

# ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016

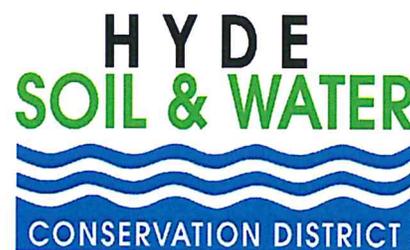
Hyde Government Center Suite #117

P.O. BOX 264

SWAN QUARTER, NC 27885

252-926-4195

<http://www.hydeswcdnc.org/>



The District is a governmental subdivision of the State, a public body corporate and politic, organized in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 139 of the General Statutes of North Carolina and is subject to the powers and restrictions as set forth in G.S. 139. Under this law, the District has the responsibility of conserving soil, water, and related natural resources within the District boundary. (When districts were first organized in 1937, their main responsibility was the control of soil erosion caused by water and wind.) The District board is made up of five supervisors: three elected (J.W. Spencer, Daren Hubers and Darren Armstrong) and two appointed (Earl O'Neal and Chad Spencer). The Board meets monthly to handle current business and stay up to date on environmental matters.

Annual and long-range programs of conservation and development within the District boundaries are developed and carried out with the assistance of local, state, and federal agencies. The Long-Range Program and Work Plan was updated in 2013. The North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program (initiated in 1984 as a pilot program and gradually extended to all counties) has been a great initiative to encourage landowners and landusers to apply best management practices (BMPs). The District also administers the Agriculture Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP) and the Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP). The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, working through a Memorandum of Understanding, is a major source of assistance. This agreement enables the District to furnish federal technical service to individuals, groups, and other agencies and units of government.

#### Hyde SWCD Supervisors

J. W. Spencer, Chairman

Darren Armstrong, Vice-Chairman

Earl O'Neal, Secretary/Treasurer

Daren Hubers, Member

Chad Spencer, Member

#### Hyde SWCD & NRCS Staff

Debbie Cahoon, District Administrator

Daniel Brinn, NCACSP/Tar Pam Technician

Rodney Woolard, NRCS District Conservationist

Anthony Hester, NRCS Engineering Technician

## Practices funded in 2015/2016



Hyde SWCD funded BMP's through 9 contracts this year. The following practices were approved for installation:

- **13 Water Control Structures**
- **80 acres of Land Smoothing**
- **250 Acres of Nutrient Management**

**NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURE COST SHARE PROGRAM (NCACSP)** – Program Year 2015-2016 began on August 1, 2015. The District received a cost share allocation for \$40,632.00 for non-point source pollution control from agricultural activities. These funds were available to assist farmers and landowners with the installation of best management practices which help to decrease the amount of sediment and nutrients entering our water sources. Applications were taken to install conservation practices such as conservation tillage, variable rate nutrient management, land smoothing, and water control structures.

**COMMUNITY CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CCAP)** – The Hyde Soil & Water Conservation District received an initial allocation of \$1,814.00 to be used for Community Conservation Assistance Program. This program is designed to implement conservation practices at the community level such as water cisterns, stream bank and shoreline protection as well as other community related practices. One application was taken during the program year for a Streambank Restoration and due to a lack of funding this contract will be rolled over to the next program year.

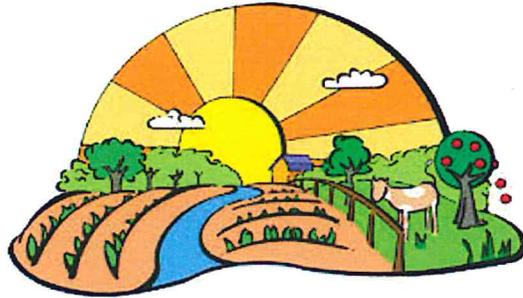
**NRCS & DISTRICT STAFF** provided assistance to farmers and landowners as of July 19, 2016 on a total of 248 acres. These farmers and landowners had conservation plans formulated on their land and 1,920 acres were benefited by the application of a conservation practice. The following conservation programs were utilized in Hyde County during the year:

**Conservation Stewardship Program** – As of July 19, 2015, one new application to this program was approved for a Hyde County producer covering 1,925 acres. This program rewards farmers for the good conservation they are already practicing as well as encourages them to adopt new practices. Several Hyde County producers are receiving payments of nearly \$27,000 per year for five years.

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program** – Fiscal Year 2016 saw an award of \$75,761 for practices such as structures for water control, drainage water management (winter water control), reforestation, and a seasonal high tunnel.

