

# **Haywood County Soil and Water Conservation District**

Annual Report 2021-2022



## Mission Statement

Protect the natural resources of Haywood County through education, conservation and preservation.

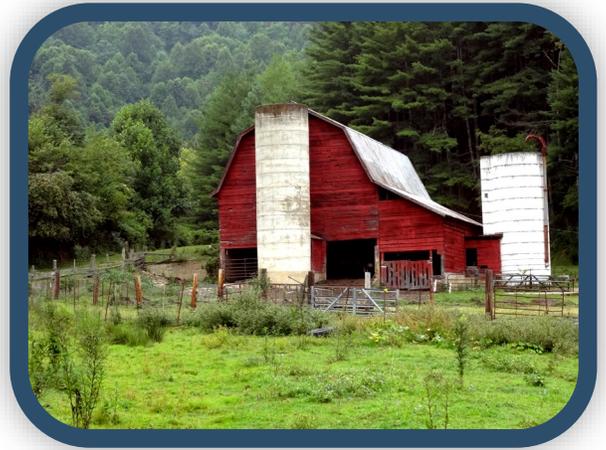
## **About the District**

589 Raccoon Road, Suite 203

Waynesville, NC 28786

828-452-2741 ext. 3

Board of Supervisors Meeting held  
the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at  
9:00 a.m.



**Scan the QR code to access our  
website**

**Check out our Facebook page at  
[facebook.com/HCSWC](https://facebook.com/HCSWC)**

## **Board of Supervisors**

Bill Yarborough, Chairman

Charles Boyd, Vice Chairman

James Ferguson, Treasurer

Jennifer Best, Secretary

Will Morrow, Member

Timothy Garrett, Associate Supervisor

Davis Ferguson, Associate Supervisor

## **District Staff**

**Duane Vanhook**

**District Director and NC Ag Cost-Share Technician**

Duane.Vanhook@haywoodcountync.gov

**JD Jorgensen**

**Soil and Water Conservationist**

Jd.Jorgensen@haywoodcountync.gov

**Ryan Manning**

**Farmland Preservation Program Coordinator**

Ryan.Manning@haywoodcountync.gov

**Dana Miller**

**Education Coordinator**

Dana.Miller@haywoodcountync.gov

**Sheila Mills-Mode**

**Administrative Assistant II**

Sheila.Mode@haywoodcountync.gov

## **Natural Resources Conservation Service Staff**

**John Ottinger**

**Supervisory Soil Conservationist**

John.Ottinger@usda.gov

**Amanda Buchanan**

**Soil Conservationist**

Amanda.Buchanan@usda.gov

**Brandon Young**

**Soil Conservation Technician**

Brandon.Young2@usda.gov

## Conservation Programs

The District and NRCS works with landowners to provide technical guidance, develop conservation plans, provide financial assistance and install best management practices.



**16 Active Contracts  
on 280 Acres**

### Examples of Best Management Practices

Reduced Till or No-Till

Cover Crops

Livestock Watering Systems

### **State-Funded Programs**

NC Agricultural Cost Share	\$45,019
Community Conservation Assistance Program	\$100,000
Impaired & Impacted Streams	\$9,736
Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program	\$7,500
Tropical Storm Fred Cost Share	\$49,006
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$211,261</b>

# **NRCS Conservation Programs**

## **Program Highlights**

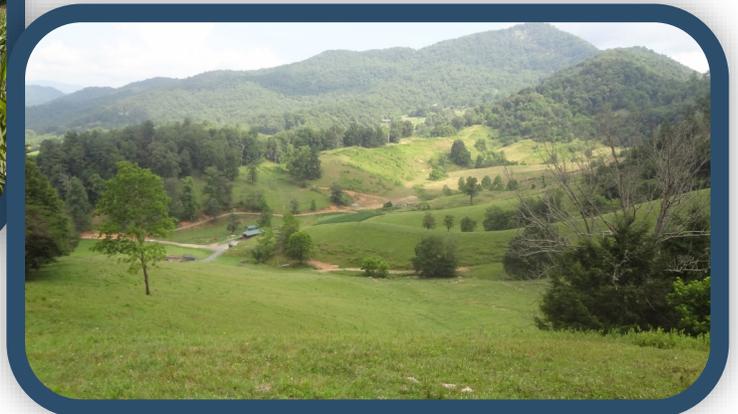
8 new EQIP contracts totaling **\$131,048** on **54 acres**

25 active contracts totaling **\$492,134** on **849.9 acres**

Emergency Watershed Protection Program-  
**\$5,767,893.50** was secured for **60 locations** in Haywood  
County to repair flood damage from Tropical Storm Fred.

### **Federally-Funded Programs**

6 contracts completed	\$129,244
Conservation applied on	135.1 acres



## Special Projects

### **Tropical Storm Fred Response**

The District and NRCS worked together to administer the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP). With the help of statewide partners, the District and NRCS evaluated over 300 sites damaged by Tropical Storm Fred, with approximately 60 sites identified for assistance. Total estimated construction costs are \$6,832,540, with \$5,124,405 provided by NRCS and \$1,708,135 provided by NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation. In addition to these funds, the District secured the funds listed below to assist with the flood relief efforts. Haywood County Soil and Water Conservation District is serving as the liaison between Haywood County, NRCS, NC Department of Public Safety and Emergency Management, and FEMA.

<b>Tropical Storm Fred Relief Funds</b>	
NC Streamflow Rehabilitation Program (StRAP)	\$493,466
Emergency Management Disaster Relief Fund	\$379,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$872,866</b>

### **Lower Jonathan Creek Watershed Project**



In partnership with Southwestern RC&D, Haywood Waterways, the Conservation Fund, NC DEQ and the NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation, the District has worked to address the water quality issues in the Lower Jonathan Creek watershed. The District is working in conjunction with NRCS to plan, design, implement and manage grants for this project, totaling \$960,231.

