



CONSERVOGRAM } The newsletter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society

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79th SWCS International Annual Conference Updates

July 21-24, 2024  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina  
[www.swcs.org/24AC](http://www.swcs.org/24AC)

Mark your calendars for the 79th SWCS International Annual Conference! This year, we are bringing our conservation family to a place where families gather every year to witness the region's natural beauty and enjoy one another's company.

We will assemble a diverse, multigenerational conservation network of researchers, practitioners, industry leaders, farmers, and students from around the world to [Myrtle Beach](#), a coastal community in South Carolina, just minutes from the North Carolina border. Surrounded by breathtaking scenery, Myrtle Beach and the other coastal communities along the strand showcase the charm and vulnerability of our world's great ecosystems. From the beaches, you can view islands and inlets surrounded by coastal wetlands. Coastal ecosystems transition upriver to a diverse agricultural area covering two-thirds of the state, including peanuts, corn, cotton, livestock, and timber production. From there, a sharp rise in elevation leads into the Blue Ridge Mountains, a beautiful section of the Appalachian Mountain Range.

This year's conference theme, "**Rising Together: Collaborative Conservation for All**," challenges all conservationists to rise to the great challenges and opportunities ahead of us together.



At this year's event, we will share successes and embrace lessons learned so that we can move toward our natural resource goals with greater speed, efficiency, effectiveness, and inclusivity. We will navigate the capacity, innovation, and partnerships needed to regenerate our land, water, and other natural resources.

The agenda will feature the latest ideas, technologies, and practices and foster a dialogue around their adoption. Cutting-edge research and practice developments in soil health, water quality, and resource management will be shared through various workshops, sessions, symposia, tours, exhibits, and demonstrations. Scientists and practitioners will present their work at the field, farm, and watershed scales across an array of private and public arenas. Applications of social theories and examples of successful outreach and education will enable you to identify ways to scale up localized successes. As an attendee, you will also hear about policy and economic developments that build a framework to increase conservation adoption and support future generations.

Outside of the formal program, you can carry on discussions while the sun sets along the strand, watch the tides rise and fall, listen to the birds sing, and have fun with your conservation family and maybe some of your own family as well!

Visit [www.swcs.org/24AC](http://www.swcs.org/24AC) for additional information on the 2024 event.

## Call for Presentations

SWCS is seeking oral presentations, posters, symposia, and workshops for the 79th SWCS International Annual Conference.

Submissions are being accepted for three special and nine general topic areas. General submissions should speak to the overall conference theme, "Rising Together: Collaborative Conservation for All."

- Conservation on the Edge
- Cultivating Conservation Technical Assistance, Community, and Networks
- Healthy Forest Ecosystems: Research, Policy, and Applied Science of Ecological Conservation and Restoration Across Landscapes and Watersheds
- 2024 General Conference Theme Submissions

The submission deadline is **January 31, 2024**. Download the [Call for Presentations](#) for more information.

## Become a Conference Exhibitor or Sponsor

The 79th SWCS International Annual Conference is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to connect with a uniquely targeted group of conservation and environmental professionals. Becoming an exhibitor or sponsor gives you an affordable opportunity to market your products and services to a key audience and maximize your organization's exposure. Put your brand in front of those who are directly involved in the decision-making process of purchasing products and those who influence prospective buyers and conservationists.

Download and review the [Exhibitor and Sponsor Guide](#) for full details and to become an exhibitor or sponsor today!

Exhibitors and sponsors will be recognized in the preliminary program if the contract, payment, and logo are received by **March 18, 2024**.



## Thank You, Members!

As the year comes to a close, we want to say a great big thank you to you, the SWCS members. Thank you for your dedication to conservation and to being a part of the SWCS community. The vital work you do to further conservation is HARD and often thankless. We want you to know that we see you, we appreciate you, and we are here to support you in any way we can!





## World Soil Day: SWCS Georgia Chapter Spotlight

*Courtesy of Sherry Williford, Georgia Chapter President*

On December 5, 2023, the Georgia Chapter of SWCS partnered with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the University of Georgia (Athens and Tifton campuses) to host two simultaneous events celebrating World Soil Day. This year's theme was "Soil and Water: A Source of Life."

Both events featured a rainfall simulator demonstration showing soil and water run-off versus infiltration on a variety of land management scenarios. General information was provided to teach visitors how to find out what kind of soil they have and how they will behave.



