

Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission
MIDDLE SOUTH GEORGIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS as of June 2022

Wesley Griffin, Ben Hill (E)
Joseph K Phillips, Ben Hill (A)
Dan Niewoehner, Brooks (E)
Adam Rowland, Brooks (A)
Thomas Coleman, Colquitt (E)
Preston Jimmerson, Colquitt (A)
Randy Ellis, Crisp (E)
James Farrow Baker, Crisp (A)
Bob Martin, Irwin (E)
Donald McWhorter, Irwin (A)
Darrell Hart, Thomas (A)
VACANT Thomas County
Grady M. Thompson, Jr., Tift (A)
Brian Ponder, Tift (E)
Alex Sumner, Turner (A)
Ross Kendrick, Turner (E)
Keith White, Worth (E)
Chris Young, Worth, (A)

GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Leanne Hopper, Regional Program Manager - Southwest Georgia

GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Michelle Boone, Conservation Manager - South Georgia

Middle South Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District

Annual Plan of Work – FY 2023

7/1/22 -- 6/30/23

District Identity:

The Middle South Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District was constituted as an agency of the State Government by the authority and under provision of the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District Law of 1937 on March 16th, 1939. The Board is made up of farmers, landowners, and land-users that are dedicated to the conservation, development, and protection of natural resources. The District comprises Ben Hill, Brooks, Colquitt, Crisp, Irwin, Thomas, Tift, Turner, and Worth Counties. Two supervisors from each county, one elected and one appointed, serve on the eighteen-member Board.

Meetings are held quarterly at the USDA Service Center in Tifton, Georgia on a Wednesday at 2 pm with date/time and agenda posted 24 hrs prior to the meeting. Public is encouraged to attend. Demonstrations, tours, and special meetings are held periodically with proper notification given as to time and location.

Major Objectives:

This Annual Plan of Work establishes the major objectives for the Middle South Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District for fiscal year 2023. The following objectives will be planned, developed, and implemented under partnership with the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts.

1. **Natural Resources Conservation** – Promote the conservation treatment of all natural resources including soil, water, wildlife, and other related resources. Work with government agencies and conservation organizations to assist in planning, developing, and implementing conservation programs. Provide local direction and priorities for government technical assistance.
2. **Conservation Education** – Educate the public on the importance of conservation. Work with conservation groups in planning, developing, and implementing seminars, programs, contests, etc. that are used for conservation education.
3. **Public Relations and Information** – Work to create public awareness of District conservation programs, objectives, and activities through the news media to inform the public on conservation issues and concerns.

4. **Watershed Inspections and Maintenance** – Work with GSWCC to carry out watershed inspections and maintenance in the District to prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, control floods, and assist in maintaining the navigability of rivers in the District.

Action Items:

Natural Resources Conservation

- Assume leadership role (local work groups) in setting priorities, ranking applications, and awarding funds for federal and state funded conservation programs.
- Sponsor, conduct, and participate in demonstrations, tours, and field days to acquaint farmers and land-users with methods for protecting soil and water resources.
- Manage the use of the District's conservation tillage equipment and demonstrate methods for implementing conservation farming. Promote and publicize rental equipment to farmers and land-users in the District.
- Assist land-users to apply best management practices that provide conservation benefits to soil, water, wildlife habitat, etc.
- Work with the Georgia Forestry Commission to assist landowners with establishing pine trees on marginal cropland.
- Work with local units of government to consider planning/zoning issues that involve the acquisition of farmland for development in the District.
- Provide technical assistance to evaluate soil and water resources for proposed public facility sites.
- Provide soil information with interpretations to developers for their use in developing an Erosion & Sediment Control Plan.
- Work closely with local issuing authorities in implementing their Erosion & Sediment Control Ordinance by providing technical assistance and education.
- Review and approve Erosion & Sediment Control Plans for developments within the jurisdiction of local issuing authorities as deemed necessary under The Erosion and Sedimentation Control Law of Georgia.
- Assist any interested issuing authority in obtaining a memorandum of agreement between themselves and the District so that they may conduct in-house review of their erosion and sediment control plans.

Action Items:

Conservation Education

- Sponsor at least two students from each county in the District to attend the Natural Resources Conservation Workshop at ABAC.
- Assist school curriculum advisors by providing natural resources conservation books, booklets, curriculum guides, and instructional seminars.
- Host an annual Irrigation Workshop highlighting newest irrigation technologies and practices.
- Work with other groups to conduct workshops for control of feral hogs.
- Present information on soil and water conservation for presentation to schools, civic

clubs, churches, etc.

- Sponsor or assist in sponsoring 4-H, FFA, or other youth organizations in conservation related activities.
- Purchase and distribute Soil and Water Stewardship Week materials to educate the public of the need to manage and protect soil and water resources.
- Manage and expend funds made available through private, local, state, and federal sources in such a way as to promote natural resources conservation and conservation education.

Action Items:

Public Relations and Information

- Pay dues and take an active role in the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts and the National Association of Conservation Districts. Assist in sponsoring individual Supervisors to attend activities of these organizations. Maintain membership (pay dues if necessary) to other professional organizations that promote goals similar to the District.
- Work closely with other agencies and organizations (Pine Country Resource Conservation & Development Council, Farm Service Agency, UGA Cooperative Extension Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, Department of Natural Resources, Warner Robins Air Force Base, National Wildlife Federation, River Keepers and other related groups) to coordinate conservation program activities in the District. Encourage each agency or organization to attend board meetings, and to keep the District informed on available conservation programs.
- Keep the public informed of conservation programs that are available through the local, state, and federal agencies. Sponsor and conduct meetings to inform groups and individuals of particular conservation needs.
- Develop and distribute an Annual Report on District accomplishments at the end of the fiscal year.
- Purchase and/or replace District boundary signs, as needed.
- Prepare and distribute news articles on District programs and activities, i.e. newspapers, television and radio stations.
- Invite elected officials (local, state, federal) to District functions in order to make them aware of conservation concerns, programs, and accomplishments.
- Seek outside sources of income to strengthen and support District activities and programs.
- Manage District financial and material resources to meet its goals in an efficient and productive manner, and as prescribed by state guidelines.