



# Division of Soil & Water Conservation - Cooperation with EQIP

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## 2 Division of Soil & Water Conservation

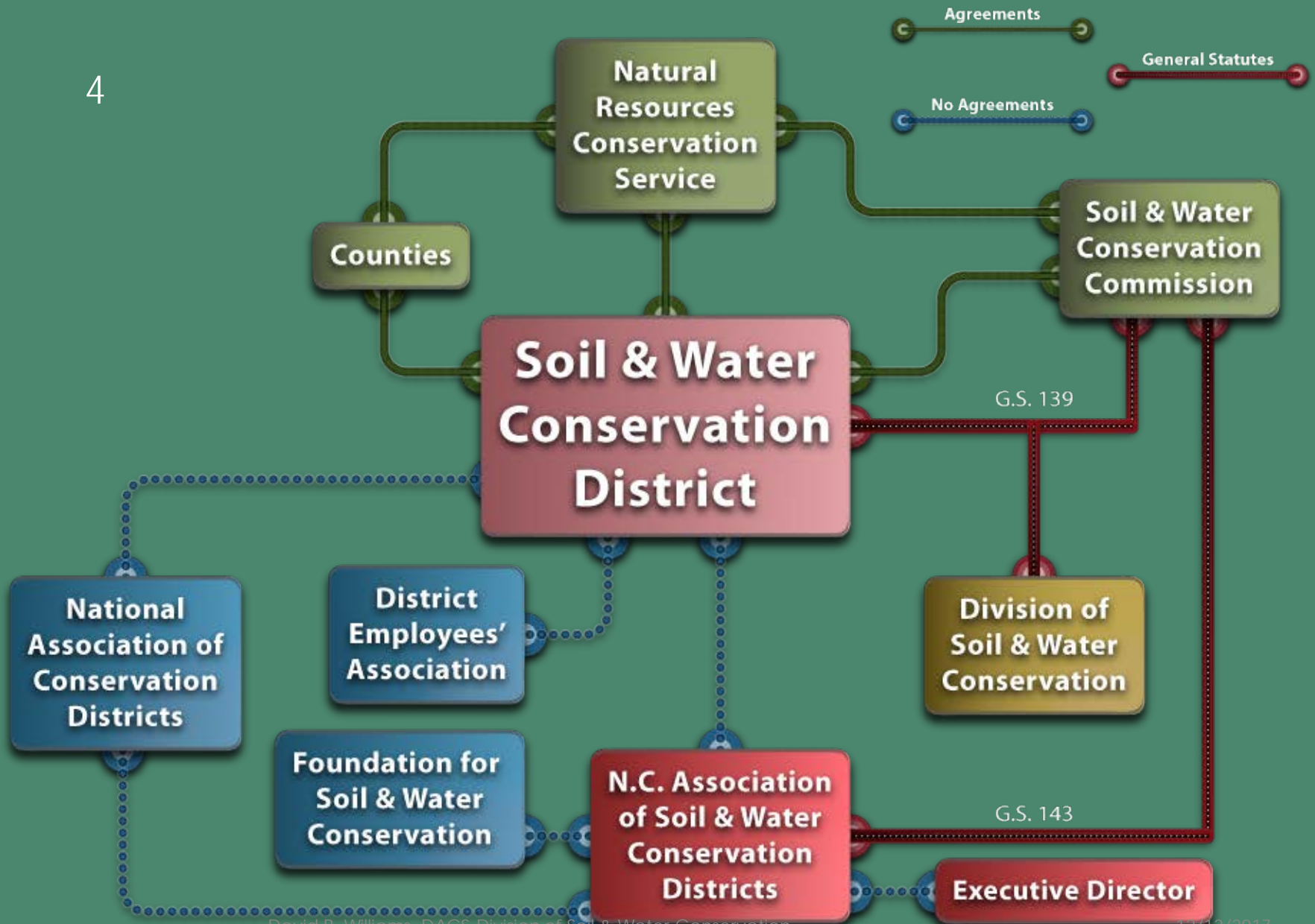
- Staff support to Soil & Water Conservation Commission
- 44 positions
- Non-regulatory; voluntary

