



REGION II NEWSLETTER

Georgia Soil & Water Conservation Commission

SPRING
2023

Protecting & improving soil & water through education, assistance, & oversight, GSWCC helps local conservation districts, landowners, & governments wisely use & maintain the soil & water resources for all Georgians.

THE PROMISES OF SPRING —Jennifer Standridge, Region II

“Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn.” – Lewis Grizzard

Spring is a time for new beginnings and I am happy to announce that Region II will now issue a quarterly newsletter. We hope to provide you with information on activities taking place within other districts as well as statewide events. Each issue will include an Erosion & Sediment Control Corner written by Stuart Suttle, as well as district news and highlights on page 2. This month’s issue provides information on the various agencies and the roles they play in district activities.

We look forward to sharing our newsletters with you. If you have any updates or news that you would like to share, please contact Stuart or myself.



Jennifer Standridge,
Conservation Regional Manager
Jennifer.standridge@gaswcc.ga.gov



Stuart Suttle,
Resource Specialist
Stuart.suttle@gaswcc.ga.gov

ROLES & PARTNERSHIPS:

Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission —
GSWCC is a non-regulatory Georgia State Government agency dedicated to protect, conserve, and improve soil and water resources. Due to additional funding, regional offices were able to be reimplemented in 2023. Region II covers the districts listed at the top of this newsletter and their office is located at 4310 Lexington Rd., Athens. Regional staff provide technical support and guidance to SWCDs, Local Issuing Authorities, and community members with concerns about soil and water quality.

Partnering Organizations:

The following groups are not state government or federal government agencies. They play integral roles in the success of the SWCD’s. This is not an all-inclusive list, as many districts and counties have unique local organizations.

Georgia Association of Conservation Districts—
GACD is a non-profit membership based organization that provides outreach support opportunities for the SWCD’s located in Georgia who have purchased a membership.

National Association of Conservation Districts—
NACD is a non-profit membership based organization that supports districts across America, through advocacy, education, and partnerships.

Resource, Conservation, and Development Councils—
RC&D’s focus on four areas: land conservation, water management, community development, and land management. They have a high degree of independence to determine and address community needs from providing safe drinking water to administering soil and water education grant opportunities, and many things between.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Gwinnett County SWCD will hold a Soil & Water Conservation Conference on April 20 from 8:30-5pm at the Sugar Hill Eagle Theatre. Theme will be the *The Economics of Ecology: Innovative Solutions to Urban Conservation*. The cost is \$50 to attend and lunch is included. For more information or to register, visit www.gwinnettswcd.org or email : Jennifer.standridge@gaswcc.ga.gov

Natural Resources Conservation Workshop (NRCW) will be held July 11-15 at ABAC in Tifton. Registration is open now through May 1. Apply online at www.abac.edu.nrcw



Erosion Control Corner....by Stuart Suttle

Regions II has been busy this year assisting municipalities, agronomists, and private landowners alike with their erosion and hydrologic concerns and needs. In conjunction with our Urban Lands Department, we have conducted three overviews for local cities and counties. These overviews are designed to help the municipalities address and proactively tackle any issues they may be having with erosion and sediment control from land disturbing activities. We continue to work with citizens that notice issues in their area and pass along our reports to the governing entity or GA EPD.

DISTRICT & REGION HIGHLIGHTS

Across All Districts/Regional Office:

- Several new supervisors have been elected or appointed and we are excited to welcome new faces to the team. We’re also grateful for the dedication of reelected/reappointed supervisors.
- It’s always a crappy experience when septic tank issues arise and there is a general lack of knowledge about maintenance needs. To that end, Commission employees have been working on organizing septic tank health workshops for districts who may be interested in holding one in their area.
- GSWCC is in the planning process for a Small Farm Conference to be held November 16-17 at Unicoi State Park & Lodge in Helen, GA. More details and information about registration to come.

Broad River

- Honored winning FFA teams from Banks County on National Titles
- Honored winning FFA teams from Madison County on State Titles
- Supported Fescue Field Days, Beef Cattle Workshops, school gardens and purchased a drone for local extension agents to use.

Columbia County

- Purchased conservation themed books for all school libraries in the district.
- Will hold feral swine workshop in partnership with Lincoln and McDuffie Districts
- Sponsored middle school team to compete in Envirothon.

Dekalb County

- Supported pollinator gardens at Mason Mill Park and SANDS Pre-school
- Held meeting with Local Issuing Authority to discuss responsibilities

Gwinnett County

- Began Junior Supervisor/District Youth Ambassador program with high school environmental clubs
- Participated in Gwinnett Co. Schools Career Fair
- Will hold a Soil & Water Conservation Day in April

Hall County

- Holding a poster contest for elementary students
- Will hold an Urban Agriculture Workshop in July

Lincoln County

- Will hold a 5th grade Farm Field Day on May 4th and an 8th grade Farm Field Day on May 22
- Holding an essay contest “What Does Agriculture Mean to Me” - Top 2 winners will receive \$500 each
- Will hold feral swine workshop at Lincoln County Ag Center in partnership with McDuffie and Columbia Districts

McDuffie County

- Will hold feral swine workshop in partnership with Lincoln and Columbia Districts.
- Holding a poster contest for elementary grades and a photo contest for high school students.

Oconee River

- District Supervisors will participate in Ag Day at Statham Elementary School
- District is planning a Nutrient Management Workshop.

Stephens County

- Recently donated use of their facility (Kimsey Environmental Education Center) for Georgia Envirothon to hold a workshop.

Upper Chattahoochee River

- Held annual Minister’s Meeting
- Supervisors will take a tour of UNG Appalachian Studies Center in June.

AROUND REGION II:

The Georgia Envirothon Competition was held on March 15 at Magnolia Springs State Park in Millen, GA



West Region Winners:

- 1st Gilmer County
- 2nd Paulding County
- 3rd Etowah High School

East Region Winners:

- 1st North Oconee
- 2nd White County
- 3rd Boy Scouts, Columbia Co.

Overall State Competition Winners

- 1st Gilmer County
- 2nd Paulding County
- 3rd North Oconee

Region II Employees Attend Bale Grazing Workshop

Jennifer & Stuart learned the latest pasture health practices by attended a bale grazing workshop held by NRCS in Wilkes County.

