

## Alabama -- Soil and Water Conservation at a Crossroad

For nearly 70 years, the State Soil and Water Conservation Committee and the 67 Soil and Water Conservation Districts have had Alabama's strong support. Through Memorandum of Agreements with the Governor's office and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), we share a unique delivery system and conservation partnership like no other in the public or private sector. We work with landowners through a non-regulatory, voluntary approach to natural resource management.

### We Are:

- The State of Alabama's Soil and Water Conservation Agency
- The State's 67 Soil and Water Conservation Districts led by 335 unpaid district officials
- The State's Conservation Stewards

### Private Lands ...Public Benefits

- State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, Conservation Districts, and our federal partner, NRCS, work with the landowners of Alabama to protect soil and water resources for the benefit of all citizens of Alabama.
- These working lands comprise 95% of our total acreage and produce much more than food and fiber.
- Public benefits include clean water, clean air, reforestation, wildlife habitat improvement, recreation and open space enhancements that contribute to the quality of life for all Alabama citizens

### What's at Stake?

- Loss of financial support from federal, state, and local governments
- Loss of the local delivery system for conservation resources
- Loss of the voluntary, non-regulatory approach to resource management

### What's to Gain for a Small Investment of State Dollars?

For a state investment at the 2003 level of \$3.1 million, the state stands to receive:

- Gain \$29 million in federal dollars through technical assistance and program dollars from NRCS this year. Next year the impact is estimated to be \$46 million.
- Gain \$7 million in federal dollars from EPA through ADEM for non-point source pollution abatement.
- Gain \$1 million for County Government in support of the District programs.
- Gain \$5 million in time invested by 335 District officials that volunteer their services, knowledge and expertise for no payment.
- Gain \$12.5 million investment from the landowners who are responsible for a percentage of the cost-share dollars they receive.
- Gain \$50,000 through cooperative agreements with US Fish and Wildlife Service.

For a state investment of \$3.1 million, we can leverage over \$54 million in return. This is a \$17 to \$1 return for the state.



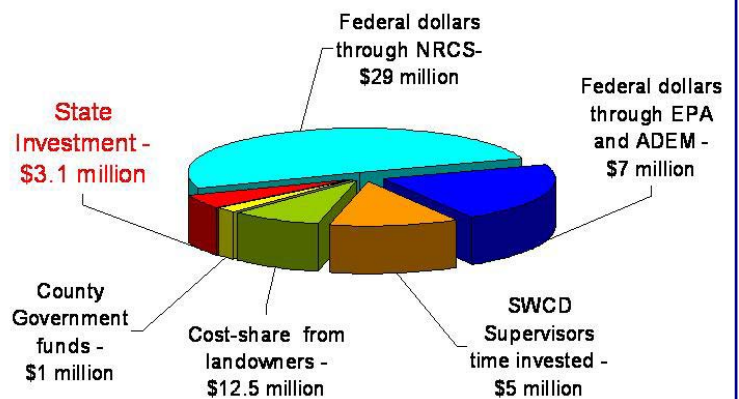
A large gully threatened McDavid Elementary School property. A project plan was developed through the Mobile County SWCD/NRCS office and other partners to provide technical assistance to stabilize the erosion and to develop an outdoor learning center.

Alabama is a beautiful state. Conservation management enables landowners to make wise decisions about the use of our natural resources. The result is a quality of life that is enjoyed not only by residents but visitors as well. This has been the mission of the conservation partnership for 70 years. We trust that it will continue for many years to come.



Water quality is an important issue in Alabama. Installation of field borders is a practice that helps control soil erosion and nutrient leaching into streams. Technical assistance and financial support from the conservation partnership is available to landowners as they install these resource management practices.

### State Investment of \$3.1 Million = \$54.5 Million through SWCC/SWCDs



**This equals a \$17 return for each \$1 of state funds invested through the Soil and Water Conservation Committee/Districts.**