

Commission NEWS

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From Our Executive Director

MSWCC nears completion of 42 Watershed Dam Assessments

The Mississippi Soil & Water Conservation Commission (MSWCC), through agreements with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), is nearing completion of assessments on 42 watershed dams throughout the State of Mississippi.



MARK GILBERT

The purpose of the assessments is to provide the local watershed sponsors with data regarding the condition of the dams; the risks to the public should a dam fail; and estimated rehabilitation alternatives and costs.

Through a sub-agreement with Dungan Engineering, the assessments are being developed in accordance with standard engineering principles that comply with NRCS programmatic requirements.

"These assessments allow for these watershed dams to be placed on the list for rehabilitation consideration through the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, Public Law 83-566. Due to the strong conservation partnership at work in Mississippi, future agreements will allow the Commission and NRCS to carry out a tremendous amount of much-needed wa-

tershed work that will reduce the risk of flooding and provide for the protection of life and property for many years to come," Mark Gilbert, MSWCC Executive Director stated.

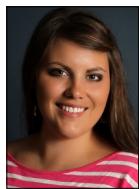
DAM ASSESSMENTS

Abiaca Creek Y-34-13	Second Creek #10B
Abiaca Creek Y-34-28	Second Creek #6A
Abiaca Creek Y-34-29	Second Creek #6B
Abotlapoota Creek Y-35-15	Shuqualak Creek #2
Bentonia Creek #7	Sowashee Creek #8
Big Creek #13	Tackett Creek #9
Big Creek #15	Tillatoba Creek Y-17B-03
Chiwapa Creek #13	Tillatoba Creek Y-17B-05
Chiwapa Creek #3	Town Creek #13
Chunky River #22	Town Creek #14
Dry Creek #3	Town Creek #26A
East & West Goose Creek R-9-1	Town Creek #39
East & West Goose Creek R-9-2	Town Creek #46A
Eden Creek Y-37D-10	Town Creek #48
Oaklimeter Creek LT-8-17	Upper Tippah Creek LT-6-17
Otocalofa Creek Y-15-1	Upper Yockanookany #1
Otocalofa Creek Y-15-23	Upper Yockanookany #2
Otocalofa Creek Y-15-24	Upper Yockanookany #4
Otocalofa Creek Y-15-4	Upper Yockanookany Creek No. 3
Otocalofa Creek Y-15B-8	White Creek No. 1
Pelucia Creek Y-33A-14	White Sands Creek No. 11E

2021 Envirothon competitions planned for in-person and outdoors

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

The MS Envirothon Steering committee met virtually via a Zoom teleconference on Oct. 1, 2020, to further discuss plans for the 2021 Envirothon Competitions.



CHELSEY GAZAWAY

Envirothon Coordinator and MSWCC Staff Officer Chelsey Gazaway sent surveys to former Envirothon advisors in September to aid the committee in selecting tentative date(s) for the 2021 Envirothon competitions.

Survey questions included querying schools on policies regarding 2020-

2021 field trips, and spring semester activities. The majority of survey respondents were in favor of holding the 2021 Envirothon competitions on site and in-person.

Plans are to hold all events outside, and to ensure that all CDC guidelines are met. "This could change if unforeseen circumstances arise due to COVID-19," Gazaway said.

Training for the competitions will be conducted virtually, and this process is a work-in-progress according to Gazaway. "We should have more details (about the virtual training) within the next few weeks," she said.



United States
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MSWCC assists with draining Adams County watershed lake

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission was contacted recently about installing the commission's siphons on a watershed lake in Adams County.

The lake's riser was clogged with mud and sticks from beavers, which caused the water level to get extremely high. The high water resulted in flooding on neighboring property, which killed the neighbor's pine trees.

MSWCC staff members traveled to Adams County on Oct. 13, and installed siphon equipment on the landowner's property.

The siphons will run for several weeks to lower the water level. Once the water level has been lowered, the landowner will be able to clear the clog from the riser, allowing the riser to function properly again.

MSWCC staff on-site included MSWCC Staff Officer Brad Shedd, Environmental Administrator Lance Middleton, and Natural Resource Specialists Colin Agostinelli and Chaz Ingram

AT RIGHT: Chaz Ingram (yellow arrow) walking uphill between the two siphon pipes running downhill from the lake.

BELOW, LEFT: Lance Middleton connects a siphon pipe in the overflowing lake.

BELOW, RIGHT: Chaz Ingram (left) and Brad Shedd assemble 8-inch siphon pipes to drain the water level of the lake.

PHOTOS BY COLIN AGOSTINELLI, MSWCC, AND MIKE GREEN, NRCS CIVIL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN



Agostinelli assists Holmes County with matching grant application

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

MSWCC Delta Area Field Representative Colin Agostinelli recently assisted Holmes County Soil and Water Conservation District Clerk Melissa Upchurch with an MACD Endowment Fund Matching Grant Proposal application for a project in Holmes County.

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

The Holmes County SWCD matching grant project is titled, "Bee Kind," and includes partnerships with The Garden Club of Lexington, The Historical Society of Lexington, The

Rotary Club of Lexington, and MSWCC. Plans are to plant and renovate a pollinator garden located at the Lexington Public Library.

A walkway was recently constructed at the library near the existing garden, so Upchurch and project partners are combining efforts to transform the existing garden into a new and improved pollinator garden. This garden will be used to supply local pollinators with the nectar and pollen necessary for them to pollinate other plants within the area, and to create an even more vibrant ecosystem than is currently in the area.

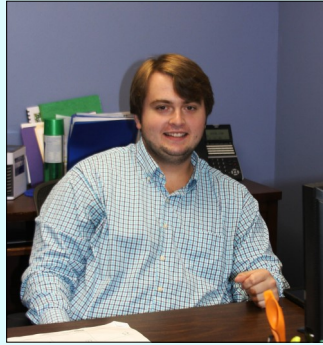
Others involved in the project include Magnolia Garden Club and the Mississippi State Extension Service. Students from area schools will help with the

planning, planting and maintenance of the garden.

Teachers can bring students to the garden to observe the butterfly habitat. A variety of wildflowers will be planted such as milkweed, purple cone flower and lantana, and stones will be added to the garden.

Each year, a total of four matching grants ranging from \$500 to \$2,500 may be available for SWCD's from MACD Endowment Fund. Districts are required to match a minimum of \$500 of the grant received, with the grant amount determined by the Endowment Fund Committee.

In-kind services, with the exception of district employee time, are accepted as a match. Matching funds may come from SWCD funds; however, Districts are encouraged to find other sources for matching funds. Projects should aid in increasing awareness and knowledge of soil, water and other related resources.



MSWCC NATURAL RESOURCE SPECIALIST COLIN AGOSTINELLI AT HIS JACKSON OFFICE. Photo by Kathy Dougan, MSWCC



DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR DRAWDOWN TICKETS FROM MACD

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.

MACD Secretary/Treasurer Hope Daley asks SWCDs to let



commissioners know about the availability of the tickets, which can be ordered via email from hope.daley@ms.nacdnet.net or hdaley@mswcc.ms.gov. Tickets will be mailed as soon as possible.

Daley reminds districts that the

money raised goes to allowing five students to be the recipients of \$5,000 scholarships for their education.

The MACD board continues to work on plans for the virtual online meeting. More details are forthcoming.

If you have any questions, please email Hope.Daley@ms.nacdnet.net.

Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission

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