



United States Department of Agriculture

Louisiana Conservation Update

June 2015

Growing a Legacy in Winn Parish

Story from the Field
Family Forestry Business Thrives in
Washington Parish

Soils Support Recreation

Projects • Successes • Partnerships



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On the Cover



Dr. Glen Melton is growing a legacy in Winn Parish. To learn more about Dr. Melton and his timber land, see pages 4 and 5.

The Conservation Update is distributed monthly by mail and e-mail.

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Notes from the State Conservationist

Forestry is a billion dollar industry in Louisiana. As a matter of fact, it is the #1 agricultural industry in the state. According to the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, 48% of the state is covered in forestland and of that, 62% is non-industrial, privately owned. This forest land provides valuable benefits to the state such as wildlife habitat for the Louisiana black bear, the red-cockaded woodpecker and many other species, as well as recreational opportunities such as hunting, hiking, and camping.

NRCS has always worked with private landowners to improve the overall health and productivity of their forest land. In this month's issue of the Louisiana Conservation Update, you will meet Dr. Glen Melton and learn how he is continuing the work of his father, grandfather and great-grandfather by growing a legacy for future generations in central Louisiana with the help of NRCS. You will also meet a father-son duo who own and operate a family forestry business in the Florida parishes.

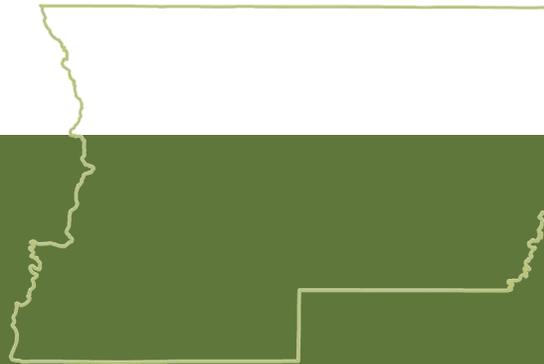


Also in this issue is an introduction to the Conservation Client Gateway, a brand new way to conduct business with NRCS. Private landowners and land users can now request conservation technical and financial assistance from NRCS via the internet. This does not change how we have traditionally conducted business, it simply adds an option for our customers. Our customers now have the option of saving time and money by making fewer trips to the local field office to take care of administrative tasks, such as signing forms and requesting assistance.

Although technology evolves and changes, our commitment to providing the best service possible to our customers remains the same. We are here for all of your conservation needs. Contact your local field office for more information on the technical and financial assistance we provide.

Kevin D. Norton
State Conservationist

Winn Parish Ag Facts



There are 179 farms in Winn Parish
24,960 acres of land is in farms
16.5% is in pastureland and 47.2% is forestland
Forestry is the #1 commodity of the parish

From: www.agcensus.usda.gov



“Doctoring animals is my vocation, but growing trees is my passion.”

Growing a Legacy in Winn Parish

Dr. Glen Melton is continuing to grow the legacy that his great grandfather started for future generations of the Melton family. Melton’s grandfather and mentor, Riley C. Melton, was one of the first certified tree farmers in Louisiana.

Melton grew up on the family farm in rural Winn Parish. After graduating from high school, he attended Louisiana State University (LSU) and majored in Animal Science. At the end of his freshman year, he saw an article in LSU’s newspaper, the Reveille, about LSU opening a veterinary school, and he knew that’s what he wanted to do. Melton was one of the 35

students that were admitted to the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine the year it opened.

During his third year of vet school, Melton’s father became disabled and the family had to make some decisions about the farm for the future. The family decided to convert areas of the farm that weren’t already planted with trees to timber land.

Upon graduation from vet school, Melton moved to Bastrop to begin practicing medicine and has now been there for 38 years.

Melton said he had always taken the timber land for granted. But in 1983, a storm moved across the state with powerful straight line winds that damaged all but a single tree on one tract. That event caused Melton to

decide it was his turn to step up to the plate.

“The tree farm became much more than just a place to hunt; it became a real valuable asset,” said Melton.

His interest in forestry, growing trees and the benefits that forest provides began to grow. As his passion for trees grew, so did his involvement in organizations such as the Louisiana Forestry Association where he has served on the board of directors.

Although already a conservationist and steward of the land, it wasn’t until six years ago that he learned about the technical and financial assistance that is offered by NRCS while at AgExpo in West Monroe.



