



REGION I NEWSLETTER

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About the Soil & Water Conservation Commission

The GSWCC is a Georgia State Government Agency that is dedicated to protecting, conserving, and improving soil and water resources across the state. Regional offices were able to be re-implemented in 2023 due to additional funding.

Region I covers the 8 districts listed at the top of this page and the office is located in Calhoun, GA on Highway 53. The regional staff provides support to the Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), Local Issuing Authorities (LIA) and community members with concerns about soil and water quality.

Additional staff administrative responsibilities include minute taking and requisitions, district program support, outreach and a variety of other functions to serve each district. Meet the Region I staff members below.



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About Conservation Districts

The Georgia Assembly created the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in 1937 to protect the state's soil and water resources following the Dust Bowl. Each District provides a way for citizens to set local resource priorities for state and federal assistance programs.

There are 40 SWCD's across the 159 counties in Georgia. Throughout the state, 370 district supervisors work to conserve, improve and protect the natural resources. There are at least 2 district supervisors in each county, one is appointed and one is elected. The supervisors are unpaid state officials that work with the GSWCC and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Districts hold regular monthly meetings to plan their work and determine local needs for soil and water conservation and resource development. SWCDs work on a local level to promote conservation goals. These meetings are public and the schedule can be found on the website (gaswcc.georgia.gov)



"Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land."

ALDO LEOPOLD





Partners for Fish & Wildlife

GSWCC in cooperation with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, partners with private landowners to provide livestock exclusion fencing for waterbodies. This Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program (PFW) will provide a cost share to improve water quality and water habitat on farmlands.

GSWCC also offers stream bank restoration through public-private partnerships by offering advice and funding. This PFW program will provide a cost share to restore stream banks, wetlands and adjoining wildlife habitat that might otherwise go unprotected.

See program details below:

- Program will reimburse 90% of total costs up to \$10,000 for fence exclusion projects in priority watershed areas.
- Program will reimburse 90% of total costs of any small stream restoration projects.
- Maximum reimbursement for stream restoration projects will be determined according to available funds.
- 60% of funds must be used to provide streambank protection.

Land Owner Responsibilities

- Assist with project scope development.
- Be available for any inspections.
- Be available for any media.

GSWCC Responsibilities

- Develop project scope, including:
 - Synopsis of farm and planned activities.
 - Goals and list of BMP's to be installed.
 - Size of buffer created.
- Write & submit project for approval.
- Provide necessary maps and photos.



"This Earth was made for all beings, not just human beings."

UPCOMING EVENTS & DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

Events:

NRCW: National Resources Conservation Workshop will be held June 11th-16th in Tifton, GA. This workshop focuses on the value of protecting wildlife, forestry, soil & water resources. Registration is due by May 1st. For more information please visit the website [here](#).

District News:

Blue Ridge Mountain

- Blue Ridge is sponsoring a bus for NRCW.
- The Supervisors will be working on their Plan of Work for FY24.
- Hog trapping is currently on hold as the camera on their trap needs repair.

Catoosa County

- Unfortunately, Supervisor Bob Plemons passed away last weekend. He served as the District Supervisor for 45.5 years.
- Catoosa is planning an initial 1A and 1B recertification course offered to LIA's and anyone in the community that would like to attend the courses.
- Thursday, May 4th Catoosa will host an Award Picnic to honor their scholarship and poster contest winner and their teachers at Elsie Holmes Park in Ringgold.

Cobb County

- Cobb had a Community Garden ground breaking. They are partnering with Farm Bureau, WellStar Hospitals, and the Cobb County Master Gardeners program to build and operate a community garden that provides fresh produce to residents.

Coosa River

- Coosa is making year end donations to school projects and community projects in their area.
- New elected supervisor Jordan Fuquea from Gordon County has been a welcome addition to the board.
- Coosa will be working on they FY24 Plan of Work and deciding what projects to focus on over the next year.

Limestone Valley

- Gilmer County High School won Envirothon and will be going to Canada!
- Limestone Valley is also sponsoring a bus for transportation for the NRCW Students.
- Currently looking for a Supervisor to fill the Murray County Elected position.

Fulton County

- The supervisors have been interviewing candidates for an open appointed position in Fulton County. A new supervisor should be appointed soon.
- The district has been working diligently to apply for an urban agriculture grant with the City of Atlanta's help.
- A recent overview on the City of South Fulton was conducted and problems were identified that will continue to be addressed by the Commission and the District.

Roosevelt

- Roosevelt will have a Wildlife Field Day this fall involving all local elementary schools.
- Discussion on farm management practices and potential starting a weed wiper program have also been discussed by supervisors.
- The Supervisors have asked GSWCC to conduct an overview the City of LaGrange and their ES&PC program.

West Georgia

- West Georgia Continues to sponsor several kids to go to NRCW.
- They have not been getting reports on feral hogs but know they are in the area.
- They are looking to fill two supervisor positions.