

Loam on the Range

ACSP Highlight | Livestock Exclusion Fencing

The North Carolina Agricultural Cost Share Program helps address nonpoint source pollution by providing technical and financial resources through a voluntary, incentive-based program designed to improve water quality through the installation of various best management practices (BMPs) on agricultural lands directly involved with agriculture production.

Livestock exclusion fencing is a system of permanent fencing installed to exclude livestock from streams and critical areas not intended for grazing to improve water quality. Benefits may include reduced soil erosion, sedimentation, pathogen contamination and pollution from dissolved, particulate, and sediment-attached substances.

Who is Eligible?

Landowners of an existing agricultural operation that has been operating for more than three years.

How does ACSP work?

The Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District is accepting applications! Applications are ranked based on resource concerns identified in Chatham county. If you would like more information or wish to apply, please contact us at (919) 542-8240.



Completed Livestock Exclusion Fencing



Completed Livestock Exclusion Fencing

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“The principles of building healthy soils are the same everywhere—you have to stop tilling the soil and switch from a monoculture crop rotation to one with a diversity of crops that should include cover crops”

-David Lamm, NRCS

Cover crops can help increase your soils organic matter.

Experts Talk Soil Health

Written and produced by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service

When it comes to water, cover crops give more than they take, expert says

It's a fair question. Why would farmers want to plant a cover crop that uses up water? But David Lamm, a soil health expert with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, says it's what those cover crops give – not what they take – that's the secret.

“By using diverse annual cropping rotations and cover crop combinations increase soil organic matter. And for each 1 percent in organic matter, there is a 25 percent increase in water holding capacity and up to 30 pounds an acre more of available nitrogen,” he said.

In a recent survey by the Conservation Technology Information Center, 600 farmers affected by the drought of 2012 reported an average increase of 14 bushels of corn per acre and five bushels more of soybeans per acre where they had a cover crop as compared to none.

Lamm said that while it's true cover crops use some water in the soil profile to grow, they simultaneously improve the soil structure by building soil aggregates, providing armor for the soil surface, and recharging the water in the soil profile through increased infiltration.

“By using cover crops, no-till and crop rotations, farmers are finding that their soil actually has more available water for their cash crops when those crops really need it,” he said. “So those covers actually help protect farms against weather extremes like drought.”

If you are interested in renting one of our no-till drills or learning more about cover crops and how to manage your soil, please reach out to us at (919) 542-8240 for more information.

VAD Benefits

Landowners belonging to a VAD will not be required to connect to County water or sewer. Any assessment fees will be held in abeyance, without interest, unless and until the property is connected.

No governmental agency may condemn any interest in participating farmland without requesting a public hearing to ensure full consideration of the impact of that action upon agricultural, forestland or horticultural land.

Farms enrolled in the VAD may benefit from higher ranking in Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District cost share programs.

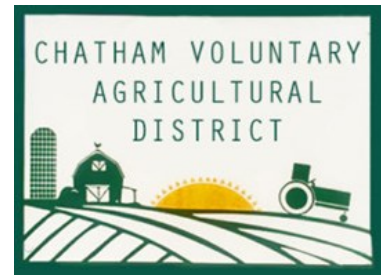
Signs identifying the VAD may be provided to qualifying farmland and placed on the property at the discretion of the owners (not within road right-of-ways).

VAD parcels and all property within one-half mile will be mapped by Chatham County GIS. This will inform the public and purchasers of real property that agricultural, horticultural, and forestry activities may occur in these areas. A notice will be posted at the Planning Department, Tax Office, and Agricultural Agencies in the county.

Voluntary Agricultural District Program

Our Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) Program is going exceptionally well. Chatham GIS recently created a new interactive map which will allow you to view parcels currently participating in the program. This new VAD map allows you to zoom in/out and explore all parcels within the county easily. You can access this map via this link: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9c8kh6>

The purpose of the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) Program is to promote agricultural values and the general welfare of Chatham County by increasing the identity of, and pride in, the agricultural community and its way of life. To encourage the economic and financial health of agriculture, horticulture, and forestry through protection from non-farm development and other negative impacts on properly managed farms.