... is my advocacy." - Dr. Glen Melton

Melton then contacted the local field office to learn more. A conservation plan was developed for the 620 acres of timber land he has in Winn Parish. With financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Melton has conducted a mid-story chemical release and prescribed burning.

"Being a good steward of the timber land is the #1 thing that's important to me," said Melton.

Because of this, Melton has also enrolled all of his property in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to improve upon his existing conservation systems. Through this program, he planted pollinator habitat to enhance wildlife habitat in his forest.

Melton enjoys spending time on his land and educating others about his passion. He recently hosted a field day to do just that.

Melton's children and grandchildren were not raised there like he was, so they do not have the benefit of knowing everything about the property like he did. However, Melton keeps a binder of information for each of his tracts that includes historical information, maps, and a general outline of the plans such as when it will be ready for the first thinning, second thinning and/or harvest.

Conservation of this priceless resource is always on his mind. He says, "The decisions I make today are not for me, but for my children and grandchildren."





2015
International
Year of Soils

Soils Support Recreation

The May theme “Soils Support Infrastructure” celebrated the major role soils play in where we live and work. This month we consider how soils support where we play – and surprisingly our mood.

With the beginning of the summer, people are regularly venturing outdoors to enjoy various hobbies, sports and vacation activities. Soil is a major player in all of these. If you’re a golfer, you may recognize how the soil has been manipulated for sand traps or water hazards or how the greens-keeper cares for the soil of the putting greens differently than the fairways to ensure the perfect putting opportunity. Maybe you have spent the spring trying to get the “dirt” out of baseball or softball uniforms, but the clay content that is so good at staining uniforms makes the best infields.

If you enjoy hiking or backpacking



through state parks and national forests, have you ever wondered about the location of hiking trails? Sure they may get you to points with the best scenery, but placement of the trails based on the soil is important for both safety of the hikers and durability of the trails. The same is true for designated ATV trails, which are located in places that will best hold up to motorized traffic with the least impact to the habitat.

Perhaps your outdoor activities are more leisurely in nature. There is nothing as relaxing for some as a beach vacation and lying on a beautiful stretch of white soil beaches. Maybe you refer to them as white sand, but really, aren’t you just lying in a big pile of soil? Or perhaps

you are an avid gardener, which could be recreation or work in your point of view. But recent studies have shown a surprising benefit in gardening or other general contact with the soil. Soil contains a bacteria, *Mycobacterium vaccae*, that acts as a natural antidepressant. When the bacteria comes in contact with your skin, it stimulates the release and metabolism of serotonin, much like popular medications such as Prozac™.



So whether you spend your leisure time racing cars on “dirt tracks”, going to the horse races, playing outdoor sports or just lying on a beach, soils support where you live, where you play and depending on how you play, your mood.

Story from the Field

Family Forestry Thrives in Washington Parish

Submitted by: Eddie Foster, District Conservationist,
Franklinton FO

James and Vance Rogers own a father-son forestry business in the northeast corner of Washington Parish in Angie, Louisiana. Together they have been in the forestry business for over 60 years.



They own and operate approximately 2,000 acres of timberland, consisting primarily of loblolly pine with a few acres of longleaf pine.

Hoping to improve the overall health and productivity of their timberland, the duo visited the Bogue-Chitto Pearl River Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and NRCS office in Franklinton, Louisiana, and requested a conservation plan.

The Rogers’ recently completed forest stand improvement by conducting a second thinning on this 20 year old loblolly plantation.

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, they were able to conduct prescribed burning after the thinning to eliminate the duff layer from the forest floor. This allowed fresh herbaceous vegetation to grow thereby providing wildlife benefits.



Visit your local SWCD and NRCS office to find out how the overall health and productivity of your timberland can be improved.

Helping People Help the Land



New Conservation Client Gateway

The Conservation Client Gateway is a new public website that allows ag producers secure ability to request conservation technical and financial assistance from NRCS. Conservation Client Gateway provides users with an alternative to work with NRCS via the internet as a supplement to in-person support. This system does not replace the time that a producer spends with the local conservation planner.

