

Loam on the Range

ACSP Highlight | Grassed Waterway

The North Carolina Agricultural Cost Share Program (ACSP) 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.

A Grassed Waterway means a natural or constructed channel that is shaped or graded to required dimensions and established in suitable vegetation for the stable conveyance of runoff to improve water quality. Benefits may include reduced soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution from dissolved and sediment-attached substances.

Who is Eligible?

If you are a landowner or renter of an existing agricultural operation that has been operating for more than three years, you are eligible to apply for the North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program.

How does ACSP work?

The Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District is accepting applications! Applications are ranked based on resource concerns identified in Chatham County. Please contact Joe Trimnal by phone (919) 545-8353 or email joe.trimnal@chathamcountync.gov to apply.

In This Issue

- ACSP Highlight
- No-Till Drill Rentals
- VAD Program
- 2023 Envirothon
- Education News
- District News
- Cost Share Programs
- Important Dates
- District Information



Completed Grassed Waterway

No-Till Drill Rentals

Summer Cover Crops

Excerpts: <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/summer-cover-crops> and <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/plantmaterials/etpmctn12917.pdf>

Cover crops may be used to reduce wind or water erosion by establishing cover after a minimal residue crop, to use up excess nutrients in the soil profile, for weed suppression, to provide nutrients for the next crop, to increase carbon sequestration and improve soil structure. Cover crops may be used on all lands needing vegetative cover for natural resource protection and improvement. They are an excellent tool for helping to improve soil health.

To get the maximum benefit from cover crops, they need to become an integral part of your cropping system. Whether you grow just corn and soybeans, or you have a more diverse rotation that includes vegetable crops and/or livestock and manure, there are opportunities to include cover crops in your production system. When you select a cover crop, make sure it provides benefits that meet your farming objectives.

Cover crops are grasses, legumes, forbs or other herbaceous plants that are established for seasonal cover and conservation purposes. Cover crops are planted in late summer or fall around harvest and before spring planting of the following year's crops. Common cover crops used in North Carolina include legumes such as cowpea, sunnhemp, velvetbean and non-legumes such as buckwheat, pearl millet, and German millet.

Chatham Soil & Water has two no-till drills available for rental to help with cover crop plantings. If you are interested in renting one of our no-till drills please reach out to Joe Trimnal at (919) 545-8353 or joe.trimnal@chathamcountync.gov Our calendar can fill up quickly during common planting seasons so reach out early if possible.



“Out of the long list of nature’s gifts to man, none is perhaps so utterly essential to human life as soil.”

-Hugh Hammond Bennett

Haybuster 77C No-till Seed Drill

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.

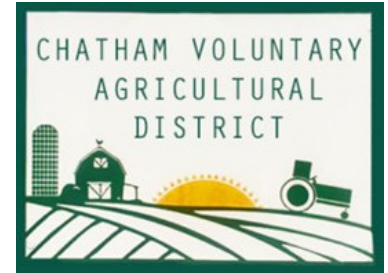
Signs identifying the VAD may be provided to qualifying farmland and placed on the property at the discretion of the owners (not within road right-of-ways).

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

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.

Qualifying farmland must be a bona fide farm, located in an unincorporated area, agree not to develop or use parcels for purposes outside of farm-use, and manage for highly erodible land (HEL) if necessary.

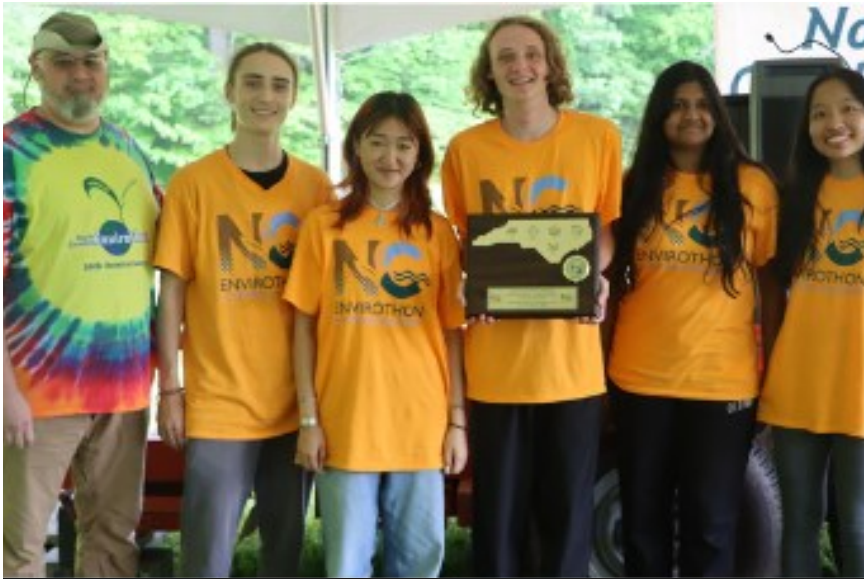


The Voluntary Agricultural District Program is a voluntary program. The term of the agreement is ten years, however, a landowner may revoke this agreement at any time by notifying the Agriculture Advisory Board in writing.

Residents interested in finding out more can visit our website or reach out to us by phone at (919) 542-8228. Residents may also apply online: <https://arcg.is/0TGCTv>



2023 Envirothon



2023 NC Envirothon Winner—Subchronic Exposure

The **NC Envirothon** was held April 28th and 29th at Cedarock Park in Burlington, NC. Although no teams from Chatham County placed to move on to the National Envirothon competition, everyone had a great time! Wake County team Subchronic Exposure (pictured above) placed first and will advance to the National Envirothon competition held in July in New Brunswick, Canada. Good luck!

