



# Commission NEWS

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[www.mswcc.ms.gov](http://www.mswcc.ms.gov)

*From Our Executive Director*

## MSWCC completes high-hazard upgrade of Richland Creek Watershed Dam 2A

The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission has completed the high-hazard upgrade of Richland Creek Watershed Dam 2A. This flood control structure was originally constructed in 1983 as a low-hazard dam.

Due to development that has taken place below the dam, the structure was reclassified as a high-hazard dam, meaning that a failure of the dam could result in the loss of life and/or property. Through an agreement with NRCS and with assistance of the MSWCC Watershed Rehabilitation cost-share program, the dam has been reconstructed with a new principal spillway riser, a widened auxiliary spillway and new outlet protection.

"MSWCC is proud to have worked with NRCS and the local watershed district to complete this much-needed project that will provide additional flood protection downstream of the structure for many years to come,"

Mark Gilbert, MSWCC Executive Director said.



MARK GILBERT



*Rehabilitation Details:* The top of the dam was raised four feet, the auxiliary spillway was widened by 100 feet, a new outlet channel and impact basin were constructed, and a chimney drain was added to the dam.



A new principal spillway riser was constructed as part of the high-hazard upgrade project.

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## MSWCC begins work on South Delta Feral Swine Pilot Project

The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission is excited to begin work on the Mississippi Delta Feral Swine Abatement Pilot Program. This project is implemented jointly by NRCS and USDA's Animal and Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS) in partnership with Delta Wildlife, the Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation, MSWCC, and Sharkey, Issaquena, Yazoo, and Warren County Soil and Water Conservation Districts (individually).

This pilot project will be implemented in Sharkey, Issaquena, Warren and Yazoo counties. The purpose of this project is to:

- 1) *reduce feral swine populations, and;*
- 2) *reduce the impact of feral swine within the project area.*

It is estimated the impact of feral swine on cropland exceeds \$60 million annually.

This project provides support to current feral swine management activities



MSWCC Bureau Director Nick Ivy, at left, with State Conservationist Kurt Readus at a planning meeting for the Feral Swine Abatement Pilot Program in October 2020 at the Mississippi Cattlemen's Association meeting room in Jackson. PHOTO BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

within this four-county area, as well as technical and direct assistance to private landowners to actively trap and remove feral swine from their property.

"I have been really impressed with Delta Wildlife's knowledge of eradication methods," MSWCC Bureau Director Nick Ivy said. "They understand the importance of proper management of a project like this, as well as the negative impacts that can plague a project if not managed properly. With this team that has been put together, I believe we can set a standard for the way that feral

swine eradication is done in our state."

The four local Soil and Water districts play an integral role in this project. As with all conservation projects, these local districts are best equipped to get the landowners involved and actively participating in this project. The success of this project depends on actively promoting Best Management Practices and seeking out landowners to help solve Feral Swine problems that exist.

The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, through the local districts, are currently accepting applications for a Feral Swine Program Coordinator.

The Program Coordinator will serve as the first point of contact for landowners needing assistance, and will collect the needed data and information to implement the program.

"We hope to have that employee in place in early January 2021," Ivy said.

*If you know of anyone that is interested in this position, please contact the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission at 601-354-7645 or [nivy@mswcc.ms.gov](mailto:nivy@mswcc.ms.gov).*

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# MACD announces scholarship, grant, contest winners

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

The Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts Endowment Fund has announced the winners of five scholarships.

These scholarships, each in the amount of \$5,000, are awarded to Mississippi college sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students currently enrolled in college.

These awards are normally announced at the MACD Annual Meeting, held every year in January at the Hilton-Jackson, however, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 76th annual meeting has been cancelled for 2021.

The scholarship may be used at a two-year junior college or a four-year college in Mississippi. Scholarships are open to students pursuing a Natural Resource field of study.

## 2020 Scholarship Winners

Anna Lynn Hollis, Lincoln County, winner of the M.C. Sparks Jr. Memorial Scholarship;

Harris N. Dooley, Yazoo County, winner of the Herman L. Dungan Jr. Scholarship;

Laney M. Forsythe, Tate County, winner of the Paul R. Myrick Scholarship;

Thomas Augustus Hall, Lamar County, winner of the Jack Winstead Scholarship, and;

Wilson Scott Cantrell, Monroe County.



## Matching Grant Program

Holmes County and Quitman County were awarded matching grants of \$1,000 each.

The MACD Endowment Fund Matching Grant Program offers assistance to SWCDs with education programs and aids in increasing public awareness of the district's role in conservation of our natural resources.

The district is required to match a minimum of \$500 of the grant received. For these competitive matching grants, in-kind services, with the exception of district employee time, will be accepted as a match.

Matching funds may come from SWCD funds; however, Districts are encouraged to find other sources for matching funds. Projects submitted should aid at increasing awareness and knowledge of soil, water and other related resources.

