

# Alabama Chapter SWCS History

(Prepared by Perry Oakes, 2019)

## **Beginnings**

Discussions of an Alabama Chapter began in 1946. An Alabama Chapter had its first President in 1949.

The Charter of the South Alabama Chapter of Soil Conservation Society of America (SCSA) was December 3, 1954, and signed by Mr. R. Y. Bailey, president of the National Association of SCSA.

A. L. Harrell, North Alabama Chapter Chairman, petitioned the National Association of the SCSA for a chapter in North Alabama on September 21, 1954. The petition was approved by the national council of SCSA and presented to the North Alabama Chapter on December 17<sup>th</sup>, by Mr. R. Y. Bailey, president of the National Association of SCSA.

The North and South Alabama Chapters of SCSA had separate annual meetings but often met together.

The two Alabama Chapters were merged in 1981 to form the Alabama Chapter of SCSA.

In August 1987, the SCSA was changed at the national level to the Soil and Water Conservation Society. This same year the By-Laws of the Alabama Chapter were changed to The Alabama Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

## **Interesting Facts**

The SCSA Annual Meeting in 1971 of the North and South Alabama Chapters at the Governor's House Motel in Montgomery consisted of addresses by Jerry Clower, a humorist from Yazoo City, Mississippi; Governor George Wallace; and Congressman Bill Nichols. What an agenda!

In the early years, the Alabama chapters contributed towards a building fund for the national association office.

In 1979, the North AL Chapter developed a "Position Statement on Land Use."

In the early years, Chapters often passed resolutions honoring members who died during the year.

In 1985, a resolution by the chapter was sent to President Reagan and each U.S. Congressman and Senator from Alabama requesting ample funding for the SCS.

For years, the Chapter had a Photo Award Contest that began in 1968 and continued until 1994. Members would compete during the year capturing the best photo in different categories.

During the early years ('80's) Annual Meetings often had as many as 12 sponsors who made monetary donations for the meeting.

In 1990 and 1991, the Chapter developed Position Statements on The Environment, Prime Farmland, Fish and Wildlife, and Forestry.

In 1992, the Chapter passed a Resolution that recognized the need for improved water resource management for the State of Alabama, and recommended to Governor Hunt and the Alabama Legislature to fund an Office of Water Resources within ADECA.

In 1995, the Chapter became part of the SWCS blanket tax exemption from the IRS.

### **Annual Meetings**

| <b>Date</b>  | <b>City</b>  | <b>Location</b>        | <b>Theme</b>                                       | <b>Attendance</b> |
|--|--------------|------------------------|--|-------------------|
| 1955, N.AL Chapter                                       | Guntersville |                        |  | 35                |
| 1964, S. AL Chapter                                      | Montgomery   | Governor's House       |  | 100               |
| 1965, N.AL Chapter, July 30                              | Cullman      | Holiday Inn            | You and the SCSA                                   | 106               |
| 1965, S.AL Chapter, August 6                             | Selma        | Holiday Inn            |  | 100               |
| 1966, S. AL Chapter, July 22                             | Monroeville  | Vanity Fair Park       | To Advance the Science & Art of Good Land Use      | 105               |
| 1967, S.AL Chapter, July 21                              | Montgomery   | Holiday Inn East       |  | 116               |
| 1968, N.AL Chapter,                                      |              |                        | Total Resource Conservation                        |                   |
| 1968, S. AL Chapter, July 19                             | Montgomery   | Governor's House Motel | Environmental Improvement                          | 115               |
| 1969, N.AL Chapter, August 1                             | Decatur      | Downtown Holiday Inn   |  | 125               |
| 1969, S.AL Chapter, July 18                              |              |                        | Frontiers in Conservation                          | 150               |
| 1970, N.AL Chapter, July 31                              | Guntersville | Val Monte Motel        | Developments in our Area                           | 112               |
| 1970, S.AL Chapter, July                                 | Montgomery   | Governor's House Motel | The Changing Society                               | 250               |
| 1971, Joint Meeting North and South AL Chapters, June 18 | Montgomery   | Governor's House Motel |  |                   |
| 1971, S.AL Chapter, August 6                             | Selma        | Holiday Inn            |  |                   |
| 1972, N.AL Chapter, July 28                              | Tuscaloosa   | Ramada Inn Downtown    |  |                   |
| 1972, S.AL Chapter, June 23                              | Montgomery   | Governor's House Motel | The Earth Around Us                                | 93                |
| 1973, Joint Meeting North and South AL Chapters, June 22 | Birmingham   | Holiday Inn South      |  | 115               |
| 1973, S.AL Chapter, June                                 |              |                        | Plants, Animals and Man                            | 60                |
| 1974, S. AL Chapter, June 14                             | Montgomery   | Jefferson Davis Hotel  |  | 75                |
| 1975, Joint Meeting North and South AL Chapters, June 13 | Montgomery   | Holiday Inn East       |  | 111               |
| 1976, S. AL Chapter, June 11                             | Ozark        | Ozark Country Club     | Critical Conservation Choices, A Bicentennial Look | 90                |
| 1977, Joint Meeting North and South AL Chapters, June 17 | Birmingham   | Parliament House Hotel |  |                   |
| 1978, N.AL Chapter                                       | Florence     | Motel on U.S. 72 East  |  | 90                |