The Voluntary Agricultural District Program is voluntary. Residents interested in finding out more can visit our website or reach out to us by phone at (919) 542-8228. We would love to hear from you!



Education News



EnviroScape Setup at Perry Harrison Elementary School Fall Fest | November 2021

Education Outreach | Fall Fest at Perry Harrison Elementary

The Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District was invited to Perry Harrison Elementary School's Fall Festival on November 6, 2021. Education Coordinator Brandy Oldham was thrilled to showcase our EnviroScape Watershed model to help educate students and parents about the importance of protecting our watersheds.

Fall Fest had a wonderful turnout, and though it was a bit chilly, the rain held out and everyone was able to enjoy themselves. Lots of students of all ages, along with their parents, stopped by to say hello and learn more about the colorful model. Brandy was able to discuss issues that many of us see in our daily lives; garbage on the side of roadways, construction areas with exposed soils, oils on roads and driveways, excess pesticides and herbicides used in our yards, and more. Students learned about ways that we can all pitch in and do our part to help the environment. Lots of students knew about issues and were excited to hear about how to help.

If you are interested in an EnviroScape demonstration please reach out. We would love to be a part of your event.

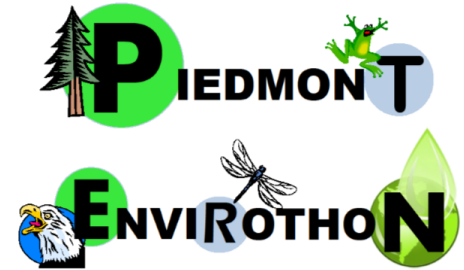
For more information about education programs or events, please contact Brandy Oldham at (919) 545-8440 or via email at brandy.oldham@chathamcountync.gov



Education News (Continued)

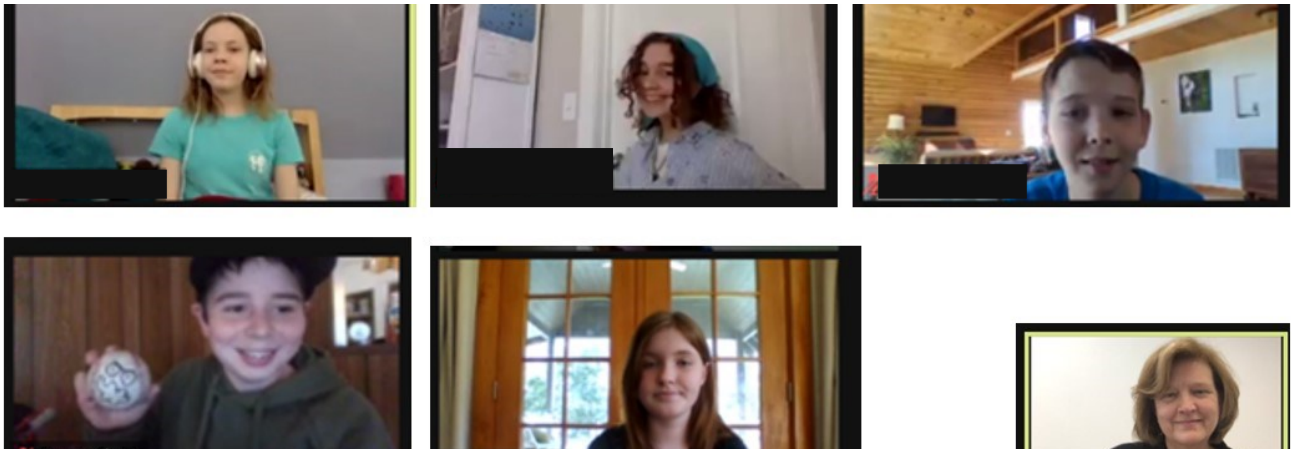
2022 Area 3 Envirothon

The Area 3 Envirothon will be held on March 15, 2022 at Elon University. Plans are still being made. We are hopeful that more teams will be able to participate this year. If you are interested in starting an Envirothon team there are a few things you need to know. Teams must consist of 3-5 members from the same school, non-traditional school, or youth organization; such as scout groups, 4-H, science, or Envirothon clubs. Middle school Envirothon teams include grades 5 through 8. High school Envirothon teams include grades 9 through 12. All teams must have at least one adult advisor. Team advisors will guide students through meetings, studying, field trips, and more throughout the year in preparation for competition.



