

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- The Annual Meeting
- Conservation Expo Day
- Conservation Activities
- Pond Seining
- NRCS Programs

# Conservation Conversation

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

FALL/WINTER

## 2012 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held August 9, 2012 at Catfish Point in Wade, MS. The purpose of this meeting is to allow the membership to become acquainted with the District, its personnel, and its activities, and to give recognition to individuals and groups who have contributed their talents and efforts to the District during the year. It is the District's opportunity to say thank you to those people who make it successful.

After an informative presentation on "Wild Boar's" by Scott Alls the Wildlife Biologist from USDA/APHIS Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, the awards were presented.

(JCSWCD) Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District presented Virginia McLaughlin with the Conservation Education Award, McLaughlin teaches at the St. Martin Gifted Center.

James Dees was recognized as the Cooperator of the Year by Nikesha Wells of (NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Services.



# Conservation Expo Day

Today's children are tomorrow's adults. With this thought in mind, the District places conservation education as one of its primary objectives. We have found that one of the best ways to teach children is to allow them to enjoy the learning experience. On October 31st and November 1st, approximately 500 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students from schools across Jackson County were given an opportunity to do just that at the annual Conservation Expo Day. The purpose of the field day is to inform students how they can share in caring for our soil, water, and other natural resources. The field day is designed in a trail format with various agencies providing stops along the way. Several agencies participated in the two-day event. Jack Kelly lead the first stop with information on marine debris. The students learned about marine debris in gulf waters and trash on the beaches and the dangers associated with it. He explained how the items we use everyday can find their way to the gulf. The next stop was manned by Lance Middleton with the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The water cycle was discussed at this stop. Next Nikesha Wells and Chad Waldrup with the (NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service talked about soil and its importance. The students were taught that there are many different types of soil and not all soil is suited for certain uses. Barry Pessoney, Area Biologist, with (NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service manned the stop on wildlife. He explained the different facts about Mississippi's wildlife. The children enjoyed viewing the different animal skins and skulls. Jim Barnes, Area Forester, with (NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service spoke about our forests. Here the students learned the importance of our forests and some of the benefits derived from forestry products. Ronda Powell from Jackson County Solid Waste discussed recycling and why it is important to our environment. Jill Zednik from the Department of Marine Resources presented their program demonstrating the structures and the organs of a fish. Grand Bay Neer's Jennifer Buchanan demonstrated the point and non-point pollution by using the enviroscape. Debbie Hackler, Perry Myers, and Rita Rouse Hall from the Jackson County Farm Bureau talked about the importance of farming. Jan Barlow, a Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner organized the Nature Walk at this year's new location in Van-cleave. Mrs. Bess Moffatt was kind enough to take the time out to volunteer and assist Mr. Barlow with the walk. The children walked along the nature trail and discussed the various Mississippi plants with an informative booklet created by Jan Barlow. This year's event was made possible with the help of several agency representatives and volunteers. Among those participating in the field day were Department of Marine Resources, Grand Bay Neer, Farm Bureau, Harrison County Soil and Water Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Jackson County Solid Waste, Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District would like to thank Chevron for their sponsorship to make this event happen for the school districts in Jackson County.



# Around the County with Edward Galle



**Pictured is Barry Pessoney, Edward Galle, and Andy Grace Johnson**

Edward Galle, JCSWCD technician and Barry Pessoney, NRCS Area Biologist assisted Greta Thornton with a pond check. According to Barry Pessoney, Greta's pond had a healthy fish population.

The only suggestions made for the pond was to add a pier and a sand beach. The pond check process is called seining. And also the PH and alkalinity of the water is tested.

The purpose of seining a pond is to provide landowners information data on predator and prey ratio. Predator and prey species need to have their ratio and populations in balance to ensure a healthy pond environment. The biologist will provide a prescription to the landowner to ensure a healthy pond environment. The prescription may include: stocking rates, fertilization, weed control, gravel beds, piers, pond renovations, etc. The biologist may recommend harvesting so many pounds per acre if the pond is overstocked. If landowners would like to have their pond checked contact Edward at the Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District office @ 228-826-2482.



**Pictured is Andy Grace Johnson, JCSWCD Deputy Greta Thornton's grand-daughter.**

# St. Martin Gifted Center



On October 11th and 12th, the Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored Virginia McLaughlin's 5th and 6th grade gifted students with a garden for the Gifted Center at St. Martin. A school garden is a great way to educate our children about food production, nutrition, and the importance of soil and water. The children at St. Martin were able to get their hands dirty while planting their very own garden vegetables. The children enjoyed the demonstration of the enviroscape. If anyone is interested in one of the Districts' programs you may contact our office to schedule a program at your school or daycare!









