

March 2024

Conservation Newsletter



**Hillsborough
Soil & Water**
Conservation District
Florida



Photo: Cockroach Bay Preserve State Park (FL State Parks)



Pictured L to R: Adam Young, Vice Chair, Chris McCullough, Supervisor, Mark Proctor, Supervisor, Ryan Gill, Chair, Myke Morris, Treasurer, Executive Director Dr Joe walsh

Join HSWCD as we welcome our new Executive Director, Dr Joe Walsh. He brings years of valuable experience and knowledge to our organization. His focus is on helping rural and suburban agriculture producers. Our educational focus will be to improve our resources and communication with producers, educators, and the public at large. Welcome Aboard!

**Welcome to the first quarterly
Conservation Newsletter published by
HSWCD!**

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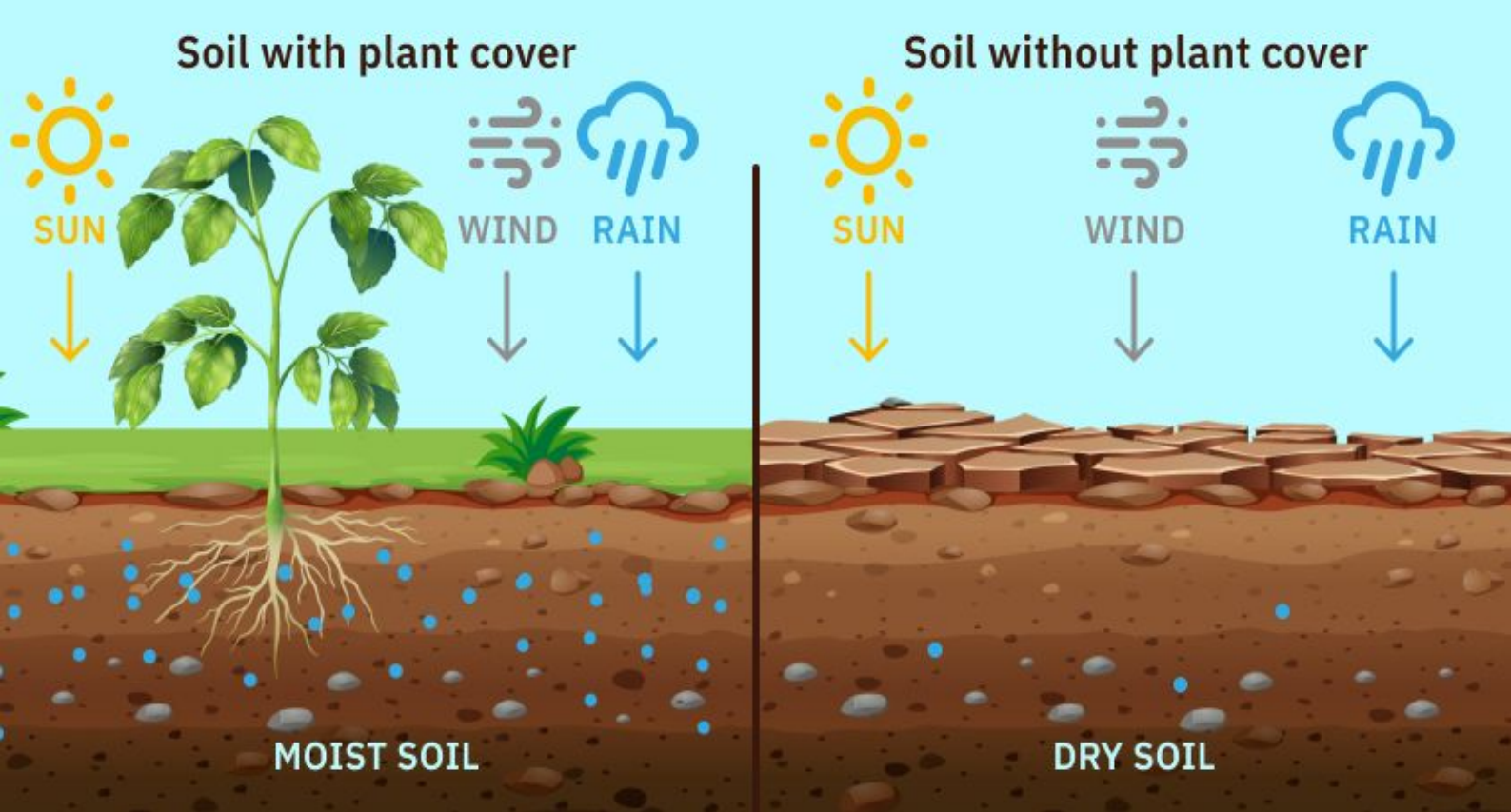
Current Contests to Check Out!

