



Wake Soil and Water Conservation District

Wake County Soil and Water Conservation Department

Annual Report 2016

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016



Protecting Wake County's Natural Resources



Executive Summary

The year of its 50th Anniversary proved a transitional year for the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District and Wake County's Soil and Water Conservation Department. Our goal to protect Wake County's natural resources had not changed, however our ability to implement conservation services greatly improved and exceeded expectations in FY2016. This was due to a budget expansion increase to the department and as well as reorganization efforts that increased efficiency in our operations.



Stream restoration and livestock exclusion for watershed protection

Following suit, this annual report is presented in a new format this year. Effective results based on **Wake County Board of Commissioners** Goals and Objectives, efficient shorter version, and engaging new infographics format.

Highlights for the year include

- Celebrating the **50th Anniversary** of Wake Soil and Water Conservation District,
- Reinstating the Wake County Beaver Management Assistance Program,
- Winning the prestigious **Legacy Award** at the City of Raleigh, Environmental Awards event,
- And, most importantly, increasing the pace of conservation and natural resources work in Wake County's watersheds.

Please contact the Wake District office if you have any questions about this annual report.

Thomas Dean, Chair
Wake Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors

Dale Threatt-Taylor, District Director
Soil and Water Conservation Department
Wake County Government



Natural Resource Conservationist document the contractor's work installing a grassed waterway.

Mission: To protect the natural resources of Wake County through voluntary technical, educational and funding assistance to citizens, businesses, communities, municipalities and partners.

Conservation by the Numbers

5,693.65 tons of Sediment

prevented from reaching water courses by completed conservation practices in Little River, Falls Lake, Marks Creek, Swift Creek and other watersheds.

UP 269% in FY2016

\$391,609 in cost share

funds were **encumbered** from Federal and State sources to implement conservation practices with completed designs per NRCS Engineering Technical Specifications and Guide.

78% Increase

2,224.9 acres

of forest and farmland have been included in comprehensive **Conservation Management Plans** to protect natural resources.

1,047.55 acres of Conservation

Best Management Practices were installed to protect and improve water quality in Wake County's Neuse and Cape Fear River Basins.

UP 62%

48 cost share contracts

were written to address natural resource problems and improve water quality. **Local businesses and contractors** installed the conservation practices.

UP 41%

319 business professionals,

consultants and community partners collaborated with staff to leverage resources for conservation, education and volunteer programs, soils evaluations, and construction site investigations in Wake County.

UP 32%

\$150,522.44 in

reimbursement was paid to **Wake County landowners** from Federal and State funds for completed contracts on conservation practices.

UP 136%

140 Wake County landowners

attended the 11th Annual Keeping the Farm Workshop in January, 2016. Over 30 public, private, and agriculture-related partners helped organize and conduct the workshop.

427 site visits

were made by District staff to **Wake County farms and rural properties** to evaluate natural resource problems.

Education and Volunteer Results

66

Educators trained in Environmental Education to maximize potential outreach training to **27,008** students.

3,526

hours of donated volunteer services saved Wake County **\$76,840.**

(Estimated value by Independent Sector)

3,298

citizens were assisted with **environmental information** to increase landowner and homeowner understanding of erosion and nutrient loading problems. Youth and families engaged in environmental education programs and projects emphasizing pollution prevention through personal and collective stewardship of Wake County's natural resources.

1,396

Volunteers removed **15,425** pounds of litter from the environment and diverted **5,660** lbs. of recyclable materials from the Wake County landfill. This resulted in cleaner streams, lakes and wetlands through Soil and Water Conservation Department's coordination of the **Wake County Big Sweep Program.**

95

High School students were taught natural resource management techniques at the Resource Conservation Workshop at NCSU.

5

Wake County High School teams and

1

Middle School

team participated in the 2016 Area IV Envirothon. Two teams advanced to the North Carolina Envirothon competition.



