



# **Pulaski Conservation District**

## **Annual Report 2012**

NBA Building, Suite 201  
4004 McCain Boulevard  
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72116  
Phone: (501) 758-2544 ext. 3  
Fax: (501) 758-7052  
[www.pulaski.aracd.org](http://www.pulaski.aracd.org)  
[www.facebook.com/PUCD12](https://www.facebook.com/PUCD12)

USDA is an Equal Opportunity  
Provider and Employer

## **Pulaski Conservation District**

### ***Mission Statement:***

The Pulaski Conservation District was organized to serve Pulaski County by recognizing the needs and objectives of each community and assisting them to meet those objectives. The District provides valuable assistance in this process by coordinating the services and efforts of various state and federal agencies. The District develops and carries out programs for the conservation of our soil, water, and other natural resources within the county. Pulaski County is shared by all of its people, urban and rural alike; therefore we share the responsibility of keeping it productive.

### ***Board of Directors:***

Dennis Hackbart, Chairman, West Little Rock  
Bill Dorough, Vice Chairman, South Little Rock  
Sam McGhee, Secretary/Treasurer, North Little Rock  
Mary Ratcliffe, Member, Sweet Home  
Debbie Moreland, Member, Roland  
Jenny Withrow, Associate Board Member, Scott

### ***Office Personnel:***

Heather Arick, Administrative Assistant  
James Harness, District Technician  
Che Gordon, USDA-NRCS District Conservationist

### ***District Hours:***

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

### ***Board Meetings:***

Third Monday of each month at 10:30 a.m. (unless otherwise posted – see website)

### ***Beaver Day:***

Last Wednesday of each month from 9:30 -12:00

## *Who We Are*



The purpose of the District is to plan and carry out programs for the conservation and efficient use of land, water and related natural resources in Pulaski County. In so doing it serves as the medium through which all individuals, agencies, organizations and institutions with conservation interests can effectively work together to solve local problems in natural resources conservation and help forecast future needs.

Technical assistance is provided to the District through an agreement between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the State of Arkansas and the Pulaski Conservation District. The Pulaski County Field Service Center of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) are partnered with the District office to provide conservation related services. The District also works closely with the Pulaski County Extension Service, Pulaski County Judge and Quorum Court, Arkansas Forestry Commission, city mayors and county land users.

The District is governed by five local landowners known as the Board of Directors, three of whom are elected by the landowners in the District, and two are appointed by the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission. Directors serve three-year terms and meet once a month.

The District's missions are met with many thanks to the financial support from and coordination with the Pulaski County Quorum Court and Arkansas Natural Resources Commission.

### *Acknowledgement:*

The Pulaski Conservation District would like to thank the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Pulaski County Judge & Quorum Court, Pulaski County Road & Bridge Department, Central Arkansas Water, Farm Bureau, and the Arkansas Grazing Lands Coalition for their continual support and financial assistance throughout our past, present, and future endeavors.

USDA is an Equal Opportunity  
Provider and Employer

## ***2012 Annual Report:***

In order to carry out its mission in 2012, the Pulaski Conservation District supported and/or coordinated a number of activities and projects. These actions involved conservation education and information, beaver control, irrigation water use registration, and implementing conservation provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill. These actions included:

### ***Education Programs:***

The District placed a high priority in fostering conservation education, particularly those efforts that enhanced Pulaski County youth's knowledge of and concern for conservation and environmental issues. Several Pulaski County students were involved in District education activities that included:

- ***Envirothon 2012-2013:*** The District helped sponsor the area and state Envirothon, a program that helps develop environmental leadership at the high school level. Our Chairman Dennis Hackbart participated in the area and state Envirothon as a judge. District Manager Heather Arick assisted with the area Envirothon.

***Envirothon 2012-2013:*** Congratulations to Central High School for winning the state Envirothon for the 2012-2013 academic year. The state Envirothon was held on November 18 & 19 at the UCA campus in Conway. There were around 18 teams that competed. Central High School placed 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> and Mill High School placed 3<sup>rd</sup>.



*(From left to right: Gary Earleywine, the Central High 1st place team, and Sid Lowrance)*

Central High School Team A will represent Arkansas at the 2013 North American Envirothon to be held next summer in Bozeman, Montana.

Congratulations to Mills High School for winning the area Envirothon for the 2012-2013 academic year. The area Envirothon was held on November 2, 2011 at the Family Life Worship Center in Morrilton. There were around 10 teams that competed. Mills High School placed 1<sup>st</sup> and Central High School placed 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>.