### **Feral Swine Trap Loan Program**

Haywood County is one of five counties in the state to participate in the Feral Swine Trap Loan pilot program through the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The purpose of the program is to provide landowners with the tools and knowledge needed to remove invasive pigs from their land. Feral swine are damaging to the ecosystem– affecting water and soil quality. They also carry harmful diseases that can spread to livestock. Participants can apply to borrow a trap to trap the feral swine on their property. The traps include a remote trigger system that allows the operator to monitor the trap using a smartphone.

# Farmland Preservation Program



The purpose of the Farmland Preservation program is to protect farmland in Haywood County from development. Agriculture is not only a \$78 billion industry in North Carolina, but also critical to

meeting the needs of a growing population. Farmland Preservation programs include:

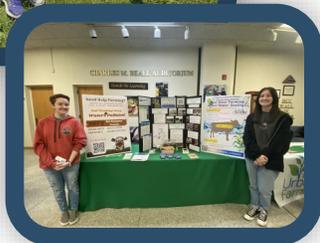
- **Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VAD)**
- **Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts (EVAD)**
- **Term Easements**
- **Permanent Easements**



County Programs		
VAD Acres	5,896.39	
EVAD Acres	1,720.7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,617.09</b>	
Conservation Easements		
Term Easements	759.86 acres	\$2,301,000
Permanent Easements	1,247.32 acres	\$9,628,202
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,007.2 acres</b>	<b>\$11,929,202</b>

## Environmental Education Program

The District provides environmental education to the citizens of Haywood County through various programs including classroom programs and outreach events such as Conservation Field Days. Our education program also works with many regional and state partners to strengthen environmental education for all.



### What we do:

- K-12 Classroom Programs
  - Adult Programs
- Conservation Field Days
  - FFA Land Judging Competition
  - Internship
  - NC Envirothon
- Conservation Contests
- Professional development for educators
  - Monthly newsletters
  - At-Home Adventure Kits
- Youth Environmental Stewardship Camp
  - Scholarships
- Partner projects such as Kids in the Creek

# Highlights

**3,500+** students and adults reached through environmental education programs



Eireann Marcus, 9th grader at Tuscola High School, won the State Computer-Generated Poster Contest themed "Soil and Water - Yours for Life". Three other Haywood contestants won 1st place in the regional contests.

5th Grade Conservation Field Days were held in-person at the Mountain Research Station for the first time since 2019. Over 500 5th graders were in attendance.



Haywood County students created several hundred ornaments to decorate the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree which is coming from a N.C. National Forest this year.



Youth Environmental Stewardship Camp



Resource Conservation Workshop



Canton Middle School Envirothon Team

## **New Staff**

### ***Welcome JD Jorgensen***

Having grown up in Buncombe County, JD feels blessed to have returned home to WNC. He received a B.S. in Environmental Studies from UNC-Asheville and an MAed in Instructional Technology from East Carolina University. Prior to coming to Haywood County, JD worked as an environmental science educator and then as a Digital Learning and Teaching Facilitator in Onslow County. JD is currently working as the District Soil and Water Conservationist. JD, his wife Leah, and their dog Junebug, live in Waynesville. In his free time, JD enjoys spending time in the great outdoors, fishing and hiking and is also working on restoring a 1971 International Scout. JD is excited to be working here in the Haywood Soil and Water office and happy to call Haywood County home.



### ***Welcome Amanda Buchanan***

Amanda is a ninth generation Jackson County native. She received her B.S. degree in Natural Resource Management with a concentration in Forestry. Additionally, she has her A.A.S. from Haywood Community College in Forest Management Technologies. Amanda began her career as an NRCS employee in October 2014. Prior to working for NRCS, Amanda was the Swain Soil and Water District Director for 6 years. Amanda still resides in Qualla with her husband, Joe, and two grown children Bryar and Ashton. In her free time, Amanda enjoys all outdoor activities including mountain biking, fly fishing, hiking, camping, and gardening. She also is an avid CrossFitter and enjoys running 5k competitions. Amanda is excited to be working in Team 2 and being the Soil Conservationist assigned to Buncombe County.



## ***Welcome Jennifer Best***

The District bid farewell to Robert (Bob) Cathey after his retirement from the Haywood Soil and Water Conservation District Board. Cathey served on the District Board as the Secretary for the last twenty years. A native of Haywood County, Cathey has served on numerous other boards throughout his career. He was a US Forest Service employee for thirty-four years and was able to bring his knowledge and skills to the District. Bob will truly be missed– the District wishes him the best in his retirement.



Upon Cathey's retirement, County Commissioner Jennifer Best was appointed by the NC Soil and Water Commission to fill his position. Over the last year, Jennifer has served as an Associate Haywood Soil and Water Conservation District Board Member. As a County Commissioner and farmer herself, Best has already made a tremendous impact throughout the County and the District with her knowledge and experience in agriculture practices.

## **Our Partners**

NC Association of Soil & Water  
Conservation Districts

NC Division of Soil and Water Conserva-  
tion

NC Soil & Water Conservation  
Commission

NC Foundation for Soil & Water  
Conservation

USDA Natural Resources Conservation  
Service

Area 1 Association of Soil & Water  
Conservation Districts

Southeast District Employee Association

National Association of Soil & Water  
Districts

Southwestern NC Resource Conservation  
& Development

Mountain Research Station

NC Cooperative Extension

USDA Farm Services Agency

Haywood Waterways Association

NC Conservation District Employee's  
Association