

ANNUAL REPORT

2025





Our Mission

Our mission is to protect natural resources through education, programs, and cooperative efforts with partner organizations to achieve common goals for the benefit of all citizens of Greenville County with efforts in promoting:

- **Urban and Land Use Planning**
- **Conservation Awareness**
- **Sustainable Agriculture**

From our District Manager

Greetings Conservation Partners!

As the newest member of the district team, beginning in December 2025, I am just beginning to learn the many facets of conservation and the districts' role in serving the community. I have been to three of the nine district dams and responded to several citizen requests for assistance with drainage, erosion, and flooding issues on their properties.

Stepping into the district manager role, I quickly became aware of the many relationships with partnership organizations and the importance of working together to educate and create awareness on protecting our natural resources. My predecessor, Kirsten Robertson, has done an outstanding job in maintaining and building upon these relationships.

Kirsten Robertson was awarded the 2025 "Conservation District Employee of the Year" by the South Carolina Association of Conference Districts (SCACD). Kirsten possesses a wealth of district knowledge and continues supporting me in my new role. In addition, district commissioner Robert Hanley was awarded the 2025 "Conservation District Commissioner of the Year" by SCACD. Robert is a leading voice for conservation in Greenville County and is a key resource for district staff. The passion and dedication of these individuals in supporting conservation is remarkable.

This year Greenville County continued successful programming including school visits, the Seed Library, and SC Envirothon, while advancing new programs such as the Volunteer Storm Drain Marking Program and K-12 outreach.

I am excited to continue learning about the many district programs and resources used to support conservation efforts. Feel free to reach out with ideas on how we can better serve our community.

Regards,

Ronn Beebe
Manager

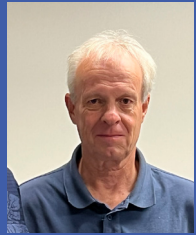
District Commissioners



Michael Stewart
Chairman



Robert Hanley
Vice Chair



Jim Blackwell
Treasurer



Margaret Harrison
Commissioner



Christopher Hall
Commissioner



Danny Howard
Assoc. Comm.



Fred Payne
Assoc. Comm.

A Message from the Chairman

Conservation friends and colleagues,

If there's one thing that defines the Greenville Soil and Water Conservation District, it's our ability to thrive amid change and challenge. This past year tested our resilience as we navigated a near-total staff transition—a moment that could have slowed us down. Instead, it became the spark for one of our most dynamic years yet.

We bid farewell to long-time District Manager Kirsten Robertson, who stepped into a new role within the county. Alongside this transition, we welcomed an entirely new leadership team that is already shaping the future of our district. Please join us in welcoming:

- Ronn Beebe, District Manager – bringing strong leadership and vision to guide the district forward.
- Kendall Juell, Stormwater Programs Coordinator – leading innovative efforts to protect water quality and manage stormwater challenges.
- Olivia Reed, District Programs Coordinator – strengthening our programs with fresh ideas and a commitment to community engagement.

Together, this team has infused our work with innovative ideas, diverse perspectives, and contagious energy that is already transforming our outreach and impact.

Our success was powerfully affirmed at the 2026 South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts (SCACD) Annual Partnership Conference, where we received two of the highest honors: Conservation District Commissioner of the Year and Conservation District Employee of the Year. Commissioner Rob Hanley was recognized for his leadership at both local and state levels, while Kirsten Robertson earned the Employee of the Year award for her outstanding service and dedication to educating our community about conservation practices. These awards reflect a team that didn't just adapt to change—they rose to the occasion without missing a beat.

Our mission remains steadfast: to protect natural resources and foster a sustainable future through advocacy and education. As we look ahead, we are determined to build on this momentum—innovating, collaborating, and ensuring a lasting impact on our community.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Here's to another year of growth, resilience, and progress!

Sincerely,

Mike Stewart

Chair

A Year of Change

Greenville County Soil and Water Conservation District welcomed several new employees this year and said goodbye to others. Kirsten Robertson, who served as District Manager for over fifteen years, moved to Greenville County's Land Development department as County Engineer. We wish her the best in her new position!

