A Brief History of the District

The Manatee River Soil and Water Conservation District (MRSWCD) was chartered by the State of Florida on October 3, 1945.

The District Board of Supervisors entered into an agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, whereby the USDA/NRCS provides technical information and experienced conservation personnel to the district. Manatee County Government has been and continues to be a strong supporter of the MRSWCD by providing staff and technical assistance.

Supervisors meet regularly on the second Monday night of each month at the Manatee Extension Office in Palmetto.

Board Members
Jennifer Brunty                    Chairman
John J. O’Connor, Jr.            Vice-Chairman
Paul Howard                      Treasurer
Callon C. Keen, Jr.               Supervisor
Ben King                          Supervisor

2014 USDA FARM BILL PROGRAM
Cost Assistance for Conservation Practices

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is now accepting applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and several other programs.

USDA program applications are accepted on a continuous basis. However, applications must be submitted by November 21, 2014 to be considered for 2015 funds.

Farms and ranches will be ranked based on environmental benefits, then government incentive funds will be allocated based on highest to lowest ranking until available funds run out.

The EQIP program has been the most widely used USDA conservation program in Manatee County. Examples of incentive practices are: reorganize inefficient irrigation systems, irrigation water management, troughs and pipeline for livestock watering, and exotic weed control for Category I pests.

For more information or to receive an application contact the local NRCS office at (941)907-0011 or visit http://manatee.ifas.ufl.edu/soils

For further information visit: http://www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/
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MRSWCD News: For more information on these programs call 907-0011. If you would like to make a donation to the MRSWCD to help defray the costs of MRSWCD sponsored student programs, please call 907-0011 Ext 101. Any donations would be greatly appreciated.

Speech Competition
Each middle school and high school participant prepared a 6-8 minute speech on the topic selected by the Association of Florida Conservation Districts, “Dig Deeper-What are the Mysteries in the Soil?” Lakewood Ranch High School student Alisha Erozer, placed 1st and was awarded $150. Placing 2nd was Bayshore High School student Cheyenne Atkinson ($100), and in 3rd place was Haile Middle School student Samantha Baum ($75). Erozer went on to win the area and state competitions.

Staff hosted 7 participants with the help of 3 volunteers.

Manasota Regional Envirothon
Manatee High School’s Amoeba Alert team was the Manatee County winner of the Manasota Regional Envirothon. Team Amoeba Alert was unavailable for the state competition, Team Zaggin from Manatee High School filled in and brought home the Forestry Recognition Award. The Florida Envirothon competition is a field event for high school students requiring problem solving, teamwork and the application of knowledge in five areas: aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and current environmental issues.

Staff assisted 100 students with the help of 40 volunteers.

Manatee County Land Judging Competition
The 2014 event allowed students from local 4-H and FFA chapters to compete and show their knowledge of soil science, home site evaluation and conservation practices on a parcel of land. The students compete for the opportunity to represent Manatee County in the state contest, and possibly move on to the national competition held annually. Southeast High School won the senior FFA team division and the junior FFA team winner was from Buffalo Creek Middle School. One Junior and one Senior 4-H team also competed. The winning teams went on to compete at the state level. All Manatee county teams placed in the top 5 in their respective categories at state.

Staff assisted 58 students with the help of 9 volunteers.

Manatee Spring Conservation Farm Tour
In the spring of each year the MRSWCD sponsors a Farm Tour of the county and its various farming areas and communities. We take citizens on a guided bus tour through our county to educate participants on the importance of agriculture to our area. Lunch and snacks are provided. For more information on attending in spring 2015 please call 941-907-0011 x 101. If you would like your farm to be considered as a stop on the tour please call us.

Staff hosted 94 participants with the help of 6 volunteers.
2015 Manatee River SWCD Events

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>Envirothon</td>
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<td>February 19</td>
<td>MRSWCD Land Judging</td>
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<td>March 20</td>
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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service Corner

Statistics 2014

- Customers assisted: 8,999
- Students assisted through educational events/classroom visits: 302
- Adult education through farm tours and training: 199

2014 Conservation Planning (Acres)

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and other programs: 5,863

Services Provided

Natural Resource Information. NRCS access to recent and historical aerial maps, topography maps, and soil maps.

USDA Soil Survey Distribution. Soil surveys used for development and crops are available. Soil survey information for many areas may now be found online at http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/

Develop Conservation Plans on land used for agriculture. The plans recommend Best Management Practices for protecting resources.

Available Programs
Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, and others.
Call for information 941-907-0011.
Manatee River Soil and Water Conservation District

1303 17th St. W.
Palmetto, FL 34221

Phone: (941)907-0011
Fax (Toll Free): 1(855)464-1961

Farm City Week November 13 – November 21

For more information contact
Samantha Kennedy/County Extension Director at 722-4524


Nov 13  AgVenture

Nov 15  Beef Workshop and Prospect Show

Nov 18  Kiwanis Luncheon/Agriculturalist of the Year

Nov 20  Agriculture Hall of Fame Luncheon

Nov 21  Farm Tour

The Prospect Beef Show educates the youth of Manatee County on their beef projects in areas such as the industry, proper animal care, show techniques and how to prepare their animals for a show. This show is provided to the youth of Manatee County through sponsorships. If you are interested in being a sponsor or for more information contact Extension Agent Christa Carlson-Kirby 722-4524 or visit http://manatee.ifas.ufl.edu/agriculture/livestock/