|  |                            |  |   |      |
|--|----------------------------|--|---|------|
| 1978, S.AL Chapter, June 16                              | Auburn                     | Auburn Union Building                    |   | 47   |
| 1979, Joint Meeting North and South AL Chapters, May 18  | Montgomery                 | Sheraton Motor Inn                       |   | 140  |
| 1980, Joint Meeting North and South AL Chapters, June 27 | Birmingham                 | Holiday Inn 20 <sup>th</sup> Place       | Energy and Agriculture  | 125+ |
| 1984, June 21-22   | Tuscaloosa                 | Stafford inn                             | Alabama's Natural Resources                                     |      |
| 1985, June 13-14   | Eufaula                    | Lakepoint State Park                     |   | 108  |
| 1986, June 12-13   | Birmingham                 | The Club                                 |   |      |
| 1987, June 11-12   | Foley                      | Foley Civic Center                       |   |      |
| 1988, June 10  | Decatur                    | Decatur inn                              |   |      |
| 1989, June 15-16   | Birmingham                 | Mountain Brook Inn                       |   |      |
| 1990, June 8   | Montgomery                 | Ramada Inn East                          |   |      |
| 1991, June 14  | Foley                      | Foley Civic Center                       |   |      |
| 1992, June 19  | Birmingham                 | Botanical Gardens                        | Water Resources Management and Protection                       |      |
| 1993, June 24-25   | Auburn                     | Auburn Conference Center and Motor Lodge | Changing Faces of Rural Alabama                                 |      |
| 1994, June 24  | Foley                      | Foley Civic Center                       | Wet and Wild (Wetlands and Wildlife)                            |      |
| 1995, June 15-16   | Guntersville               | Guntersville State Park                  | Ecosystems in Alabama – The Lake Guntersville Story             |      |
| 1996, June 27-28   | Eufaula                    | Lake Point State Park                    |   |      |
| 1997, June 12-13   | Birmingham                 | Botanical Gardens                        |   |      |
| 1998, June 24-25   | Mobile                     | Ramada Inn                               |   |      |
| 1999, June 17-18   | Huntsville                 | ? Ramada Inn                             |   |      |
| 2000, June 14-16   | Auburn – First 3 day event | Jovonn – Best Western - Clarionn         | Erosion and Sediment Control Products for the Future            |      |
| 2001, June 13-15   | Birmingham                 | Sheraton Birmingham South Hotel          | Our Changing Watersheds: Issues in the Urban/Rural Interface    |      |
| 2002, June 12-14   | Huntsville                 | Hilton Plaza                             | Protecting Our Environment – Understanding Phase II Regulations |      |
| 2003, June 11-13   | Mobile                     | Airport Plaza Hotel                      | Watershed Protection from Headwaters to Estuaries               |      |
| 2004, June 2-4   | Opelika                    | Grand National Conference Center & Lodge | Protecting Our Water Supply                                     |      |
| 2005, June 8-10  | Birmingham                 | Birmingham Botanical Gardens             | Managing Our Natural Resouces for Multiple Uses                 |      |
| 2006, June 7-9   | Huntsville                 | Holiday Inn Research Park                | Conserving Our Soil and Water Resources for Future Generations  |      |
| 2007, May 17-19  | Quincy, FL                 | North FL Research Center                 | Tri-State Mtg (AL, FL, GA)                                      |      |
| 2007, June 20-22   | Mobile                     | Ashbury Hotel and Suites                 | Watershed Protection from Headwaters to Estuaries               |      |
| 2008, June 11-13   | Auburn                     | Ham Wilson Livestock Arena               | Our Changing Landscapes 2008                                    |      |
| 2009, June 10-12   | Birmingham                 | Double Tree Hilton Hotel                 | Energy and Water Development for Alabama                        |      |
| 2010, June 9-11  | Huntsville                 | Holiday Inn Research Park                | Protecting Our Soil and Water Resources                         |      |
| 2011, June 8-10  | Spanish Fort               | Five Rivers Delta Center                 | Restoring and Managing our Natural Landscapes                   |      |
| 2012, May 23-25  | Eufaula                    | Lakepoint State Park and Resort          | Water Conservation, Not Water Wars: A Tri-State Perspective     |      |