- [Poster Contest with NACD](#)
- [Photo Contest with NACD \(scroll down\)](#)
- [Photography Contest with FDACS](#)

Upcoming Events:

- Ag Pesticide Collection March 12**
- Military Ag Tour April 5**
- Ag Venture April 16
- Local Working Group Meeting April 18
- Board Meetings (open to public)





Soil condition using conventional farming methods versus conservation techniques
<https://eos.com/blog/soil-conservation/>



About HSWCD

Internet Resource Corner

[Educator Helpful Websites](#)

[Producers Helpful Website](#)

[UF/IFAS \(Ag Co Extension Office Phone #'s\)](#)



The 1930s Dust Bowl disaster spurred the U.S. Congress to declare soil and water conservation a national policy and priority in 1935. To elicit the active support of landowners on a local level, Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) serving conservation needs at a county level were created to work in partnership with the federal government. Today there are nearly 3,000 conservation districts nationwide dedicated to wisely using soil and water resources and involved in efforts as varied as their conservation needs and the local citizenry they serve. The authority to create Florida's SWCDs was established in 1937 under Chapter 582, F.S. There are currently 58 SWCDs in the state. The law was based on federal model legislation that established SWCDs nationwide. SWCDs were originally organized, for the most part, within county boundaries by landowner petition based on a need for soil and water conservation and in the interest of public health, safety, and welfare (see Figure 1). An SWCD so organized constitutes a governmental subdivision of the State of Florida (Sections 582.10 through 582.14, F.S.)

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) promote the conservation of Florida's natural resources through a variety of programs and partnerships including: cooperative programs with NRCS, FDACS, UF/IFAS, Demonstration Projects, Educational Workshops, Conservation Projects, Mobile Irrigation Labs (FDACS), Planning and Rule-Making. (from [Supervisor Handbook](#))

HSWCD Supervisors:

Ryan Gill, Chair, District 2

Adam Young, Vice Chair, District 3

Robert "Myke" Morris, Treasurer, District 4

Christopher "Bear" McCullough, District 1

Mark Proctor, District 5

HSWCD Office Staff

Dr Joe Walsh, Executive Director

Kathy Eckdahl, Sr Adm Specialist

Linda Chion, HSWCD Staff

Conservation is Crucial in South Hillsborough County

South Hillsborough County's demand for water has grown steadily for the past several years as more people move to the area. Over the last 12 months, average demand has increased by more than 5% — nearly 3 million gallons of water per day (mgd) — and even more rapidly since February as temperatures rose and watering restrictions for this portion of the county were lifted. From February to April 2023, Tampa Bay Water saw an increase in water use of 15-20 mgd on Sundays, the only non-watering day for landscapes. While projects are in the works to increase supply to this fast-growing region, businesses and residents are urged to conserve water now.

“Every drop saved is a drop that stays in the environment,” said Warren Hogg, Tampa Bay Water’s chief science officer. “The rainy season is months away, so it’s vital that we all use water wisely.”

Hotter and drier conditions are predicted for April and May, and the running average pumping rate from the South-Central Hillsborough Regional Wellfield is forecast to continue increasing.

