



Soil and Water Conservation District

Agricultural Services Building
4001 Cary Drive, Suite D
Raleigh, North Carolina 27610
Phone: (919) 250-1050

Wake County—a wonderful community where we work and play—where vibrant towns, in close proximity to beautiful farms and natural areas, make our work so important.

Wake Soil and Water Conservation District
Protecting our natural resources since 1965

Get involved with your Conservation District

Contact us if you would like to....

- Join the *Friends of the Wake District*
- Join the VAD Advisory Committee
- Volunteer at the Soil and Water Conservation office
- Attend the Wake SWCD Board of Supervisors meetings
- Volunteer with Big Sweep
- Serve on any of the following Board Committees:

Keeping the Farm workshop
Farm and Food Council
Outreach and Communication

Call 919-250-1050 for more information



More Than Just Dirt

Cecil is the North Carolina State Soil, and for good reason. Cecil soils make up

about 1,600,000 acres in North Carolina. About half of this acreage is cultivated, while the rest is used for pasture or forest. **As a service to the citizens of North Carolina, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture provides FREE routine soil testing. Soil tests determine the nutrient content and pH levels of a soil, and make recommendations for fertilizer and lime application based on the plant being grown.**

Sample boxes and forms are available from: Wake District office at 4001D Cary Drive Raleigh, NC or the NCDA&CS

Agronomic Services Division
Office at 4300 Reedy Creek Road, Raleigh NC 27607.

Voluntarily Ag Districts Display Pride in NC Agriculture

Sign up today to participate in the Wake County **Voluntary Agricultural District program (VAD)**. You can join 44 agricultural, forestry, and horticulture landowners on 5,638 acres who are identifying primary farm communities and increasing community pride by joining forces as agricultural districts. Unlike conservation easements, which are permanent, the VAD program, which is administered by the Wake County VAD Advisory Committee, is voluntary and non-binding. In addition to an attractive sign identifying your land as a VAD, notification of the presence of VAD will be posted in the register of deeds office and other county offices. This notification helps to inform any

purchasers of real estate property to expect certain agricultural activities, in order to prevent conflicts between VADs and non-farm landowners nearby. Landowners belonging to VADs also will not be assessed for water or sewer systems operated by participating units of government. Although a VAD must consist of 100 acres or more, two or more qualifying farms within one mile of each other may join together to form a VAD.

Forestry and agricultural landowners are encouraged to apply to participate in existing VADs, in order to increase the sense of community in agriculture.

Wake County Voluntary Agricultural District



For more information, or to receive an application, please call Dale Threatt-Taylor at 919-250-1068.

WAKE COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT
(919)250-1050

We're one the Web!
www.WakeSwcd.org

What We Do:

The Wake Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is here to assist landowners and land users in managing soil, water, plants, and wildlife effectively. In addition to dedicated technical assistance, financial assistance is also provided through state and federal programs to support the implementation of best management practices to protect the land of Wake County and all that it supports.

Who We Are:

Board of Supervisors
Thomas Dean, Chair
Bill Cole, Vice Chair
Laura Parker, Sec-Tres
Marshall Harvey
Jenna Wadsworth

Staff:

Natural Resource Conservationists
Teresa Furr
Teresa Hice
Larry Petrovick

Environmental Educator
Sheila Jones

NRCS District Conservationist
Matthew Kinane

Division Director
Dale Threatt-Taylor

Concerning Conservation

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Cost-share Grants to Assist Farmers with On-farm Food Safety Efforts

Two new cost share grants offered by the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will assist with the costs of water analysis and independent certification of an operator's good agricultural practices.

"Both of these grants help farmers with their on-farm food safety efforts," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "I am glad we were able to secure these USDA funds to assist our growers. Farmers can apply for both grants, which will be available on a first come, first served basis."

The Water Analysis Cost Share grant program will reimburse growers up to \$200 for certified laboratory analysis of irrigation and/or packing house wash water for the presence of generic E.coli bacteria. Growers can be reimbursed for one water test or multiple tests

throughout the year.

The Good Agricultural Practices Certification Assistance Program, which covers up to \$600 for independent audits of a farm's GAP or good handling practices. To be eligible, growers must have a third-party audit from an approved government agency or company that verifies GAP or GHP efforts, the audit must be conducted in 2011 and the grower must submit an application to participate in the program prior to the audit. The audit can be for farm review, field harvest and field packing activities, packing house facility, storage and transportation, and trace back.

For more information or to obtain an application for the Water Analysis Cost Share grant program or contact Kevin Hardison at (919) 707-3123, or kevin.hardison@ncagr.gov.

For more information or to obtain an application for the GAP Certification Assistance Program contact Shirley Nicholson at (919) 707-3136, or shirley.nicholson@ncagr.gov.

Wake County Strawberry Farm



Spring Big Sweep Removes 7,670 lbs. of Trash from Watershed

Volunteers came together all across Wake county for the Spring 2011 Big Sweep and removed a total of 7,670 lbs of trash from the waterways and public spaces of Wake County in March and April 2011. The biannual event, which takes place every Spring and Fall, drew 240 volunteers to sites across 5 Wake County towns. From Morrisville to Wendell, and points North and South,

volunteers proved that a committed group of citizens giving just a little of their time can have big results. A big thanks to all the volunteers and the zone captains who helped organize the efforts. The 25th annual Big Sweep will take place in **September and October of 2011**, and volunteers are always needed to help clean up our waterways and green spaces.