*Sherry Williford, Georgia Chapter President, explains to a group of middle school students how rain impacts the soil surface and how proper soil management can reduce run-off and increase infiltration (Tifton event).*

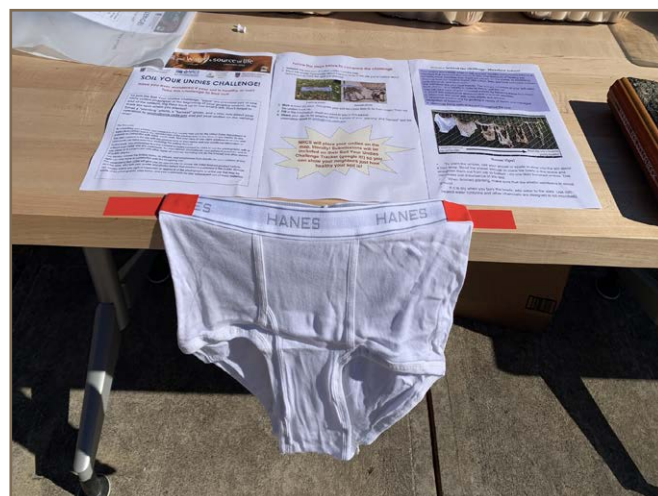
Graduate and PhD students from each campus presented posters on various soil health and agronomic topics. Several different soil health demonstrations were presented, showing cation exchange, soil respiration, and the importance of soil biodiversity.

Visitors were also invited to participate in the USDA NRCS Soil Your Undies Challenge! Willing participants picked up a package with all the supplies and instructions to measure the health of their soils. They were encouraged to take pictures and share their results with the NRCS campaign.

Both events were a successful outreach to growers, professionals, and students of all ages.

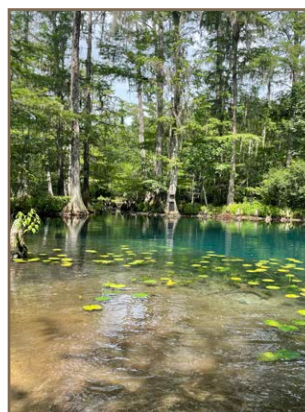


*Dan Wallace, Georgia Chapter member and former President, explains the rainfall simulator results to a group of college students and professionals (Athens event).*



*Attendees were invited to participate in NRCS' Soil Your Undies Challenge to check their soil biodiversity!*

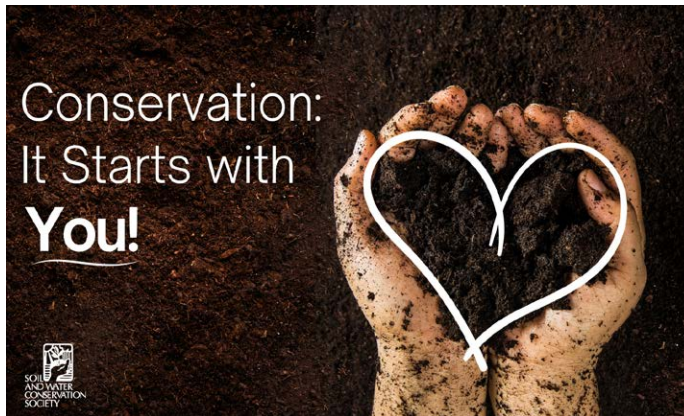
## Georgia Chapter Student Photo Contest



In addition to these two events on World Soil Day, the Georgia Chapter of SWCS also hosted a student photo contest, giving away a one-year SWCS student membership to the winning individual. That winner was Oglethorpe County student Luke Holbrooks, with his "Blue Water Hole" picture taken in Jenkins County, Georgia. Congratulations, Luke!

## Give Today!

The end of the year is nearly here, and as you think about your year-end giving, consider donating to SWCS. Your donation will go toward advancing the conservation profession and expanding the conservation community.



Donate

## Chapter Activity Report and Awards

The annual Chapter Activity Report will be available December 20 for our chapter leaders to complete with updates on their work in 2023. The information provided is used to submit charitable applications and by the national organization to ensure we provide chapters with the best support possible. This report is combined with the chapter awards nomination form, allowing chapters to easily apply for two annual awards when filling out the report.

Information regarding Chapter Activity Reports will be sent to chapter leaders. All reports are to be submitted through the online form by **February 28, 2024**. Please contact [memberservices@swcs.org](mailto:memberservices@swcs.org) with any questions.

## Upcoming Webinar Series

SWCS hosts several educational webinar series, all of which are free or exclusive to members. [Learn more.](#)

The final session of the **SWCS Members Only Book Club: A Year with Aldo Leopold** is Friday, December 22, at 12 p.m. CT. Participants will wrap up their discussions on *A Sand County Almanac*. Contact [events@swcs.org](mailto:events@swcs.org) to register.

The next **Student Professional Development** session is Wednesday, January 24, at 4 p.m. CT on "Combatting Imposter Syndrome." Join leading experts in natural resources, conservation, agriculture, and related STEM sciences as they share insights to help you develop in your career. [Learn more and register.](#)

## Results of SWCS Student T-Shirt Contest

Congratulations to the first winner of the Student T-Shirt Contest, Arjun Kafle, from Texas Tech University. SWCS community members voted on the designs through Facebook and Instagram by commenting the number of their favorite design. In total, we had 56 votes, and Arjun's design received 32 votes. We also randomly selected two voters to receive a SWCS swag package.

