

## July 23 Meeting of the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District

### Present:

Delbert Smith -- Chair

Pete Cameron -- Deputy Chair, Secretary

Duke Emerson -- Treasurer

Scott Tucker -- FDACS Representative

Monica Jones -- NRCS Representative

Katie Pritchett -- Intern working with Monica

The June meeting was cancelled due to the lack of a quorum.

The July meeting was opened by Delbert Smith reporting that it is now time to send a yearly financial compliance report (budget and expenditures) to Tallahassee. The report will be given to Pam Toney to deliver to the county commission. Since there was little financial activity this year, the process is expected to be uncomplicated.

Concerning the ASR project (moving storm water into the aquifer) that our board wishes to promote, Delbert reported the project to be temporarily stalled. Hugh Thomas, who will sponsor the project in the WMD, has a medical problem in his family that requires all of his time. Pete Cameron asked for a little more detailed information about the project and was informed that if analysis of soil probes indicates that the project is feasible, and funding happens, underground pipes will be installed to receive storm water sitting on the surface and transport it through the confining clay layer to layers below that where sand will filter it before it enters the aquifer.

Scott Tucker reported that of the \$5M awarded statewide for water conservation cost-share projects, DACS will receive about \$2M, roughly \$1M for each side of the Suwannee River. \$250K will be allotted to the Blue Springs/Ginnie Springs Restoration Focus Area. Currently, 20 wells, 4 springs, and 4 river spots are being monitored there for water quality. Scott's contribution will be to fund and monitor agricultural projects in which the farmer will start or continue to use best management practices (BMPs). Fertigation (providing fertilizer in small amounts to prevent leaching) is one tactic. Scott will continue his "implementation assurance" visits to help farmers follow the guidelines of the BMPs.

Scott also mentioned that the annual CARES dinner was a success and that the Williams farm of Union County was honored at the affair.

Monica Jones, our NRCS representative, reporting on opportunities in Union County, said that EQIP money is available for people interested in planting flowering plants (forbs) that will attract pollinators. Interest in forestry (replanting clear cut land with slash pines) is resurging, she mentioned.

With Jon Croci unavailable due to job-related training requirements, it was not possible to see the materials he has gathered to make a general education presentation on what this board does and hopes to accomplish. We look forward to his return.

The meeting closed just before 8PM.