

Association of Texas  
Soil and Water  
Conservation Districts



# ANNUAL REPORT

October 29, 2019

## ATSWCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Area I	Bill Gray, Secretary/Treasurer
Area II	Volney Hough, President
Area III	Rick Schilling, Vice President
Area IV	Kent Batman
Area V	JC Mathews

Immediate Past President — Rickey James

Executive Director — Tamara Daniel

1497 Country View Lane, Temple, TX 76504 • 254-778-8741 • [www.atswcd.org](http://www.atswcd.org)



## *... From the President*

*I would like to ask your indulgence as I reflect on previous reports and my time as President in this report. I have discussed with you before many of the changes and challenges your Association has met during the past three years. Your board members have embraced these and I believe your Association is much stronger as a result.*

*Briefly to recap a few, it was necessary to become more independent and in order to accomplish this, it was obvious to your board members that we needed a staff person to oversee and lead the day to day business of the Association. We were blessed there was a tremendously qualified and talented person who was agreeable to stepping into the role of Executive Director and moving forward from day one. Thank you Tamara!*

*It quickly became obvious that our bookkeeping system, computers and software were in dire need of updating which resulted in much of the information needing to be manually entered into the new system, which was a very time consuming and frustrating process. We are also very fortunate to have an outstanding person who undertook this task. Thank you Donna!*

*One area we are very proud of is opportunities we have been able to offer districts through various programs. The conservation education and outreach program (555 program) allows each district to recover substantial funds targeted to their local priorities. The travel scholarship program provides assistance with travel to regional and national meetings. Soil health workshops have been held across the state and more are in planning stages. I am of the belief that this is possibly the first time your Association has been able to offer financial support directly to districts. These programs are the result of contracts the Association has negotiated with Texas NRCS leadership who are strong proponents of locally led conservation efforts for which we offer our sincerest thanks.*

*We certainly encourage you to take advantage of these.*

*One legislative activity in particular which has come to fruition since our last meeting is passage of the 2018 Farm Bill. We were fortunate to have a good friend in the legislature who served as chairman of the House Agriculture Committee allowing us to develop meaningful dialog during the course of the farm bill process. We worked closely with him and NACD, our national organization, to accomplish this. We feel that there are many areas addressed in this farm bill which are important for conservation in Texas and can be traced back to these conversations.*

*Once again, I will remind you that even though your board members and staff work diligently to see that your wishes are conveyed to appropriate officials, none has the same effect as personally contacting your representatives. Please do not underestimate the voice you have as a constituent!*

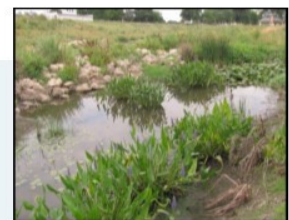
*This meeting of conservation district directors marks the end of the time I am eligible to serve as your president. I would like to thank you for the trust you have placed in me over the past three years. I have certainly been honored to have represented you in this capacity. I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to your Association board members and staff I have been privileged to work and become friends with during my tenure. These are such incredible people and are absolutely committed to representing you. Please extend your thanks to them as well!*

*Most importantly, I would like to offer my most heartfelt appreciation to my family and employees who have kept the home fires burning and have endured during the times I have not been available while tending to Association business. I could not have done this without you! Thank you!*

*Volney Hough, President*

## *... A Year in Review*

This past year has been very busy for the Association. We kicked off 2019 in a big way as host state for the February 2-6 NACD Annual Meeting, welcoming 1,000 conservation leaders from across the nation and U.S. territories to San Antonio, Texas. In addition to our warm hospitality, behind-the-scenes work included securing speakers, setting up tours and other host state events. Planning and work for this major conference actually began last May, however, we are always happy to show off our great state!



Aquatic habitat restoration, NACD Annual Meeting, San Antonio.





## *Legislative*

The Board traveled to Washington, D.C. in March to participate in the annual NACD Legislative Fly-in and spent two days on Capitol Hill, meeting with members of the Texas Delegation. They addressed funding for conservation programs, Farm Bill implementation, carrizo cane eradication and also provided general conservation information for each congressional district. They met with approximately 20 members in D.C. and also had the opportunity to visit with NRCS leadership and network with conservation leaders from other states.

