

Annual Report July 1, 2019—June 30, 2020

Gulf Coast Soil and Water Conservation District



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 **Bradley Pousson** and **Bruce Watts** are appointed by the Louisiana State Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC). The Board has appointed 1 associate supervisors, **Dezere Richard**, who donate their time to assist the board and to give input to district activities.

The monthly Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. in the Lake Charles Field Office located at 5417 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, 2019—June 30, 2020

are as follows:

Gene Doug Miller

Chairman

Bradley Pousson

Vice-Chairman

Louie D. Barbe III

Secretary-Treasurer

The District has three full-time employees:

Danielle Vail

District Secretary

Office/Program Assistant

Andrea Gorum

Brittany Manuel/Kaleb McDade

Vegetation Technicians

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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:

Macandol Parker

District Conservationist

Meghan Moser

Soil Conservationist

Earth Team Volunteers

play an important role in helping NRCS help the people help the land. The District has recruited 34 new volunteers who logged 278 hours of service this fiscal year.

Thanks Volunteers!

Conservation Statistics

"We abuse land because we see it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." - Aldo Leopold

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	2412	Acres of conservation <u>plans written</u>	24,980
New Cooperators	22	Acres of cropland with conservation applied to <i>improve</i> <u>Soil Quality</u>	3,891
Number of customers assisted	1737	Acres of land with conservation applied to <i>improve</i> <u>Water Quality</u>	12,637
Number of EQIP contracts funded	7	Acres of land with conservation applied to <i>improve</i> <u>Irrigation Efficiency</u>	468
Total EQIP dollars obligated	\$342,691	Acres of land with conservation system applied to <i>improve</i> <u>Ag. Irrigation Water Mgmt</u>	338
Master Farmer	0	Acres of grazing land w/ conservation applied to <i>protect/improve</i> <u>Resource Base</u>	5,430
		Acres of grazing land w/ a conservation system applied to <i>achieve a sustainable</i> <u>Forage-Animal Balance</u>	378
		Acres of non-federal land w/ conservation applied to <i>improve</i> <u>Fish and Wildlife Habitat Quality</u>	9,381
		Acres of conservation applied on land being <i>actively managed</i> for <u>Wildlife Habitat</u>	5,004
		Acres of forest land w/ conservation applied to <i>protect and improve</i> <u>Vegetative Condition</u>	3,731
		Acres of conservation applied to <i>improve</i> <u>Environmental Quality</u>	34,765

Conservation Practices Planned and/or Installed to Treat Natural Resource Problems

Brush Management	426 acres	Prescribed Grazing	80 acres
Critical Area Planting	13 acres	Watering Facilities	2 count
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management	1,990 acres	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	9,216 acres
Fence	12,037 feet		
Firebreak	17,357 feet		
Forest Stand Improvement	129 acres		
Grade Stabilization Structure	12 count		
Heavy Use Area Protection	3,136 sq feet		
Herbaceous Weed Treatment	102 acres		
Irrigation Land Leveling	525 acres		
Irrigation Pipeline	2,676 feet		
Livestock Pipeline	719 feet		
Pasture and Hay Planting	24 acres		
Prescribed Burning	175 acres		

Coastal Revegetation Planting Program

The District actively participated in the **2019 – 2020 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 program year the district planned and installed five projects that consisted of planting and monitoring a total of **57,946** linear feet of shoreline and used a total of **14,132 plants**, consisted of the following plant species: 6,857 Smooth Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora* "Vermilion"), 1,275 Bitter Panicum (*Panicum amarum*), 2,500 Seashore Paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*), 2,000 Marshhay Cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), 1,000 Seashore Saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), and 500 Gulf Bluestem (*Schizachyrium maritimum*).



Above: Sabine NWR (located in Cameron Parish), a 2019 Vegetation Project where 2,000 linear feet of smooth cordgrass was planted to attempt to vegetate an area within a previous recreated marsh to increase species diversity, increase stability, lessen erosion, create habitat for wildlife, and provide a seed source for natural regeneration.

Gulf Coast Soil and Water Conservation District

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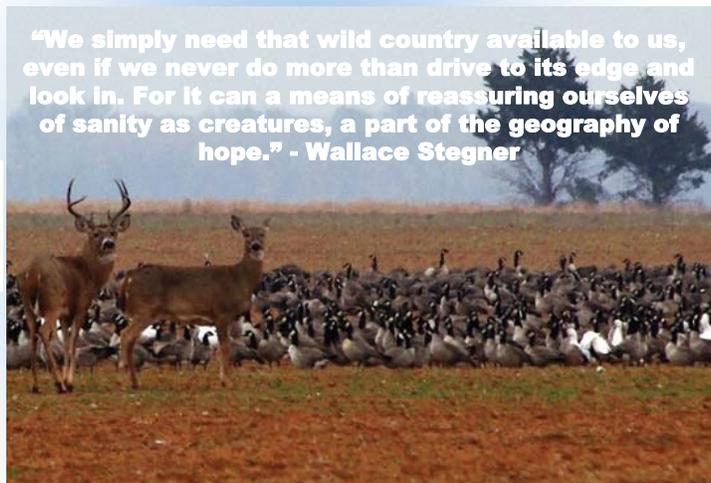
Conservation * Development * Self-Government



We're on the Web!
www.gulfcoastswcd.org



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www.facebook.com/gulfcoast.swcd



"We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope." - Wallace Stegner

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

Jane Goodall

Additional Accomplishments this FY

- Coordinated with the Grand Lake FFA Chapter to organize and carryout the annual tree sale which lasted from February 3– February 7, 2020
- District's website had over 54,000 hits
- Actively participated in the LACD Convention in Lafayette, Louisiana January 8-10, 2020
- 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



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, LDAF, 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.