1. *Lead state agency for Ag. nonpoint source pollution*
2. *Administer technical & financial assistance programs*
3. *Address wide range of land use issues*
4. *Established relationships with DEQ's divisions*

# <sup>3</sup> Soil & Water Conservation Districts

- NCGS Chapter 139 authorizes as independent units of government
- 96 districts cover all counties
- 492 officials (3 elected & 2 appointed)
- 270 local employees
- Non-regulatory; voluntary
- Identify local natural resource needs

1. *Delivery mechanism for division's and NRCS' technical & financial programs to citizens*
2. *Address a wide range of land use issues*
3. *Significant financial support from county government (e.g. stormwater; sedimentation & erosion control)*



# **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Between the**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

**And the**

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND  
CONSUMER SERVICES - DIVISION OF SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION**

**and**

**THE CHATHAM SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**and**

**CHATHAM COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

**For their Cooperation in the  
Conservation of Natural Resources**

## **BACKGROUND STATEMENT AND PURPOSE**

THIS AGREEMENT is between the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services - Division of Soil and Water Conservation (DSWC) an agency of the State of North Carolina, the Chatham Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Chatham County collectively referred to as the parties, to clearly define the roles

# Commission Cost Share Programs

- Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP) est. 1984
  - Addresses water quality concerns on agricultural lands
- Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP) est. 2008
  - Addresses water quality concerns on non-agricultural lands
- Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP) est. 2012
  - Addresses water quantity needs on agricultural lands
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) est. 1999
  - Provides financial incentives to agricultural landowners to restore and protect riparian buffers and wetlands



# Relationship between state and USDA programs

- DSWC serves on NRCS' State Technical Committee, and NRCS serves on review committees for state programs
  - Improve coordination of practice requirements
  - Helps ensure programs used in a complementary fashion
- Local priorities
  - District supervisors set local priorities for ranking applications
    - District ranking sheet for state programs
    - Coordinate local workgroup for federal programs
  - Districts coordinate applications to optimize natural resource benefits and administrative efficiency

# Relationship between state and USDA programs – cont'd

- Job Approval Authority
  - For most practices on agricultural land district technical staff work under Job Approval Authority issued by NRCS
    - Based on demonstrated competency
    - Ensures high technical standards are met for design and installation
- Conservation Planning
  - State cost share programs generally require conservation plans that comply with NRCS' conservation planning policy
    - Ensures cost-shared practices are needed and feasible to address the noted existing resource concerns
- Practice Installation
  - District, Division, and NRCS staff all work cooperatively to assist landowners to implement conservation practices regardless of cost share funding



# Relationship between DSWC and DEQ-Division of Water Resources (DWR)

- Agricultural Nutrient Reduction Rules (EMC)
  - Generally DSWC coordinates accounting for agricultural nutrient reductions to document compliance with nutrient reduction requirements in Nutrient Sensitive Waters (Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, Jordan Lake, Falls Lake)
  - DWR funds Nonpoint Source Planning Coordinator position in DSWC to lead this effort
- Basinwide Planning
  - DSWC coordinates with DWR to facilitate local district input into basinwide planning process and to help ensure that impaired and impacted waters are considered as part of district prioritization of resource concerns

# Relationship between DSWC and DEQ-Division of Water Resources (DWR) – cont'd

- Animal Waste Management
  - DSWC is delegated responsibility for inspecting permitted animal operations in 4 counties (Brunswick, Columbus, Jones, and Pender)
  - DSWC staff provide voluntary non-regulatory technical assistance to producers to improve waste management statewide

# Summary

- DSWC, local soil & water conservation districts, and NRCS all work cooperatively to implement conservation practices on private and public lands to address resource concerns of local, state, and national significance
- Technical assistance by well-trained technical employees is key to success
- Voluntary conservation works

# Questions

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