

## 2003 NORTH CAROLINA RC&D ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

Mountain Valleys RC&D hosted the 2003 North Carolina RC&D Association Annual Meeting on May 18-20, 2003. The meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Sun-Spree in beautiful Asheville, North Carolina. This setting provided not only superb meeting facilities, but access to local shopping and dining, artisan's galleries and studios, the Blue Ridge Parkway and 50+ public and semi-private golf courses. Participants included representatives of the 10 current North Carolina RC&Ds plus two applicant areas.



Registration began Sunday, May 18 at 4:00 p.m. There was a Welcome Reception at the Upper Pool area later in the evening. Guests were entertained by James Carson.

Registration continued Monday morning at 8:00 a.m. along with early morning coffee and socializing. At 8:30 a.m. all were welcomed by MV RC&D Chairman, Hubert McEntyre and Nathan Ramsey, Chairman of the Buncombe County Commissioners. There was then an update by Southeastern RC&D President, Jeanette Jamieson concerning the Southeastern and National RC&Ds. Jim Borowa, Supervisor of the Watershed Enhancement Program presented information on the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. Andy Brown, an environmental planner from Equinox Environmental Consultation and Design, spoke about his company's role in the Muddy Creek Partners project. Pamela Pyles, erosion control specialist with the Upper Broad River Watershed Protection Project finished out the early morning session with an update on the UBRWP project.

After a short break, Gary Gumz, Director of the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project, provided a summary of ASAPs many projects. Gary Cohen, regional director, discussed the American Farmland Trust and Dorinda Powell of Holder, Powell & Associates brought useful information regarding RC&D audits and financial training.

## NEW PROJECTS ADOPTED IN 2003

**POLK COUNTY: Polk Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Committee.** This committee will provide input and advice regarding potential areas of economic growth in agriculture and forestry in Polk County.

**TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY: Farmland Preservation Districts—Signs.** This project will create and install signage marking the Agricultural Districts in Transylvania County. Financial assistance needed.

**HENDERSON COUNTY: Apple Orchard Spray Drift Reduction.** Cost share funds needed to assist apple producers in purchasing equipment for spray drift reduction.

**AREA WIDE: Area 8 Envirothon Video.** Sponsored by the Cleveland Soil and Water Conservation District, this project would produce a video to encourage teachers and students to participate in the Area 8 Envirothon. Assistance needed with the cost of the video production.



**Family Farms and Forests Network.** This collaborative project will educate, organize and support rural landowners, increasing landowner participation in conservation programs, sustainable management of rural lands, and the sustainable production of farm forest products.

**Alzheimer Patient Emergency Search and Location Program.** Sponsored by NETSTAR Air Rescue, Inc., this project will result in the ability to track participating Alzheimer patients using radio transmitter/receiver technology. Seeking assistance in purchasing truck receiver and training on new equipment.

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Monday afternoon was spent touring the North Carolina Arboretum, a 426-acre public garden located within the Bent Creek Experimental Forest of the Pisgah National Forest. Surrounded by the dense folds of the botanically diverse Southern Appalachian Mountains, the Arboretum is nestled in one of the most beautiful natural garden settings in America.

Pilot View RC&D hosted a President's Reception at 6:00 p.m. and then meeting participants were encouraged to try local restaurants. They were even provided with a list of those which support our local farmers.

Tuesday morning following coffee, the business session commenced at 8:30 a.m. Al Engler welcomed everyone with opening comments. Minutes of the last meeting were presented by Tom Livingston and Dave Dudek gave the treasurer's report. Mary Combs provided an update on NRCS/RC&Ds. Al Engler then spoke about the upcoming National meeting in San Antonio and RC&D training. Wendell Kirkman then chaired the nomination of officers for FY 2004. Positions were filled as follows: Bryant Shepherd, President; Buster Brown, Vice President; Dave Dudek, Treasurer; Tom Livingston, Secretary.

Following the morning break, James Ferguson provided an update on the Federal Funding Legislative Committee. Wayne Howell spoke about the State Funding Oversight/Legislative Committee and Tim Garrett, Jacob Crandall and Stan Steury presented information on the new RC&D application areas. Al Engler addressed NRCS Outsourcing. Committee Appointments were made for FY 2004 and the business meeting was adjourned.

Tuesday afternoon participants were treated to tours of local sites affected by RC&D projects. They toured the Ivy River Watershed in Madison County and saw the positive environmental effects of River Friendly Farmers. The meeting concluded with a spectacular dinner at the Biltmore Estate. Keynote speaker at the dinner was Gary Claxton, The Mouth of the South.

Throughout the meeting, drawings were made for very nice door prizes, including tickets to the Biltmore House, for boat tours of Lake Lure, and to Chimney Rock. Major contributors to the success of the meeting were the TVA, Resource Stewardship Cherokee-Douglas & Little Tennessee Watershed Teams; NC Electric Membership Corporation; USDA NRCS; and The Duke Energy Foundation. Thanks to all who contributed and participated, helping make this one of the best meetings yet.



Parmley Easement, Madison County, NC

## Mountain Valleys RC&D Welcomes Newcomers

### **ELISE ISRAEL - Buncombe County Council Member**

Elise lives in the Candler area, West of Asheville with her husband Larry, who is a professional land surveyor, and their collection of dogs and horses. They have 3 adult children and a 5 year old granddaughter. She is an elected Board member of the Buncombe Soil & Water Conservation District and also serves on the Board of Synagogue Beth Ha Tephila in Asheville. She teaches middle school part-time and enjoys riding her horses in our beautiful mountains.