**Wetland Reserve Program**– Five active applications on hand totaling 2,589 acres from Hyde County remain unfunded at this time. One application was funded and a conservation easement was closed on 547 acres.

**Conservation Reserve Program/Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**—During the past year, three contracts were renewed and one new application was funded for Hyde County Landowners on 37 acres.



**Supervisors and Staff Update** - Length of Service Award - Supervisor, Earl O'Neal received a length of service award for 20 years of service as a District Supervisor at the 2015 Area 5 Fall meeting in Windsor on November 12, 2015. Earl was not present to accept this award so the District staff accepted it on his behalf. Earl was presented his award by J.W. Spencer, Chairman at the Hyde SWCD District Board meeting on December 10, 2015.

**Supervisor Activities** - In addition to holding their regular meetings, the Supervisors also attend other meetings to keep informed of the priorities and upcoming issues in the field of soil and water conservation.

**NC Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts** - The 72nd Annual Meeting entitled, "*Contagious Enthusiasm*" was held January 3-5, 2016 at the Sheraton Hotel in the Research Triangle Park, NC. J.W. Spencer and Chad Spencer represented the District at this meeting. J.W. Spencer along with Daniel Brinn, District Technician made a presentation to the Water Resources Committee concerning flooding and drainage concerns in Eastern North Carolina.

**NC Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts' Area 5 2016 Spring Meeting** - The meeting was held on February 18, 2016 at the Windsor Community Building in Windsor, North Carolina. J.W. Spencer serves as a delegate on the Natural Environment Committee and Earl O'Neal serves as an Alternate for the Research and Technology Committee. District Supervisors were unable to attend this meeting.

## Education Updates

**Ag Expo at the Senator Bob Martin Equestrian Center** in Williamston, NC on November 12, 2015. The District was one of the many sponsors from across the region that participated in the event. High school students (public and private) were exposed to career opportunities in the various agricultural areas through speakers and exhibitors from various businesses and agricultural agencies. Debbie Cahoon and Daniel Brinn represented the Hyde Soil & Water Conservation District by giving a presentation on the North Carolina River Basins promoting good stewardship of our natural resources.



**Hyde SWCD Environmental Field Day** - The District hosted its Annual Environmental Education Field Day on Wednesday, October 28, 2015 at the Ponzer Community Building. Approximately 50 fourth grade students from Mattamuskeet Elementary School along with their teachers and chaperones attended. The students visited 6 stations hosted by the following agencies: NC Aquarium on Roanoke Island, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Goose Creek State Park, North Carolina Wildlife Education Center, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and the Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge. These agencies provided six learning stations covering wetlands, forestry, fisheries, wildlife and conservation. The District greatly appreciates the partnership with these agencies in promoting an awareness of our environment and an appreciation of our natural resources.

## Education Updates Continued

**Poster and Essay Contests** - “*We all Live in a Watershed!*” was the theme for 2016 Poster Contest sponsored by the District. Students in third through fifth grade from Mattamuskeet Elementary and Ocracoke School submitted posters. The District presented cash prizes for all 1st, 2nd, & 3rd places winners as well as a certificate with a ribbon. All first-place winners posters advanced to compete in the Area 5 competition where posters from potentially fifteen other Districts were judged. The winning posters are displayed in the District Office until the next contest cycle. The District had two students posters receive 2nd place awards at the Area 5 competition.



Poster Winners from MES



Poster Winners from Ocracoke School

**NC Science Festival-Aquaculture and Seafood Industry Education Day sponsored by NC Sea Grant**—The Hyde Soil & Water Conservation District staff was among the many agencies and businesses to make a presentation to the middle and high school students at Mattamuskeet Early College High School on Wednesday, April 13th from 8:30 to 2:30 pm. The District made a presentation on the North Carolina River Basins and had several interactive activities available for the students to engage in. The students were given a booklet of questions to answer as they visited each of the station presentations.

**Hyde Heritage Day at Mattamuskeet Elementary School** - On April 8, 2016 the Hyde Soil & Water Conservation District staff participated in this event organized to raise students awareness of the rich culture and history that Hyde County has to offer. The staff had a presentation entitled, “*Morning, Noon & Night, Our future flies on Pollinators.*” Pollinator Booklets were available for each age group along with bookmarks. Daniel Brinn engaged the students with a variety of hands on items available during the presentation.

