

“Grants to Districts” Has a History of Success in Pulaski County

The “Grants to Districts” funding program of the Arkansas Natural Resources Division of the Arkansas Agriculture Department has funded multiple projects in Pulaski County over the years, including the installation of pollinator gardens at Lawson Road Elementary School, Flightline Academy at the Little Rock Air Force Base, and the Anthony School. ANRC funds also supported the addition of native plants to the Terry Mansion Decorative Arts Museum gardens managed by the Little Rock Garden Club.

The “Grants to Districts” program is an annual competitive funding opportunity open only to Arkansas conservation districts. Projects with budgets of up to \$25,000.00 are considered and require a one-third District funding match. Currently these funds are supporting new projects at Forest Heights STEM Academy and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Campus Garden. At Forest Heights, elementary school students will benefit from the expansion of their outdoor classroom. The grant funded installation of honey bee hives, a year of hive maintenance and hive operation training by Lauren Anderson of Calm + Confidence. The funding also provided for purchase of

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It’s Time to Shop Arkansas Farmers’ Markets



It’s that time of year again. Arkansas’ farmers’ markets will soon be in full swing and Pulaski County has plenty to offer. If you’re looking for fresh produce and other locally-produced foods, here are just a few of your options:

- Urbana Farmstead - 2400 Kerrie Drive, Little Rock
- Bernice Garden Farmers’ Market – 1401 Main St., Little Rock
- Hillcrest Farmers’ Market – 2222-2298 Kavanaugh, Little Rock
- River Market Farmers’ Market – The River Market, Little Rock
- The Bramble Market – 9325 Ferndale Cutoff, Little Rock
- St. Joseph’s Center Farm Stand – 6800 Camp Robinson Road, N. Little Rock
- Me and McGee Market – 10409 US-70, North Little Rock
- Jacksonville Farmers’ Market – 9 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville

Pulaski Conservation District Board:

- Debbie Moreland, Chairman
- Alice Weeks
- Fred Nickerson
- Trey Rosenbaum
- John Crabtree

Office Hours

Monday – Friday

Pulaski CD:  
8:15 AM – 2:45 PM

NRCS:  
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

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birding supplies, such as binoculars, bird feeding stations, and bird nesting boxes, including multiple sets of "paint it yourself" bird box kits. Forest Heights STEM Academy's mission is to prepare and empower students to be problem solvers who work to positively impact their communities through the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and math. Students participate in STEM projects acting as scientists, engineers, and mathematicians as they design and conduct learning projects and then communicate their results. Creating and utilizing outdoor classroom activities expands the traditional classroom and engages students in hands-on experiences connecting them to the natural world. Pulaski Conservation District will be involved in further expansion of the outdoor classroom in the next few months with installation of a greenhouse provided by funding from the District and the AR Game & Fish Commission.

The second "Grants to Districts" project in Pulaski County for FY22 is the expansion of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Campus Garden. The garden is worked and managed by students and faculty on a volunteer basis. It contains raised beds, in-ground production rows, a keyhole garden, and a small greenhouse which is used primarily for herb production and seed-starting. The garden has become an important part of the University District community, providing over 2,000 pounds of free produce annually to local residents.

The American Health Rankings from the United Health Foundation listed Arkansas with a 2019 obesity value ranking of 37.1%, making it the third highest "obese" state outranked only by Mississippi and West Virginia. In addition, the Arkansas Food Bank identifies 25% percent of Arkansas' children as facing hunger. According to The Urban Institute, a nonprofit research organization, 19.9% of Pulaski County residents face food insecurity issues compared to a 12.9% national average. In addition, the median household income for the county was identified at approximately \$10,000 per year less than the national average. These statistics all indicate that the availability of fresh, healthy produce is lacking in many parts of the county and, combined with low income levels, this results in a reliance on low-cost,



unhealthy fast food. Community gardens such as the UALR Campus Garden provide a strategic source of nutrition in urban areas. The "Grants to Districts" program provided funds to purchase a commercial cold storage unit and the materials needed to construct a produce storage building at the garden. Thanks to volunteers from the campus community, the building will be ready for the 2022 gardening season and will significantly increase the efficiency of produce distribution to local residents. In addition, the grant will provide funding for renovation of the raised bed irrigation systems in the garden.

### Locally-Led Work Group Meeting Scheduled for April 21, 2022

Pulaski Conservation District will hold its FY 2023 USDA Locally-led Work Group (LWG) meeting on Thursday, April 21, 2022 starting at 11 am at the AACD office/USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) NLR Field Service Center, located at 4004 McCain Boulevard, Suite 201, North Little Rock, AR 72116. All District/USDA partners and the general public are invited to attend. Participants may attend either in person or virtually via Zoom. The meeting will likely continue until 1:00 pm and will include a working lunch provided by the District. The purpose of the meeting is to gather recommendations to submit to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on State and local natural resource priorities and criteria for conservation activities and programs for fiscal year (FY) 2023, specifically addressing conservation concerns for Pulaski County. This process supports the locally-led conservation effort by coordinating USDA programs with other Federal, State, and local conservation programs to work singly and in combination, and to provide an integrated solution to addressing natural resource concerns. Please RSVP to [katrina.king@ar.nacdn.net](mailto:katrina.king@ar.nacdn.net) if you plan to attend and if you will be in-person or virtual, so we can plan for food appropriately. If you cannot make the meeting, but would like to provide input regarding conservation of natural resources in Pulaski County, you can send in your comments via e-mail by the morning of April 21st.