**Nikeshia Wells, Soil Conservationist**

**Financial Assistance: We pay for Cogon grass treatment!!!!**

Our Conservation Programs are to help landowner meet challenges through technical, education, and financial assistance. We also use our program as an essential tool to encourage and promote good conservation stewardship for agriculture. We have spent over 70,000 dollars in Jackson County for Fiscal Year 2012 to landowner. Next year you could be in that number!!!!

**The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** is a voluntary conservation program administered by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. EQIP activities are carried out according to a plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice or practices to address the resources concerns through EQIP, agricultural producers may receive financial and technical help with structural and

management conservation practices on agricultural land. EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practice. These practices are subject to NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) technical standards adapted for local conditions. Practices include watering facilities, heavy use areas, fencing, nutrient management, pest management, pasture and hay land planting, tree planting, transitioning to organic farming, organic farming, high tunnel system, etc.

**Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW)** NRCS has formed a new partnership with the Department of Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) called Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) to accelerate wildlife conservation for targeted at-risk or listed species. NRCS is geographically unique; we have a broad delivery system to put conservation on the ground at the local level, across the entire country. With nearly two thirds of all species federally listed as threatened or endangered with populations on private lands, the ability to work with private landowners and target our conservation efforts can have a tremendous impact. This is partnership uses innovative approaches with farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to restore and protect priority habitat areas for seven specific wildlife species to include: New England cottontail, bog turtle, golden-winged warbler, gopher tortoise, greater sage-grouse, lesser prairie-chicken and the Southwestern willow flycatcher. This approach is a paradigm shift for the agency where we will look at species conservation on a broad scale.

**Working Lands for Wildlife has three primary goals:**

- Restore populations of declining wildlife species
- Provide landowners with regulatory certainty
- Strengthen rural economics through productive working lands.

The gopher tortoise is the target species in MS and an indicator of longleaf pine ecosystem health. Gopher tortoises require deep, well drained soils and an open understory that provides open sunny sites for nesting. Its burrows provide vital habitat and shelter for many endangered species.

For more detail of our programs can be discussed at your local Soil & Water Conservation office. Please feel free to contact us if we can assist you in anyway. We will make sure to answer any question or concerns.

## Arbor Day Annual

### Tree Give-away!!

In observance of Arbor Day, The Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District is sponsoring a tree give away. A limited number of trees will be available free to the public, on Arbor Day, Friday February 8, 2012, at the Singing River Mall, in Gautier, from 10:00 a.m. until the supply is exhausted. For more information, contact our office at : 228-826-2482



## Jackson County Soil & Water Conservation District

### Commissioners:

Benny Goff, Chairman

Jan Barlow

Wiley Gregory

Nick Elmore

### Deputies:

Rita Seward

Bobby Goldman

Greta Thornton

John Ford

### Employees:

Kathy Hamrick, Administrator

Edward Galle, District Technician

Lindsey Coleman, District Clerk

## ~Recipe of the Month~

Everyday Food, June 2005

### **Chocolate-Coconut Bars**

#### **(Samoa Bars)**

#### Ingredients:

3 cups finely ground cookies (12 ounces), such as graham crackers or chocolate wafers, or a combination

1/4 cup sugar

3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, melted

1 cup pecan pieces

1 cup semisweet chocolate chips or chunks

1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk

1 1/2 cups sweetened shredded coconut

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly splash a 15-by-10-inch rimmed baking sheet evenly with water, then line with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, stir together cookie crumbs, sugar, and butter until combined. Evenly press onto bottom and up sides of prepared baking sheet. Bake, rotating halfway through, until firm, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool, about 20 minutes.
3. Sprinkle cooled crust evenly with pecans and chocolate. Pour condensed milk over the top, spreading to cover completely (do not let it drip over the edges). Sprinkle with coconut.
4. Bake until coconut is toasted, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer to rack; cool completely. Trim edges, if desired, and cut into equal-size bars.

Fill out and Return to :

Jackson County Conservation District

P.O Box 5802

Vancleave, MS 39565

JACKSON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
and  
MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

- Individual \$10.00     Affiliate \$25.00 or more  
 Family \$20.00     Patron \$50.00  
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Conservation District**

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