Through the Conservation Client Gateway, producers are able to :

- Request help on a natural resource issue or request a conservation plan on their land;
- Apply for financial assistance;
- Review and sign conservation plans and practice implementation schedules;
- Electronically sign key documents, such as program applications and contracts
- Request and track payments for

StrikeForce Initiative



Louisiana Update

for Rural Growth and Opportunity

July 27

Conservation Field Day/Soil Health Workshop

The Campti Field of Dreams will be hosting a conservation field day and soil health workshop on July 27, 2015, from 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM at the Campti Historic Museum located at 211 Edenborn Street in Campti, Louisiana. After a soil health presentation, participants will tour a farm located at 681 Campti Bayou Road in Campti, Louisiana.

completed and certified contract items;

- Request updates to customer profile information.

Step-by step instructions are available online at www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway. If you need additional help, personal assistance is available at (970) 372-4200.

Contact your local office for more information on this new way to work with NRCS.

NRCS Nominee, APC Construction, LLC from New Orleans wins National Award

Nominated by NRCS, APC Construction, LLC from New Orleans was recently named the Small Business Administration's HUBZone Contractor of the Year (Small Business Program Area). APC Construction, LLC is an 8(a) certified, HUBZone, and DOTD DBE certified construction company.

NRCS retained APC Construction, LLC to construct the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act PO-75 LaBranche East Marsh Creation Pilot Project in St. Charles Parish.

The event is FREE and open to the public. For more information about the field day, visit www.camptifieldofdreams.org or contact Donna Isaacs at 318-332-7791 or donna@camptifieldofdreams.org.

August 6

Bossier/Caddo Parish StrikeForce Meeting

Traiblazer RC&D is hosting a StrikeForce Meeting for Bossier and Caddo Parishes on Thursday, August 6, 2015 at 5:30 PM at the Booker Memorial Church located at 146 New Bethel Booker Road in Plain Dealing, Louisiana.

The company overcame many challenges to complete the contract on time. Because of the successful completion of this pilot project, the larger scale project estimated at \$32.3 million is currently being developed.

Upcoming Events

June 25-28

Louisiana Farm Bureau Convention

Visit the NRCS exhibit at the 93rd Annual Louisiana Farm Bureau Convention from June 25 - 28, 2015, at the New Orleans Marriott.

July 6

Annie's Project:

The next session of Annie's Project will be held at the Community Trust Bank in the Community Room, located at 1511 N. Trenton Street in Ruston, Louisiana. This workshop will take place over the course of five Thursday nights beginning on July 6th.

For more information or to register for the course, please call (318) 255-3554 or e-mail Annie's Project at dccross@agcenter.lsu.edu. Registration is \$75.00.

August 27

Webster Parish StrikeForce Meeting

Traiblazer RC&D will be sponsoring a Webster Parish StrikeForce meeting on Thursday, August 27, 2015, at 5:30 pm at the B.F. Martin Community Life Center located at 101 B.F. Martin Drive in Minden, Louisiana.