(From left to right: Jeremy Jenkins, Nick Brooks, Taylor McKie, Jeannie KuangNguyen, Daniel Han, Hunter Stanton and Sid Lowrance)

- **Youth Poster Scholarship Contest:** The National Association of Conservation Districts sponsored a poster contest for kindergarten through twelfth grade students. The theme for 2012 was Soil to Spoon. The contest is offered by the National Association of Conservation Districts and there are awards at the national level for 1<sup>st</sup> place: \$100 & 2<sup>nd</sup> place: \$75.
- **Youth Essay Scholarship Contest:** The District is offering a \$250 scholarship at the the district level to a candidate that applies for the 2012-2013 AACD Dave Ferguson Scholarship. The theme is "**Drought: Can Conservation Make a Difference?**" The rules of the contest are included in the information the student certifies by signing the entry form. The scholarship applicants must live in the district, have a GPA of at least 2.0, and intend to follow a conservation related major at an Arkansas college or university. With the entry they are required to include three letters of recommendation and a minimum 500-word essay. Contestants in the state contest should be prepared to give a 3-5 minute presentation on the same subject, and be interviewed by the judges. The contest is offered by Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts and there are three awards offered at the state level: \$1,000, \$750 and \$500.
- **Native Grass Plots:** The District works in partnership with the NRCS to establish grass plots in willing and viable locations. One such plot was established and is being maintained at Mills University Studies High School.
- **Carver Basic Skills Math Science Elementary CROP Garden 319 Education Grant Project:** The garden was sponsored by the District and funded through a 319 grant from Arkansas Natural Resources Commission and other donors. It continues to educate the nearly 500 Carver students and is in excellent condition.

### ***Information Programs:***

The District endeavors to provide Pulaski County land users with conservation and environmental information that will help them make wise land use decisions. District information activities include:

- ***Pulaski Conservation District Web Page:*** Since getting conservation information to the public is central to our mission, the District maintains a website ([www.pulaski.aracd.org](http://www.pulaski.aracd.org)) Navigation pages are “District News”, “Programs”, “Background Conservation”, “District Information”, “Calendar of Events”, “Student Programs”, “Climate and Environment Concerns” and “Useful Links”. The annual report and information on periodic fundraisers and events can also be found here. Thanks to an excellent intern through partnership with UALR, the site underwent a full makeover at the end of 2009 and is updated regularly to reflect news and events. Our district is still maintaining and updating our website, and we’re looking at a full makeover in 2013.
- ***Newsletter:*** The District publishes a quarterly newsletter and sends it out via email and mail. Our purpose is to educate and inform the citizens in Pulaski County about our District, The USDA-NRCS, our participation in the community, services offered to landowners, county events, educational opportunities, etc.
- ***District Maps:*** By serving an urban county, the District responds to numerous requests for public viewing of its topographical, aerial, flood, soils and wetland maps. Office aerial maps include 1969 and 1990 flights. Soil surveys for Pulaski County are available at no cost. This service especially helps land planning consultants and engineering companies with their preliminary site assessments for those planning to relocate to Pulaski County. These assessments are critical in the planning phase to determine land use and potential concern.
- ***Plat Books:*** The District has updated to the 2011 Pulaski County Plat Book. A copy of the Plat Book, EBook, or EMap can be purchased at the Pulaski Conservation District office for \$50. A Pulaski County wall map is also available for purchase for \$75. Plat books for adjoining counties are available upon request.
- ***Backyard Conservation:*** The district office maintains a supply of conservation pamphlets and brochures that provide tips to rural and urban land users on many topics such as; watering facilities, electric fencing, pond design, grazing management, etc. The goal is to show land users how to manage their land and water resources.
- ***Technical Programs:*** The District continues to participate in the “Technical Assistance Initiative” with the NRCS. This is the second year that we’ve maintained our technician James Harness and he’s a valuable employee of the district. In this capacity the District can assist NRCS with CTA and EQIP technical work and field work and be compensated via mutual agreement. This benefits NRCS, the District and local clients because more technical services are now available from the field service center staff. The District continues to

provide technical support on ponds, drainage issues, basic surveying, flooding problems, and other issues.

### **Environmental Programs:**

- ***Beaver Control Program:*** The beaver control program is administered by the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission through Arkansas conservation districts. Only beavers trapped in Pulaski County are eligible for the Pulaski Conservation District's \$10 per tail bounty. Trappers must notify the district, complete forms and negotiate with the landowner before trapping begins. Beaver day is the last Wednesday of each month from 9:30 to 12:00 noon. In fiscal year 2012, bounties were paid on 414 beavers. The district applies for funding each year from the county and state for the program.
- ***Irrigation Water Use Registration:*** Act 154 of 1991 requires all surface and ground water users to be assessed an annual \$10 water use fee per registered relief or well excluding water withdrawn for household use. The irrigation water use can be registered at the District office October 1 through March 1 of each year for the previous cropping season. Over 300 sites in Pulaski County were registered for crop year 2011. This program is administered through a mutual agreement with the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC) to monitor the amount of groundwater used to address the concern of declining groundwater supply.
- ***Arkansas Poultry Feeding Operations Registration:*** In 2003 the 84<sup>th</sup> General Assembly passed nutrient management legislation to address water quality, with ANRC as administrator and conservation districts responsible for registering operators and producers. The program, along with other related legislation, helps producers utilize poultry litter and commercial fertilizers most effectively without jeopardizing water quality. The District collects a \$10 annual fee from each operation and provides any technical assistance needed. In FY 2012, Pulaski County registered 3 producers.