|                  |              |  |   |    |
|------------------|--------------|--|---|----|
| 2013, June 12-14 | Birmingham   | Doubletree by Hilton Hotel               | Got Soil Health?  |    |
| 2014, June 11-13 | Huntsville   | Holiday Inn Research Park                | Our Changing Landscapes   |    |
| 2015, June 22-24 | Spanish Fort | Five Rivers Delta Center                 | Creating a Clean Water Future through Water and Soil Conservation |    |
| 2016, June 8-10  | Auburn       | Ham Wilson Livestock Arena               | Protecting Alabama's Natural Resources                            |    |
| 2017, June 7-9   | Irondale     | Associated General Contractors - Alabama | Consumption and Conservation of Natural Resources                 |    |
| 2018, June 20-22 | Florence     | Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa            | Healthy Land and Clean Water                                      |    |
| 2019, June 19-21 | Foley        | Graham Creek Nature Preserve             | Conservation in Action from the Mountains to the Beaches          | 83 |

### **Presidents (Chairman)**

1949 – J. J. Stroup

1950 thru 1954 - John K. Howard

1955 – A. L. Harrell, North AL Chapter

1956 thru 1957 – John M. Cross, North AL Chapter

1958 thru 1959 Harold Benford, North AL Chapter

1960 – C. T. Hallmark, North AL Chapter

1961 – Roger M. Chapman, North AL Chapter

1962 thru 1963 - Kermit N. Tucker, North AL Chapter

1964 thru 1965 - John K. Howard, North AL Chapter

1966 – Dyer N. Ruggles, North AL Chapter; Luther Gowder, South AL Chapter

1967 – Robert M. Cargile, North AL Chapter; G. L. Edwards, South AL Chapter

1968 – Joe O. Cleland, North AL Chapter; Elvin V. Wright, South AL Chapter

1969 – Jack P. Harper, North AL Chapter; O. D. Fincher, South AL Chapter

1970 – W. J. King, North AL Chapter; Ed Gingles, South AL Chapter

1971 – Henry C. DeBardeleben, North AL Chapter; D. M. Harris, South AL Chapter

1972 – James A. Green, North AL Chapter; Henry Harrison, South AL Chapter

1973 – Byron Oliver, North AL Chapter; Lewis D. Williams, South AL Chapter

1974 – Charles T. Mathews, North AL Chapter; Lewis D. Williams, South AL Chapter

1975 – Samuel H. Geiger, North AL Chapter; James Holland, South AL Chapter

1976 – Marlyn F. Hester, South AL Chapter

1977 – Joe Dent, South AL Chapter

1978 – James Norris, South AL Chapter

1979 – Glenn Hickman, South AL Chapter

1980 – W. F. Patterson, South AL Chapter

1981 – Bobby Moody, South AL Chapter

1982 – Charles Bowen

1983 – Joe Hood

1984 – Robert Kelley

1985 – Randy Hale  
1986 – Jerry Johnson  
1987 – Rick Zellner  
1988 – Jim Brown  