A new South Hillsborough Pipeline will send an additional 65 mgd of regional water to the County when completed in 2028; the Brandon Booster Station is also sending additional water to south Hillsborough County. Additionally, we are working with the County to increase their wholesale water intake at their Central Hillsborough Water Treatment Plant, and we recently signed an agreement with the County to move forward with a new production well in the Balm area using aquifer recharge credits. To build awareness, we have re-launched our **Water Smarter** campaign to encourage residents in southern Hillsborough County to know and abide by their watering days, and we’re also promoting **Tampa Bay Water Wise** rebates in retail stores, digital advertising and several events throughout the region. from [Tampa Bay Water Wise](#) [Saving Water Indoor Tips](#)

Simple Steps to **SAVE WATER OUTDOORS**



TEST WITH TRACKS

Water your lawn and landscape only when it is actually needed, such as when footprints are left when you walk across the grass.

SPRINKLE WITH CARE

Apply moderate amounts of water to create a healthy, drought- and stress-tolerant lawn. For most Florida soils, applying no more than three-quarters of an inch of water per application is enough to revitalize the grass.



AVOID BUZZ CUTS

Cut your grass at the highest recommended height for your turf species or the highest setting on your lawn mower.



NOZZLE THE NOSE OF YOUR HOSE

Equip hoses with automatic shutoff nozzles for car washing, hand watering, etc.



PLANT FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LAWNS

Plant native or drought-tolerant vegetation that thrives in the native soil and local weather conditions.



FERTILIZE RESPONSIBLY

The use of fertilizer and pesticides on our yards results in pollutants contaminating the waterways in stormwater runoff when it rains. Residents are encouraged not to use fertilizers or pesticides during the warmer months and to use them in the correct amounts during other times of the year.

WHY SOIL TESTING IS IMPORTANT

Good crop production often requires the application of lime and fertilizer. Soil testing enables you to find out the makeup of your soil and helps you determine how much lime and fertilizer you need to apply.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR SOIL

To find out what you need to do to improve your soil's quality, you should know each of the following attributes of the soil:

- Current pH levels of your soil.
- Fertility levels of the principal nutrients.
- Type and quantity of lime your soil needs.
- Nutrients need to be added to your soil as fertilizer.
- Amount of fertilizer your crop and soil needs.

If you do not have this information, a soil test may help.



LIMITATIONS OF SOIL TESTING

Soil testing can let you know where your soil needs treatment or improvement. However, a soil test cannot do any of the following:

- Tell you which crop to grow.
- Prevent poor crops caused by drought, disease, insects, too much water, or other problems.
- Substitute for proper cultural practices.
- Replace good management.

HOW TO TAKE A SOIL SAMPLE

Keep in mind that soil test results generally take a couple of weeks to arrive back from the lab. Lime may need up to six months to produce the full effect in raising the soil pH. Be sure to send samples to the lab well before it's time to fertilize so that you can use the results to determine what kinds of fertilizer to buy.

Before following these instructions, contact your **county Extension agent** for complete information.

- Divide your farm into fields or areas for sampling. If you have areas with different crop growth, soil color, or lime or fertilizer histories, take a sample from each area. Keep the samples separated.
- Collect samples that provide an general example of the field or area sampled.
- Do not sample areas that are too small to be fertilized or limed separately. Do not sample unusual areas, wet spots, feeding areas, burn piles, old fence rows, sand boils, and other problem areas.
- Use a proper sampling tool, such as a sampling tube or auger. If it is necessary to use a shovel or trowel, dig a 6-inch-deep V-shaped hole in the soil. Slice a 1-inch slab off one side of the hole, and lift out the slab. For the sample, save a 1-inch-wide strip of soil from the center of the slab.
- Use a sampling tube to take a 6-inch-deep core of soil from at least fifteen spots in each field or area to be tested. Sample lawns only to a 3-inch depth. Mix together the cores from one field or area. Put about a pint of the mixed soil in a soil sample bag.
- Identify the samples by letter or number. Make a sketch or record of some kind so you will know which sample came from which field or area.
- Fill out the appropriate information sheets and submission forms. These forms are available at your **county Extension office** and the **Extension Soil Testing Laboratory website**. Include these forms and payment when mailing the samples.
- Send samples to the **laboratory** for analysis.
- Consult with your county Extension agent if you need help interpreting the test results or fertilization recommendations.
- Follow the recommendations!