Greenville County hired Ronn Beebe, P.G., as the new District Manager. Ronn is a professional geologist with more than ten years of environmental experience, who most recently worked for the US Army Corps of Engineers in Norfolk, VA. When he's not working, Ronn is an avid outdoor enthusiast. He enjoys hiking in the mountains, biking on the Swamp Rabbit Greenway and playing golf.

Our new Stormwater Programs Coordinator, Kendall Juell, also joins us from Virginia. A South Carolina native, Kendall is naturally drawn to waterways. She has a knack for identifying aquatic insects, is an avid advocate for healthy streams, and shares a lifelong passion for wildlife, natural resources, and conservation. She may be spotted indoor climbing, on the hiking trails, at the river with her Daisy Scout, or working on her dual graduate degree.

Our District Programs Coordinator, Olivia Reed, joins us from North Carolina, bringing with her several years of experience in environmental communications and outreach. She has been interested in conservation since childhood and spent some time working on a small-scale organic farm, working in food waste reduction, and learning about what we can do to help our planet.

It's great to have so much new talent on the team! We're excited to jump into 2026.

Photos:

(clockwise) Halloween at GCSWCD; Ronn Beebe; Kirsten Robertson; Kendall Juell; Olivia Reed; Kendall Juell and Olivia Reed learning about freshwater monitoring at SC Adopt-A-Stream.



Welcome to our new staff!

Awards & Appreciation Celebration

In May, we celebrated our partners and Conservation Award winners at our annual Awards & Appreciation Celebration. We gathered at Famoda Farm and supported local producers.

Congratulations to the 2025 award winners:

Haley Denison, Conservationist of the Year

Jessica Gates, Farmer of the Year

Jamie Hattendorf, Teacher of the Year



Jaime Hattendorf



Haley Denison



Group photo!



Jessica Gates

Awards & Appreciation Celebration



SCACD State Recognition

Greenville Soil and Water is proud of the achievements of our commissioners and staff. In 2025, several of our folks were honored with state recognition.



Kirsten Robertson

Former District Manager, Kirsten Robertson, received the 2025 Conservation District Employee of the Year award from SCACD at the annual partner conference. Kirsten was recognized for her passion for conservation and her fifteen years of service for GCSWCD. Including using conservation practices on her own farm, Kirsten has taught classroom and on-farm soil health workshops, developed "Soil Health Matters!", a comprehensive curriculum and kit of experiments landowners can use at home, and served as an adjunct professor at Greenville Technical College's Sustainable Agriculture Program. Kirsten has been a steadfast advocate for locally led conservation and we couldn't be prouder that she has won the 2025 Conservation District Employee of the Year award!



Robert Hanley

Dr. Robert Hanley, one of GCSWCD's commissioners, won the 2025 Conservation District Commissioner of the Year award for his contributions to conservation in Greenville County. In addition to his invaluable involvement with SCACD through the legislative committee, Dr. Hanley has worked in Greenville County to help secure funding and support for the Reedy River Meadow Project, a riparian buffer showcase project in downtown Greenville. He has also been involved with the City of Greenville's City Piedmont Connector, which included an on-site mitigation project to restore streambanks of an unnamed tributary to Laurel Creek, and with educational and outreach activities in support of GCSWCD staff. Greenville County is lucky to have Dr. Hanley as one of our commissioners!

Award Gallery



Education

GCSWCD attended multiple schools and programs this year—here are some of the highlights!

Tigerville Elementary 2-4 grade students received customized programming that met curriculum standards, delivered by the district's education team. Second graders built stream runoff models; third-graders studied weather patterns by analyzing real Greenville weather data and created their own "rain maps"; and fourth-graders explored the movement of soil and water through an erosion activity called Soils on the Move. Students made connections about how rainfall and runoff impact the environment.



The GCSWCD team led 136 K-5 students at Buena Vista Elementary's afterschool program in an edible 'soil parfait' activity. Students used food items to represent the five soil horizons, and reviewed the importance of soil as a habitat for critters, a place for plant roots, water and nutrient storage, and the surface on which we walk and play. Students added cookies, crumbled graham crackers, pudding, gummy worms, and cornflakes in layers, and were thrilled to eat their soil creations afterwards.

Sustaining Way Steward Fellows at Annie's House learned about the connections between insects and healthy soil during a presentation by GCSWCD educators Haley Mumaw and Kendall Juell. During the program, students also pinned paper insects and observed bugs in the garden as young entomologists. At the program's end, students were given an insect pinning kit to take home.