1989 – John Harper  
1990 – Bill Hughes  
1991 – Gary Kobylski  
1992 – Clifford Jones  
1993 – Greg Mullins  
1994 – Greg Mullins  
1995 – John Meetze  
1996 – Dr. Wayne Reeves  
1998 – Randall East  
1999 – Paul Kennedy  
2000 – Mary Miller  
2001 – Foy Kirkland  
2002 – Rod Goode  
2003 – Carl Pinyard  
2004 – Jeff Holloway  
2005 – Ben Moore  
2006 – Tracy Cole  
2007 – Kirk Iverson  
2008 – Steve Musser  
2009 – Monday Mbila  
2010 – Perry Oakes  
2011 – Renea Dyer  
2012 – Brian Lassiter  
2013 – Andrew Price  
2014 – Gary Banks  
2015 – Monday Mbila  
2016 – Leslie Gahagan  
2017 – Jason Gardner  
2018 – Randy Sims  
2019 – Kathy Gotcher  
2020 – Leslie Gahagan

**Membership (individual)**

1961 73 (South AL)  
1965 94 (South AL)  
1967 110 (South AL)

|      |                |
|------|----------------|
| 1968 | 111 (South AL) |
| 1969 | 85 (South AL)  |
| 1973 | 113 (South AL) |
| 1974 | 117 (South AL) |
| 1975 | 108 (South AL) |
| 1976 | 119 (South AL) |
| 1977 | 94 (South AL)  |
| 1978 | 120 (South AL) |
| 1979 | 119 (South AL) |
| 1984 | 194            |
| 1985 | 169            |
| 1986 | 154            |
| 1987 | 136            |
| 1988 | 131            |
| 1989 | 116            |
| 1991 | 106            |
| 1993 | 100            |
| 1995 | 103            |
| 1996 | 100            |
| 1999 | 123            |
| 2000 | 122            |
| 2002 | 176            |
| 2005 | 153            |
| 2006 | 145            |
| 2007 | 118            |
| 2008 | 127            |
| 2009 |                |
| 2010 |                |
| 2011 | 116            |
| 2012 | 101            |
| 2013 | 93             |
| 2014 | 94             |
| 2015 | 92             |
| 2016 | 92             |
| 2017 | 89             |
| 2018 | 80             |
| 2019 | 70             |

## **Constitution and By-Laws**

The South Alabama Chapter adopted by-laws in 1974.

The first “dated” By-Laws of the Alabama Chapter was dated 6/85 at which time they were revised to align with the 5 areas of the Soil Conservation Service. Previous By-Laws existed for both chapters but were undated. The By-Laws were revised in 6/93.

The By-Laws were amended in 1986 to require the Nominating Committee to develop a slate of candidates (at least 2 for each office except for the President, which is filled by the President-Elect) at least 60 days before the annual meeting. The slate will be mailed to the membership for voting at least 45 days prior to the annual meeting.

In 1983, changes were made to the By-Laws making the Secretary/Treasurer’s position two separate positions. In 1993, the Treasurer’s position was made a permanent position.