**Envirothon Competition** – The Area 5 & 6 Coastal Envirothon competitions for middle and high school students was held March 15, 2016 at Weyerhaeuser's Cool Springs Environmental Education Center in Askins near New Bern, NC . Mattamuskeet High School Teacher, Ronald Crider advised two high school teams, High School FFA Teacher, Jennifer Cahoon advised one high school team and Mattamuskeet Middle School Teacher, Dail Berry advised two middle school teams to compete at the Coastal Envirothon. The two middle school teams led by Dail Berry were among the top seven teams at the Coastal Envirothon and advanced to the state competition. Due to a team declining advancement to the state competition, two of the high school teams led by Mr. Crider were able to advance to the State Competition in Burlington, N.C. The Coastal Envirothon is a hands on environmental education program supported by the Area 5 and 6 Soil & Water Conservation Districts, the NC Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Weyerhaeuser, NuCor, Georgia-Pacific and our local Farm Bureaus.



The teams from Mattamuskeet Early College Middle & High School at the state competition in Burlington, N.C. on April 29-30, 2016

## Education Updates Continued

**Resource Conservation Workshop @ NCSU** - Bell Noble, a rising sophomore at Pungo Christian Academy, was selected to attend the Resource Conservation Workshop at North Carolina State University during the week of June 26th - July 1, 2016. This workshop was hosted by the North Carolina Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. The Hyde Soil & Water Conservation District sponsored Bell by providing her registration fees and travel expenses.



Bell is the daughter of Derek Noble of Belhaven, North Carolina & Kris Cahoon Noble of Swan Quarter, North Carolina. Bell is interested in learning about our natural resources and its management in today's environment.

**9th Annual Hyde, Seek and Discover Day Camp** - is provided by the Hyde County Cooperative Extension. The Hyde Soil & Water Conservation District is one of the government agencies that partners with 4-H to host this four day summer camp. Together we help provide youth ages 5 to 12 with the opportunity to increase their awareness of environmental issues, increase their team building skills, learn healthy habits and get them involved in various recreational activities.



## DISTRICT CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS

**Annual Spot Check and Conservation Tour**-The spot check and conservation tour of permanent practices still under maintenance for NCACSP was carried out on February 8, 2016. The Supervisors and Staff visited several farms to ensure that cost shared practices were being maintained as required by program regulations. Through the North Carolina Agriculture Development and Farmland Preservation program two conservation easements were visited to ensure that they continue to be working agriculture lands and are being maintained through program guidelines.

**Hyde County Beaver Management Program**- Established in 2008, the county reimburses contracted trappers for trapped beaver not to exceed \$1,000.00 in a given fiscal year. The District did not receive any reports of beaver problems during the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

**County wide Drainage Issues**-The Hyde Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors and Staff have provided assistance to many individuals, land users, and units of government during fiscal year 2016. This has required numerous site visits, scoping meetings in an effort to resolve resource problems. The District Technician has provided assistance to local farmers in seeking to establish the Slocum Drainage District, provided maps for the Swan Quarter Main Ditch drainage issues and worked with other government agencies in seeking funds to address debris in Outfall Canal to alleviate some local drainage issues. The District provided assistance through coordination efforts with NRCs in supporting pumping efforts on the Swan Quarter Dike on Farrow Road. Daniel Brinn, District Technician, participated in a NC Sea Grant YouTube video entitled, "Living in the Flood Zone". You can view the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAV5eIn0rrlv=cAV5eIn0rrlv>

## Swan Quarter Watershed Update



**Swan Quarter Watershed** –The Swan Quarter Watershed Steering Committee is made up of 9 members serving the community by making recommendations to the County Commissioners on issues related to the continuing operation and maintenance of the Swan Quarter Special Use Drainage District. Tony Carawan serves as the Chairman for the Committee and Josh Gibbs serves as the Secretary. The assessment funds collected for both sections of the drainage district is run through the County of Hyde finance office. Yearly mowing of 17.7 miles of the earthen dike is almost complete. Trash grates and basins along Highway 45 have been cleaned of debris and clearing of debris around the 20 foot fire buffer has been completed. Several gates at West Canal and Quarter Canal have had debris removed from them and a gasket was replaced on the gate located on the Little Larry Lot.



### **RECENT COASTAL LOW AND NOR' EASTER (FOLLOWING HURRICANE JUAQUIN)**

**Despite the existing drainage infrastructure the prolonged tides and rainfall were detrimental to agricultural production.**

**From Sept. 22nd to Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Swan Quarter received 13 inches of rain.**



**Tides ruled high for nearly two weeks cresting around 3ft in Swan Quarter.**

**Fields, yards and streets were inundated for days.**

**Drainage entities throughout the county were unable to prevent inundation from rainfall and tide water.**