

**2023 Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District – Gillespie County
SWCD, [Gillespie County SWCD #220](#)**

Cade Bonn - Chairman
Patrick A. Kunz - Vice Chairman
Guenther G. Ottmers, Jr. - Secretary
Neal Eckert - Member
James S. Wahrmund - Member

The Gillespie County SWCD has been recognized as this year's Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District. Gillespie County is located in the heart of the Texas Hill Country; an area that is currently in a state of very active growth. New landowners arrive daily to take advantage of the beautiful scenery and natural resources. With the continued urban expansion and fragmentation of large tracts of land, the SWCD feels a strong responsibility to bring a widespread understanding of the need for soil and water conservation to the community. The programs Gillespie County SWCD provides equip ranchers, farmers, landowners, and residents with practical guidance and the knowledge needed to be effective conservationists. The SWCD sponsors a Beef and Range Field Day every spring, which is an informative event for people involved in agriculture. The event provides hands-on demonstrations and informative presentations on various topics related to the latest in agricultural research and development. The SWCD also sponsors an annual essay and poster contest, which is open to students of various ages residing in the district. By sponsoring these contests, the SWCD aims to inform young people about the importance of conserving natural resources and inspire them to become citizens who support the wise use of natural resources in the future. Gillespie County SWCD's main goals are water quality and quantity, critical area erosion, proper grassland and brush management, prescribed burns to control brush re-growth, and improving wildlife habitats. Within the past fiscal year, the SWCD has planted and seeded 275 acres of pastureland, installed 29,190 feet of cross fence for grazing distribution, installed 27 livestock drinking facilities, completed 1,300 acres of brush control, and applied prescribed burns to 1,000 acres. Those accomplishments could not have been made possible without the directors, staff members, cooperators, and partners of Gillespie County SWCD. These individuals give freely of their time and efforts to make Gillespie County exceptional. The Gillespie County SWCD realizes that strong community pride and working together are the foundation for making great strides in conservation and the preservation of natural resources.