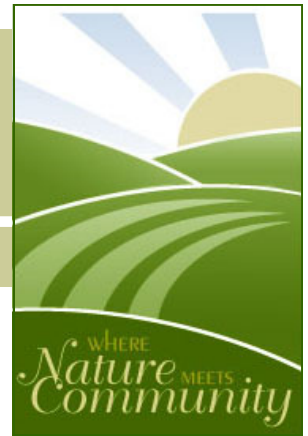


# Conservation Conversations

Published By

Buncombe County Soil and Water Conservation District  
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August 2016

## Buncombe County



### Friends of Ag Breakfast Tuesday—August 16, 2016

At 7:00 a.m.

WNC Ag Center, Virginia Boone Building  
1301 Fanning Bridge Road

### FINAL FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT RULES AND WHAT GROWERS CAN EXPECT

**SPEAKER: CRAIG MAUNEY**, Area Extension Specialized  
Agent for Agriculture—Commercial Vegetables & Fruit  
Production

Come join us for the Buncombe County Friends of  
Ag Breakfast. Enjoy a complimentary country  
breakfast. Chat with farm friends old and new.

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



## 2016 CAMP WILD

During the week of July 25-29, 2016 thirteen students from Buncombe County attended the District's first outdoor environmental education camp. The camp was made



possible by a grant from the Pigeon River Fund. Participants learned about hydroponics, biodiesel production, forestry, and soils on their Monday visit to the Biltmore Estate. On Tuesday the activities included a trip to Purchase Knob in Haywood County to learn about amphibian research and snorkeling in the upper Pigeon River to examine aquatic species on the streambed. Wednesday's environmental studies included a trip to Pink Beds to explore a mountain bog, a stop at the Cradle of



### **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.

Forestry; and some fun at sliding rock. Thursday was a very full day of activities that began with a visit to Ripley's Aquarium, followed by a visit to Cades Cove where the group camped overnight and enjoyed a cookout and outdoor movie. Camp Wild wrapped up on Friday with a nature hike in Cades Cove, followed by tubing on the Little River in Townsend TN.



## 2016 Resource Conservation Workshop

The 2016 Resource Conservation Workshop was held the week of June 26 thru July 1, 2016. The event was held



on the campus of N. C. State University with daily field trips to nearby locations. During the workshop, students were instructed in the following areas: 1) Soil Characteristics and Soil Conservation; 2) Wildlife & Fisheries Management; 3) Forest

Management and Air Quality; 4) Nonagricultural Uses for Soil; and 5) Water Quality and Watershed Management. Instruction was done by experts in each of the respective fields. At the end of the workshop students were given a final exam, and were eligible to compete for cash awards and scholarships. The Buncombe SWCD sponsored **Will Baldwin** from the Fairview/Fletcher area. Will did very well with a fourth place score on the exam, earning a \$75 cash prize. The photos show Will studying soil conservation, and looking for dung beetles in cow manure.



## Christmas Tree Sale!

The District will be having its annual Christmas Tree Sale around December 1, 2016. The high quality #1 Fraser firs are from a local supplier and are picked up and sold within a couple of days of harvest so they are fresh. This year we will be selling 6 to 7 foot trees and all you need to do is call our office, place your order and pick up your tree when it arrives. The trees will be very priced very competitively.



You may place your order at any time up until November 22nd. We will post more information on the Buncombe County website and in the November newsletter. Profits

from the sale go to improve our environmental education programs.

## Land Conservation Advisory Board Hall of Fame Awards

The Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board held it's Hall of Fame Awards Dinner on June 30, 2016 at Elida Home. The purpose of the event is to recognize landowners who protected their property with a conservation easement in the past year. The Board recognized two landowners who worked with the Buncombe SWCD to place permanent conservation easements on their land. One of those was Gary and Brenda Hutchins with a 74.86 acre conservation easement. The other was Janet Peterson of Fairview who received the award of Conservationist of the Year in recognition of her 184 acre conservation easement on Cloud 9 Farm. Others recognized included Robert & Marissa Goettling (Ecostead Versant LLC) with a 50.9 acre easement; and Whisper Mountain (Charlie & Troy Ball) with a 175.44 acre easement. Congratulations to all for their awards and conservation easements!! District Board member Elise Israel and Farmland Preservation Coordinator Ariel Zijp attended the event on behalf of the District.

## SWCD Equipment for Rent

Just a reminder that the Buncombe SWCD has equipment available for rent to help increase profits on local farms. (Funded by NCDA & CS and a TVA Ag & Forestry Grant). The following are available:

**Seed Drill-** The Truax FlexII seed drill features double disc furrow openers and depth bands to optimize seed placement and seed to soil contact. It has multiple seed boxes allowing it to seed native fluffy seeds, cool season species, small grains, legumes, and wildflowers. Planting can be accomplished as no-till and inter-seeding in most conditions. \$50 minimum or \$10/acre.



