



Cawaco News

Serving Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby and Walker Counties of Alabama

WINTER 2013

IN THIS ISSUE:

Project Update	1-2
Southeastern Conference	2
Board Member Spotlight	3
Forest Action Plan	4
Forest Certification Workshop	4
Area Plan Update	5
Needs Assessment	5

Engineering teacher **Jay LeCroy** says, "the 3D printers are a big hit with the students. Currently we are teaching the students to use the printers and prepare easier projects for prototyping.

"High School students from six schools are currently training on the printer, but the project is too young to have created any jobs yet. However, we can say with certainty that the skills learned here are critical in our technology-driven economy!"

Additive manufacturing or 3D printing is a process of making a three-dimensional solid object of virtually any shape from a digital model. 3D printing is achieved using an additive process, where successive layers of material are laid down in different shapes. 3D printing is considered distinct from traditional machining techniques, which mostly rely on the removal of material by methods such as cutting or drilling.



Project Update: STEM ACADEMY

Project Director: Jay LeCroy



Attending the Cawaco RC&D grant presentation at LeCroy Career Technical Center's STEM Academy were (left to right): Industrial Development Coordinator and Cawaco Board member Fred Crawford, Drayton Cosby of The Cosby Company, STEM instructor Jason Sosa, Rep. Kurt Wallace, students Colby Ramsey and Jacob Smith, LeCroy director Tommy Glasscock and STEM instructor Jay LeCroy.

STEM Academy purchases 3-D printers with grant

By Emily Beckett, Clanton Advertiser Published 4:45pm Tuesday, October 1, 2013

The Academy of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) at LeCroy Career Technical Center recently purchased two 3-D printers and materials with a \$5,000 grant from Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development Council.

The grant covered two MakerBot Replicator 2 printer units (about \$2,000 each), replacement parts and spools of printable materials.

"This is our first time getting 3-D printers," STEM instructor Jason Sosa said.

Students can use the printers to produce 3-D items for which they have created digital files on a computer.

In addition to using the printers to make items for robotics competitions, Sosa said students could gain experience with the machines many manufacturing-related



Jay Lecroy sports a CAWACO RC&D shirt while demonstrating his drone squadron plane at the Farm & Wildlife Expo, another Cawaco-sponsored event.



Cawaco Executive Director Kellie Johnston, Chairman Paul McCaleb and board member Jim Phillips share a table at the Southeastern RC&D Conference in Sandestin FL.

companies prefer their employees have prior to entering the workforce.

For example, students recently collaborated with Johnson Controls Inc. in Clanton to produce an ergonomic handle for the company’s assembly line workers with the new 3-D printers, saving Johnson Controls hundreds of dollars.

“They sent us the file, and we were able to print it for them for about \$2,” Sosa said. “I feel there will be a lot of jobs for people who can design items that can be manufactured with these machines.”

Jacob Smith and Colby Ramsey, both 10th graders at Chilton County High School, said they have spearheaded the use of the printers.

“We’ve played with stuff and programs that most people haven’t that could give us an edge, going out into the real world,” Smith said.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTEND SOUTHEASTERN RC&D CONFERENCE

Cawaco Board Members (Paul McCaleb and Jim Phillips) and Staff attended the Southeastern RC&D Conference held October 4-6, 2013 at Sandestin, Florida. The program provided many opportunities to network with other Southeastern RC&D Councils as well as connecting with our other Alabama RC&D family.

The President of the National RC&D Association, Olga Walter, addressed the group with an update on the National Program. Goals for the National RC&D for 2014 include becoming a full-service organization in support of local RC&D Councils which includes developing and providing information on funding opportunities.

The agenda was heavily Alabama-oriented. Alabama made a clean-sweep of the Southeastern Awards, winning Council of the Year, Project of the Year, Council Employee of the Year, and Council Member of the Year. Additionally, training provided at the Conference was developed or previously hosted by Alabama Councils.