### **Short and Long Term Goals:**

Through an agreement with the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission the District sets short and long term goals to meet future goals of the district. Included in these are:

- ***Central Area Envirothon:*** Pulaski county teams have had success in the Envirothon each year. Our district's goal is to increase the number of Pulaski county teams that participate in the Envirothon and to organize a central area Envirothon.
- ***Information Disbursement Program (Increase Education):*** The District plans to target teachers and administrators of county school districts to remind them that the district offers educational programs and information on conservation and environmental practices. The district plans to implement and carry out this program.

- ***Initiate Backyard Conservation:*** Our goal is to initiate and include the community in backyard conservation activities. One idea is to increase awareness of birds, particularly the blue bird, and make bird houses available to land users at the district office.
- ***PCD Calendar:*** The district plans to create a district calendar as a means to inform the community of activities going on with the district and NRCS.
- ***Website Makeover:*** the district plans to maintain and update our current website. We look forward to doing another full website makeover in 2013.
- ***Urban Conservation:*** The district would like to increase environmental education and information activities that assist urban and suburban citizens.

#### **Other District Activities:**

- ***Annual Pecan Sale:*** In October the District sold pecans from the Georgia Pecan Company available for order and delivery before Thanksgiving. The sale was successful in fiscal year 2012 with total sales of \$3,572.50.
- ***Float Valves:*** The District offers ¾” Rojo Float valves for \$30 each & 1” Mega Flow Float Valves for \$45 each. In FY 2012, the District sold 18 valves.
- ***Retiree Agreement:*** The District has a Cooperative Agreement with the NRCS. Under this agreement, the district employs a retiree of the NRCS to work as our technician and gets reimbursed for his work completed. The technician assists land users in the county with various irrigation and land use issues. The Pulaski Conservation District is in its 2<sup>nd</sup> year of employing a technician and it’s been very beneficial to our county.

### **USDA-NRCS Programs:**

The Pulaski Conservation District, through a memorandum of understanding, partners with NRCS in the implementation of conservation practices and projects associated with the 2008 Farm Bill. For fiscal year 2012, the accomplishments by USDA program are as follows:

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for FY 2012:**
  - 9 contracts were funded for Pulaski County landowners in FY 2012
  - Funding amount for EQIP was approximately \$ 38,376
  - Resource concerns were addressed on approximately 557 acres of land associated with these contracts

- **Wetland Reserve Program On-going work (WRP):** WRP is a voluntary program that provides for restoration of marginal or nonproductive land back to a wetland condition by planting hardwood trees, developing moist soil units, installing water control structures and dikes to manage water and mimic natural flood events. The program allows landowners to receive financial compensation through easement acquisition and receive technical assistance from NRCS and partners.
  - The Woodson Joint Venture Restoration is complete, all work has been done. This WRP easement is over 7,500 acres. Some re-plants and monitoring is on-going
  - The England Joint Venture Restoration is mostly completed. The WRP easement is over 11,000 acres in size. Some re-plants and monitoring is on-going.



- **A Grazing Workshop** was held on September 5, 2012 near Walkers Corner, AR. The workshop included discussion and demonstrations in the field and viewing installed practices. Approximately 35 people were in attendance and it was a successful event.
- **Farm Service Agency (FSA) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).** This resulted in 4 approved contracts and 252 acres under contract. The practices installed under these contracts will be tree and shrub site preparation, tree planting, and wildlife openings habitat and mid-management disking and prescribed burning. The establishments will provide significant conservation cover to reduce or eliminate soil erosion and create valuable wildlife benefits. NRCS partnered with AGFC and AFC to create plans and contracts for these approved participants.

- NRCS is currently working more closely with our partners, Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC) and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) to promote the **Forest Stewardship Program** administered by AFC. This program allows for landowners with a combination of forestry and wildlife objectives/interests to get technical advice and a detailed plan developed by and AFC county forester and AGFC private lands biologist. This program is very effective for private landowners to inventory their property and give them ideas and alternatives. It is also a great starting point for landowners with forest land.
  
- **Total Conservation Measures for Pulaski County for FY 2011**
  - 6,999 acres conservation plans written
  - 454 acres crop land with conservation applied to improve soil quality
  - 1,361 acres land with conservation applied to improve water quality
  - 412 acres land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency
  - 557 acres grazing land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base
  - 
  - 1,388 acres non-federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat
  - 390 acres wetlands created, restored, or enhanced
  
- **Total Conservation Measures for Pulaski County for FY 2012**
  - 2,620 acres conservation plans written
  - 2,498 acres crop land with conservation applied to improve soil quality
  - 5,202 acres land with conservation applied to improve water quality
  - 937 acres land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency
  - 266 acres grazing land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base
  - 3,360 acres non-federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat
  - 338 acres forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve vegetative condition