

Annual Report July 1, 2012—June 30, 2013

Gulf Coast Soil and Water Conservation District

comprising Calcasieu and
Cameron Parishes



National Association of Conservation Districts

About the District

Gulf Coast SWCD was formed in 1945, and is a legal subdivision of the Louisiana State Government which is responsible for the conservation of soil and water resources. It is governed by 3 elected and 2 appointed supervisors. **Doug Miller, Louie Barbe III, and Jim Paul Dupont** are elected, while **William Hardeman, Jr. and Harold Aymond** are appointed by the Louisiana State Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC). The Board has appointed 2 associate supervisors, **Cynthia LeBlanc** and **Dezere Richard**, who donate their time to assist the board and to give input to district activities. Dr. Harold Aymond resigned in October 2012 from the Board of Supervisors; henceforth, the Louisiana SWCC appointed Ms. Cynthia Leblanc to fill his position.

The monthly Board meetings are

Award presented to the District this fiscal year:

2012 LACD Auxiliary's 1st Place Award
for Outstanding Soil and Water Stewardship District Programs

held on the third Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. in the Lake Charles Field Office located at 1400 Gerstner Memorial Drive, Lake Charles. The public is invited to attend.

The goals of the District are to coordinate conservation activities and educational programs, and to provide technical assistance to landowners and units of government on the use of soil, water, and related resources.

The District Officers for July 1, 2012—June 30, 2013 are as follows:

Jim Paul Dupont

Chairman

Doug Miller

Vice-Chairman

Louie Barbe III

Secretary-Treasurer

The District has four full-time employees:

Patti Busby

District Secretary

Celina Yentzen

Office/Program Assistant

Jaden Ardoin

Josh Soileau

Vegetation Technicians



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Pictured above are Board Members and Associates from left: Dezere Richard, Doug Miller, Billy Hardeman, Jim Dupont, Beau Barbe, Cynthia LeBlanc, and Harold Aymond

District's Partnership with USDA NRCS

Since 1935, **USDA's NRCS** (Natural Resources and Conservation Service originally called the Soil Conservation Service), has provided leadership in a partnership effort to help America's private land owners and managers conserve their soil, water, and other natural resources.

Partnerships, like the one with conservation districts, expand the reach and depth of conservation on the land. Along with conservation districts like Gulf Coast SWCD, the NRCS puts cooperative conservation to work in an effort to "**Help the People Help the Land.**" The

NRCS staff providing technical assistance at the Lake Charles Field Office for this FY includes:

Frank Chapman

District Conservationist

Mary Beth Guillory

Soil Conservationist

Eric Jones

Soil Conservation Technician

Earth Team Volunteers

play an important role in helping NRCS help the people help the land. The District has recruited **13** volunteers who logged **99** hours of service this fiscal year.

Thanks Volunteers!

Conservation Statistics

"If there's one thing I'd want to be remembered for, it's passion and

The District, with technical assistance provided through the NRCS, has been active in addressing natural resource concerns with landowners and land users in Southwest Louisiana during this fiscal year. A summary of this assistance follows:

Number of District Cooperators	2234
New Cooperators	15
Number of customers assisted	3381
Number of EQIP contracts funded	17
Total EQIP dollars obligated	\$533,836
Master Farmer	3 plans
Acres of land with conservation plans written	34,845

Acres of cropland with conservation applied to improve Soil Quality	3,338
Acres of land with conservation applied to improve Water Quality	18,529
Acres of land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency	3,491
Acres of grazing land w/ conservation applied to protect/improve resource base	8,186
Acres of forest land w/ conservation applied to protect/improve vegetation	399
Acres of non-federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality	17,885
Acres of wetlands created, restored, or enhanced	15,396



NRCS's Student Intern, Ryan Johnson and Soil Conservationist, Andrea Bridgewater stop for a picture during a field spot check

Conservation Practices Installed to Treat Natural Resource Problems

Access Control	160 acres	Herbaceous Weed Control	203 acres	Rotation of Supplmt/Feeding Areas	228 acres
Access Road	3,324 feet	Integrated Pest Management	3,530 acres	Shallow Water Development/Mgmt	4,251 acres
Brush Management	746 acres	Irrigation Land Leveling	3,415 acres	Tree/Shrub Establishment	75 acres
Conservation Crop Rotation	92 acres	Irrigation Water Management	2 acres	Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	256 acres
Critical Area Planting	7 acres	Monitor Key Grazing	260 acres	Upland Wildlife Habitat Mgmt	705 acres
Fence	32,777 feet	Nutrient Management	2,816 acres	Water Well	2
Fire Break	43,525 feet	Pipelines (livestock)	5,468 feet	Watering Facilities	2
Forage Biomass Planting	195 acres	Pond	3	Wetland Enhancement	7,879 acres
Forest Stand Improvement	55 acres	Prescribed Burning	329 acres	Wetland Restoration	7,517 acres
Grade Stabilization Structure	2	Prescribed Grazing	2,680 acres	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Mgmt	11,693 acres
Grazing Mgmt for Wildlife Habitat	260 acres	Residue Management	55 acres		
Heavy Use Area Protection	2 acres	Riparian Forest Buffer	7 acres		

Coastal Revegetation Planting Program

The District actively participated in the **2012 – 2013 District Vegetative Planting Program** with the **Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration (OCPR)** and **Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF)** in the restoration and conservation of coastal



wetlands. This fiscal year the district installed five projects that consisted of planting and monitoring a total of **52,000** linear feet of shoreline protection, **17,500** linear feet of interior marsh vegetative plantings, and a total of **17,500 plants**, which consisted of the following plant species: 5,000 Bitter Panicum (*Panicum amarum*), 3,000 California Bulrush (*Schoenoplectus californicus*), 1,000 Marshhay Cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), 1,500 Saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), 1,000 Seashore Paspalum (*Paspalum*

vaginatum), and 6,000 Smooth Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*). Gulf Coast SWCD Vegetative Technicians, **Jaden Ardoin** and **Josh Soileau**, oversee the program.



