



United States Department of Agriculture

Louisiana's Conservation Update

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help the Land

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February 2014

PARTNERS in Conservation in their own words

Featuring
USFWS, NWTF, DU,
LSU AgCenter, and LDEQ

A cooperative partnership with local
Soil and Water Conservation Districts and
Resource Conservation and Development Councils (RC&D)

Projects · Successes · Partnerships



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

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On the Cover



The Pumping Plant and Irrigation System Efficiency Evaluation tests the efficiency of on-farm irrigation pumps. This conservation tool is offered by the LSU AgCenter in partnership with Ducks Unlimited (DU) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This partnership is one of many partnerships in Louisiana aimed at helping agricultural producers conserve and improve natural resources while ensuring sustainability. To learn more about conservation partnerships in Louisiana, see pages 4 and 5.



Follow us on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/LouisianaNRCS>

Follow us on Twitter: http://twitter.com/NRCS_Louisiana

Notes from the State Conservationist



The conservation partnership in Louisiana continues to grow and reflect the changes and needs of our diverse resource base, ag and forest producers, and our population. Within the vast network of conservation partners we have a broad range of expertise. Among the partnership's membership are biologists, foresters, economists, agronomists, plant scientists, wildlife specialists, range conservationists, and soil scientists representing private organizations; coalitions; and local, state, and federal agencies.

Ag producers are familiar with the "traditional" partnership between the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). NRCS and SWCDs have worked side-by-side for over 78 years helping farmers and ranchers conserve natural resources. Built around the objective of treating each acre of land within its needs and capabilities, NRCS and SWCDs work with each farmer, rancher, or forest land owner to build a conservation plan that works within their goals and objectives. You can see the footprints of success all across our wonderful state.

In recent years, new resource concerns have brought new conservation partners to the table. Featured in this issue of **Conservation Update** are a few of these partnerships. There are many others working to advance conservation and stewardship across our state. We hope to highlight others throughout the year. Each partner brings unique skill sets and resources to Louisiana's farmers and ranchers. In this issue, we have featured the LSU AgCenter, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Ducks Unlimited, and National Wild Turkey Federation.

Kevin Norton
State Conservationist
Louisiana



Soil Health *Ag Facts*

From: USDA NRCS Soil Health Key Points Fact Sheet. For more information on soil health, go to: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/>

What's critical about soil health now?

- World population is projected to increase from 7 billion in 2013 to more than 9 billion in 2050. To sustain this level of growth, food production will need to rise by 70 percent.
- Between 1982–2007, 14 million acres of prime farmland in the U.S. were lost to development.
- Improving soil health is key to long-term, sustainable agricultural production.

Speaking of Partnerships

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) partnered with the Cooperative Extension Service and the National Conference on Cover Crops and Soil Health in Omaha, Nebraska, to host over 200 simultaneous **Cover Crops and Soil Health Forums** across the United States. To read more about this partnership and Louisiana's forum, go to page 7.

Soil health matters because:

- Healthy soils are high-performing, productive soils.
- Healthy soils reduce production costs—and improve profits.
- Healthy soils protect natural resources on and off the farm.
- Healthy soils can reduce nutrient loading and sediment runoff, increase efficiencies, and sustain wildlife habitat.

PARTNERS in Conservation

Meet a few members of Louisiana's Conservation Partnership . . .
and find out why they partner with NRCS



Andy Dolan
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

"Habitat restoration via conservation programs is generally a win-win situation for the landowner, their children, and the taxpayer."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) provides technical assistance to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) in development of local policy for conservation programs and issues. USFWS also assists NRCS with determining land eligibility, ranking applications, and restoration planning within the Wetlands Reserve Program and performs a consultation role with Swampbuster (wetland mitigation) determinations. The Service occasionally piggybacks its Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program with USDA programs in cooperative habitat restoration as well.



