Day

Melanie Harris, Paige Seago and Dwayne Faircloth participated in the Community Ag Day in April 2014. A booth was set up to encourage children and adults to feel the different types of soils most common to Sampson County. Over 1000 people attended the event.