### **ANNA DAVENPORT - Administrative Assistant**

Anna Davenport comes to MVRCD after ten years of home schooling and two years of part-time work with a local company that sells recycling equipment. Anna has a Bachelor's degree from York College of PA. She and her husband Michael moved to North Carolina five years ago from Bristol, Tennessee. He works for Digitech International as a Project Manager. They live in Fletcher with their four children and are active members of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church.

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## Mountain Valleys RC&D Projects Completed This Year

**McDowell Equine Facility Improvements** - MV RC&D provided financial assistance to help the McDowell Saddle and Bridle Club with repairs to their stables and bleachers.

**Hydroseeder for Madison County** - With the encouragement of MVRC&D, there are now several hydroseeders in Madison County. This equipment allows critical areas to be more easily and reasonably stabilized.

**Dry Hydrant Project - White Oak Mountain** - Installation of a dry hydrant off White Oak Mountain Road increased fire protection for local residents.

**Land Conservation Workshop** - Held May 1, 2003, this workshop provided a continuing education opportunity for landowners and their advisors - attorneys, accountants, financial planners, appraisers, and land planners. Participants benefited from the knowledge and expertise of Stephen Small, author of *The Federal Tax Law of Conservation Easements* and *Preserving Family Lands, Books I, II & III*.

**Mud Creek Restoration** - MV RC&D worked with the Mud Creek Restoration Council and the TVA to conduct an Integrated Pollutant Source Identification (IPSI). A report on the findings has been published.

**Polk County Farmers Market** - MV RC&D helped establish a tailgate market in Polk County. Residents could purchase a wide variety of locally grown fresh fruits and produce in season. Other farm products are also available, including eggs, honey, cut flowers, ornamentals, as well as handmade crafts.

**Growing Minds: Community Foundation and Healthy Yancey Green Toe Ground** - These projects provided the opportunity for elementary school children to participate in and learn from gardening. Gardens were established in four schools. These provided teachers with an educational tool used in teaching science, language arts, mathematics, social studies,



environmental studies, and health and nutrition. Assistance included help in planting the gardens, resources (seeds, grow lights, worm bins, shovels, etc.), integrating the garden into existing curriculum, books and a website for indexing literature. These projects provided insight into how to help teachers and students better use and understand gardening and its impact on everyone's life. It is hoped that these insights can be used on future projects, especially those which focus on healthy lifestyles and prevention of obesity.

**Tobacco Transitions: Toward Regional Community Based Food Systems** - Funds from this project supported the development of demonstration farms which show the viability of tobacco transitions. Twelve of the ASAP transition program participants have become certified for organic vegetable, burley tobacco, and apple production and have gained access to the expanding and lucrative organic market through participation in Carolina Organic Growers Inc., a marketing cooperative that has also received technical, marketing, and leadership support through ASAP. Eight burley tobacco farmers have participated in the program and all are engaged in transition to sustainable production practices with three growers currently growing organic burley tobacco and four growers transitioning out of tobacco production and into organic vegetable production. Three beef producers and three apple growers have also been supported in the process. The sale of these farmer's crops were also boosted through the "Get Fresh - Buy Appalachian" campaign, which was supported in part by this project.

**Community Alliances for Food Enterprises (CAFÉ) Rural Center #2** - Performed in conjunction with the Mountain Partners in Agriculture, this project expanded the "Get Fresh - Buy Appalachian" food campaign in Madison, Buncombe, and Henderson Counties. It also heightened consumer awareness of local farming and food issues and increased the desire to consume locally grown foods. A "Buy Appalachian Local Food Guide" was produced and commitments were gained from local restaurants to purchase locally grown produce.

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## Future RC&D Council Meetings

### Regular Council Meetings

February 19, 2004 - Buncombe County (Thursday)

May 25, 2004 - Polk County

### Executive Board Meetings - USDA Service Center Conference Room (205) 94 Coxe Avenue

December 18, 2003

March 25, 2004

June 24, 2004

January 22, 2004

April 22, 2004

July 22, 2004

## Mountain Valley's RC&D Council Members

### Buncombe County

Jim Coman - 4th Vice-Chairman  
Elise Israel  
Kenneth Reeves

### Cleveland County

Jim Boggs - 1st Vice-Chairman  
Carl DeBrew  
Bill McCarter

### Henderson County

Andrew Brannon - Third Vice Chairman  
Danny McConnell  
J.B. Osteen

### Madison County

Maurice McAlister  
Betty Reeves

### McDowell County

C.A. (Doc) Buckner  
Dan Smith

### Polk County

Hubert McEntyre - Chairman  
Dan Servideo  
Richard Smith

### Rutherford County

Bill Booth  
Mike Haire - Immediate Past-Chairman  
Barbara Meliski

### Transylvania County

Marla Cilley - Treasurer  
Jonalyn Crite  
Rick Lasater

### Land-Of-Sky Regional Council

Roberts Watts

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**The Mountain Valleys RC&D Council is a 501(c)3, nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible. You can help Mountain Valleys RC&D promote environmental quality by contributing your time or dollars to local environmental programs such as the ones described in this newsletter. For more information, contact:**

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