**Weed Wiper-** The weed wiper can be used to control invasive weeds and small brushy growth in hay and pasture fields, resulting in better stands of grass and higher productivity. The wiper can be towed to the farm using a pickup or SUV then attached to a tractor or ATV for use in the field. The wiper is 12 feet wide in the field use configuration. \$30/day



**Post Driver** -The post driver can be used to improve existing fencing, expand pastures, and add cross fencing for rotations and will reduce labor costs and improve profitability. The unit is capable of driving up to eight inch diameter posts and has a pilot auger to use in if the soil is difficult to penetrate. \$50/day



Call or drop by the SWCD office to check on availability.

## Cycle to Farm Sandy Mush October 1<sup>st</sup> 2016

Cycle to Farm Sandy Mush is featuring an awesome 62 mile route on low traffic beautiful country roads. The rest stops are transformed into farm stops where you can purchase fresh local food and have the opportunity to meet the region's farmers. At the end of



the ride, there will be a fabulous after party featuring a farm to table meal at New Belgium Brewing Tasting Room in West Asheville. The Sandy Mush ride will start and finish at the New Belgium Tasting Room in West Asheville--New Belgium has been a sponsor of Cycle To



Farm since the very beginning five years ago. This ride is limited to no more than 300 riders, so if you are

interested in riding the Cycle to Farm Sandy Mush please sign up! The Buncombe County Farm Heritage Trail is a sponsor of the Cycle to Farm Sandy Mush.

Sign up for the ride or to volunteer at [www.cycletofarm.com](http://www.cycletofarm.com)

## 2016/2017 Conservation Education Contests

The Buncombe Soil & Water Conservation District is sponsoring Conservation Poster, Essay, and Public Speaking contests this year!



The theme for all the contests is “**Soil and Water.....Yours for Life**”.

This subject focuses on the importance of soil and water to our future and our daily lives and the importance of conservation and sustainability.

Who's eligible?

**Poster Contest** -Any Buncombe County student (public, private, or home school) in **3rd - 5th grade!**

**Essay Contest** - Any Buncombe County student (public, private, or home school) in the **6th grade!**

**Public Speaking Contest** - Any Buncombe County student (public, private, or home school) in the **7th or 8th grade!**

The Poster and Essay contests runs until **January 11, 2017**. All entries must reach the District by 4:00 pm on that date. The Public Speaking Contest will be held at the District office on **January 12, 2017**.

### Prizes:



Not only do the contests provide a great way for the students to explore an issue on their own, but there are prizes for the students and winning teacher! **There will be a 1st, 2nd & 3rd place** county-wide awards given in all the Contests.

**1st place - \$50 cash**

**2nd place - \$25 cash**

**3rd place - \$15 cash**

### District Board Members

JEFF FOSTER	Chair
ELISE ISRAEL	Vice-Chair
DAVID SNELSON	Secretary
WILLIAM HAMILTON	Treasurer
LOUISE SCRUGGS	Member

### District and NRCS Staff

GARY HIGGINS	District Director
TAIRA LANCE	Environmental Educator
ANTHONY DOWDLE	NCACSP Soil Conservationist
ARIEL ZIJP	Soil Conservationist/Farmland Pres.
EMILY KOONE	NRCS Soil Conservationist

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Asheville, NC 28806

1st place winners in the county contest will be eligible for the Area contest.

**(The teacher of the winning student will receive \$50 gift card)**

More information about the contests can be obtained at:

<http://www.buncombecounty.org/Governing/Depts/Soil/Default.aspx> or [taira.lance@buncombecounty.org](mailto:taira.lance@buncombecounty.org) (828-250-4785)

## Envirothon

The Envirothon is a fun, hands-on natural science academic competition for teams of middle and high school students sponsored by the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts



with help in organization and implementation from the NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation. The Buncombe SWCD sponsors several teams in this competition each year, so if you are interested in forming a team, please contact Taira Lance at 828-250-4785 or [taira.lance@buncombecounty.org](mailto:taira.lance@buncombecounty.org) for more information.



**CAROLINA FARM CREDIT, ACA**  
701 Brevard Rd.  
Asheville, NC 28806  
670-9474



## Mountain State Fair Coming Up!

The 2016 Mountain State Fair will run from Friday, September 9th thru Sunday, September 18, 2016 at the WNC Agricultural Center. The Buncombe SWCD will be working with 15 other Soil and Water Conservation Districts to have a display in the Davis Arena. So look for us at the fair!!



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