



Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Society

*Promoting the wise use of Soil,
Water and other Natural
Resources.....*

Spring Issue
March 2008

Presidents Message



Steve Musser

As I approach the midyear point of my SWCS presidency I am excited to be leading an organization that is making a difference. I am constantly talking with our members and listening to their enthusiastic ideas about our future. We have a diverse membership that brings new ideas to the table, and this makes our organization stronger.

We have co-sponsored two no-till meetings in south Alabama and are co-sponsoring science fairs and other activities across the state.

Our area vice presidents are always looking for innovative ways that SWCS can promote good environmental stewardship.

Planning has also begun on our annual meeting. Francisco Arriaga has put together a group of talented folks that are working on a great meeting. We plan to meet in Auburn on June 11-13 at the Ham Wilson building on Auburns campus on South Donahue next to AU Ag Heritage Park, with the traditional agenda of meeting Wednesday afternoon, tour on Thursday, and technical meeting on Friday.

I hope you will make plans to attend this meeting. I also want to encourage you to think about those in or outside of SWCS that are deserving of recognition for their environmental stewardship and provide nominations to Heidi Richards. Please remember the silent auction. Its proceeds provide support to our student chapters, and these members are the future of our organization. I look forward to seeing you there!

Educational Opportunities on SWCS Homepage

A new feature has been added to the Alabama Chapter SWCS homepage. Click the link to our homepage below and check out "Educational Opportunities":
<http://www.alchapterswcs.aces.edu> Please make us aware of other educational opportunities for SWCS members by providing the information to a member of the Educational Committee or Perry Oakes.

perry.oakes@al.usda.gov

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**"A true
conservationist is a
man who knows
that the world is
not given by his
fathers, but is
borrowed from his
children" -
Audobon**



2008 ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIRS

The Northeast Alabama Regional Science Fair was held at Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama. The judging of projects was held on February 21st with the awards ceremony following on Friday, February 22nd. The event was divided into Junior and Senior divisions among various subjects/topics.

Representing the Alabama Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society were Eddie May (Coordinator for Coosa Valley RC&D), Phillip Slater (Soil Conservationist Talladega Field Office), and Heidi Richards (Coordinator for CAWACO RC&D) serving as contest judges for Plant Science/Botany and other topics.

2008 Science Fair Tyler Montgomery Senior Winner Award Presentation

Shown below, Left to Right: Gladys Swain, Director of NE Alabama Science Fair with Talladega College; Heidi Richards, Awards Chairman for AI SWCS; Tyler Montgomery, a 9th grade student at Talladega High School; Dr. Christopher Jeffries and Dr. Charlie Stinson, both of Talladega College.



Tyler's project: "How pH Effects Seed Germination" won him 1st place in the Senior division of Plant Science/Botany.

Tyler received a certificate of accomplishment from the Alabama Chapter of the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Society and a \$50.00 money order.

"Is Gray Water as Effective as Tap Water for Plant Growth?"

Shown is Cate Rasco, a 6th grade student from Graham Elementary School. Cate's topic, "Is Gray Water as Effective as Tap Water for Plant Growth?" Cate won 1st place in the Junior Division of Plant Science/Botany.

Heidi Richards, Awards Chairman for the chapter of the Alabama S&WCS presented her with a certificate on behalf of the Society and a \$25.00 money order.





MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

Make your reservations for the Annual Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Society Meeting

June 11-13, 2008

Auburn

More information coming soon.

Plans are well under way for the annual meeting, Francisco Arriaga has put together a group of talented folks who are working towards a great meeting. Auburn is our destination and our target date is June 11-13; where we will assemble at the Ham Wilson building on Auburn University. The Ham Wilson building is located on South Donahue next to AU Ag Heritage Park. The traditional agenda of meeting Wednesday afternoon, tour on Thursday, and technical meeting on Friday. More details later, check the web-site for more frequent updates.

Regarding the silent auction at the SWCS annual meeting

We Need Your HELP!

A big THANKS to Sue Daniel and John Curtis, who have agreed to handle the silent auction this year. We need each of you to help support this fund raiser; all proceeds from the silent auction goes to the student chapters. **Please get your items to Sue or John, or bring them to the meeting. Contact information for Sue, susie.daniel@al.usda.gov; Contact information for John, john.curtis@al.usda.gov

SWCS Awards for 2008

The Awards Committee for SWCS is now taking nominations for possible 2008 recipients. If you have a nominee you may contact Heidi Richards her contact information is heidi.richards@al.usda.gov.



Membership Notes

From Skip Ragsdale, Membership Chairman Alabama Chapter of the SWCS

Most SWCS chapter members understand and appreciate the work it takes to make the Society a success. Without new members, the SWCS would fail to provide the needed support the environment in Alabama and the world needs desperately. Support the Society and Alabama will be better because of you. The SWCS is a group worthy of your time and effort. Alabama and the world desperately need you-yes you!

The membership of the Alabama Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society includes those from all occupations. Whether a farmer or scientist; they all are specialists in areas of expertise needed to assure Alabama's future includes water that is clean and usable. Many SWCS members do not think of ourselves as a specialist much less have the knowledge to prevent and undo pollution, but by working as a group we each provide a piece of the puzzle that provides our children's future a chance. Every Alabamian has a role in the future health of our environment. I encourage all members not only remain members, but to actively work to seek others to join. Remember, by supporting the Soil and Water Conservation Society you are working to help provide the future we desire and our children deserve.