In 1996, changes were made so that Vice Presidents from areas 1, 3, and 5 were elected in odd years while Vice Presidents for area 2 and 4, Secretary, and Treasurer were elected in even years. Terms were for 2 years.

## **Strategic Plan 2005-2009**

The original Strategic Plan was done in 1999 and considered a working document.

## **CPESC**

In 1981, the national SCSA joined with the American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops and Soils in initiating a program for certifying individuals qualified in the area of erosion and sediment control. An individual certified in this program is known as a Certified Professional Erosion and Sediment Control Specialist (CPESC). The name was changed later to Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control.

The Chapter established a CPESC Committee in 1995 and offered tutorials, workshops, and proctored exams for certification at the annual meeting through the 2000 annual meeting. In 2001 the Chapter began sponsoring the CPESC Exam Review Course and the Exam twice annually at a site near Clanton and did this through 2013. Beginning in 2014, instructors could no longer proctor the exam so the Chapter has co-sponsored the Exam Review Course with others, i.e. ALDOT, Volkert at various locations. The need for CPESCs to attain continuing education encouraged attendance by CPESCs and helped in attaining members. Earl Norton, CPESC Committee Chair, estimated that between 1995 and 2016 over 200 CPESCs, including candidates from Georgia, Tennessee, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and South Carolina have been certified with the support of the Alabama Chapter’s courses and exam proctors.

### **Certified Crop advisors**

A CCA Committee met with the Chapter in January 1998 to determine ways the Committee and Alabama Chapter of SWCS can support and enhance the CCA Program. The 1990 SWCS program included training sessions for CCA's to provide continuing education. The Chapter continues today to ensure that annual meetings are pre-approved for CCA continuing education credits.

### **Agreements**

In early 2001, a vision plan for a state-wide erosion and sediment control program was developed by Chapter members Robert Berry and Earl Norton and resulted in establishing a program led by the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee with strong support of the Chapter, Alabama Association of Conservation Districts, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Alabama Department of Environmental Management. The program formally began in September 2001 and continues today. Additional partners were added over the years and include the Alabama Department of Transportation, Alabama Associated General Contractors, Home Builders Association of Alabama, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, and Auburn University. The program has provided the Alabama Handbook for Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management on Construction Sites and Urban Areas, the Field Guide for Erosion and Sediment Control in Alabama, the brochure Let's Look at Sediment, 24 Red Water Blues and Clear Water Alabama events, and numerous seminars through Auburn University. This program has provided many benefits to the citizens and environment of Alabama and, incidentally, provided accomplishments for the Chapter to recognize in the Annual Reports to SWCS Headquarters.

### **Student Chapter History**

#### **Auburn University**

In June 1964, information was provided for the formation of a student chapter.

The Auburn University Student Chapter of SWCS was chartered in 1998 with 15 members.

The first meeting of the Auburn Student chapter was held January 12, 1998, with 30 students attending from at least 8 majors.

The Chapter was still active in 2002.

Currently, the Chapter is not active.

#### **Alabama A&M**

The Alabama A&M Chapter is known as the **Environmental Science Club (ESC)**

**Founding:**

The Alabama A & M University Student Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society was founded in Fall 2002 by Monday Mbila in association with the Alabama Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

**Need for the Club:**

The club was needed because as concerns for the quality of the environment increased, the need to recruit and involve more and more youths through initiatives that give the youths a sense of service and responsibility to their local communities became imperative.

**The Club has the following goals:**

- To encourage, educate, and share information concerning issues in soil and water conservation.
- To enhance student awareness concerning educational and professional opportunities.
- To participate in both campus and community services and activities that promote environmental awareness.

**Affiliations:**

- Up till date, the club receives funding from the AL SWCS to help in carrying out the Chapter activities.
- The Student Chapter became a member of the Students of Agronomy, Soils and Environmental Sciences (SASES) of the American Society of Agronomy. Membership to this organization gives our students access to professionally associate with other Agronomy/Soils/Environmental Science students across the United States and the world.

