

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Soil Science Division

Soil Survey Region 3—Mid-Atlantic and Caribbean Area



Richmond Hill, Georgia, Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Soil Survey Office

Annual Career Fair at Carver Elementary

Introduction

The annual Carver Elementary Career Fair has grown over the last 5 years. This year more than 1,000 students from two schools were taught the importance of maintaining and preserving our natural resources. They learned that NRCS assists land use managers in applying conservation practices and maintaining healthy environments to sustain and improve food and fiber production for our country.

February in Richmond Hill brings many excited elementary school students together to meet local professionals who share information about their careers. Some of the presenters are parents of the children, but many others are not. The diverse group of professionals includes police officers, military specialists, artists, real estate agents, bankers, lawyers, doctors, and scientists.

The staff of the Richmond Hill MLRA Soil Survey Office maintains a booth at the fair. The employees distribute pins, pamphlets, and posters and promote the professions in the Soil Science Division of the NRCS. Individuals speak to various grades about the specific duties of their position.



Nathan Johnson, soil scientist, Richmond Hill MLRA Soil Survey Office, describes the characteristics of a soil profile to a 5th grader at Carver Elementary School.



Purpose

This career fair provides an opportunity to promote public awareness of the overall roles of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil Survey Division, and to emphasize the roles of each profession in the division. It includes outreach to the community and exploration of collaborative projects, including those conducted by the schools and other organizations such as local, State, and Federal agencies. New and developing technologies that deliver soils information, such as Web Soil Survey, also are introduced to the students.

Key Outcomes

Many students are already showing a keen interest in science by the fifth grade. It is our hope that they will develop an interest in protecting the environment and one day will become leaders, scholars, scientists, and conservationists. An awareness of the careers with NRCS will ensure a pool of well-qualified scientists inherit the reins of the soil survey program in the future.

The students displayed a significant awareness of the human impact on the environment and the need to protect and enhance it. They now also know the role of the Soil Science Division in assisting individuals, land managers, and public servants in becoming better stewards of the land and its resources. In a few years, these students will be the leaders making decisions about the environment. For farmers to successfully produce food and fiber and conserve the soils in the future, new and more efficient conservation practices will be needed. What better way to achieve this than to inspire young people to become soil scientists?



Charles Lagoueyte, Richmond Hill MLRA Soil Survey Office leader, demonstrates a hydraulic soil probe and explains how soil surveys are conducted.



Some excited 5th graders who are potential future soil scientists.