## MACD 2020 Newsletter

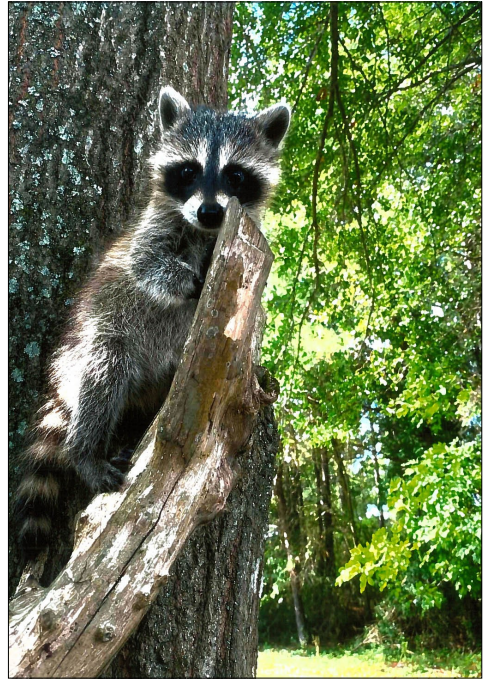
Tunica County SWCD won the Newsletter of the Year contest.

## MACD 2020 Photo Contest Categories:

*Conservation Practices*, Youth, Kailee Steelman, Lafayette County; no adult entry;

*Close-Up Conservation*, Youth, Kailee Steelman, Lafayette County; Adult, Melinda Lusk, Webster County;

*Conservation In Action*, Youth, Kailee Steelman, Lafayette County;



Lauren Lusk of Webster County was the overall winner of the MACD 2020 Photo Contest with this photo she took in Eupora, MS. The photo is titled, "Treetop Lover."

Adult, Lauren Lusk, Webster County;

*Ag/Conservation Across Mississippi*, Youth, Kailee Steelman, Lafayette County; no adult entry.

*Overall Photo Winner*, Lauren Lusk, Webster County.

The winning state photos were submitted to the NACD Photo contest. Winners at the national level will be announced in January 2021.

*Editor's Note: Please see page 4 for additional Photo Contest entries.*

## DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR MACD DRAWDOWN TICKETS

Although the MACD Annual Meeting will not be a face-to-face event in 2021, MACD is selling drawdown tickets to raise funds for the MACD Endowment Fund Scholarships.

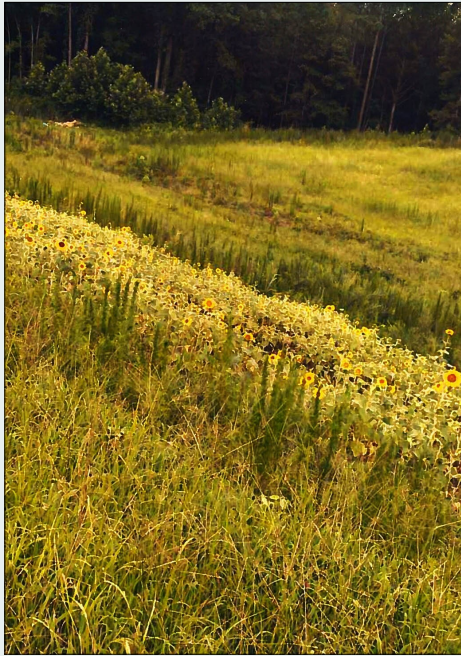
Tickets can be ordered via email from [hope.daley@ms.nacdnet.net](mailto:hope.daley@ms.nacdnet.net) or [hda-ley@mswcc.ms.gov](mailto:hda-ley@mswcc.ms.gov).

Money raised from the sale of the tickets goes towards funding five scholarships of \$5,000 each to allow five students to pursue their college or graduate school education.

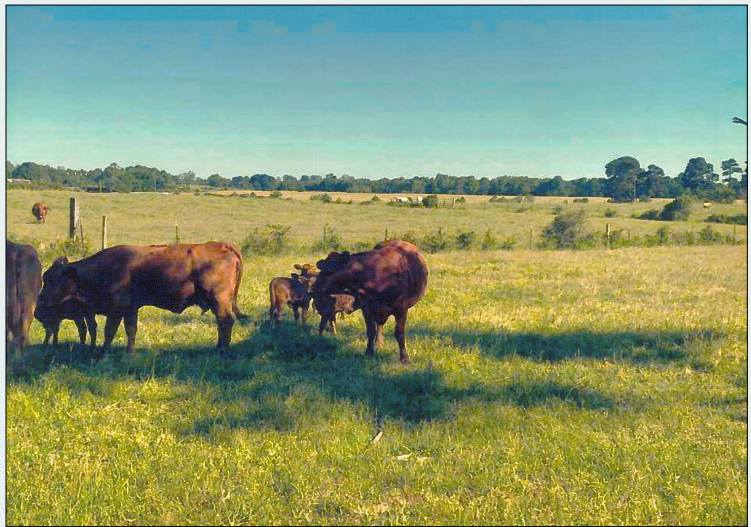
Happy Holidays



## MACD 2020 Photo Contest Winners



CONSERVATION IN ACTION  
Kailee Steelman, age 9, Lafayette County, Oxford, MS  
*Crop/Wildflowers in Action*



AG/CONSERVATION ACROSS MISSISSIPPI (AMERICA)  
Kailee Steelman, age 9, Lafayette County, Oxford, MS  
*Cattle Grazing in the Shade*



CONSERVATION PRACTICES  
Kailee Steelman, age 9, Lafayette County, Oxford



CLOSE-UP CONSERVATION  
Melinda Lusk, Adult, Webster County, Eupora  
*Mini Creations: Mini mushrooms growing on a moss-covered log.*



At right:  
CLOSE-UP CONSERVATION  
Kailee Steelman, age 9, Lafayette County, Oxford  
*Getting Ready for Planting*