Global Climate Change is real! It has occurred in regular cycles in the worlds past. NASA and NOAA states that the difference this time is due to man. In past occurrences, it took a thousand years or so for change to occur. Due to the influences of man, this cycle will not give us long to acclimate to the change. We may have only a hundred years (per NASA and NOAA). As Global Climate Change highlights, most of the world does not have the natural resources we have in Alabama. Water is an essential ingredient of life. China has less water than Canada—and forty times as many people. Half the people of the world struggle each day to find enough to drink and to meet their other basic human needs. With 77,000 miles of Rivers and streams, Alabama has always had an abundance of clean water. Like all abundant resources, we tend to take it for granted, but clean water is finite. In today's world, it takes a thousand tons of water to grow a ton of grain and fifteen thousand to grow a one-ton cow. Thirteen hundred gallons of water go into the production of a single hamburger; a steak requires double that amount. If we want to eat, we must be responsible and keep Alabama's greatest natural resource clean for future needs.

Use every opportunity to spread the fact that our Chapter provides education and expertise essential to Alabama's future. The person you convince to join today might be the one that can provide the last needed piece of the puzzle. Working together, we can solve any problem. We should all be concerned about the future because our children will spend the rest of their lives there!

Promoting the wise use of Soil, Water and other Natural Resources.....





Erosion and Sediment Control News

Earl Norton, Chairman CPESC Committee



Our next erosion and sediment control field day event is scheduled for September 17 & 18, 2008 at the Bessemer Civic Center. The Erosion and Sediment Control Program Steering Committee met on January 29, 2008 with industry representatives to discuss field day plans for 2008. I am providing the field day details for those that are interested.

The event will have a new name, Clear Water Erosion and Sediment Control Field Day (Clear Water replaces Red Water Blues) and only a single 2-day event is planned for 2008. The first day will provide advanced classroom training for designers/planners of erosion and sediment control systems. The second day will consist of visits to sites where erosion and sediment control systems, practices and products can be observed and discussed – this day of activities should be of high interest to contractors, planners/designers and others interested in proper citing and installations.

The Bessemer Civic Center provides easy access to Interstate 59/20, ample parking, room for exhibits and a large classroom for the first day of training. There are numerous lodging accommodations nearby for those that need to stay overnight. We expect to have numerous sites to visit during the second day and the time in the field will extend through the afternoon. Please notice, visits to field sites will extend throughout the day with lunch provided somewhere along the trip route.

The Chapter-sponsored CPESC Exam Review Course and CPESC Exam are scheduled for March 26 and 27, respectively, at the GuestHouse Inn at Clanton. Registration information is available at the Chapter website. CPESCs may attend the session to earn CEUs if space is available – there will probably be a few spaces available and anyone interested in attending for CEUs should confirm space with me prior to coming to the Exam Review Course.

I recently attended the annual conference of the International Erosion Control Association at Orlando in February and have some related important information to share with SWCS members. New IECA Executive Director Russ Adsit has agreed to be the keynote speaker for our SWCS AL Chapter 2008 Annual Meeting. Russ replaced Ben Northcutt, a friend of our Chapter, this past year and adds a southern flavor to the IECA Headquarters - Russ has worked throughout the Southeast as a landscape architect and moved to the IECA Headquarters from Memphis, TN.

During the Business Session of the SE Chapter of IECA held at the IECA Conference, I had an opportunity to announce the AL Chapter SWCS meeting. The IECA SE Chapter plans to co-sponsor our SWCS 2008 Annual Meeting and is quite pleased of the partnership with our AL SWCS Chapter. I believe the AL Chapter SWCS and SE IECA Chapter partnership began in 1996 and it has significantly benefited both organizations.

Let me remind you, if there is a specific topic related to CPESC that you would like to have covered in our Chapter newsletter let me know.

nortone1@bellsouth.net



CONT. FROM PAGE 2: 2008 ALABAMA HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIRS

2008 Science Fair AIDB If You Plant Them They Will Grow

Shown from left to right are AI SWCS members and fair Judges Eddie May, Heidi Richards, Phillip Slater with Justin Graben, a student from Alabama School for the Blind.



SWCS
Alabama Chapter

Check our website
<http://www.alchapterswcs.aces.edu/>

Send Articles for the newsletter to Joyce.nicholas@al.usda.gov



SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY

Spring is Here

Ecclesiastes 1:4: Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever.

Our collective jobs, whether we are landowners or stakeholders, is to strive towards saving our natural resources, thereby saving our earth—being a good steward of the land—it is our responsibility. I know that each of you does your part, however let me take this opportunity to remind you that Earth Day, April 22, 2008—a great time to share your knowledge with youngsters or adults about conservation.

What a busy time of the year; I love the planting season. We are extremely busy down here in Monroe and Conecuh Counties—EQIP FY '08 is gearing down—EWP Forestry will be closing out soon and our staff is working out in the field to apply conservation practices for current contracts.

The spring rains have been a blessing; remember the last few years our rainfall was quite inadequate—hopefully the raining trend will hold out through the spring—this should help improve our water supply. While out in the field visiting with farmers several of them have made the statement that some fields were “too wet” to get in—what joy—we are very grateful for the rain—just not too much.

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**The Map to the right shows the 4 areas.
 Get to know your Area Vice President.
 They are your voice in Executive Meetings!
 See contact information on page 6.**



We're on the Web!
www.alchapterswcs.aces.edu/



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