For more information about forming an Envirothon team, or for information about our education programs please contact Brandy Oldham at (919) 545-8440.

What is Envirothon?

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.



Students listen to a presentation from a NC Park Ranger during the Area 3 Envirothon.

Education News

Resource Conservation Workshop

Chatham County was able to sponsor two high school students to attend the 2023 Resource Conservation Workshop. The RCW will be held June 25-30 and we hope to include updates in our Fall newsletter!

Conservation Contest Winners Announced

Chatham County Soil & Water received numerous entries this year for our conservation contests! Public speaking, poster, and essays. Christian Hartlaub took first place in our 2nd grade poster contest. Kyle Stinson took first place in our high school public speaking contest. Maddie Sparrow won first place in our high school essay contest with Matthew Sullivan taking second place. Maddie, Kyle and Christian went on to compete at the Area 3 contest. Maddie placed first with her essay. Kyle also placed first in public speaking and Christian received an honorable mention with his poster entry. Maddie and Kyle continued to the state level contest. Kyle finished in second place for the high school public speaking contest. Maddie took home first place in the high school essay contest. Congratulations and thank you to all our winners and those who participated!



Chatham SWCD 2023 Poster Contest Winner Christian Hartlaub



Creek Geeks Field Day

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District hosted our second annual Creek Geeks Field Day on April 23rd. We had a great turnout this year! Participants were able to search for aquatic macroinvertebrate in the tributary at Boling Lane Park. We also did a trash clean up and two of our participants assisted with planting several Joe-Pye-weed plants in the buffer to fill in some empty spaces (see photo to the left).

Chatham County Student Receives Careers in Conservation Scholarship

CCCC student Samantha Andrews received a Careers in Conservation Scholarship from the NC Foundation for Soil & Water Conservation. Congratulations Samantha!

District News

Chatham County's Spring Ag Fest Was A Huge Success!

The Chatham County Spring Ag Fest on March 25, 2023, was a success with a great crowd in attendance in spite of intermittent rain throughout part of the event. Spring Ag Fest is a celebration of Chatham County's agriculture, forestry, and natural resources. Visitors enjoyed over 75 indoor and outdoor exhibits highlighting local farms, farmers' markets, sustainable agriculture, agricultural support and advocacy, agribusiness, beekeeping, livestock, forestry, green industry, wildlife, conservation, and much more. Visitors enjoyed watching several events at the Livestock Arena, including a Parade of Breeds for Beef & Dairy Cattle, Sheep & Goats, a barrel racing demonstration, and games for the kids. Debbie Roos posted photos from Ag Fest online:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/debbieroos/albums/72177720307086293/with/52777886038/>



We had lots of visitors at our Soil & Water booth!



Folks loved seeing the antique tractors. Photo by Debbie Roos.

This event was made possible by the collaborative efforts of the NC Cooperative Extension Chatham County Center, Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center, Chatham County Farm Bureau, Chatham County Government, Chatham Soil & Water, Farm Service Agency, and the NC Forest Service. Thank you to everyone helping make this year's Ag Fest a success!

Next year's Spring Ag Fest is scheduled for March 23,

Cost Share Programs

The 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) 545-8353.

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

July 4: Independence Day (Office Closed)

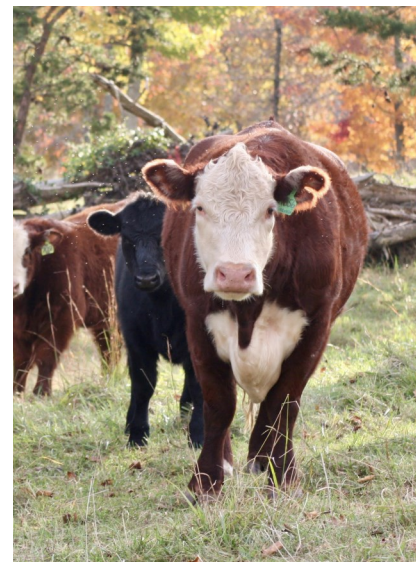
September 4: Labor Day (Office Closed)

November 10: Veteran's Day (Office Closed)

November 23: Thanksgiving (Office Closed)

November 24: Thanksgiving (Office Closed)

December: 25-27: Christmas (Office Closed)



District Supervisors:

J. Lynn Mann, Chair, Elected
Johnny Glosson, Vice Chair, Elected
Rich Hayes, Secretary, Elected
Keith Stanley, Treasurer, Appointed
Mike Sturdivant, Board Member, Appointed
Henry Outz, Associate Supervisor

District Staff:

Susannah Goldston, District Director & Environmental Specialist
Joe Trimnal, Soil Conservation Specialist
Brandy Oldham, District Administrator & Education Coordinator

NRCS Staff:

Vacant, NRCS Soil Conservationist
Olivia Plant, NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist

Contact Us

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

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

1192 US 64 W Business
Suite 200
Pittsboro, NC 27312

(919) 542-8240

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

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Chatham Soil & Water Conservation District

1192 US 64 W Business, Suite 200
Pittsboro, NC 27312

In accordance with Federal Civil Rights law U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Civil Rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior credible activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).