United States Department of Agriculture

Contact Our Offices

Visit our web site at:
www.la.nrcs.usda.gov

Parish	Field Office	Soil and Water Conservation District	Address	Telephone
Acadia	Crowley	Acadia SWCD	157 Cherokee Drive, Suite C, Crowley, LA 70526	(337) 783-5823, ext. 3
Allen	Oberlin	Allen SWCD	309 North 1st Street, Suite 1, Oberlin, LA 70655	(337) 639-4850, ext. 3
Ascension	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2259 Business Park Boulevard, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Assumption	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD	2259 Business Park Boulevard, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Avoyelles	Marksville	Avoyelles SWCD	629 Tunica Drive West, Marksville, LA 71351	(318) 253-9445, ext. 3
Beauregard	DeRidder	Calcasieu SWCD	597 Mahlon Street, Suite B, DeRidder, LA 70634	(337) 463-8555, ext. 3
Bienville	Minden	Saline SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Bossier	Benton	Bodcau SWCD	200 Burt Boulevard, Suite 101, Benton, LA 71006-4901	(318) 965-2185, ext. 3
Caddo	Shreveport	Caddo SWCD	1402 Hawn Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71107	(318) 676-3461, ext. 3
Calcasieu	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	5417 Gerstner Memorial Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 474-1583, ext. 3
Caldwell	Columbia	Boeuf and Dugdemona SWCD	7128 Highway 165 South, Suite 2, Columbia, LA 71418	(318) 649-2651, ext. 3
Cameron	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	5417 Gerstner Memorial Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 474-1583, ext. 3
Catahoula	Jonesville	Catahoula SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Claiborne	Minden	D'Arbonne SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Concordia	Ferriday	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	8331 Highway 84, Ferriday, LA 71334	(318) 757-2455, ext. 3
DeSoto	Mansfield	DeSoto SWCD	332 Lake Road, Mansfield, LA 71052	(318) 872-4949, ext. 3
East Baton Rouge	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	907 Florida Boulevard, SW, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 665-4253, ext. 3
East Carroll	Lake Providence	East Carroll SWCD	406 Lake Street, Suite C, Lake Providence, LA 71254	(318) 559-2604, ext. 3
East Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Evangeline	Ville Platte	Evangeline SWCD	205 Court Street, Ville Platte, LA 70586	(337) 363-6602, ext. 3
Franklin	Winnsboro	Northeast SWCD	616 Riser Road, Winnsboro, LA 71295	(318) 435-6743, ext. 3
Grant	Colfax	Grant SWCD	510 Main Street, Colfax, LA 71417	(318) 627-9903, ext. 3
Iberia	New Iberia	Iberia SWCD	2617 Northside Road, Suite 600, New Iberia, LA 70563	(337) 369-6623, ext. 3
Iberville	Addis	Lower Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1 South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
Jackson	Ruston	Dugdemona SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Jefferson	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Jefferson Davis	Jennings	Jefferson Davis SWCD	2003 Port Drive, Jennings, LA 70546	(337) 824-0975, ext. 3
Lafayette	Lafayette	Lafayette SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
Lafourche	Thibodaux	Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
LaSalle	Jonesville	LaSalle SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Lincoln	Ruston	D'Arbonne SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Livingston	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	907 Florida Boulevard, SW, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 665-4253, ext. 3
Madison	Tallulah	Madison SWCD	1900 Crothers Drive, Tallulah, LA 71282	(318) 574-4158, ext. 3
Morehouse	Bastrop	Morehouse SWCD	9604 Marlatt Street, Bastrop, LA 71220	(318) 283-7626, ext. 3
Natchitoches	Natchitoches	Natchitoches SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3
Orleans	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Quachita	Monroe	D'Arbonne/Boeuf River SWCD	2410 Old Sterling Road, Suite B, Monroe, LA 71203-2668	(318) 343-4467, ext. 3
Plaquemines	New Orleans	Plaquemines SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Pointe Coupee	New Roads	Upper Delta SWCD	180 East Main Street, New Roads, LA 70760	(225) 638-7746, ext. 3
Rapides	Alexandria	Rapides SWCD	3734 Government Street, Building C, Alexandria, LA 71303	(318) 473-7856, ext. 3
Red River	Coushatta	Red River SWCD	1311 Ringgold Avenue, Coushatta, LA 71019	(318) 932-4352, ext. 3
Richland	Rayville	Boeuf River SWCD	141 Industrial Loop, Rayville, LA 71269	(318) 728-4451, ext. 3
Sabine	Many	Sabine SWCD	570 Highway 171 By Pass, Many, LA 71449	(318) 256-3491
St. Bernard	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Charles	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Helena	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
St. James	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2259 Business Park Boulevard, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
St. John	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Landry	Opelousas	St. Landry SWCD	5832 I-49 North Service Road, Opelousas, LA 70570	(337) 942-2530, ext. 3
St. Martin	Lafayette	St. Martin SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
St. Mary	Franklin	St. Mary SWCD	500 Main Street, Franklin, LA 70538	(337) 828-1461, ext. 3
St. Tammany	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Tangipahoa	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
Tensas	St. Joseph	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	1223 Plank Road, St. Joseph, LA 71366	(318) 766-3502, ext. 3
Terrebonne	Thibodaux	Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
Union	Farmerville	D'Arbonne SWCD	501 Glory Road, Farmerville, LA 71241	(318) 368-8021
Vermilion	Abbeville	Vermilion SWCD	3221 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite H, Abbeville, LA 70510	(337) 893-5664, ext. 3
Vernon	Leesville	Calcasieu SWCD	205 North 5th Street, Leesville, LA 71446	(337) 239-2193
Washington	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Webster	Minden	Dorcheat SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
West Baton Rouge	Addis	Upper Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1, South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
West Carroll	Oak Grove	West Carroll SWCD	208 South Constitution Street, Oak Grove, LA 71263	(318) 428-9303, ext. 3
West Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Winn	Natchitoches	Dugdemona SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3

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