

**MADISON COUNTY  
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1999**

This annual report is presented by the board of supervisors of the Madison County Soil Conservation District to inform district cooperators and the public about District activities.

**INTRODUCTION** - The District is a corporate and political subdivision of the state and was established by the state soil conservation committee in 1941. The geographic and political boundaries of the District are the same as those of Madison County. The District is a member of the Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts (TACD), and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD).

**DISTRICT SUPERVISORS** - The District is governed by a board of supervisors, that is responsible for developing and administrating the District's long range program. The board is composed of five landowners residing within the District. Two of the supervisors are appointed to serve three year terms by the state soil conservation committee, while three of the supervisors are elected to serve three years by the land owners within the District. The supervisors meet monthly and do not receive a salary. The present board consists of Franklin James, Mike Pearson, Mark Smith, Allen Verell, and Joel Haynes.

Chairman, Franklin James, a residence of the Windy City community, has been on the board since 1972 and has served as the board's chairman since 1975. Franklin is a past director for area VIII of the Tennessee Association of Conservation District.

Vice-Chairman, Allen Verell, of the Huntersville community was elected to the board in 1995 and was reelected to a second term in 1998.

Secretary-Treasurer, Joel Haynes was appointed to the board this year by the state soil conservation committee.

Mike Pearson of the Adair community, along with Mark Smith of the Pope community, were elected to the board in 1995 and were reelected to a second term in 1998.

**OFFICE STAFF** - The office staff in 1999 consisted of federal employees Brad Denton and Kenneth Williams, and county employees Maxine Blankenship, and Benton James. Brad is a District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and has been stationed with the District since 1986. Kenneth is a Soil Conservationist for NRCS and was transferred from Haywood County to Madison County in January of 1997. Maxine has been the office secretary-clerk since 1969, while Benton has been the field technician and conservationist since 1979.

## DISTRICT PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

**ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET** - The District held its annual awards banquet in March, at the Madison County Agricultural Complex Auditorium. Sweet Harmony, a vocal group from Henderson provided entertainment while the 90 guests in attendance enjoyed a steak dinner catered by Richard's of Bolivar. Don Johnson was recognized as the District's Conservation Farmer of 1998. Twenty floral table decorations and the floral centerpiece were given out as door prizes.

**TACD ANNUAL MEETING:** Homer Jones, the recipient of the District's 1997 Conservation Farmer of the Year award, was recognized as TACD's Conservation Farmer of 1998 at the TACD's annual meeting in 1999.

**DISTRICT NEWSLETTER** - During the year, the District published one newsletter, which was mailed to over 200 District cooperators. The newsletter serves to inform cooperators of up and coming events, programs, and activities.

**SOIL STEWARDSHIP SERVICES** - In April the District supplied St. John's Baptist Church Number 2 of Denmark, Denmark Baptist Church, and the Greater Mercer Baptist Church of Mercer, with soil stewardship material for worship services during Soil and Water Stewardship Week.

**FARM CITY DAY** - In April, District staff participated in Farm City Day, held at East Elementary School. District staff along with Employees of the Tennessee Department of Forestry developed a trail through a five acres woods lot on the school's property. Trees were identified and marked. Over 500 students were taken on guided tours by members of the District staff. The District staff also handed out activity booklets to the students. Many other agencies, businesses, and individuals took part in the event.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS DAY** - In May, the District staff took part in Environmental Awareness Day attended by 1,200 fifth grade students from Madison County schools. Activity books purchased from NACD with a grant from TDA were given to the students visiting the booth.

**PESTICIDE COLLECTION** - The District along with other agencies sponsored an agricultural pesticide collection day in April. Over 12,000 pounds of obsolete pesticides were collected for safe disposal.

**OUT DOOR CLASSROOM** - On Arbor Day a dedication ceremony was held on the grounds of Denmark Elementary School to officially open the natural trail through the school's woods lot. The District staff along with staff from the Tennessee Division of Forestry assisted Denmark School with the development of the trail. Over twenty species of trees were identified and marked and a path was cleared. The staff looks forward to leading classes through the nature trail.

**TDA AG CONSERVATION GRANT** - In August of 1998 the District entered into a contract with the Tennessee Department of Agricultural (TDA). The contract made the District eligible for grant funding from TDA over the next five years. The grant enables the District to provide cost share for certain conservation work performed by District cooperators. The grant also enables the District to help fund information and education projects. In 1999 the District was approved for nearly \$48,000 to assist cooperators with the installation of conservation practices.

**FISH DAY** - The District sponsored a Fish Day in the spring. Fish Day allows the public to buy fingerlings to stock their ponds. The vendor, Tommy's Fish Truck, from Arkansas, supplies Channel Cat, Hybrid Blue Gill, Bass, Crappie, Red Ear, White Amur, and Fat Head Minnows.

**NO-TILL DRILL** - The District has a 7-foot no-till Tye drill for rent by people in and around Madison County. The drill is housed, and can be rented, by the Madison County Farmers Co-op on Ragland Road. The drill was obtained with funds by a grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA).

**STRAW MULCHING MACHINE** - The Chickasaw-Shiloh RC&D Council has a straw mulcher available for rent through the District.

**WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)** - The Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) is a federal program where the government purchases permanent or temporary easements on lands that would have been considered wetlands before they were cleared. The land is restored to its natural hydrology and planted to bottom land hardwood trees. The District has two WRP contracts totaling around 45 acres. Three contracts totaling 130 acres are pending approval by USDA. One WRP application totaling 145 acres has been approved and is awaiting finalization.

**CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)** – CRP contracts are agreements between individuals and the federal government, where the individual agrees to establish and maintain their environmentally sensitive land in a vegetative cover which protects the soil from erosion and benefits wildlife. In return, the government partially reimburses the individual's establishment costs and pays the landowner an annual rent. Currently there are 248 contract on 8,323 acres enrolled in CRP.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)** - EQIP is a federal program which provides cost share for the installation of certain conservation practices. Currently there are 9 of 16 application approved for over \$36,000 in conservation assistance.

**ENGINEERING SERVICES** - The District staff assisted cooperators with a number of conservation practices, including terraces, waterways, diversions, grade structures, ponds, and sediment basins.

**MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES** - The District staff assisted several real estate agents, farm appraisers, environmental consultants, and individuals by providing them with soil information, soil maps, topography maps, flood insurance rate maps, wetland inventory map, and both historic and contemporary aerial photos.

WATERSHED DISTRICTS – The District has two active watershed districts, Johnson Creek and Meridian Creek. The Johnson Creek Watershed has 5 flood retardant structures and the Meridian Creek Watershed has 3. All of the dams were built in the late 1950s and early 1960s. All of the structures passed recent state inspections but several are experiencing problems with their pipe spillways and will require expensive repairs in the near future. The US Congress passed a bill this year to provide funding to repair watershed dams across the United States.

#### DISTRICT SPONSORS AND AFFILIATE MEMBERS

The District's operations and services for 1999 were made possible in part by contributions from the following sponsors whom we sincerely appreciate.

American Cyanamid  
BASF  
Bancorp South  
Bemis Gin Company  
Dunavant Enterprises  
First Bank  
First Tennessee Bank  
IMC AgriBusiness  
Jackson Tractor  
Jimmy Bond  
Madison County Co-op

Madison County Farm Bureau  
Mercer Gin Company  
Monsanto  
Novartis Crop Protection, INC.  
Sidney David Florist  
S. M. Lawrence Company  
Tri-State Delta Chemical, Inc  
Union Planters Bank of Jackson  
Union Planters Bank of West Tennessee  
Zeneca Ag Products

Franklin James, Chairman  
Madison County Soil Conservation District

## DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

### 1992 Agriculture Census

|                              |               |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Total Area in Madison County | 358,000 acres |
| Total Land in Farms          | 141,357 acres |
| Average Farm Size            | 280 acres     |
| Number of Farms              | 505           |

### Office Data

|                                    |                 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Cooperators                        | 500             |
| Highly Erodible Acres              | 80,000 acres    |
| Conservation Reserve Program Acres | 11,000 acres    |
| Conservation Tillage               | 20,000 acres    |
| Contour Cropping                   | 20,000 acres    |
| Winter Cover Crops                 | 35,000 acres    |
| Crop Residue Cover                 | 27,000 acres    |
| Terraces                           | 1,000,000+ feet |

### 1997 Agriculture Statistics

| Crops         | Acres   | Yield | Production | State Rank       |
|---------------|---------|-------|------------|------------------|
| Cotton lbs.   | 39,500  | 577   | 22,791,500 | 7 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Corn bu.      | 15,000  | 109   | 1,630,000  | 12 <sup>th</sup> |
| Soybeans bu.  | 28,000  | 32    | 900,000    | 14 <sup>th</sup> |
| Wheat bu.     | 3,400   | 44    | 150,000    | 22 <sup>nd</sup> |
| Hay tons      | 9,000   | 2.0   | 18,000     | 68 <sup>th</sup> |
| Timber "1989" | 140,700 |       |            | 41 <sup>st</sup> |

### 1998 Agriculture Statistics

| Livestock         | Number | State Rank       |
|-------------------|--------|------------------|
| Cattle and Calves | 13,000 | 62 <sup>nd</sup> |
| Hogs and Pigs     | 17,000 | 9 <sup>th</sup>  |

## Madison County Soil Conservation District

- Don Johnson, the recipient of the District's 1998 Conservation Farmer of the Year award, was recognized as TACD's 1999 Conservation Farmer at the TACD's annual meeting in February of this year.
- John Parrish, the District's 1999 Conservation Farmer was presented the West Tennessee Conservation Farmer of the year award by the Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts (TACD) at their summer meeting.
- The District published two newsletters, which were mailed to over 200 District cooperators.
- The District supplied St. John's Baptist Church Number 2 of Denmark, Denmark Baptist Church, and the Greater Mercer Baptist Church of Mercer, with soil stewardship material for worship services during Soil and Water Stewardship Week.
- The District staff assisted the Chickasaw-Shiloh RC&D Council with their Evironthon 2000, which was held in Madison County.
- The District staff took part in Environmental Awareness Day attended by 1,200 fifth grade students from Madison County Schools. Activity books purchased from NACD with a grant from TDA were given to the students visiting the booth.
- This district provided 21 cooperators with over \$24,000 in cost-share assistance to apply best management practices on their land. The funds were provided through a grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA). For this fiscal year TDA has allocated the District over \$53,000 for the application of BMPs and \$800 for BMP information and education.
- The District has a 7-foot no-till Tye drill for rent by people in and around Madison County. The drill was obtained with funds by a grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA).
- During the 20<sup>th</sup> CRP sign-up, the District had nearly 1,200 acres on 40 tracts accepted into CRP.
- Two cooperators signed Equip Contracts.
- The District staff assisted cooperators with a number of conservation practices, including terraces, waterways, diversions, grade structures, ponds, and sediment basins.
- The District staff assisted several real estate agents, farm appraisers, environmental consultants, and individuals by providing them with soil information, soil maps, topography maps, flood insurance rate maps, wetland inventory maps, and both historic and contemporary aerial photographs.
- The District supported the establishment of 10 outdoor classroom within the Jackson-Madison County School System. In 2000 the ten schools were awarded grant funding totally \$3,000 from the Tennessee Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. Each of the eight schools are to incorporate production agriculture, soil conservation best management practices and non-point water quality control into their project.