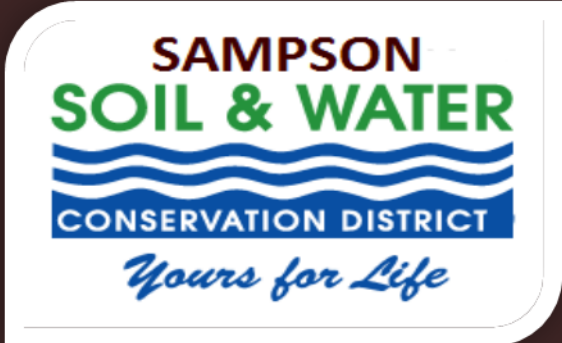


Sampson County Soil & Water Conservation District



Sampson SWCD
80 County Complex Rd, Suite 110
Clinton, NC 28328
910 592-7963 ext 3

Mission Statement: 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



Sampson County Soil & Water Conservation District



We never know the worth
Of water, until the well
Is dry.
~Thomas Fuller

2016 Annual Report
July 1, 2015 –June 30, 2016

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Who We Are....

District Supervisors

- Craig Thornton, Chairman
- James Lamb, Vice Chairman
- Curtis Barwick, Secretary/
Treasurer
- Tommy Hobbs, Member
- Henry E. Moore III, Member

District Staff

- Melanie Harris
Department Head,
Soil Conservationist
- Henry Faizon
Soil Conservationist
- Mitchell Miller
Soil Conservation Technician
- Gretta Steffens
Education Coordinator
Administrative Assistant

NRCS Staff

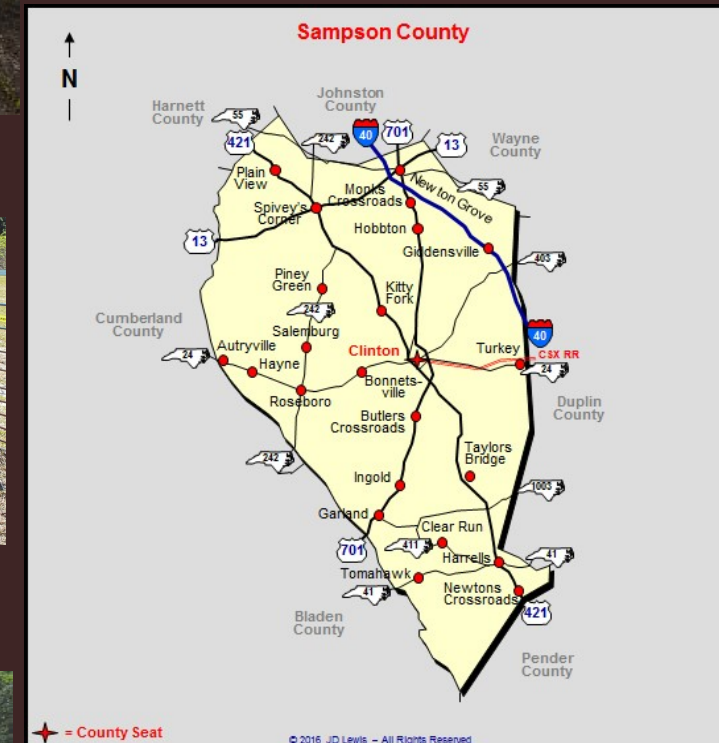
- Gavin Thompson
Soil Conservationist
- Dwayne Faircloth
Soil Conservation Technician

The Sampson County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is comprised of a five member Board of Supervisors.

Three District Supervisors 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 Sampson County's soil, water and related resources and for establishing conservation programs in the county. The staff team members assigned to carry out the District's mission include one Soil Conservationist-Department Head, two District Soil Conservation Technicians and an Education Coordinator/Administrative Assistant. Another Soil Conservationist and a Soil Conservation Technician are provided by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS). The Sampson SWCD's mission is also supported by several state and federal cost share programs that assist landowners in Sampson County with the cost of installing the Best Management Practices (BMPs). For the 2016 program year, these programs brought almost 1 million dollars into Sampson County in the form of direct payments and incentives to farmers and landowners for installation of on-farm conservation practices to solve natural resource concerns.