**Past Activities/Accomplishments:**

- At the 2005, American Society of Agronomy Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, the Alabama A& M Student Chapter participated with 12 other universities in a nationwide Students of Agronomy, Soils and Environmental Sciences (SASES) poster contest. The AAMU-Student Chapter was placed 4th after the University of Arkansas, Kansas State University, and the University of Florida.
- Participation in state Soil and Water Conservation Activities including annual meetings and poster presentations.
- Adopt-a-mile program on Memorial Parkway in front of the AAMU Campus -Club members help in keeping that portion of the highway clean. Obtained clearance from City for this program.

- Volunteer with other organizations in Northern Alabama (Operation Green Team, Redstone Arsenal, Wheeler Wildlife Refuge, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and City of Huntsville, Mayor's Office) area to help cleanup the Huntsville Spring Branch.
- Participates in the Huntsville Panoply Arts festival to promote the talents of young and mature artists throughout the nation.
- Participate in a "Printer Cartridge Recycling" program with Green School, a non-profit organization that allows schools and businesses to recycle empty printer, fax, and copier cartridges.
- Embarks on an AAMU Campus wide recycling program to recycle papers that are being generated from the University offices.
- Inviting speakers to speak to the club on different issues that interest the members.
- Organized water chemical testing certification training to members of the Club.

**Advisors:**

- Dr. Elica Moss
- Dr. Kozma Naka
- Dr. Monday Mbila

**Tuskegee University**

*Need to add Information.*

**Scholarships**

In 1991, the Chapter began discussion of a Scholarship fund to award a \$500 scholarship each year (if funds are available) to an undergraduate student in the field of agriculture or related curriculum. In 1992, the scholarship was established with eligibility criteria. Auburn University, Alabama A&M, and Tuskegee University would determine potential recipients and the Executive Committee of the chapter would determine the recipient.

In 1993, the Chapter established an Agreement with the School of Agriculture and Home Economics at Alabama A&M University to award a \$500 scholarship every 3<sup>rd</sup> year to an eligible student at A&M.

Since 2010, the Chapter has given an annual scholarship to an eligible student in an Alabama College or University. Student apply to the Chapter and the selection is made by the Executive Committee. The scholarship began as \$1,000 and was increased to \$2,000 in 2013. This scholarship is still active.

## **Chapter Awards**

The Alabama Chapter has received numerous National Awards throughout the years. Most of the awards were not found for this review of history.

1970 – North AL Chapter, National Winner of the SCSA membership development campaign

1999 – Outstanding Chapter for the South Central Region

2002 – Outstanding Chapter and Chapter Achievement Award

2005 – Outstanding Chapter Award, Chapter Achievement Award, and Chapter Professional Development Award.

2006 – The Chapter was part of a Team effort with Georgia SWCS, the University of Georgia, and Auburn University to promote Conservation Tillage. The Team received a Merit Award from the National SWCS.

2006 – Sustained Performance Award

2007 – Chapter Professional Development Award and Chapter Achievement Award

2008 – Outstanding Chapter Award

## **Chapter Sponsorships**

Over the years, the Chapter has sponsored or co-sponsored numerous workshops and events including: an advanced course in erosion and sediment control taught by Jerry Fifield, Ph.D.,

There is no record or when it was started, but the Chapter has supported regional and state Science Fairs by providing awards. This activity has been spotty but continues today.

## **Newsletters**

Newsletter for the Chapter members were regularly issued from 1996 until 2008.

## **Home Page**

Discussion began of developing a Chapter homepage in 1997. A home page was initiated through Auburn University ACES in 2001. The affiliation with Auburn as the home page provider was changed in 2017, with services provided by Sunshine Supplies. In 2018, the Chapter Treasurer began providing the services for maintaining the Chapter homepage.