Luke Lewis
National Wild Turkey Federation

"NWTF's new conservation initiative is *Save the Habitat, Save the Hunt!*"

The Louisiana National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) biologist and forester are dedicated to working in concert with NRCS employees, state and federal agencies, NGO's, and private landowners throughout the state to establish new partnerships to deliver conservation practices such as Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Activity Plans (CAP 142). Through the Longleaf Pine Initiative, longleaf pine ecosystem restoration and maintenance will be encouraged through NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program, private grants, and other USDA initiatives.



Alicia Wiseman
Ducks Unlimited

"What's good for rice is good for ducks!"

The Ducks Unlimited (DU) Rice Stewardship Program works to sustain rice production through stewardship of land, water and waterfowl resources. That makes for an easy partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and together we are reaching rice producers, raising the bar of conservation on production agriculture, and making a difference for producers, the environment, and wintering waterfowl. Rice and ducks go together, naturally . . . and so do DU and NRCS!



For more information about our partners . . .

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

http://www.fws.gov/lafayette/pfw_program.html

National Wild Turkey Federation

www.nwtf.org

Ducks Unlimited - Louisiana

<http://www.ducks.org/louisiana>

National Wild Turkey Federation

Ducks Unlimited

LSU AgCenter

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Conservationists

in their own words

habitat restoration . stewardship . helping agricultural producers . sustainability . improved water quality



Ernest Girouard
LSU AgCenter



Donna Morgan
LSU AgCenter



James Hendrix
LSU AgCenter



Allen Hogan
LSU AgCenter

“By becoming a part of Louisiana’s Master Farmer Program, Louisiana’s farmers are taking a progressive approach to ensure farm sustainability.”

Louisiana’s Master Farmer Program is a partnership of five agricultural entities —USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Louisiana State University Ag Center, Louisiana Farm Bureau, Louisiana Cattlemen’s Association and Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, which has the authority by law through the Commissioner of Agriculture to approve Master Farmer certification. The program focuses on helping agricultural producers voluntarily address environmental concerns as well as helping them enhance the production and resource management skills.



Beatrix Haggard
LSU AgCenter

“LSU AgCenter believes that sustainability is a combination of conservation and productivity.”

The LSU AgCenter is very excited with the current direction of cover crop research. What started out as a question from a producer has turned into a collaborative endeavor for Louisiana’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and LSU AgCenter to be able to better serve Louisiana producers. The warmer weather that is experienced in the mid-south makes it necessary to understand the potential for cover crops to improve crop yield, soil quality, and the environment—with an overall goal for producers to have a positive experience with NRCS cost share incentives.



Gwen Berthelot
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

“We are improving water quality for the citizens of Louisiana.”

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality’s (LDEQ) Nonpoint Source Program and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) collaborate by leveraging resources and funds to restore impaired water bodies caused by nonpoint source pollution from agricultural sources. Our goal is to monitor and document water quality improvement after placement of conservation practices which can lead to delisting and publication of success stories.



LSU AgCenter Master Farmer Program
https://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/environment/conservation/master_farmer

LSU AgCenter Northeast Region Office
http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/our_offices/regions/northeast

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
<http://nonpoint.deq.louisiana.gov>

Around the State

Nov 2013 and Feb 2014 Congratulations to Annie's Project Graduates

Ten women graduated in the first two classes of Annie's Project in Louisiana: Catherine LaCour, Morganza; Carlyn Morales, Glynn; Katie Ramagos, White Castle; Dana Fairchild, Port Allen; Beth Toups, Baton Rouge; Hali LeBlanc, Port Allen; Brianna Compton, Jennings; Mary Broussard, New Iberia; Nicolette Gordon, Baton Rouge; and Sunyani Gordon, Baton Rouge.

Annie's Project is an educational program dedicated to strengthening women's roles in the modern farm enterprise. Through six educational sessions, these women gained in-depth knowledge in risk assessments, human factors in farming, grain marketing, insurance for the family and farm business, crop insurance, farm programs, farm transition planning, financial statement, farm tax issues and accounting, legal issues, retirement planning and business planning.

