

## Board of District Supervisors

Charles Davenport, Chairman  
C. Leroy Smith, Vice Chairman  
Tom Best, Secretary/Treasurer  
Thurston James, Member  
Bob Edwards, Member

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

# PITT SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Pitt County Agricultural Center, 403 Government Circle, Suite 4,  
Greenville, NC 27834 Phone: 752-2720

## Staff Members

Bryan Evans, District – Director  
Don Barker, NRCS – District Conservationist  
Carolyn Garris, District – Admin Assist/Ed Coord  
PJ Andrews, District – Resource Conservationist II  
Caroline Sisley, District – Resource Conservationist I

*It is our mission to provide the highest quality of service to all Pitt County citizens regarding the conservation of our natural resources through technical excellence, education and teamwork.*

<https://sites.google.com/site/pittswcd1963/>



*District Board pictured left to right:  
Charles Davenport, C. Leroy Smith,  
Tom Best, Bob Edwards, and  
Thurston James*

The Pitt Soil and Water Conservation District is a governmental subdivision of this State and is organized to exercise public powers under the provisions of the North Carolina Soil and Water Conservation District Law, Chapter 139 Article 1 as amended. The District works in conjunction with the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service and other agencies to provide a very comprehensive conservation program in Pitt County through technical services and environmental education.

## Additional Legumes Cover Crop Grant



The Pitt Soil and Water Conservation District received a grant through the North Carolina Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc., which was funded through Cotton Inc., to demonstrate the benefits of legumes for soil health. Cover crops are important for protecting the soil during fallowed periods from eroding as well as a great source for increasing organic matter. Many farmers in Pitt County use cover crops, but most are single species winter annuals. This grant allowed the District to include multiple species including legumes. A variety of Rye, Triticale, Clover, Winter Pea and Radish were

used for different benefits. The Rye and Triticale provided great biomass, the Clover and Winter Pea legumes provided nitrogen fixation and the radish provided deep soil penetration for the reduction of compaction and hardpan. Two workshops were held for producers to demonstrate the processes and benefits. The Soil and Water District has received an extension of the grant to see the effects of continued use of this type cover crop system.

## State Events Hosted

The Pitt Soil and Water Conservation District hosted two State events this year. The first event was the North Carolina Conservation Employees Training. Soil and Water Conservation resource specialists from across the state attended various indoor and outdoor conservation trainings. Highlights included survey training at the Alice Keene District Park, pond training on the grounds of the Boys and Girls Club in Winterville and seminars from local professionals. The event was held at the City Hotel and Bistro and there were approximately 150 in attendance.



The second event hosted, was the North Carolina FFA State Soils Judging contest. The host school, Ayden-Grifton High School, was a great setting for two days of in-field training and competition for over 300 students and advisors. Soils professionals were on hand to provide a day of interactive learning for students. The next day, they applied their soils knowledge in a team based competition to evaluate the soils on an undisclosed Pitt County farm.

## New District Employee

The Pitt SWCD welcomes Caroline Sisley to its staff. Caroline is the Resource Conservation Specialist I serving in the Cost Share Technician position.



## Conservation Highlights of 2014-2015

The district has been privileged to serve landowners and residents of Pitt County in the following ways:

- Addressed drainage and erosion problems by providing technical assistance and guidance to Pitt County landowners and land users
- Allocated \$476,023 through cost share programs to install soil and water conserving practices
- Allocated \$60,000 to increase agricultural water availability and decrease demand on public water supplies
- Assisted with confined animal operations on Waste Management Systems so they can operate in an environmentally safe manner

Abundant, good quality water and healthy soils are important to all people. The installation of the best management practices (BMPs) funded for PY2014-2015 will directly benefit Pitt County by the reduction of 11,770 pounds of nitrogen, 85,157 pounds of phosphorus and prevent 1,089 tons of soil from eroding. Some of the funded BMPs will increase agricultural water availability by approximately 8,990,000 gallons.

## Voluntary Agricultural Districts



The Pitt County Agricultural Advisory Board has accepted 12 Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VADs) totaling over 2000 acres. VADs bring awareness to the agricultural community and heritage of Pitt County as well as bringing education to those residents who are unfamiliar with agricultural activities. Pitt County's 171,000 acres of farmland produced over \$174,000,000 in cash receipts in 2012, contributing greatly to North Carolina's number one industry. VADs confirm farm owners' commitment to maintaining agricultural lands through a 10 year conservation agreement. To date, Ag Districts have been enrolled in the North East, Southeast and South West areas of the County. If you are interested in enrolling your agricultural land, please contact our office.

## NC Ag Cost Share Program

The 2014-2015 Cost Share fiscal year was busy as in the past. Several Best Management Practices (BMPs) were surveyed, designed, and installed to reduce soil and nutrient loss. Sediment is the leading cause of impairment in our rivers and streams. Losing this precious resource greatly reduces soil productivity. Though we are relatively flat in Pitt County, our large tracts of farmland still create areas that could have severe erosion issues. Funds are available through the North Carolina Agricultural Cost Share Program to repair BMPs damaged by unusual storm events. If you are interested in resolving natural resource issues on your farm, please contact our office.

## USDA Programs

There are many federal programs which could be utilized on your farm. Each of these programs has specific conservation objectives which must be impacted. The programs are specific as to what must be done and are designed to fit everyone's situation. Most of the programs tie to water quality improvements, enhancement of wildlife habitat, or the conservation of our soil and water resources. There are many other federal programs available. To check them out, visit the following website: <http://www.nc.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>. Each program has its own set of rules and requirements. Feel free to contact this office for additional information on the available programs.

## South Central HS student, Caroline Allen, attends the 2015 Resource Conservation Workshop held at NCSU

Caroline Allen was selected through an application process by the District Board. Her registration and expenses were covered by the District. Caroline attended a board meeting with a presentation about her experiences and what she learned. The Resource Conservation Workshop is sponsored by the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts in conjunction with the NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation, NC State University Soil Science Department, and the Soil and Water Conservation Society Hugh Hammond Bennett Chapter. The Resource Conservation Workshop is a weeklong workshop and involves study and hands on participation in a wide range of conservation topics. Students are housed at NC State University campus dormitories under the guidance of live-in counselors.

