

**LSWCD Staff**

Brad Russ  
District Resource Coordinator  
Cindy Strickland  
Resource Conservationist  
Patty Fletcher  
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James "Bobby" Brown  
Mobile Irrigation Lab, Team Leader  
James Joiner  
Mobile Irrigation Lab, Team Member

# LAKE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 3 — JULY 2007

**District**

**Supervisors**  
Nadine Foley  
Terry Godts  
John Harris  
Frank Paulhamus  
Betsy Farner

**USDA -NRCS Staff**

Chakesha Martin  
District Conservationist



## Cindy Strickland Receives Award

Cindy Strickland, Resource Conservationist for Lake Soil and Water Conservation District, received the Community Service Education Award on March 29, 2007.

The Lake County Community Service Awards are sponsored by the Lake County League of Cities, Leadership Lake County Alumni Association, The Daily Commercial, and Lake Receptions.

Mrs. Strickland was recognized for her work in bringing conservation education to Elementary Schools. In 2004, she developed an out-reach program to educate kindergarten through fifth graders about soil and water conservation. Since then, she has presented to over 25,000 students.



John Harris, Vice Chairman, Board of Supervisors, stated, "Cindy has a gift for making these children realize that they can make a real difference by practicing conservation every day and playing an active role in protecting our community's valuable resources."

## Welcome Kesha Martin



On June 11, Ms. Kesha Martin began her new position in the Tavares Field Office as District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service under the United States Department of Agriculture.

Ms. Martin has worked in two locations in Florida, the Baldwin and Fort Myers USDA Field Offices, since starting with NRCS in 2004.

Her responsibilities will involve working in Lake and Sumter Counties in the capacity of providing conservation technical assistance and administering the Farm Bill Programs.

She is originally from Arkansas and has a Bachelors' and Masters' Degree in Environmental Soil and Water Science from the University of Arkansas and the University of Florida, respectively. We look forward to working with Ms. Martin and we would like to welcome her to the area.

Ms. Martin may be reached at 352-343-2481, ext. 6 or [Chakesha.Martin@fl.usda.gov](mailto:Chakesha.Martin@fl.usda.gov)



### Thank you, Joe Mustion

Joe Mustion has been Acting District Conservationist from January 2007 through June 2007. He has contributed a lot in a short time.

*"I've really enjoyed working with the district staff, Farm Service Agency personnel, and the agriculturalists in Lake and Sumter Counties over the past few months. It was a pleasure meeting this year's EQIP applicants during the sign up. The local farmers were very friendly and easy to work with. I am sure the new district conservationist will enjoy working with all the fine people that I have met here."*

Joseph T. Mustion

# State Winners

## East Ridge High School Land Judging Team

Students in Future Farmers of America participated in the State Land Judging competition hosted by Polk Soil and Water Conservation District in Bartow, Florida on March 30.

East Ridge High School FFA and Clermont Middle School FFA from Lake County both placed first in their divisions. From East Ridge High School FFA, Taylor Clemons won individual high scorer, and Jacob Nyhusi won third high scorer.

East Ridge High School FFA went on to represent Florida in the National Land and Range Judging contest in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on May 1 - 3. Over 170 teams of teenage FFA and 4-H members from over 36 states competed this year.

Thanks to Danny Garner, East Ridge High School FFA Advisor and Veterinary Science Instructor, for his commitment to environmental education.

*“ FFA makes a positive difference in lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success.”*

## Stewards of the Land

To be a steward of the land means that you take responsible care of the land, and do what is necessary to keep the earth healthy and productive.

The benefits of good land stewardship are cleaner water, improved wildlife habitat, and land protected from damages caused by wind erosion and water erosion.

If natural resources are depleted at a faster rate than they can replenish themselves, they eventually will disappear.



## Association of Florida Conservation Districts

### Lake Soil and Water Conservation District hosts AFCD Area Four Meeting

The Area Four meeting was held on May 12 at the Lake County Agriculture Center in Tavares. Five area four districts were represented.

After the business portion of the agenda, two break-out sessions were offered: How to run a Public Meeting Legally and Supervisor Training.



Commissioner Linda Stewart

Lake County Commissioner Linda Stewart was the guest speaker. She captured audience attention and encouraged questions which was followed by open discussion.