The next session of Annie's Project will be conducted in Hammond, Louisiana in July. To find out more about Annie's Project or to register for the next session, contact Deborah Cross-Young, Annie's Project Louisiana State Coordinator, dcross@agcenter.lsu.edu or (225) 281-9470.

Annie's Project
Risk Management Education for
Farm Women

Jan 16

LaSalle SWCD Seedling Sale

The LaSalle Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) conducted its annual tree seedling sale on January 16, 2014. A record number of seedlings were sold this year— 5,400! Species sold included longleaf pine, crabapple, mayhaw, persimmon, bald cypress, native sweet pecan, cherrybark oak, white oak, sawtooth oak, live oak, nuttall oak, green ash, and river birch. For more information, call the LaSalle SWCD at (318) 992-2235.

Jan 31

Plant Science Workshop

On January 31, 2014, staff from the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center conducted a workshop in the Larose Upper Elementary school library to teach approximately 75 students and school staff the important role of native plants in conservation of our natural resources. Staff used conservation plants from the Plant Materials Center as part of the hands-on workshop.

Feb 3-7

Bogue Chitto-Pearl River Tree Seedling Sale

The Bogue Chitto Pearl River Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) hosted their annual tree seedling sale on February 3-7. This year, they sold over 1,200 seedlings. Species sold included ashe magnolia, chinquapin oak, crabapple, dogwood, sassafras, yellow poplar, and western mayhaw. For more information, call the Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD at (985) 839-5688, ext. 3.

Upcoming Event

Mar 18-20

State of the Coast 2014

The Natural Resources Conservation Service will exhibit at the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana's State of the Coast 2014 Conference on March 18-20, 2014, at the Ernest Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information, visit <http://stateofthecoast.org>.



Helping People Help the Land

From the Field

Conserving Water and Saving Money in Morehouse Parish

Chris Carter of Chris Carter Farms in Collinston, Louisiana, contacted NRCS' Bastrop Field Office to learn more about irrigation water management through the PHAUCET program.

The PHAUCET (Pipe Hole and Universal Crown Evaluation Tool) program was designed to calculate existing irrigation system performance and define alternatives for improving irrigation efficiency. PHAUCET assists farmers

determine the sizes of the holes in the polypipe that best distribute the available water. The program also helps farmers improve timeliness of watering fields having different row lengths.

NRCS employees in the Bastrop Field Office provided PHAUCET training to Mr. Carter, and now he uses PHAUCET in all of his fields. He is saving money and water by not applying more water than is necessary on his crops. He is so pleased with the results, he is also encouraging other producers in the parish to use the PHAUCET program.

Submitted by: Eran Robinson, District Conservationist, Bastrop Field Office



Feb 18 Cover Crops and Soil Health Forum

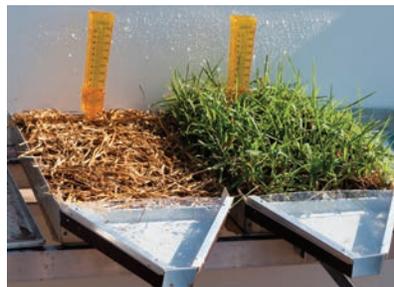
Alexandria, Louisiana

On February 18, 2014, a Cover Crops and Soil Health Forum was hosted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Alexandria, Louisiana. This forum was one of over 200 events conducted

simultaneously across the nation to promote conversations on cover crops and soil health. These events gave farmers and other agricultural professionals an opportunity to share their thoughts with other forum participants and engage in local conversations on cover crops and soil health. During Louisiana's event, NRCS conservationists discussed the

prospects for cover crops and soil health improvements and provided a demonstration of NRCS' rainfall simulator trailer.

For more information about cover crops and soil health, contact an NRCS office near you. See the back cover of this publication for a list of offices.





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	2438 Highway 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Assumption	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD	2438 Highway 1 South, 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) 664-1430, 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) 664-1430, 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	2438 Highway 1 South, 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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