Kafle's design will be featured in the next run of SWCS T-shirts in our online Bonfire store this spring. Thank you to everyone who participated in this competition!



## The Emerging Leaders Want Your Event Ideas

Need help planning an event? Our 2023-2024 class of [Emerging Leaders](#) need ideas for events they can help execute as a part of this program. Submit ideas and event plans at [https://swcs.formstack.com/forms/23\\_elp\\_es](https://swcs.formstack.com/forms/23_elp_es). Want to serve as a mentor? Use this form to sign up!

## Upcoming Chapter Events

[Southern New England Chapter  
Annual Winter Conference](#)

Warwick, RI  
February 16, 2024



## New Members

*Welcome members who joined in November!*

### Arkansas—Razorback

Garrett Akins  
Bailey Darnell-Blake  
Ricki Gilbert  
Robbie Hoskins

### California/Nevada

Cailynne Graham  
Reed Lievers  
Kelsey Ramos

### Canada—Ontario

Ryan Carlow

### Colorado

Nikki Brinson  
Shabaz Khan

### Connecticut/ Massachusetts/Rhode Island—Southern New England Chapter

Erin Thomas

### DC—National Capital Chapter

Sage Saffran

### Florida

Ann Bishop  
Olivia Caillouet  
Autumn Homer  
Madison Royer

### Georgia

LeAnn Rutledge

### Hawaii and Pacific Basin

Annie Liu  
Ben Mock

### Iowa

James Boatright  
Evan Brehm  
Sophia Campbell  
Brieanna Ewoldt  
Laura Ferguson  
Rosemary Galdamez  
Rafael Gonzalez  
Mitch Harting  
Scott Hendricks  
Jordan Koos

Shawn Macha  
Rachael Millage  
Aaron Prestholt  
Eric Schmechel  
Nikki Schoonover  
Laurel Sellers  
Priscilla Sletten  
Morgan Smith  
Devin Stortz  
Abigayle Sweet  
Alena Whitaker  
Alycia Willenbring

### Illinois

Charlie Cole  
Alex Dozier  
Ian Gerfen  
Karla Griesbaum  
John McNally  
Niranga Wickramaratne

### Indiana—Hoosier

Aubree Pond  
Jordan Young

### Kansas

Lyndsie Beasley  
Ryan Edgecomb  
Jacque Harvey

### Kentucky—Bluegrass

Kim Barton  
Hannah Feagan  
Morgan Mairs  
Monica Nolan  
Hayley Perkins  
Vivian Ross  
Miranda Tabor  
Perry Thomas  
Kristine Whybark

### Maine—Pine Tree

Rachel King

### Michigan

Caryn Dawson  
James DeYoung  
Patty McNinch  
Mila Resetar  
Karri Tomich Baylis  
Shayla Williams

### Minnesota

Chris Danner  
Auste Eigirdas  
Sadie Neuman  
Katie Swiontek

### North Carolina—Hugh Hammond Bennett

Winifred Dorer  
Lina Soto  
Mark Walton  
Celeste Wescott Maus

### North Dakota

Amy Koehler  
Hannah Nordby  
Warren Swenson

### New Hampshire/Vermont

Jim Fortin  
Katherine Kasacek

### New Jersey—Firman E. Bear

Alyssa Bright  
Tai Colon

### New York—Empire State

Nawi Flores  
John Jondle

### Ohio—All Ohio

Katelyn Beckemeyer  
Michelle Pressel  
Joanie Redd  
Charlotte Smithson

### Oregon

Ty Siepert  
Jordan Slayden

### South Carolina

Lacy Barnette  
Kassidy Roof  
Erin Rosebrock  
Krista Schmidt  
Debra Stevens  
Lexi Thomason  
Nick Walker  
Kiersten Weber

### South Dakota

Joshi Deepak

### Tennessee

Ruth Groce  
Hannah Hudson Stacey  
Shanna Mathis  
Michaela Saylor

### Texas—East Texas

Jackie Buck  
Alyson Foreman

### Texas—Heart of Texas

Christina Winters

### Washington—Olympic View

Lynsey Sandum

### Wisconsin

Mynesha Holliday  
Nichole Kirk  
Andrea Topper

## Corporate Partners

Please visit [www.swcs.org/corporatepartner](http://www.swcs.org/corporatepartner) for more information on how to become a corporate partner.

### Platinum



### Gold



### Silver

We are actively looking for a Silver Level sponsor. If you are interested in sponsoring, please contact [memberservices@swcs.org](mailto:memberservices@swcs.org).

### Bronze

