

Sabine-Neches

*Resource Conservation
and Development Area, Inc.*



**2016 - 2017
Annual Report**

RC&D Council

Board Members

Cary Hilliard. President
Thomas Frazier. Treasurer
John Wade
Al Harris. Secretary
William Hatfield
Frank Glenn
Shane Renberg
Brenda Samford
Dwayne Archer
Darryl Primo

County

Van Zandt
Henderson
Upshur
Wood
Harrison
Smith
Henderson
Panola
Gregg
Gregg

RC&D Staff:

Jo Nell Haltom. Program Assistant
Ken Awtrey. Technical Consultant

Vision Statement

Our most important resource is our people, who have a desire to better themselves and in the spirit of working together, strive to make our area a better place to live.

Mission Statement

Our council will utilize the diversity of our volunteers to tap the resources of Federal, State, and Local Governments and the private sector to achieve our goals.

Sponsors

**Harrison SWCD
KVZR SWCD
Panola SWCD
Smith SWCD
Trinity-Neches SWCD
Upshur-Gregg SWCD
Wood SWCD
Gregg County
Harrison County
Henderson County
Smith County
Upshur County
Van Zandt County
Wood County
City of Carthage
City of Longview
City of Mineola
City of Tyler**

Thank you very much for your support!

Letter from the President

Greetings from Sabine-Neches RC&D

2016 was another successful year for Sabine-Neches. When one of our members learned of a large fine in Northeast Texas and a possible grant, our board decided to make an application to support the Mineola Wildlife Preserve. Castilaw Environmental Services, in Nacogdoches was engaged to put together a plan to clean up the land on the banks of the Sabine River and preserve the old growth trees in the preserve. Sabine-Neches in coordination with the City of Mineola asked for \$500,000 to improve the preserve and make it more accessible to the hundreds of tourists who visit the 3,000 acre recreation area. The decision is pending and should be announced later in 2017. Sabine-Neches is working with the Sabine River Authority for grant funding which will help to extend the Big Foot Paddling Trail and increase economic development and recreational options for Mineola and Wood County.

Excess Supplemental Environmental Program (SEP) funds were used to begin the cleanup of a large, illegal tire dump in Van Zandt County. About one third of the estimated 12,000 tires were removed and the remainder await additional funds.

One new initiative that shows great promise is building a partnership with Texas railroad companies. We are having productive discussions with Union Pacific Railroad and the head of their Public Relations Office is coming to the state conference. We believe by working together this partnership will lead to better rail service, especially to rural Texas cities.

The members of Sabine-Neches RC&D are volunteers, no one is paid. Our members do this important work because they believe we have an obligation to give something back and to help clean up our beautiful state. Thanks to our generous sponsors we are able to continue this rewarding and important work. If you are interested in this effort, please give me a call.

Cary Hilliard, President



What is Sabine-Neches Resource Conservation and Development?

The RC&D Council is a voluntary, local, membership-based, nonprofit entity that represents the eight counties in our area: Smith, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Panola, Upshur, Wood and Van Zandt. The purpose of the RC&D council is to advise, plan, implement and develop programs; to ensure the wise use of funds that are intended to protect the environment, improve community infrastructure, enhance rural economies and to improve local communities' environmental planning and projects.

Sources of funds for our Council's projects come from: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), environmental enforcement fines, the participation of county and city governments, local Soil & Water Conservation Districts and sponsors. Because the legislature approved up to 10% of SEP funds for administrative reimbursement, we now have two paid part-time staff members who oversee SEP projects for both Sabine-Neches and Pineywoods RC&D areas. This is a welcome improvement and sponsorship funds from the eight counties. SWCD's and several cities provide the funds for non SEP related expenses.

Sponsorship and financial assistance is vital to fund these operational expenses and will enable the Sabine-Neches Council to continue our important work throughout our area.