Email sbjones@wakegov.com for a Fall 2011 schedule. *Students from NC State pose for a picture on the mound of trash they helped collect from Reedy Creek*

Farming Operations Exempt from Forced Annexation



Farms close to the state's growing urban populations will now have protection from forced municipal annexation. Forced municipal annexation is a process by which municipalities may expand their city limits into areas not already incorporated, and levy taxes in exchange for city services. Bona fide farm operations are also exempt from the practice of Extraterritorial Jurisdiction—the exercise of a town or city's powers in a defined area outside of city limits.

This bill defines the term "bona fide farm purposes", and prohibits the annexation or exercise of Extraterritorial Jurisdiction of any operations which fall into this category.

For more information on whether you are exempt from forced annexation and Extra Territorial Jurisdiction, call Wake SWCD District Director Dale Threatt-Taylor at 919-250-1068.

Any of the following documents are considered evidence of a bona fide farming operation:
a. A farm sales tax exemption certificate
b. A copy of the property tax listing
c. A copy of the farm owner's or operator's Schedule F from federal income tax return
d. A forest management plan
e. A Farm Identification Number issued by the USDA Farm Service

Agricultural operations within the Falls Lake Watershed need to register with the local advisory committee by January 2012

Other Legislation Affecting Conservation

Conservation easements are an important tool to help private land owners maintain soil and water resources on their property. Senate Bill 309 was passed in order to ensure that conservation easements meet their intended goals. This bill gives the board of the SWCD the authority to establish and maintain a special fund to provide for the maintenance of current and future easements.

The Soil and Water Conservation Commission and the Division of Soil and Water Conservation are transferred from the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources to the Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer services. This was enacted with provisions not to interrupt any current services during and after the transfer. The impact of this transfer should not be visible to Wake landowners

The proposed \$1,197,834 reduction to the Ag Cost Share program, which provides financial assistance for the installation of practices to reduce soil erosion and water degradation, has been removed. This is good news because Wake County Traditionally uses 100% of its annual NCACSP allocation of Funds for Wake County Citizens.

Falls Lake Rules and Agriculture



This stream crossings construction, when finished, will allow animals to cross without eroding the soil or destroying the steambanks

The Falls Lake Nutrient Strategy, which became effective on January 15, 2011, sets standards for protecting the water supply uses of Falls Lake Reservoir by reducing the loading of phosphorus and nitrogen into the watershed.

What does this mean to you? Anyone who engages in agricultural operations in the Falls Lake Watershed,

produces crops or horticultural products (excluding trees) primarily for financial profit or engages in research activities in support of commercial production, or has any of the following live-stock operations, **must register with the local advisory committee by January 2012:**
 5 or more horses
 20 or more cattle
 20 or more swine not in a feedlot
 150 or more swine in a feedlot

120 or more sheep
 130 or more goats
 650 or more turkeys
 3,500 or more chickens
 Any combination that exceeds 20,000 pounds of live weight
You can register online at <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/swc/falls-nsw-registration> or call Larry Petrovick with the Wake SWCD at 919-250-1067

New Program Assists with Agricultural Water Needs

The North Carolina Agricultural Water Resource Assistance Program (AgWRAP) is a new cost share program in North Carolina to support the design and implementation of practices which increase water access, conservation, and efficiency of use. In the Spring of 2012, farmers and agricultural landowners who apply to receive this funding for approved projects can receive 75% of the average cost of installing these practices. Also,

limited resource or first time farmers who qualify can receive 90% of the cost for the installation of these practices. Conservationists at Wake Soil and Water Conservation District will assist landowners in the design and installation of projects as well as in the application for cost share. Projects which will be approved for cost share funds will increase water storage, availability, and efficient use for agricultural purposes, or will

conserve and protect water resources by decreasing pollution from runoff and erosion.

Contact a Natural Resource Conservationist in the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District today at 919-250-1050 to find out more about NC AgrWRAP



Cisterns up to 5000 gallons can be installed to collect rainwater from buildings and parking lots and be saved for irrigation

Apply Today for NC Agriculture Cost Share

The NC Agriculture Cost Share Program (NCACSP) is available to assist farmers who are interested in implementing practices which improve soil and water conservation. Best Management Practices (BMPs) can improve the efficiency and sustainability of your farming operation by reducing soil erosion, optimizing nutrient usage, and maintaining the water quality on your land and surrounding land. Conservationists at the Wake Soil and Water Conservation



Gully erosion can erode topsoil and leach nutrients, which can end up in the waterways and degrade water quality

District can offer guidance on the implementation of BMP's and help you apply for the Ag Cost Share Program, which can reimburse up to 75% of the costs of approved BMP's for your agricultural operation.

Contact the Wake District if:
 1. Land has been farmed for at least 3 years, and

2. There is a suspected soil or water quality issue: **919-250-1050**
Visit the following website for a list of BMPs which are approved for cost share: <http://www.enr.state.nc.us/dswc/pages/agcostshareprogram.html>

Conservation Plan Must be up to Date to Apply for USDA Programs

Beginning on October 1st 2011, all USDA Program applications will require an updated conservation plan in order to be considered for federal funding. A conservation plan is a tool to help assure the continued viability and efficiency of your land by maintaining the condition of the soil and water resources. Conservation plans are voluntary, and are developed to meet your unique needs

and goals. This is the first step to identifying the technical and financial measures which can be taken to maintain the productivity, sustainability, and profitability of your land. Conservation plans can be completed by a conservationist at the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District, and will be necessary to be considered for Environmental Quality Incentive Programs, Stewardship Programs,

Easement Programs, Community Conservation Assistance Programs, and other programs. **Please contact District Conservationist, Matt Kinane, at 919-250-1050 to schedule a review of your conservation plan.**