Mike Roden, Alabama RC&D Executive Director, provided a presentation on *Council Development*. This presentation was given as the Cawaco Council meeting in August at Palisades Park and during AARDCDC Staff Training in Mobile, September 25th. Mel Cosgrove of Government Relations-International Code Council, presented *Who is the International Code Council and What is the International Wildland Urban Interface Code and How Does This Relate to RC&D Councils?* This presentation was given in Cullman, August 22nd during the *Wildfire... Safe, Sound and Code Smart Workshop*. Cawaco RC&D partnered with other RC&D Councils in hosting this meeting. Attendees were encouraged to attend the National RC&D meeting in June of 2014 which will be hosted by Alabama RC&D Councils, and to seek items that highlight local vendors to include in gift baskets and giveaways.





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Volunteers pose in front of raised beds at the Liberty Highlands Community Garden in Irondale, which was a collaborative effort between Cawaco and Coosa Valley RC&D. This garden serves the elderly and youth programs at Cornerstone Church, as well as the surrounding community, providing food and fellowship.

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT SHEILA BAKER

Jefferson County Member At-Large

Board member Sheila Baker was raised in Bridgeport, CT and went to school at UAB. She currently resides in Birmingham. Like many of us, she moved here to be closer to her family.

When I asked Sheila what she likes most about Alabama, she replied, "I like the feeling of being home. I love that the signs upon entering the state say, *Welcome to Alabama the Beautiful*. I could go on and on about this. The land is beautiful, whether it be rivers, farm land, the mountains, awesome beaches or the inner city streets. I also love how communities come together in the spirit of doing what is in the best interest for our communities."

The only things Shelia doesn't like about Alabama: Too many tornadoes and not enough snow.

Sheila is employed as a Social Worker with Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging. She says she enjoys her job because she helps people become self-sufficient by empowering them.

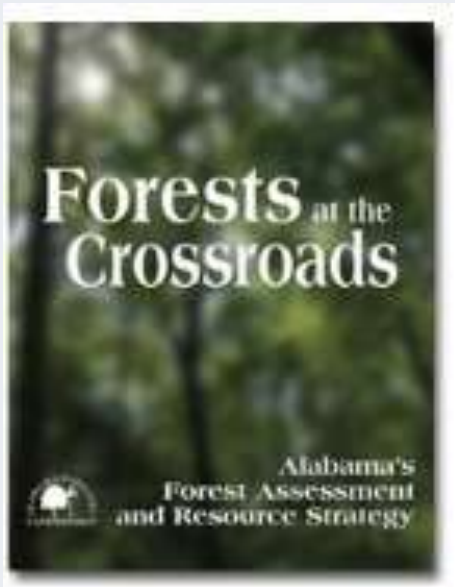
Sheila has been on the Cawaco Board since 2007, when working in the same building with the Cawaco staff, she became intrigued by RC&D. RC&D, she realized, went hand in hand with her own beliefs of self-empowerment. She is most appreciative of the Cawaco project that helped to bridge the digital divide between seniors and the rest of their community. "It is awesome to see seniors using the internet to keep in contact with their families, receive and sending pictures of grandkids and great-grandkids or to complete a job application on-line." she said. One thing that Sheila finds disturbing is the lack of healthy food choices for the elderly and lower-income individuals. "If healthy foods were affordable, people would be more inclined to eat healthy. But how many can realistically afford to eat healthy when the cost is so much greater than purchasing cheaper, processed food?"

When I asked her what she would like to see Cawaco do, she said "I would like to see Cawaco become completely self-sufficient. I envision us as having income that is generated for our community projects earned by ventures from us. I know it's good business sense and in my heart of hearts I know we will make this great achievement especially with the leadership that we have in the Staff and our Board Members."

Among Sheila's many hobbies and interests, she enjoys reading, cooking and traveling.



Participants at the Forest Action Plan meeting in Jefferson County, on November 14, 2013.



Alabama's Forest Assessment and Strategy is a document identifying threats to Alabama's forests and strategies to rectify those threats. The document can be downloaded here:

<http://www.forestry.state.al.us/AlabamaForestActionPlan.aspx?bv=5&s=1>

On January 16, 2014, Cawaco will host The Alabama Forestry Commission **Forest Certification Workshop**. This is a one-day workshop providing training to forest industry professionals on the current status of major forest certification systems in North America. This workshop will be held in Columbiana's 4-H center. For more information, call 205-623-0457.

