



Newsletter

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313 North Parkway
Jackson, Tennessee 38305

Madison County Soil Conservation District
Serving Madison County since 1941

www.madisonscd.com

(731)664-1544 x 3
FAX: (731)664-7685

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Member

A Word from Our Chairman



As Chairman of the Madison County Soil Conservation District, I sincerely thank the local, state and federal governments, their many participating agencies, the local affiliated businesses and the many individuals for the partnerships we have forged.

Together we are able to work as one to conserve soil and soil related natural resources. I extend my thanks to the many individual farmers and landowners that worked with the District. Their voluntary efforts to improve their natural resources serve to benefit the greater community in which we live.

I invite everyone to visit our new website at www.madisonscd.com. The site is packed with information about the District, Soil, Water, Plants & Animals, Conservation Programs, and Conservation Practices. It has links to several sites related to conservation, soil, water, government agencies, agriculture, and more.

Allen Verell, Chairman
Madison County Soil Conservation District

The Madison County Soil Conservation District does not discriminate on the basis of a person's race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

Annual District Awards and Appreciation Banquet 2011

In March the District hosted its annual awards and appreciation banquet. Approximately 100 guests attended including farmers, landowners, business leaders and government officials. Everyone was treated to a steak dinner catered by Richard's of Bolivar.

District Chairman Allen Verell presented the District's Outstanding Cooperator Award to Manning Farms. Accepting the award was Kenny Manning who was joined by his wife Sharlene, their son Dustin and wife Deanda, their daughter Shey and husband Joseph, and Kenny's father, Darrell.



In the last two years he has worked with the District and NRCS to install 10,000 feet of diversions, and four pipe drop grade stabilization structures. Last year he enrolled 340 acres in the EWP FPPE program. Under the EWP program he will allow cropland along the Forked Deer River floodplain on his farm to revert back to its natural floodplain hydrology. This spring he breached several feet of levies along the river and has established a stand of bottomland hardwoods on 113 acres and switch grass on 130 acres. This spring our honoree installed two cattle panel drop grade stabilization structures and 800 feet of diversions.



Jamie Evans, manager of the Ames Plantation in Grand Junction was the feature speaker. Mr. Evans discussed the history of Ames Plantation as he focused on the cultural history of the many farms purchased to form the 18,000 acre plantation. Jamie's presentation included pictures of Cultural Resource Day held each October at Ames.



The pictures included the many restored log cabins and buildings on the plantation's grounds. Mr. Evans' presentation told the story of the Stencil House, an early 18th century house originally located in Wayne County. The house was donated to and relocated to Ames Plantation where it is in the process of being restored.



Jim Nance with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and Craig Ellis with the Natural Resources Conservation Service summarized the highlights of the last year and discussed what farmers, landowners, and the District can expect during the coming year as it relates to their respected agencies.



The Districts appreciates its banquet sponsors. They include Farm Credit Services, Mercer Gin, Mid-South Farmers Co-op, BancorpSouth, Bemis Gin, Farm Bureau Insurance, Farmers Gin Humboldt, First State Bank, R & J Feed Supply, Syngenta Crop Protection, Tennessee Tractor, Sydney David Florist, and Four Seasons Nursery.



Madison County Farmer Wins State Award

In January District Cooperator Brad Tinsley of the Mercer community was recognized by the Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts as Tennessee's Conservation Farmer of 2010. Brad received the award in January at the TACD annual convention held in Nashville. Each of the state's 95 soil conservation districts can nominate a farmer for the award. Brad was nominated for the award by the Madison County SCD as the District's Outstanding Cooperator for 2009. Brad advanced to the state competition after



receiving the top honor at the area and divisional levels. The award, sponsored by TACD and Farm Credit Services, serves to bring attention to the conservation work of farmers across Tennessee. Brad is the grandson of W.D. Pope and the late Betty Pope, and is the son of Sam and Elizabeth Tinsley. Brad and his wife Heather Duncan Tinsley have two children; Taylor Autry and Samuel Broden. Congratulations Brad!