NRCS

District Conservationists

Robbie Clemens.....Gilmer/Longview

OpenMarshall

Julie Moore.....Athens/Canton

Melissa Berry.....Carthage

Darin Smith.....Tyler

John Stone.....Quitman



SEP Projects Completed & Ongoing

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>PROJECT COST</u>
Harrison	Abandoned Tire Cleanup	\$29,344
*Harrison	Clean School Bus Elysian Fields ISD	\$ 64,575
*Harrison	Clean School Bus Waskom ISD	\$ 64,575
*Van Zandt	Abandoned Tire Cleanup	\$ 4,310
Smith	Illegal Trash Dump Cleanup	\$ 10,368
Harrison	Abandoned Tire Cleanup	\$ 9,225
*Gregg /Rusk	Wastewater Treatment	\$ 337
Upshur	Wastewater Treatment	\$10,368

* Completed projects

SEP Projects



The Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP) program allows organizations fined by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to direct the money to a local project with direct environmental benefits. This program is now funding about \$2 million a year through RC&Ds across the state. This past year Sabine-Neches RC&D administered SEP projects in three out of our eight counties totaling over \$180,000.00.



SEP Projects



The SEP projects in Sabine-Neches RC&D area include: illegal trash dump cleanup, replacing failing sewer systems for low-income home owners, household hazardous waste collection days, helping purchase new school buses, and abandoned tire cleanup.





Mineola Nature Preserve

Sabine-Neches RC&D helped develop the Big Foot Paddling Trail on the Sabine River.





Texas Association of RC&D Annual Training Conference
Hosted by Sabine-Neches RC&D

SEP Project

SEP funds are used to repair or replace failing septic systems for low-income homeowners.



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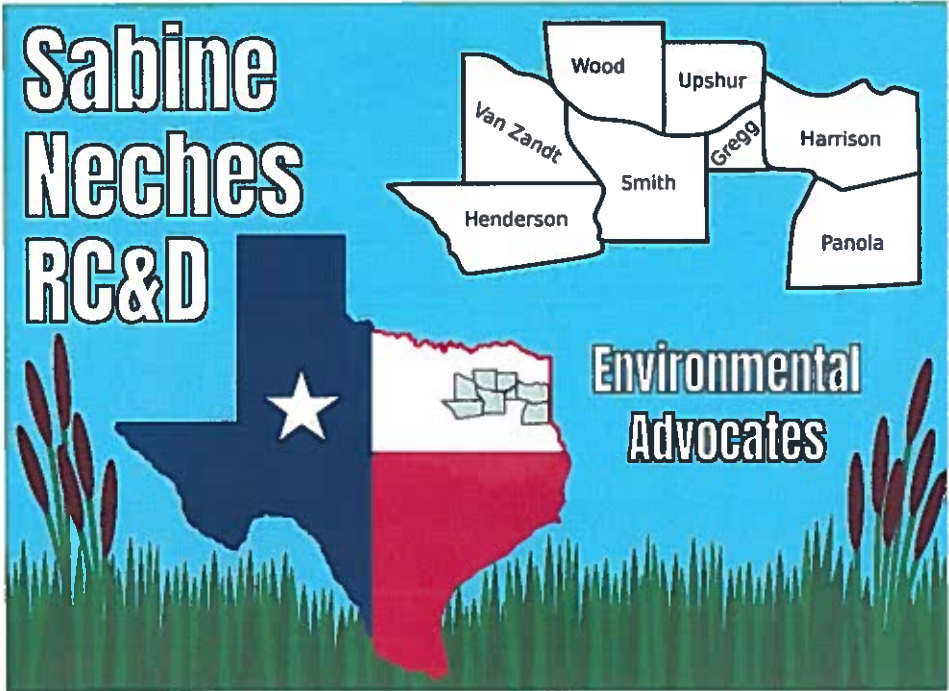
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**Serving Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Panola, Smith, Van Zandt,
Upshur and Wood Counties**

All programs and services of the Sabine-Neches Resource Conservation and Development Council are open to all persons without regard to any discriminatory factor.