10 ways to protect CORAL REEFS

Choose sustainable seafood.



Learn how to make smart seafood choices at www.FishWatch.gov.

CONSERVE WATER



The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually find their ways back into the ocean.

Volunteer!

Volunteer in local beach or reef cleanups. If you don't live near the coast, get involved in protecting your watershed.



Long-lasting light bulbs - ARE A - BRIGHT IDEA

Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is one of the leading threats to coral reef survival.



IF YOU DIVE DON'T TOUCH.

Coral reefs are alive. Stirred-up sediment can smother corals.



Practice safe boating.

Anchor in sandy areas away from coral and sea grasses so that the anchor and chain do not drag on nearby corals.



CHECK SUNSCREEN ACTIVE INGREDIENTS.



Seek shade between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., use Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) sunwear, and choose sunscreens with chemicals that don't harm marine life. For more information, visit oceanservice.noaa.gov/sunscreen.

BE A MARINE DEBRIS CRUSADER.

In addition to picking up your own trash, carry away the trash that others have left behind.

Don't send chemicals into our waterways.

Nutrients from excess fertilizer increases algae growth that blocks sunlight to corals.



oceanservice.noaa.gov

[Tips from NOAA](#)

Need to Find a Coral Reef in FL?

Look here:

[App for FL Coral Reef Locator from FDEP](#)

[Unified Reef Map from FWCC](#)



Photo: Genni Springs Park (above)

Photo: Hillsborough River State Park (below)



Top Ten Springs and Parks to Visit in Florida

By: [Mommy Spot](#)

There are many natural **springs and nature park** in and around Tampa Bay that provide fun experiences for the entire family. It will provide you with outdoor experiences while venturing in the wild and connecting with nature. You can go kayaking through the beautiful waters and springs, see what lives under the sea, or take a hike and look to see what's up in the treetops. Florida is home to many wildlife species and you can see them all while visiting one of the many natural springs and nature parks.

Top Ten:

1. [Silver Springs State Park](#)
Features: glass bottom boat tour
2. [Rainbow Springs Park](#)
Features: tubing and kayaking
3. [Ginnie Springs State Park](#)
Features: tubing, cave diving for certified divers
4. [Eureka Springs Conservation Park](#)
Feature: boardwalks, trails, rose garden orchid room.
5. [Hillsborough River State Park](#)
Features: trails, horseback riding, geocaching, fishing

continued page 6



Photo: Lettuce Lake Conservation Park (FL State Parks)



Photo: Alafia State Park (FL State Parks)
continued from page 5:

Top Ten Springs & Parks to Visit in Florida

6. [Crystal River \(Three Sister Spring\)](#)
Features: snorkeling, boat ramp, manatees, hiking, boardwalk
7. [Fort DeSoto Park](#)
Features: beach, camping, trails, playground
8. [Caladesi State Park](#)
Features: access through ferry or boat, beach, trails, view
9. Bradenton Riverwalk
Features: art, botanical garden, splash pads, family fun zones, skate park.
10. [Alafia River State Park](#)
Features: hiking, biking, boating, bird watching, geo-seeking, camping, mountain biking, fishing, paddling.

Looking for a Map of Florida State Park Springs?

The Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute has a really fun interactive map where you can find over 1,000 springs across Florida! [Click here](#) to see the interactive map of Florida state park springs.

Conservation Quiz Corner



1. What do you call fishways constructed on barriers?
2. What kind of trees lose all of their leaves when the weather gets colder?
3. Who is the author of Silent Spring?
4. What is the collection system in which recyclables of different materials are intermixed in a single container and separated later?
5. What do you call a baby porcupine?
6. Who was the first chief of the US Forest Service?

Conservation Quiz Corner
Answers: (1) ladders (2)
deciduous (3) Rachel Carson
(4) single stream recycling
(5) porcupette (6) Gifford
Pinchot



quiz by yorkccd.org

Recipe Corner



Sustainable [Dairy Free](#) or [Vegan Recipes](#)

Click here: [Sustainable Recipes](#)

Beef? Click here: [FL Beef Council Recipes](#)

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