Immediately upon their return, the Board traveled to Austin for Conservation Day at the Capitol. District Directors, along with Association Board members, met with state senators and representatives. The day's primary focus involved funding for our various conservation programs. The Association partnered with TCAWS to host the annual event.

Throughout the legislative session, ATSWCD Executive Director Tamara Daniel also represents the Association at weekly meetings of the Texas Ag Council to network with other ag organizations across Texas on priority issues.

## *Soil Health*

We continue to grow this important outreach program, with funding made possible through an agreement with NRCS. We hosted three 2-day events this year in Palestine, Amarillo and Victoria. All facilities were filled to capacity, and more than 400 people attended the event in Amarillo. We are headed west for the next workshop, to be held in Sweetwater. These educational courses include field tours, scientific research and speakers, as well as producers who provide the "boots on the ground" perspective. Each of these informative Soil Health Workshops represents months of advance planning.



## *Partnership Programs*

The Association co-sponsors several events with the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, including the Awards Program, the District Director/Employee Leadership Development Workshop and the FFA Soil Stewardship Speaking Contest. ATSWCD Board members and the Executive Director served as judges for the speaking contest and presented the winners.

Board members and the Executive Director attend a wide variety of other meetings throughout the year, including the NACD South Central Region meeting held every summer. They attend as many area association meetings as possible and also attend regular Ag Council meetings outside the legislative session, State Technical Committee meetings and many more as the need arises.

## *Agreements*

The Association currently has three agreements with NRCS. Two of the agreements provide direct benefits to conservation districts.

The Travel Scholarship provides funding to help pay for directors to attend regional or national meetings. In 2019, 21 directors attended the NACD meeting in San Antonio under the Travel



Scholarship Program. The Association was able to return more than \$27,000 to member districts to assist in covering travel expenses.

The 555 Program is in its second year and participation continues to grow. Through three quarters in FY19 (3rd quarter pending), the chart below details payments to districts by area:

	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5
Total Dollars Paid	\$3455.16	\$11,660.48	\$14,611.87	\$7,146.02	\$3,113.40
Number of Districts	9	22	29	14	9