Above: Black Lake Terrace Tops 2012 Vegetation Project where 17,500 linear feet of Seashore paspalum, Saltgrass, and Marshhay cordgrass was planted atop the terraces located in Cameron Parish.

Information and Education

"Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land." - Aldo Leopold

The District has a very outstanding and active Information/Education Program. During this FY, the District has sponsored 35 program activities reaching 486 students and 246,758 citizens many of which are educators. From April 28—May 5, 2013 the District sponsored Soil and Water Stewardship Week with the theme being "Where does

your Water Shed?" During this week 25 student activity booklets, 25 activity sheets, 25 bookmarks, and 20 posters were distributed. Throughout the year, the District stays active in communicating with area educators to encourage them, to keep them informed of conservation activities and to provide assistance in teaching conservation.



Above: The Grand Lake FFA Chapter partnered with NRCS/Gulf Coast SWCD for their 8th Annual Tree Seedling Sale. NRCS/Gulf Coast SWCD was very grateful for all their help and hard work.



Other Information/Education and Outreach Projects

POSTER CONTEST—This FY the District held its 3rd Annual *Poster Contest* in October 2012 using the theme of 2012 Soil and Water Stewardship Week, "Soil to Spoon". There were 34 participants from Kindergarten—9th Grade from 7 area schools, St. Margaret Catholic School, Immaculate Conception, F.K. White Middle School, Moss Bluff Elementary, S. J. Welsh Middle, J.I. Watson Elementary, and J.I. Watson Middle School.

Winners were as followed:

Category: Kindergarten - 1st Grade

1st Place - Ilijah Greene (1st G) - J.I. Watson Elementary

Category: 2nd - 3rd Grade

1st Place - Emma McCall (2nd G) - Immaculate Conception

2nd Place—Eowyn Greene (3rd G) - J.I. Watson Elementary

Category: 4th - 6th Grade

1st Place - Alexandra Albrecht (6th G) - F.K. White Middle

2nd Place - Alissa Stout (4th G) - Moss Bluff Elementary

3rd Place - Sam Boullt (6th G) - St. Margaret's Catholic School

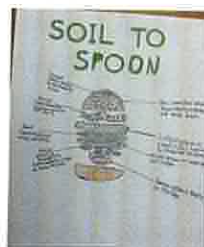
Category: 7th - 9th Grade

1st Place - Andrew Coe (7th G) - St. Margaret's Catholic School

2nd Place - William Albrecht III (8th G) - S.J. Welsh Middle

3rd Place - Taylor Quibodeaux (7th G) - St. Margaret's Catholic School

Each participant received a certificate and ribbon for entering and winners were given monetary awards and ribbons.



The District's 8th Annual **Tree Seedling Sale** **January 23-25, 2013**

More than 7,000 bare-rooted seedlings of 19 hardwood and fruit varieties were sold to 300 customers.



Above: F.K. white Middle School Student, Alexandra Elizabeth Albrecht's poster is presented. She was the 1st Place Winner in the 4th - 6th Grade Division for District Judging contest. Her poster was then sent to the State Judging Contest, where it was presented with **Honorable Mention**.

To the Left: The remaining Poster Contest Winners (in no particular order)

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www.gulfcoastswcd.la.nacdnet.org



"I believe sustainable use is the greatest propaganda in wildlife conservation at the moment." - Steve Irwin

Additional Accomplishments this FY

- Participated in the McNeese State University Career Days September 24, 2012 and February 25, 2013
- Sponsored the Area III FFA Forestry Contest on October 3, 2012 at Bayou Chicot, Louisiana
- Sponsored and actively participated in the LACD Auxiliary Poster Contest October, 2012 with 34 participants
- Participated in the meeting with the legislators on May 29, 2013 at the Capitol in Baton Rouge
- Participated in spreading the word to at least 442 women about the Louisiana Women in Agriculture Conference on August 30, 2012
- Coordinated with the Grand Lake FFA Chapter to organize and carryout the annual tree sale which lasted from January 25-27, 2013
- Hosted the Area IV meeting at Treasurers of Marilyn's which about 50 people attend on March 19, 2013
- District's website reached 19,870 people
- Sent out 12 News Releases/Ads to local newspapers which reached potentially 680,000 people
- Actively participated in the LACD Convention in Lafayette, Louisiana January 9-11, 2013
- Actively cooperates with NRCS to provide necessary training to new employees
- Actively invests in and supports the NACD, National Association of Conservation Districts, as the unified voice for conservation districts at the federal level
- Actively stays informed with farm bill legislation and corresponds with legislators concerning conservation issues

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

THANK YOU

Since conservation is indeed a "team effort," it would be impossible to meet the goals of the District without the help of the District's many partners. With this in mind, the District would like to take this opportunity to thank its partners, **NRCS, Imperial Calcasieu RC&D, LDAF, LNPI, Ducks Unlimited** and other **Federal, State and Local Agencies, Cooperators, Landowners, Land Users** and area **Educators** who assist the District throughout the year to accomplish its goals for conservation.



Career Day at McNeese State University