Sponsored By: Area 3 Soil and Water Conservation Districts

If you would like to know more about starting an Envirothon team, please reach out to Brandy Oldham at (919) 545-8440 or via email at brandy.oldham@chathamcountync.gov Resources are available to help you!



Margaret B. Pollard Middle School | 2021 Area 3 Envirothon Winner

What is Envirothon?

Going 30 years strong, the NC Envirothon is an exciting natural resource education program designed to challenge students in an interactive, outdoor competition where middle and high school teams (consisting of 3-5 students) are tested in areas of Wildlife, Forestry, Aquatic Ecology, Soils and Land Use and Current Environmental Issues.

The Envirothon program is an effective educational tool, capable of supplementing environmental education both inside and outside the classroom.

Education News (Continued)

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation Contest Deadline Updates

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District announces extended deadline for Conservation Contest entries. Posters and essays may now be submitted as late as February 14th 2022. Students interested in submitting an entry for our 2022 contest may do so by dropping off their poster or essay, with the appropriate information attached, in our lobby at 1192 US 64 W Business, Pittsboro, NC 27312. Our lobby is located on the west side of the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center.



Any public, private, Charter, or homeschooled Chatham County student in grades 3 through 6 may enter our poster contest. Students in grade 6 may enter our essay contest. Details and guidelines are available on our website, www.chathamcountync.gov/swcd or by calling Brandy Oldham, Education Coordinator, 919-545-8440.

District News

Historical Aerial Imagery Now Available Online!

Residents can now view historical aerial imagery online through Chatham County's GIS Portal, <https://gisservices.chathamcountync.gov/historicalimagery/>. Aerial images are available dating back to 1955 in most areas of the county. Use the search bar at the top left to view specific parcels or address points. Use the slider at the bottom left to navigate through years available.

If you have any questions please reach out to us, 919-542-8240. If you have issues accessing the images/maps please reach out to Chatham County GIS, 919-545-8473.



Cost Share Programs

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District is always accepting applications for our cost share programs. We can provide financial and technical assistance to Chatham County land users. Please contact us for more details at (919) 542-8240.

The **North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP)** is designed to address water quality issues on agricultural lands throughout the state. Common "Best Management Practices," or BMPs for short, include Livestock Exclusion Systems, Nutrient Management Practices, and Sediment Management.



The **Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)** is set up based on the same procedures and outlines of the ACSP and offers similar water quality improving practices, but on non-agricultural lands. Typical BMPs include: Backyard Rain Gardens, Riparian Buffer for nutrient reduction, and Critical Area Planting.

The **Agriculture Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP)** is designed to identify opportunities to increase water use efficiency, availability and storage and in some cases help fund BMP to conserve and protect water resources. BMPs in this program include irrigation ponds and irrigation wells.



Chatham SWCD Mission

To ensure the wise use of our natural resources, soil, water, air, plants and animals by providing technical and educational services to land users.

Important Dates

December 23-27, 2021: Christmas (Office Closed)

December 31, 2021: New Year's Day (Office Closed)

January 17, 2022: Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday (Office Closed)

February 14, 2022: Deadline for Conservation Contest Entries

March 15, 2022: Area 3 Envirothon at Elon University

April 15, 2022: Good Friday (Office Closed)

District Supervisors:

J. Lynn Mann, Chair
Johnny Glosson, Vice Chair
Rich Hayes, Secretary
Keith Stanley, Treasurer
R. Edward McLaurin, Member

District Staff:

Susannah Goldston, District Director & Environmental Specialist
Brandy Oldham, District Administrator & Education Coordinator

NRCS Staff:

JaBioas Glenn, NRCS Soil Conservationist
Diana R. Irizarry, NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist
Kenneth Payne, NRCS Civil Engineering Technician
Tiff Wei, NRCS Civil Engineer

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our programs and services.

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

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Suite 200
Pittsboro, NC 27312

(919) 542-8240

Visit us on the web at
www.chathamcountync.gov/swcd

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