## ATSWCD FULL-QUOTA MEMBERS

**“We greatly appreciate your support!”**



- |   |   |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <p><b>AREA I</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>107 Rio Blanco</li> <li>108 Lubbock County</li> <li>109 Hall-Childress</li> <li>110 Tule Creek</li> <li>115 Upper Colorado</li> <li>124 Dawson County</li> <li>127 Donley County</li> <li>129 Hockley County</li> <li>130 Lamb County</li> <li>132 Hale County</li> <li>133 Salt Fork</li> <li>134 Lipscomb</li> <li>136 Running Water</li> <li>138 Hemphill County</li> <li>142 Ochiltree</li> <li>146 Hutchinson</li> <li>148 Hansford</li> <li>149 Cochran</li> <li>150 Yoakum</li> <li>151 Terry</li> <li>152 Hartley</li> <li>153 Oldham County</li> <li>156 McClellan Creek</li> <li>161 Foard County</li> <li>162 Lower Pease River</li> <li>163 Cottle</li> <li>164 Upper Pease</li> <li>165 Upper Clear Fork</li> <li>166 Gaines County</li> <li>168 King</li> <li>169 Duck Creek</li> <li>170 Andrew Kent</li> </ul> <p><b>AREA II</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>205 El Paso-Hudspeth</li> <li>206 Middle Clear Fork</li> <li>210 Highland</li> <li>213 Upper Pecos</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>215 Menard County</li> <li>216 Kendall</li> <li>217 Kerr County</li> <li>218 Pedemales</li> <li>219 Coke County</li> <li>220 Gillespie County</li> <li>221 Nueces-Frio-Sabinal</li> <li>222 Edwards Plateau</li> <li>223 Mason County</li> <li>224 Devil’s River</li> <li>225 Upper Llanos</li> <li>226 Medina Valley</li> <li>227 Big Bend</li> <li>229 Bandera</li> <li>230 High Point</li> <li>231 Trans Pecos</li> <li>232 Runnels</li> <li>233 Llano County</li> <li>234 Middle Concho</li> <li>235 Crockett</li> <li>236 West Nueces-Las Moras</li> <li>237 Rio Grande-Pecos River</li> <li>238 Upper Nueces-Frio</li> <li>241 Sandhills</li> <li>242 Mustang</li> <li>244 Midland</li> <li>245 Nolan County</li> <li>246 Andrews</li> <li>247 Eldorado-Divide</li> <li>248 Tom Green</li> <li>249 McCulloch</li> <li>250 San Saba</li> <li>251 Glasscock County</li> <li>252 North Concho River</li> <li>253 Maverick County</li> </ul> | <p><b>AREA III</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>301 Wilson County</li> <li>304 Caldwell-Travis</li> <li>316 Matagorda County</li> <li>317 Coastal Plains</li> <li>318 Waters Davis</li> <li>319 Southmost</li> <li>321 Agua Poquita</li> <li>323 Live Oak</li> <li>324 San Patricio</li> <li>326 Winter Garden</li> <li>330 Alamo</li> <li>332 Starr County</li> <li>333 Colorado County</li> <li>334 Lavaca</li> <li>335 Zapata</li> <li>336 Jackson</li> <li>337 Webb</li> <li>338 Gonzales County</li> <li>339 DeWitt County</li> <li>340 Bastrop County</li> <li>341 Fayette</li> <li>342 Wharton County</li> <li>343 Karnes County</li> <li>344 Bee</li> <li>345 Calhoun</li> <li>346 Victoria</li> <li>347 Austin County</li> <li>348 Washington</li> <li>349 Willacy</li> <li>351 Hays County</li> <li>352 Goliad County</li> <li>353 McMullen County</li> <li>354 LaSalle County</li> <li>355 Jim Wells County</li> <li>356 Kleberg-Kenedy</li> <li>357 Nueces</li> <li>358 Burleson County</li> <li>359 Lee County</li> </ul> | <p><b>AREA IV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>401 Nacogdoches</li> <li>404 Davy Crockett-Trinity</li> <li>408 Bowie County</li> <li>412 Harrison County</li> <li>415 Lamar</li> <li>417 Upshur-Gregg</li> <li>421 Anderson-Houston</li> <li>423 Red River County</li> <li>424 Freestone County</li> <li>426 Smith County</li> <li>427 Cherokee County</li> <li>428 Bedias Creek</li> <li>429 Piney Woods</li> <li>432 Coastal</li> <li>433 Marion-Cass</li> <li>434 Trinity Bay</li> <li>435 Lower Trinity</li> <li>436 Polk-San Jacinto</li> <li>437 Lower Neches</li> <li>439 Long Leaf</li> <li>440 Navasota</li> <li>441 Jasper-Newton</li> <li>442 Harris</li> <li>443 Delta</li> <li>444 Wood</li> <li>446 Lower Sabine-Neches</li> <li>449 Shelby</li> <li>450 Brazos County</li> <li>451 Robertson County</li> <li>452 Montgomery County</li> <li>453 Walker County</li> </ul> <p><b>AREA V</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>501 Limestone-Falls</li> <li>504 Ellis-Prairie</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>505 Kaufman-Van Zandt</li> <li>506 Hamilton-Coryell</li> <li>508 Little River-San Gabriel</li> <li>509 Central Texas</li> <li>512 McLennan County</li> <li>513 Taylor</li> <li>518 Palo Pinto</li> <li>519 Dalworth</li> <li>520 Fannin County</li> <li>524 Upper Elm-Red</li> <li>525 Upper Leon</li> <li>530 Upper Sabine</li> <li>534 Hill Country</li> <li>535 Collin County</li> <li>537 Wilbarger</li> <li>538 Wichita</li> <li>539 Young</li> <li>540 Hill County-Blackland</li> <li>541 Johnson County</li> <li>543 Throckmorton</li> <li>544 Wichita-Brazos</li> <li>545 California Creek</li> <li>547 Denton County</li> <li>548 Wise</li> <li>549 Jack</li> <li>551 Lower Clear Fork/Brazos</li> <li>552 Callahan Divide</li> <li>553 Pecan Bayou</li> <li>554 Mills County</li> <li>555 Bosque</li> <li>556 Cross Timbers</li> <li>557 Brazos Valley</li> <li>558 Parker County</li> <li>559 Archer County</li> <li>560 Little Wichita</li> </ul> |
|---|---|--|---|--|