*Leopold Education Project*



## **Educator Workshop**



**Open to all Environmental Educators** including: Environmental science teachers, Master Naturalists, Stream Team leaders, Conservation districts, and state park and nature center interpreters. Participants will receive Certificates of Completion and curriculum for LEP and WET. In addition, they will also receive Leopold Exploration Cards and Leopold's seminal work, *A Sand County Almanac*, plus AEEA offers ADE-approved PD credit hours for WET.

**Little Rock Audubon Center**

**9:00am – 3:30pm on Friday, June 10, 2022**

**Cost \$20**

*Bring your lunch & drinks. Wear good walking shoes.*

The Leopold Education Project (LEP) and Project WET incorporate educational strategies using interdisciplinary, hands-on, and critical thinking activities to not only teach students about water and conservation but to instill what Leopold called a “land ethic,” an appreciation of and respect for the land and all its component parts. LEP and WET teach about humanity’s ties to the natural environment in the effort to conserve and protect earth’s natural resources. All activities meet or exceed Arkansas state education standards and are presented in an easy- to-use format similar to Projects WILD and Learning Tree.

To register, contact **LEP-Arkansas at [suzannehirrel@gmail.com](mailto:suzannehirrel@gmail.com) or call 501-224-9419 or 501-680-7061 and ask for Suzanne or Marc Hirrel**

**Deadline to register is Wed. June 1**

*This workshop is made possible by grants from*

*Arkansas Game & Fish Commission*

*and*

*Pulaski Conservation District*

## LONOKE/PULASKI FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEWS – PAUL CASEY, CED

Due to the low COVID rates in Lonoke County, the Lonoke/Pulaski FSA Office is unlocked and we are open to the public. You can call and make an appointment or just stop by to conduct your FSA business.  
1300 N Center St, Ste 6, Lonoke AR 72086; 501-676-5116 ext 2

### IMPORTANT DATES

Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program (SMHPP) Deadline	April 29, 2022
Grassland CRP Signup Deadline	May 13, 2022
Final date to Report 2022 Spring Seeded & All Other Crops	July 15, 2022
Continuous CRP Signup	Ongoing
<b>FINAL DATES for PREVENTED PLANTED ACREAGE</b>	
Corn	May 10, 2022
Grain Sorghum	May 30, 2022
Rice	June 9, 2022
Upland Cotton	June 9, 2022
Soybeans Not Following Another Crop (NFAC)	June 30, 2022
Soybeans Following Another Crop (FAC)	July 10, 2022
<b>RECURRING ITEMS</b>	
<b>FAILED ACRES</b> should be reported using form CCC-576, Notice of Loss. This must be filed, and a field visit made by FSA before disposition of the crop to be considered eligible for history. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), producers must file a Notice of Loss within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. <u>Producers must timely file a Notice of Loss for failed acres on all crops including grasses. Please call the office and make an appointment to file failed acres.</u>	15 Days of the occurrence of the disaster
Final date to inform FSA of crop losses	Before Crop Disposition
Sign-up continues for Disaster Assistance Programs: Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). <u>Submit notice of loss within 15 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.</u>	Continuing

### Arkansas Department of Agriculture Announces Scholarship Opportunity

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is now accepting scholarship applications from students majoring in agriculture or an agriculture-related field at one of the following universities: Arkansas State University, Southern Arkansas University, the University of Arkansas System, and Arkansas Tech University. Applications will be accepted through June 1, 2022. Application information is available on the department's website.

"The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is pleased to provide funding to help deserving students further their education and prepare for potential careers in agriculture, our state's largest industry," said Wes Ward, Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture. "It is an exciting time to be involved in the agricultural industry and we wish to support students as they consider the many career options available in agriculture." Scholarship recipients may receive up to \$5,000 for the 2022-2023 academic year. Funding for the scholarships comes from civil penalties collected by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture. Recipients must have a minimum 2.5 GPA. Selections are based on academic achievements, character, leadership, career plans, and financial need.

USDA/NRCS Financial Assistance (By Program)  
Pulaski County 2011 through 2021

AWEP	-----
CSP - GCI	\$ 127,281.00
CSP	\$1,524,369.00
EQIP	\$3,165,475.00
RCPP - CSP	-----
RCPP-EQIP	\$ 233,550.00
WHIP	\$ 231,752.00
ACEP/WRP/WREP	-----
TOTAL	\$6,194,579.00

PROGRAM Abbreviations:

AWEP: Agricultural Water Enhancement Program

CSP-GCI: Conservation Stewardship Program-Grassland Conservation Initiative

CSP: Conservation Stewardship Program

EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentives Program

RCPP-CSP: Regional Conservation Partnership Program-Conservation Stewardship Program

RCPP-EQIP: Regional Conservation Partnership Program – Environmental Quality Incentives Program

WHIP: Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

AWEP/WRP/WREP: Agricultural Conservation Easement Program/Wetlands Reserve Program/Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Partnership Program