We Are Sampson County

Sampson SWCD yours for life



Sampson County Hometown Proud



The Board of Supervisors and the Staff of the Sampson SWCD sincerely appreciates all landowners, farmers, agencies and groups who partner with us to help the District carry out its conservation efforts. Thank you.



Know Soil

Know Life



The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

“People talk about medium. What’s your medium? My medium as a writer has been dirt, clay, sand... what I could touch, hold, stand on and stand for. My medium has been Earth. Earth in correspondence with my mind.”
~ Terry Tempest Williams
Finding Beauty in a Broken World ~



North Carolina 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. The purpose of the program is to improve water quality through Best Management Practices (BMPs) that properly manage nutrients, reduce sediment delivery to streams, manage pesticides and reduce soil erosion. These BMPs include practices such as : No-Till Farming, Cover Crops, Precision Agrichemical Application, Chemical Storage/Mixing Facilities, Grassed Waterways, Field Borders, Nutrient Management, Cropland Conversion, Fencing, Watering Facilities, Heavy Use Areas, Nutrient Management, Prescribed Grazing, Critical Area Planting, Stream Crossings, Waste Irrigation, Odor Control Management Systems, Mortality Management and Grade Stabilization.

For the 2016 program year, the Sampson district was allocated \$86,140 by the NC Soil and Water Conservation Commission. These funds were encumbered through 13 contracts with Best Management Practices (BMPs) ranging from an Incinerator, Cropland Conversion, Cover Crop and a Grade Stabilization Structure.



North Carolina Agriculture Water Resource Assistance Program (AgWRAP): Sampson County has a diverse cropping rotation throughout the county, each with needs for water and water efficiency. Through the Agriculture Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP), we are able to help farmers with water resource concerns on agriculture lands by establishing wells, constructing ponds and assisting in pond sediment removal. For program year 2016, the Sampson Soil and Water Conservation District received \$20,881 from the NC Soil and Water Conservation Commission. These funds will be used to help construct a new irrigation pond.

Summary of Federal Programs Through NRCS:

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) continues to be a growing success in Sampson County. EQIP A total of \$879,199 was obligated to 26 contracts. Following were the top practices contracted:

- Cover Crop- 8 contracts
- Waste Storage Facility- 7 contracts
- Seasonal High Tunnel- 4 contracts
- Animal Mortality Facility- 3 contracts
- Tree Planting- 2 contracts
- Agriculture Energy-2 contracts



Community Outreach



Envirothon

The Area VII Envirothon was held at Jones Lake State Park on March 24th, 2016. Sampson SWCD Staff were there in full support. Melanie Harris, Mitchell Miller, Henry Faison, Dwayne Faircloth and Gavin Thompson helped to set up and were runners for the event. Gretta Steffens helped register teams as they arrived. It was a fun filled, educational day. Gretta Steffens also volunteered to help out at the NC State Envirothon and served as a judge for the oral presentation portion of the competition. Gretta Steffens attended Envirothon School, a week long workshop for educators and advisors to help prepare for Envirothon 2017.



Sampson County Ag Day

Sampson SWCD staff participated in Sampson County Agriculture Day held at the Cooperative Extension Complex in April 2016. The staff borrowed the "Tunnel of Soil" and the "Wheel of Conservation" from NCASWCD and had a great time teaching conservation and quizzing people during the event.





Community Outreach



The Sampson SWCD participated in educational booths at the NC State Fair and at the Clinton Street Fair during the month of October. We also relaunched our Facebook page around this time. Henry Faison and Gavin Thompson gave a presentation at a Cooperative Extension event for Operator in Charge (OIC) training also in October. November found the staff at the Fall Meeting along with District Supervisor Chairman, Craig Thornton.

As 2016 started, the Sampson SWCD staff continued to participate in community outreach and training programs. Each of Sampson SWCD Supervisors attended the annual NCASWCD meeting held in Durham for 2016. Sampson SWCD staff is very fortunate to have dedicated Supervisors who take the time out of their busy lives to participate in meetings and events, helping us further the mission of conservation. They are very much appreciated.