Storm Drain Markers



In 2024, Stormwater Programs Coordinator Abbi Greer and District Programs Coordinator Haley Mumaw redesigned the district's storm drain curb markers, creating a fun and eye-catching marker to help raise awareness about runoff pollutants. This year, Stormwater Programs Coordinator Kendall Juell implemented the new program, and Simpsonville began marking storm drains! So far, 156 storm drains have been marked across Greenville County.

Only Rain Down The Drain

Get involved!

Take the first step towards public education and stormwater pollution prevention!

Are you an individual, family, student, school, Scout group, garden club, civic organization, or homeowner association? Inquire about volunteering today. Contact Kendall Juell (864-467-4997), visit greenvillesoilandwater.com, or email contact@greenvillesoilandwater.com to learn more.



Simpsonville city Council woman Shannon Williams marks storm drain in Simpsonville.



Storm drain marker in the rain.

Community Corner

Check out some of the many events that Greenville County attended in 2025!

GCSWCD tabled at Roper Mountain Science Center Earth Day, where District Programs Coordinator Haley Mumaw invited kids and adults to play the Defend Your Drain game, which illustrates how litter and pollution can enter local waterways via storm drains. Also at the event, RMSC staff displayed the rainfall simulator—a device sponsored by GCSWCD—to depict how rainwater runoff behaves on outdoor surfaces with differing permeability.



District Programs Coordinator Haley Mumaw and District Manager Kirsten Robertson visited Conestee Nature Preserve for Conservation Camp. Students learned about soil health, stormwater management, erosion and the importance of native wildflowers. Kirsten and Haley taught about the “Soil Your Undies” soil health challenge, showing students how they could test their health of their soil at home with just a simple pair of cotton underwear and time. They also learned about the principles of soil health and how to maintain healthy soil.

In partnership with the Greenville Water Collective, GCSWCD staff tabled at iMAGINE STEAM festival in downtown Greenville, reaching more than 20,000 Greenville residents and teaching about stormwater runoff and how stormwater travels in a watershed. To reinforce their talking points, they used a scale 3D model of Greenville County to illustrate how stormwater travels across the landscape, picking up pollutants along the way.



South Carolina Envirothon:

Three Greenville County teams competed in the Envirothon competition held April 25 in Columbia. Spartanburg High School won overall and went on to represent South Carolina at the NCF-Envirothon over the summer in Alberta, Canada. Greenville County's J.L. Mann took third place in the Soils station. District Programs Coordinator Haley Mumaw and District Manager Kirsten Robertson assisted at the competition to support the Greenville teams.



Seed Library:

Our successful seed library program continued with 15,850 packets of seeds distributed this year.

Greenville County residents can check seeds out at the Berea branch library with their Greenville County library card.



From the District Conservationist/NRCS

Getting Conservation on the Ground in Greenville

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides funding through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) to address resource concerns such as erosion, water quality, soil health or wildlife.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps farmers build on their existing conservation efforts while strengthening their operation. Whether farmers are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop yields, or develop wildlife habitat, NRCS can design a CSP plan to help meet those goals.

This year, CSP and EQIP dollars supported projects covering cropland, forestland and pastureland in Greenville county. This is in addition to the funding that NRCS brings to the county every year in the form of professionals, and equipment to provide technical support to our farmers.

If you have a farm or timberland and would like assistance in improving the resources on your land, give us a call to schedule a visit.



Meet Our Staff



District Staff

Staff Directory

Ronn Beebe	District Manager	864-467-4996
Kendall Juell	Stormwater Programs Coordinator	864-467-4997
Olivia Reed	District Programs Coordinator	864-467-4998
Collin Buckner	NRCS District Conservationist	864-920-6402
Melody Key	NRCS Soil Conservationist	864-920-6396
Lainey Veltri	Administrative Specialist	864-467-4995

Greenville County Soil and Water Conservation District

301 University Ridge, Suite S-4100

Greenville, SC 29601

864-467-4995

www.greenvillesoilandwater.com

@gcsoilandwater

GREENVILLE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
301 University Ridge, S-4100
Greenville, SC 29601

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PLEASE DELIVER TO:

