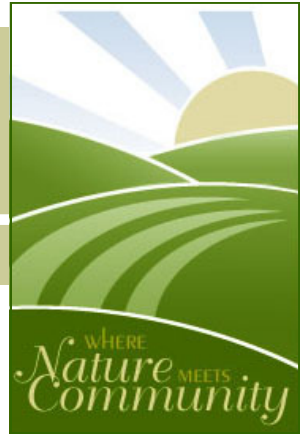


# Conservation Conversations

Published By

**Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District**  
Suite 204, 155 Hilliard Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801  
(828) 250-4785 - [www.buncombecounty.org](http://www.buncombecounty.org)



AUGUST 2015

**Buncombe County  
Friends of Ag Breakfast**  
Tuesday August 18, 2015  
At 7:00 a.m.

**WNC Ag Center, Virginia Boone Building**



**Join us and enjoy a complimentary  
breakfast featuring fresh food from local  
Buncombe County farms and learn about  
our pollinators!**

Speaker Phyllis Stiles is Director of Bee City USA, a program of the Center for Honeybee Research. Come join us to learn about honeybees, what we can do to help them and much more!

**RSVP: [ARIELDIXON@BUNCOMBECOUNTY.ORG](mailto:ARIELDIXON@BUNCOMBECOUNTY.ORG)  
OR CALL (828)250-4794**

## **Local Students Attend Resource Conservation Workshop (RCW) at NC State University**

Each year Buncombe Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) sponsors 2 students to spend a week learning about conservation at NC State University. The RCW workshop offers lectures along with hands-on and outdoor activities related to soil, aquatics, forestry, wildlife, and current environmental issues. The students chosen are both rising seniors at Buncombe County High Schools.



Aimee Allen was selected from North Buncombe High School. Aimee participates in FFA, Human Rights Watch and has interest in becoming a Conservationist and working for

the Peace Corps in third world countries.

Michael Sutton was also selected to attend the RCW. Michael is a rising senior at Enka High School. He is on the Cross Country and Wrestling



## **DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

The Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is to conserve the soil, water, and related natural resources of Buncombe County by providing education, information, technical assistance, and economic incentives to county citizens and by establishing new programs in concert with other appropriate agencies and organizations to meet changing needs.

Team and a member of the National Honor Society. Michael would like to pursue a career in Forestry Management. Aimee and Michael did a great job representing Buncombe County at RCW .



### **CHRISTMAS TREES IN NOVEMBER!**

The Buncombe SWCD will be selling #1 Fraser Fir Christmas trees again this year. The trees will be very competitively priced and the proceeds will go to help fund environmental education programs. Our customers loved our trees last year and the ease in making a purchase. If you want to buy a tree all you have to do is call the District, order, and pick up their tree on the designated day in late November. We will be posting more information on the Buncombe County website, in the November newsletter, and other places as we finalize the details.



### **MOUNTAIN STATE FAIR COMING SOON!**



Mark your calendars for the Mountain State Fair September 11-20, 2015. The fair will be at the WNC Agriculture Center across from the Asheville Airport and will have all the fantastic things you find at the fair. Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Western NC will have an exhibit, so be looking for it!



### **FY2014 COST SHARE HIGHLIGHTS**

#### **North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program**

##### **Planned:**

**Regular Cost Share Program Contracts** – 6 developed (\$65,597)

29.8 acres of Cropland Conversion; 1 grassed waterway; 1 well; 850 linear feet of livestock exclusion fencing; 11 livestock watering tanks; 11 heavy use area protection; 1 stream pickup; 1 spring development; 7,603 linear feet of pipeline.



**Impaired and Impacted Contracts** - 2 developed (\$13,738)

1 Stream Crossing; 2,800 linear feet of fence; 2 Heavy

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Use Area Protection; 800 linear feet of pipeline; 0.2 acres of vegetation

**North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program**

**Installed:**

54.75 acres cropland conversion; 6,327 linear feet of fence; 1.24 acres pasture conversion to trees; 1 well; 3,100 linear feet of pipeline; 5 livestock watering tanks; 5 heavy use area protection; 0.1 acre vegetation. (\$48,312 paid out - \$64,416 total value of projects)

**North Carolina Agricultural Water Assistance Program**

**Planned:**

1 contract for an agricultural pond - \$24,000

2 contracts for wells - \$10,606

**North Carolina Agricultural Water Assistance Program**

**Installed:**

2 agricultural ponds - \$26,468

1 agricultural well - \$6,176

**North Carolina Community Conservation Assistance**

**Program:**

1 contract developed for streambank stabilization - \$9,017

**CROWD FUNDING PILOT PROJECT**

The Buncombe SWCD is cooperating with the N. C. Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the N. C. Foundation for Soil and Water



Conservation on a pilot project to determine if crowd funding could be used to raise funds for specific educational or environmental projects. Soil and Water Conservation Districts in North Carolina utilize social media to some extent for outreach, but have not used it to raise funds for specific projects. The District has decided that an outdoor classroom will work well for the pilot and is working with Cane Creek Middle School on a project that will make improvements to the site the school uses for Creek Week. During Creek Week, seventh and eighth grade students go down to Cane Creek and do various studies in the stream and learn about aquatic species and protecting water quality. This project will provide a safe access point to Cane Creek, a deck for conducting classes, walks to the site, and invasive species removal along the stream. All the improvements will be handicap accessible and will provide a better learning environment for Cane Creek Middle School students.

When the designs for the site are complete, the District will be announcing its crowd funding website, and you can make your donations!



**District Board Members**

JIM COMAN  
WILLIAM HAMILTON  
JEFF FOSTER  
ELISE ISRAEL  
DAVID SNELSON

**District and NRCS Staff**

GARY HIGGINS	District Director
TAIRA LANCE	Education Coordinator/Admin.
ANTHONY DOWDLE	NCACSP Soil Conservationist
ARIEL DIXON	Soil Conservationist/Farmland Pres.
KARA CASSELS	NRCS District Conservationist (Acting)

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**Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District**  
**155 Hilliard Avenue, Suite 204**  
**Asheville, NC 28801**

### **WELCOME to ARIEL DIXON**

Ariel Dixon grew up in Cabarrus County, NC on a small organic vegetable farm run by her parents. She worked on a flower farm throughout high school, where her love for flowers blossomed, and when she graduated moved to Swannanoa to attend Warren Wilson College (WVC). She worked on the WVC garden throughout her time there, as well as many other farms in WNC and then graduated December 2012 with a double major in Sustainable Agriculture and Sustainable Forestry. Over the past couple years she has worked as a Farm Bill Specialist with NRCS in Buncombe and McDowell counties and worked with Buncombe County Cooperative Extension Center. She has a 2 acre homestead in Mars Hill, where she lives with her fiancé. They live in a 165 year old farmhouse, have a large vegetable, flower and herb garden, laying hens, beehives, a roadside farm stand, and host cooking and homesteading workshops. Although Ariel has been working in our office for a year and a half, Ariel officially joined the Buncombe County Soil and Water team on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015.



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