Melanie Harris and Gretta Steffens attended the UNC School of Government Training in February 2016. The Sampson SWCD staff and District Supervisors attended the Area VII Spring meeting held in Cumberland County. Gretta Steffens volunteered to help the Sampson County Board of Elections by working the polls for the 2016 elections. The staff attended a Forage Conference held by the NC Cattlemen's Association and a Forestry Summit sponsored by Mt. Olive College, the NC Forest Service, NC State University, the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and NC Woodlands. The Sampson SWCD also attended an AG Cost Share Training event. Mitchell Miller attended a four day pasture land training in Waynesville, NC.

Dwayne Faircloth, who was a Soil Technician with Sampson SWCD, went from county employee to federal employee back in November 2015. He is now a Soil Conservation Technician with NRCS. Luckily for Sampson SWCD, he is still in our office representing NRCS for Sampson County.



Sampson SWCD is proud to welcome Mitchell Miller to our team. Mitch had previously worked as an Ag Teacher at Gray's Creek High School and as a Soil Technician with Robeson County. Mitch has already proven to be a great addition to Sampson SWCD.

Gretta Steffens also made a move this year, leaving NRCS and joining Sampson SWCD as the Education Coordinator/Administrative Assistant. She continues to help out with wetland requests for NRCS and is enjoying her new responsibilities as she works towards her Environmental Educator Certification.



So Proud of Our Local Students!



Resource Conservation Workshop at NC State University

The **Resource Conservation Workshop** is sponsored by the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts in conjunction with the NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation, NC State University Soil Science Department and the Soil and Water Conservation Society Hugh Hammond Bennett Chapter. The Workshop is a week long event that emphasizes conservation through hands on participation, demonstrations and study. The Workshop is open to High School Students from each District and the selected students are housed in NC State University dormitories on the campus, giving them an early taste of college life. It is an opportunity to win scholarships and other awards. This year's participants were Annette Tinoco-Flores, Alondra Flores, and Grace Hairr; from Lakewood High School and Paxton Hudson from Hobbton High School. They were all chosen to represent Sampson County in the 2016 Resource Conservation Workshop at N.C. State University in Raleigh June 26-July 1, 2016. These outstanding students were chosen by the Sampson Soil and Water Conservation District Board as the 2016 recipients of the Anna S. Sumner Resource Conservation Workshop Scholarship. They each submitted an essay explaining their interest in resource conservation and they came highly recommended by their teachers. While attending the workshop they competed for additional scholarship opportunities. Gretta Steffens was honored to be asked to serve as a counselor during the Resource Conservation Workshop.

The Resource Conservation Workshop is a week of intensive study and hands-on activities requiring student application and participation in a wide range of conservation topics. Soil scientists, foresters, biologists, wildlife experts and engineers provided classroom instruction and outdoor study in the environmental sciences. Students also received information and insight into careers in natural resource management.

The workshop is sponsored and organized by the N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation, the N.C. Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Hugh Hammond Bennett Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and N.C. State University's Soil Science Department and the McKimmon Center for Extension and Continuing Education.



MBCI Signing



Community Outreach

The 2015-2016 fiscal year saw Sampson SWCD participating in community outreach and training programs all over the state. From the mountains to the coast, Sampson SWCD was helping spread the conservation message. From teaching workshops, attending training, starting a new Facebook page and a Twitter account, to partnering for events with FSA and Cooperative Extension, educating farmers, mentoring students and helping plan training events, Sampson SWCD did it all this year!

Here are a few places we've been and things we've done to promote conservation during the 2015-2016 FY.

Market Based Conservation Initiative (MBCI) This three year project reached its culmination on August 28, 2015, with the signing of contracts by landowners to ensure the protection of rural land under existing military flight paths throughout Sampson County and 17 other counties in North Carolina. More information about this program along with video links of the signing event can be found at <http://ncsoilwater.org/programs/mbc/>.

Sampson County Conservation Compliance : Sampson SWCD assisted NRCS and the local FSA office in their efforts to tackle compliance issues and questions from local landowners. The informative event was held in September 2015 at the Sampson County Agro-Expo Center. Thanks to Gavin Thompson and Kettrel Strickland, Sampson County landowners came away with a better understanding of how conservation compliance affects their federal contracts through NRCS and FSA, as well as their state contracts through Sampson SWCD.