New Employees



When you visit the District office or call you will likely see a new face at the front desk and hear a new voice over the phone. That new face and new voice will be our new office secretary Mrs. Mary Beth Flowers. Mary Beth joined the staff in October. She is a graduate of Southside High School and a lifelong resident of Madison County. Her husband Mack is an officer for the Madison County Sheriff Department. They have one son Hunter. Please welcome Mary Beth.



Another new face you may see this summer is that of Ms. Deirdre Orr. Deirdre is one of 101 employees recently hired by NRCS who are training to fill administrative positions with NRCS. As part of her training she will be spending 3 months in our office learning field office procedures. Deirdre comes to us from Milwaukee and is a graduate from Tennessee State University. Please welcome Deirdre to Jackson-Madison County.

Farmland Legacy Workshop

www.farmlandlegacy.org

The University of Tennessee is partnering with TDA, Tennessee Farm Bureau, The Land Trust of Tennessee, USDA Rural Development, and Edward Jones Financial Services to conduct a workshop at the West Tennessee Research & Education Center on Airways Blvd. in Jackson on August 10th from 8:30 a. m. till 3 p. m. The workshop will aid farmers and agricultural landowners with estate planning, retirement planning, and much more. Deadline for registering is August 3rd. For more information and to register please call Amy Elizer or Sammy Elgin at 731-668-8543 or Chuck Danehower at 731-635-9551.



Conservation Cost-Share Programs Available

NRCS & TDA provide funding for conservation work to address erosion and water quality under the EQIP and ARCF programs. Practices include gully control structures, livestock watering facilities, grass establishment, cross fencing, winter cover crops and others. Contact the District or the NRCS field office. It is best if you sign-up before October 1st.



CRP - FSA has an on-going sign-up for certain CRP practices. These practices include filter strips, riparian forest buffers, bottomland hardwoods, upland bird habitat field borders, and STAR. CRP provides funding to take land out of production and establish it to soil conserving, wildlife friendly plantings which include grasses, forbs, and trees. Funding includes cost-share for establishment costs and an annual rental payment of up to \$157 per acre. Contact the FSA office.



WRP – NRCS has an on-going sign-up for purchasing easements to convert certain cropland back to wetlands through the establishment of bottomland hardwoods. Easement acquisitions for Madison County are currently \$2,560/acre for crop and pasture land and \$1,480/acre for woodland. Contact the NRCS field office.



Feds Feed Families Food Drive



Several Federal departments have pledged to collect 2,000,000 pounds of food this summer. USDA employees have set a goal to collect 500,000 pounds. The efforts are part of the Feds Feed Families Food Drive which has been held the last two years and runs through the month of August. The drive was initiated to offset the severe shortage of non-perishable food at food banks that often occurs during the summer months. This shortage coincides with the months when kids aren't in school where they have access to school nutritional programs. Individuals and civic minded groups are encouraged to donate to food banks during the summer months and are welcomed to participate in the Feds Feed Family Food Drive. Anyone wishing to participate can drop off non-perishable food items at the NRCS field office, 313 N Parkway, where it will be weighed then taken to the local food banks.



A message from Brad Denton

Conservation Compliance



I want to remind all farmers participating in any USDA farm program that USDA-NRCS is required to conduct a status review on a randomly selected group of farms each year to confirm that the conservation farm plans are being followed. In the past the reviews were conducted by staff within the county. This coming year the reviews will be conducted by staff from other counties. Most all upland crop ground is required to either be no-tilled or planted to a winter cover crop such as wheat. As I have crisscrossed the county this spring I have noticed several fields that appear to have been conventionally planted. Most all upland, if conventionally planted, requires a winter cover crop to meet conservation compliance. Such fields with no winter cover must have a minimum of 30 % ground cover at planting to meet conservation compliance. Please check your conservation farm plans and be mindful of these guidelines. Please contact me if you have any questions about conservation compliance or your conservation farm plan.

Thanks,

District Conservationist, USDA-NRCS