

MADISON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2001

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 - A board of supervisors that is responsible for developing and administering the District's long range program governs The District. 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, Allen Verell, Joel Haynes, and Bob Bryant.

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, elected to a second term in 1998, and a third term this year.

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 was elected to the board in 1995, elected to a second term in 1998, and a third term this year.

Bob Bryant of the Beech Bluff Community was elected to the board this year.

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 has been stationed in Madison County since January of 1997. Maxine has been a secretary-clerk for Madison County since 1969, while Benton has been an engineering technician/soil conservationist for Madison County 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. Kevin Brown, Superintendent of the University of Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Stations in Milan and Martin spoke to the 90 guests in attendance. Everyone enjoyed a steak dinner catered by Richard's of Bolivar. David Bird was recognized as the District's Conservation Farmer of 2000. The floral table decorations and the floral centerpiece were given out as door prizes.

TACD SUMMER MEETING – David Bird, the District's 2000 Conservation Farmer was recognized as the West Tennessee Conservation Farmer of the year by the West Tennessee Region of the Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts (TACD) at their summer meeting.

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER - During the year, the District published a newsletter, which was mailed to over 500 District cooperators and landowners. The newsletters serve to inform cooperators and landowners of up and coming events, programs, and activities.

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

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. Hand outs prepared by the

office staff were given to the students visiting the booth.

TDA AG BMP GRANT – This district provided 11 cooperators with over \$14,000 in cost-share assistance to apply best management practices on their land. The funds were provided through grants from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA). Participants received up to 75% cost-share to install Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their land. BMPs are conservation practices recognized for improving water quality in Tennessee's rivers and streams. The Johnson Creek watershed in south Madison County and the Turkey Creek watershed in north Madison County receive special consideration due to their environmental impact on the waters of the state.

NO-TILL DRILL - The District sold its old drill to a cooperator and purchased a new 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 old 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, nearly 1,200 acres on 35 tracts were established to CRP vegetative covers. 23 contracts that expired this year were extended for another year. Another 10 contracts covering 105 acres were accepted under the environmental priority CRP sign-up. Currently in the District there are over 250 contract on over 9,000 acres enrolled in CRP. The District is and has been working to get CRP soil rental rates raised for Madison County.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SWCA) –

SWCA was a federal program open to landowners in the Hatchie River Watershed in 2000. SWCA provided up to 75% cost share to landowners for the installation of conservation practices on their land.

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

INFORMATION ASSISTANCE - 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 historical aerial photographs of Madison County.

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.

WILDLIFE FOOD PLOTS – The District in partnership with the Forked Deer Chapter of Quail Unlimited, NRCS, the Chickasaw-Shiloh RC&D Council, and TWRA provided cooperators with prepackaged bags of seed for use in seeding half-acre wildlife food plots. Over 50 cooperators participated.

Franklin James, Chairman
Madison County Soil Conservation District

DISTRICT SPONSORS AND AFFILIATE MEMBERS 2001

Bancorp South
 Bemis Gin
 C & J Farms
 Dunavant Enterprises
 First South Bank
 Fletcher Equipment, Inc.
 Jimmy Bond
 Madison County Farmers Co-op
 Madison County Farm Bureau

Mercer Gin
 Monsanto
 Novartis Crop Protection
 R&J Feed Supply Company
 Royster-Clark
 Sidney David Florist
 Union Planters Bank
 Union Planters Bank of West Tennessee

Agriculture Census

	<u>1992</u>	<u>1997</u>
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 Farmers	231	221

2000 Agriculture Statistics

<u>Crops</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Yield</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>State Rank</u>
Cotton lbs.	40,000	708	28,320,000	6 th
Corn bu.	14,000	107	1,500,000	13 th
Soybeans bu.	29,000	23	670,000	12 th
Wheat bu.	6,800	57	390,000	15 th
Hay tons	9,500	2.2	21,000	77 th
Timber "1989"	148,400			53 rd
<u>Livestock</u>	<u>Number</u>			
Cattle and Calves	14,000			58 th
Hogs and Pigs	9,300			4 th

Office Estimates

Cooperators	500
Highly Erodible Acres	80,000 acres
Conservation Reserve Program Acres	9,000 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