Commissioner Stewart also participated as a judge for the speech and poster contest, along with Barbara Gill, President of the Florida Conservation District

Employee Association, and Christina Padgett, Mount Dora Center for the Arts.

Area Four Vice President, Mike Barr, conducted the speech contest. The topic was, “What are the effects of the Real Estate Boom on Florida’s Agriculture?” The results were as follows:

First Place - Hailey Wright, Marion County Student  
Second Place - J. Nelson Brown, Lake County Student

The theme of the poster contest was “Conservation’s Power.” Lake County had three poster winners in second place:

2nd/3rd grade - Meghan Yates  
4th/6th grade - Rebeca Mauck  
7th/9th grade - Sam Maruniak

# Mobile Irrigation Lab

## New Contract

Lake Soil and Water Conservation District was notified that funding is approved for the second year operation of the Mobile Irrigation Lab Program. The current contract was fulfilled as of June 30, 2007 with a total of 26 evaluations and 4 follow-up evaluations completed.

The completed evaluations represent 1090 acres and water savings below:

Potential water savings	269 ac/ft	87,647,947 gallons/yr
Actual water savings	43.5 ac/ft	14,173,552 gallons/yr
Instant water savings	55 ac/ft	17,920,584 gallons/yr

MIL Technicians can develop irrigation water management plans specific to your needs.

Call 352-343-2481, ext. 6 to schedule your appointment.

*Voluntary    Non-regulatory    Free public service    Confidential*

## New Equipment

The Mobile Irrigation Lab Team purchased a TDR 300 Soil Moisture Probe. This tool accurately measures soil moisture across the full range of soil moisture conditions.



Bobby Brown and James Joiner will be trained to use the equipment by David Sleeper, Soil Conservationist for USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service.

*James Joiner using the soil moisture probe*

The Mobile Irrigation Lab is Sponsored by:  
 Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
 St. Johns River Water Management District  
 USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service  
 Lake Soil and Water Conservation District  
 Lake County Board of County Commissioners

## Nursery Best Management Practices and Water Efficiency Workshops

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are the nursery practices that have been developed by growers and researchers to limit nutrient runoff, water waste, and environmental degradation. With the current extreme competition for water resources between urban and rural areas, these practices are essential to the continuation of nursery production in the state.

Free workshops will be offered to show nursery growers what is involved in a Best Management Practices and irrigation efficiency assessment. Workshops are scheduled at the following locations:

- July 11** Seminole Springs Herb Farm and Antique Roses, 34935 W. Huff Rd, Eustis
- July 18** Matlack Tree Farm, 1631 CR 561, Clermont
- July 25** Zephyr Lake Nursery, 2605 Cooke Rd, Fruitland Park

The programs will be held from 10 a.m. to noon. It will start with the BMP assessment team from East Central Florida Resource Conservation & Development showing how a BMP assessment is done, followed by the Lake Soil and Water Conservation District Mobile Irrigation Lab showing the growers how to assess their irrigation equipment.

- Learn what BMPs are and how they may affect you in the future.
- Learn how an assessment is done at a local nursery.
- Learn what Nursery BMPs can do for you.
- Learn about the free Mobile Irrigation Lab.
- Learn how the Mobile Irrigation Lab can help you save on your irrigation bills.
- Find out the facts at a location near you.

For more information, call Juanita Popenoe at 352-343-4101. Lake County Extension, [www.cfextension.ifas.ufl.edu](http://www.cfextension.ifas.ufl.edu)

# Upcoming Events—2007

## July

- 4 - Independence Day
- 26 - Lake Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting - 2:00 p.m.  
**New location** - Lake County Agriculture Center

## August

- 10, 11 - Association Florida Conservation District Annual Meeting
- 26 - Lake Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting - 2:00 p.m.  
Location - Lake County Agriculture Center

## September

- 3 - Labor Day
- 26 - Lake Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting - 2:00 p.m.  
Location - Lake County Agriculture Center

### **Newsletter Distribution**

The Lake Soil and Water Conservation District Newsletter is available on the web at [lakegovernment.com/Lake Soil & Water](http://lakegovernment.com/LakeSoil&Water). Send an email to:

**Patty.Fletcher@fl.nacdnet.net** or call **352-343-2481, ext. 6**, and we will add you to our mailing list.

*“Every day American Farmers practice conservation to take care of the land and ensure a healthy and plentiful food supply for our nation.”*

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