

Richmond Soil & Water Conservation District

2024 Annual Report



Promoting Conservation Through:



Education



Information



Technical Assistance



Economic Incentives



Table of Contents

Serving the Conservation Needs of Richmond County.....	3
Board of Supervisors	4
Field Office Staff	5
Federal Conservation Programs	6
District Conservation Programs	7
Conservation in Action	8

Mission Statement

The mission of the Richmond Soil & Water Conservation District is to use available technical, financial, and educational resources for the purpose of administrating programs designed to encourage individual responsibility in conserving, improving, and sustaining our soil and water resources for future generations.

Serving the Conservation Needs of Richmond County

In the 1930s, when dust clouds from the Great Plains darkened the eastern skies, our nation was in peril. During the height of this Dust Bowl, Hugh Hammond Bennett provided testimony before a Congressional committee that resulted in the Soil Conservation Act of 1935. From this, the Soil Conservation Service at the United States Department of Agriculture was created.

Today, our land is in far different shape that it was in 1935, thanks to an ongoing conservation partnership that helps local landowners find solutions to their natural resource problems.

The Richmond Soil and Water Conservation District was established by petition and vote of the people under provisions of the Soil Conservation Districts Law of 1937, Chapter 139 of the General Statutes. The district is a governmental subdivision of the State and a corporate and political body. A Board of Supervisors governs the district. Responsibilities of the district include:

- Preventing soil erosion.
- Protecting water resources.
- Providing education and technical assistance related to resource conservation.

Richmond SWCD is one of 96 local Soil & Water Conservation Districts in the administration of voluntary, incentive-driven, locally led initiatives promoting natural resource management and conservation on the public and private lands of North Carolina. This effort is achieved through a conservation partnership comprised of local, state, and federal organizations as well as other private and non-profit entities.

Board of Supervisors



Left to right: Jim Chandler, Treasurer/Secretary; Jeff Joyner, Chairman; Ryan Carriker, Member; Johnny McInnis, Member; Jerry Mac Snead, Vice Chairman

A five-member Board of Supervisors governs Richmond SWCD. Three members are elected in the general election and two members are appointed by the N.C. Soil and Water Conservation Commission. Terms of office are four years. The Board meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 10 AM to administer the business of Richmond SWCD.

Field Office Staff



Matthew Reel

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Neal Bevirt

NRCS Soil Conservationist
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The **Conservation Technician** performs technical work and applies knowledge of natural resource methods, techniques, and practices to agricultural land uses. In this position, Matthew advises farmers on the installation and management of best management practices.

The **Administrative Assistant/Education Coordinator** performs numerous office management and clerical duties while developing educational programs in the district.

The **NRCS Soil Conservationist** assists in the development, planning, contracting, and application of conservation practices. Neal works with local landowners to implement the programs and procedures established by NRCS.

Our office is located at:
123 Caroline Street
Suite #300
Rockingham, NC 28379

Office hours:
Monday – Friday, 8 AM – 5 PM
(910) 817-3229
<https://www.richmondnc.com/198/Soil-Water>

Federal Conservation Programs: Natural Resources Conservation Service

This fiscal year, NRCS received **\$1,636,806.50** that was invested into the county through conservation programs. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (**EQIP**) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (**CSP**) help local agricultural producers to address conservation concerns. Some practices implemented through these programs include:

- Tree planting
- Forest management
- Waste storage solutions
- Animal watering facilities
- High tunnel systems
- Cover crops

2024 Programs and Contracts

EQIP (20 contracts)	\$1,416,019.50
• 1,220.7 contract acres	
CSP (2 contracts)	<u>\$220,787</u>
• 404.1 contract acres	
	Total - \$1,636,806.50

District Conservation Programs

This fiscal year, Richmond SWCD contracted **\$103,148** to be used in conservation programs in our county. These programs assist farmers with implementing Best Management Practices (**BMPs**) on farmland that improve or protect soil and water quality. BMPs implemented this year include well drilling, lagoon biosolid removals, rooftop runoff management, cropland conversion to grass, and livestock exclusion fencing.

The Soil and Water Conservation Commission has the statutory authority and responsibility to create, implement, and supervise voluntary, incentive-driven conservation programs. These programs include the Agriculture Cost Share Program (**ACSP**), the Community Conservation Assistance Program (**CCAP**), the Agricultural Water Resources Program (**AgWRAP**), and the Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (**StRAP**). In 2024, Richmond SWCD issued contracts utilizing ACSP and AgWRAP.

Contracted and Implemented BMPs

AgWrap (1 contract) – Amount Contracted and Implemented: \$10,502

- **Water supply well** **\$10,502**

ACSP (9 contracts) – Amount Contracted: \$92,646; Amount Implemented: \$62,404

- **Lagoon biosolids removal:** 1,915,337 gallons spread **\$50,000**
- **Rooftop runoff management:** 15,300 feet **\$29,583**
- **Cropland conversion:** 37 acres **\$11,654**
- **Livestock exclusion (supplement):** 1,050 feet **\$1,409**

Total contracted - **\$103,148**

Conservation in Action



Lagoon biosolids removal

This practice removes accumulated biosolids from lagoons. The biosolids are then used on farmland as a source of nutrients.



Water supply well and pump

A well consists of a drilled, driven, or dug well to supply water from an underground source. This water could be used for irrigation, livestock and poultry, aquaculture, freeze protection, or on-farm processing.



Livestock exclusion fencing

A system of permanent fencing with the goal of excluding livestock from streams and critical areas not intended for grazing to improve water quality.



Rooftop runoff management

This practice is used to prevent runoff from agricultural rooftops from causing erosion where vegetative practices are insufficient to address erosion concerns and protect water quality.