Wake County's Conservation Team – Staff and Leaders

Wake County Soil and Water Conservation Department

County Staff

Teresa Furr, Natural Resources Conservationist
 Sheila Jones, Environmental Educator
 Emily Nash, Natural Resources Conservationist
 Jessica Pope, District Operations Specialist
 Dale Threatt-Taylor, District Director
 Josh Vetter, Natural Resources Conservationist

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Raleigh Field Office Staff

Matthew Kinane, District Conservationist Team 10

Special Soils Project

Larry Sink, Soil Scientist

Elected and appointed officials

Wake Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Thomas Dean, Chair
 Jennifer Wadsworth, Vice-Chair
 Patrick Johnson, Secretary – Treasurer
 Matt Overby
 David Adams

Associate Board of Supervisors

Quincy Adams	Marilyn Grolitzer	Robin Hammond
Sam Laurie	Larry Perry	John Phelps
Carlyle Teague	Matthew Whitfield	Donnie Woodlief

Voluntary Agricultural District Advisory Committee

Patrick Johnson, Chair



Summer cover crop in southern Wake County

The Wake Soil and Water Conservation District is at the forefront of natural resources work and water quality protection. The District strategically focuses its projects on priority watersheds, impaired streams, and state and federal targeted funding areas for water quality improvements. The priority areas are Falls Lake, Little River, Swift Creek and Jordan Lake... all drinking water supply watersheds. Priority is then directed to rural areas that have EPA 303(d) impaired streams and working lands active in farm, forest, and local food production. Work is directed to match the resource concerns. The District responds to all natural resources concerns with collaborative funding projects to address stormwater erosion issues, but state funds are limited. Landowners and farmers pay a shared cost amount towards each project.

FY2016 – An Outstanding Year!

Celebrated record attendance at the

50th Anniversary

Annual Conservation Awards Celebration
of the
**Wake Soil and Water
Conservation District**



**Wake Soil and Water
Conservation District
was awarded
City of Raleigh's
2016
Legacy
Environmental Award**



Chairman Thomas Dean and Conservationist Teresa Furr present the 2015 Farm Family of the Year to Adams Vineyards

Staff provided **leadership** in hosting the
70th Annual International Soil and
Water Conservation Society Conference
yielding **record attendance!**



Preventing erosion protects Wake County's watersheds and drinking water supply.

Staff awarded several
Scholarships for technical
training including covering Cover Crop
Management and Nutrient
Management

*“Conservation districts serve
a critical role in protecting
drinking water sources.”*

Kira Jacobs, Drinking Water Program, EPA

Friends of the Forest

<http://www.nacdnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ForestryBooklet.pdf>

www.wakegov.com/swcd

FY2016 – An Outstanding Year!



**Wake District Supervisors
2016 Spot Check Tour**



Awarded
\$1,000

**Sustainable Forestry
Initiative Grant**

Wake Soil and Water Conservation District



Teaching Best Management
Practices for over 50 years!

Hosted two educational

Cover Crops

workshops for **Wake County
farmers** in Willow Spring and
Hopkins communities.

Awarded
\$6,000

NCFSWC Cover Crops Grant



11th Annual Keeping the Farm Workshop
for Wake County Farm and Forest landowners

Awarded
\$30,000

Duke Energy Grant for conservation
practices in Jordan Lake Watershed

Awarded national
ICMA Scholarship
for managerial training

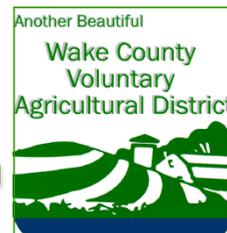
NEW Horizons – Continuing and Improved Services in the District!

Wake District worked with homeowners and residents to repairs and restore **streams** in both urban and rural watersheds.

We are seeking additional state, federal, and grant funds to increase our **Community Conservation Assistance Program** in FY2017

Work on revisions to Wake County's 2002 VAD Program continued and will move to the next phase in FY2017

VAD Ordinance Revision



236 ponds were surveyed and mapped by AmeriCorps member, Sam Stokes, for potential dry hydrant sites to protect Wake County residents.



Cover Crops improve soil health.

Beaver Management

Landowner request for technical assistance for beaver management issues exceeded capacity.

We are allocated **8** assistance calls.

Demand exceeded **40** for Wake County!

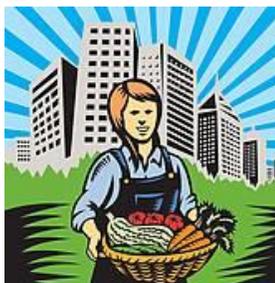


Urban Agriculture

Demand for local fresh food is on the rise in Wake County. Awareness of food insecure communities and the lack of healthy fresh foods in underserved communities is a growing concern.

In FY2017, Wake District will hire an

URBAN AGRICULTURE SPECIALIST to provide technical support to the landowners and partners in our urban agriculture community in Wake County.



For more information about this report please contact:
 Wake County Soil and Water Conservation Department
 via phone at 919-250-1050 or email the Director at dthreatttaylor@wakegov.com