FORESTRY NEWS

On November 13, Cawaco hosted Alabama's **Forest Action Plan** meeting, a free training to provide an opportunity to become familiar with the current *Forest Action Plan*, provide input for future versions and identify opportunities for implementation.

What is the Forest Action Plan?

Over an 18-month period, the Alabama Forestry Commission collaborated with 33 organizations, 37 subject matter experts, and with public comment from 865 citizens to produce Alabama's Forest Assessment and Resource Strategy, titled "Forests at the Crossroads." The document was approved on June 18, 2010 by the US Forest Service on behalf of the Secretary of Agriculture.

[Click to Read Document.](#)

Nine Threats to Alabama's Forest Resource

The foundation of the document rests on a comprehensive assessment of the conditions and trends within Alabama's forest resource. From these, nine threats were identified. Left unaddressed, these threats will diminish benefits Alabama citizens receive from the state's forest.

1. Urban Growth and Development
2. Fragmentation and Parcelization
3. Invasive Species
4. Changing Markets
5. Insects and Diseases
6. Wildfire
7. Catastrophic Natural Events
8. Air Quality
9. Climate Change

The multi-agency Forest Resource Task Force is currently assessing activities already being carried out by each agency that are found in Forests at the Crossroads. The Task Force will then recommend 1) how agencies can improve working together on existing activities and 2) what gaps or opportunities there are for additional collaborations.

The **National Association of Resource Conservation & Development Councils (NARC&DC)** provided a grant that made this possible with funding provided through the **U.S. Forest Service State & Private Forestry Cooperative Forestry**. This meeting qualified CEU credits for professional logging managers and registered foresters.

Cawaco's Area Plan

At the Annual Meeting in November, the Cawaco Board adopted the 5 year area strategic plan for Cawaco. This plan focuses staff and resource time on parks and outdoor recreation, natural resource and sustainability education, first responder support, implementation of community plans and job training.

Needs Assessment

Currently, Cawaco is conducting a *Needs Assessment Survey* for counties within the Council Area. **If you know of a project in your community that needs assistance** please contact Cawaco staff by December 8 to be considered for the *Needs Assessment Survey*.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Forestry and Agriculture are major contributors to the economic welfare of the Cawaco area. According to www.AlabamaAgImpact.com, a collaborative effort of the Alabama Agribusiness Council, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Auburn University, and other businesses and organizations, **the combined forestry and agriculture impacts for the five-county Cawaco area totaled 600 billion, and provides 86,981 jobs.** The Agriculture/forestry sector is a critical and, in many cases, indispensable component of the economies of Alabama's 67 counties.

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Section 303(d) of the **Clean Water Act** requires that each state identify those waters that do not currently support designated uses, and to establish a priority ranking of these waters by taking into account the severity of the pollution and the designated uses of such waters. For each waterbody on the list, the state is required to establish a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for the pollutant or pollutants of concern at a level necessary to implement the applicable water quality standards. **The Cawaco 5 county area has a total of 35 streams on 303(d) list**, according to Alabama Department of Environmental Management Alabama Water Quality Assessment, January 2012.

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There are a **total of 39 species** that are listed as threatened, endangered or candidates within the Cawaco RC&D Council Area. This includes 3 bird species, 11 clam species, 5 fish species, 8 flowering plant species, 2 mammal species, 1 reptile species and 9 snail species.

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The Cawaco survey revealed land preservation was the **highest ranked issue** throughout the Cawaco 5- county area. Respondents emphasized that land preservation and quality of life related to green space, forest land, and resource management were important to their communities. Population projections and trends in growth validate that land use decisions are important and related to all four authorizing elements. Cawaco RC&D promotes land conservation initiatives such as conservation of open spaces, public access to outdoor recreation. Education and promotion of community planning combined with an emphasis on these initiatives ensure that current and future generations consider land conservation activities.