

# **MADISON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2000**

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 the District's 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 administering 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, of the Huntersville Community, was appointed to the board in 1999 by the state soil conservation committee.

Mike Pearson of the Adair Community, and 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. Dr. Jim Byford, Dean of the School of Agriculture at the University of Tennessee at Martin spoke to the 90 guests in attendance. Everyone enjoyed a steak dinner catered by Richard's of Bolivar. John Parrish was recognized as the District's Conservation Farmer of 1999. The floral table decorations and the floral centerpiece were given out as door prizes.

**TACD ANNUAL MEETING** - 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.

**TACD SUMMER MEETING** - John Parrish, the District's 1999 Conservation Farmer was presented the West Tennessee Conservation Farmer of the year by the Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts (TACD) at their summer meeting.

**DISTRICT NEWSLETTER** - During the year, the District published two newsletters, which were mailed to over 200 District cooperators. The newsletters serve 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.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS DAY** - In April the District staff assisted the Chickasaw-Shiloh RC&D Council with their Evironthon 2000, which was held in Madison County. The contest allows high school students from West Tennessee to gain knowledge and demonstrate their knowledge of our various natural resources through a series of outdoor competition.

**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.

**TDA AG CONSERVATION GRANT** - 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.

**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. 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 bottomland hardwood trees. The District has two WRP contracts totaling around 45 acres. Three contracts totaling 130 acres are pending approval by USDA.

### **CONSERVATION RESERVE**

**PROGRAM (CRP)** – CRP contracts are agreements between landowners and the federal government, where the landowner 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. This year, during the 20<sup>th</sup> CRP sign-up, the District had nearly 1,200 acres on 40 tracts accepted into CRP. Currently in the District there are over 200 contract on over 8,000 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. Two cooperators signed Equip Contracts in 2000 totaling \$2,301.

**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 maps, and both historic and contemporary aerial photographs.

### **AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM**

– 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.

**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.

---

Franklin James, Chairman  
Madison County Soil Conservation District

**DISTRICT SPONSORS AND AFFILIATE MEMBERS**

Bancorp South	Mercer Gin
Bemis Gin	Monsanto
C & J Farms	Novartis
Dunavant Enterprises	Royster-Clark
Fist South Bank	Sidney David Florist
Jimmy Bond	The Bank of Jackson
Madison County Co-op	Union Planters Bank
Madison County Farm Burrau	Union Planters Bank of West Tennessee

<b><u>Agriculture Census</u></b>				
	<b><u>1992</u></b>		<b><u>1997</u></b>	
Total Area in Madison County	358,000 acres		358,000 acres	
Total Land in Farms	141,357 acres		145,586 acres	
Average Farm Size	280 acres		255 acres	
Number of Full Time Farms	231		221	
<b><u>1999 Agriculture Statistics</u></b>				
<b><u>Crops</u></b>	<b><u>Acres</u></b>	<b><u>Yield</u></b>	<b><u>Production</u></b>	<b><u>State Rank</u></b>
Cotton lbs.	42,000	537	22,554,000	6 <sup>th</sup>
Corn bu.	8,000	98	780,000	17 <sup>th</sup>
Soybeans bu.	35,000	15	510,000	13 <sup>th</sup>
Wheat bu.	6,600	47	310,000	17 <sup>th</sup>
Hay tons	9,000	1.7	15,000	78 <sup>th</sup>
Timber "1989"	140,700			41 <sup>st</sup>
<b><u>Livestock</u></b>	<b><u>Number</u></b>			
Cattle and Calves	12,000			60 <sup>th</sup>
Hogs and Pigs	9,500			6 <sup>th</sup>
<b><u>Office Estimates</u></b>				
Cooperators		500		
Highly Erodible Acres		80,000 acres		
Conservation Reserve Program Acres		8,000 acres		
Conservation Tillage		60,000 acres		
Contour Cropping		20,000 acres		
Winter Cover Crops		5,000 acres		
Crop Residue Cover		85,000 acres		
Terraces		1,000,000+ feet		