



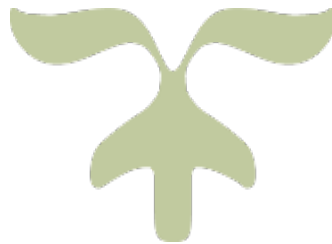
Our Vision: Vibrant communities that achieve balance between human, economic and natural resource needs.

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# ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT

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2020



OCTOBER 12, 2020  
CAWACO RC&D, INC.  
2112 11TH Avenue South Birmingham AL  
35205

# A Brief History of RC&D

With the passage of the Agriculture Act of 1962 came about the establishment of Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Councils to provide a program to empower people to help themselves. Cawaco RC&D (RC&D) was authorized in 1973 to assist the communities in Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby and Walker counties in Central Alabama. The service to these five counties focuses on vibrant communities and natural resource conservation. [Read our strategic plan here.](#) The general objective is to meet needs within the community through service, leadership and building relationships.

Cawaco is assisted by a volunteer **Board of Directors**, which assists in working with local people, agencies and organizations to identify local problems, develop a plan to alleviate the problems, and implementing such a plan to help improve the quality of life in our five county area of Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby and Walker counties in central Alabama. Cawaco also assists other non-profits in achieving their goals by offering administrative services.

## 2020 Board of Directors

### **Blount County**

Chris Greene  
Nell Miller  
Doug Smith- *Vice Chair*

### **Chilton County**

Gerald Arrington  
Whitney Barlow  
Shannon Welch

### **Jefferson County**

Paul McCaleb-*Chairman*  
Jim Phillips  
Sheila Baker

### **Shelby County**

Kevin Morris-*Treasurer*  
Amy Feger  
Brandon Hamilton

### **Walker County**

Jenny Brown Short  
Dwight Hicks  
Keith Pike  
Paul Kennedy

Address: 2112 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue South Suite 541 Birmingham AL 35205

Phone 205.623.0147

Kellie Johnston, Executive Director  
Patti Pennington, Programs Manager

## 2020 STATISTICS



**462,396** people served



**694** volunteers



**7** community projects



**3** conservation projects



**8** first responder projects



**17** educational projects



**3** job training/creation projects



**5** recreational/tourism projects



**1** senior citizen project



**1** technology project



**14** projects improved a public facility!



**40** trails created or maintained

# 2020 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

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## **Blount County Soil & Water: Classroom in the Forest**

551 students participated in a field day teaching natural resource conservation. Students received seedlings as a reminder of the lessons from the field day.



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## **Mid-South Chapter R&LHS: Historic Birmingham Mineral Railroad Sign Project**

Funding enabled the project to expand by installing signs throughout the six counties in central Alabama that were served by the BMRR.

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- **City of Jasper: Playground at James A Cox "Frisco" Park**  
Includes placement of benches, trash receptacles, installation of sod and landscape, lighting and security gates.
  - **Pleasantfield Volunteer Fire Department: Pleasantfield VFD Radios**  
Purchased 12 portable fire radios with 12 spare batteries and 12 spare antenna and one base station with antenna.
  - **City of Vestavia Hills Police Department: Project Clean Air**  
To obtain air purifying masks for patrol officers so they are not exposed to biological, chemical, or bodily gases that might cause harm.
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**Chilton Natural Resource Council:  
Woods and Water Education**

Implementation of educational programs related to environmental stewardship for youth and adults, including the Arbor Day Tree Giveaway, Professional Logger Manager (PLM) training, and landowner tours.



**Shelby County Board of Education: Home  
Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters**

Educational materials for home-based, parent involvement program that brings early learning educational materials into the homes of those most at risk because of poverty, parents' limited education, and social isolation. This program pairs an educational expert with parents and preschoolers in their homes and supports their mutual learning journey, preparing both the students and the parent for grade school.

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- **Chestnut Creek Heritage Chapel: Secure Our Foundation**

Funds were matched with \$4000 in cash donations as well as donations of steel beams were used to replace the sagging structural support beams at the Chestnut Creek Heritage Chapel in Verbena.



**Main Street Alabama: Calera Resource Team**

To help establish and maintain a successful Main Street Program for Calera. Residents and leaders recognized the value of the Main Street Approach® to downtown revitalization, and they have committed the time and resources to establish a local Main Street program. See the FULL resource report [here](#) to get an idea what kind of services MSA offers community planners.



**H.E.L.P. Organization: OASIS Summer Enrichment**

The purpose of OASIS Summer enrichment is to give children a safe place to learn after school. Many parents are unable to help children with homework and are not available after school or during the summer months to provide their children with learning opportunities to offset summer learning regression. Funds paid for educational materials for the summer program.

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- **Town of Eldridge: Playground Renewal**

The Town of Eldridge had the playground equipment painted and also added a few new pieces. The Town also purchased a shelter to cover the public picnic tables.

- **Alzheimer's of Alabama: Project Lifesaver** Purchased Project Lifesaver tracking bracelets and related supplies.

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### **The Foundry: Employment Readiness**

Purchased a meat slicer and range, to help program participants receive foodservice training which will allow them to be employable when they complete their program, and also provided equipment necessary to implement a new dispatch routing system, which is used to train program participants completing employment readiness assignments in logistics and operations.



### **Susan Moore Fire & Rescue: Fire Hoses**

The old hoses were out of date and damaged and could not pass testing. Small grants like this one make a huge difference in the ISO ratings and safety of the first responders and the general public.

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- **Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District: Educational Supplies and Materials**  
Purchased educational items for publication purposes.

- **Visionary Ministries: Kitchen Upgrades**

The kitchen that is used by the church to provide culinary training needed an upgrade. The ministry pairs youth with the elderly to enrich their lives.



### **Shelby County Schools: Real World Exposure**

Shelby County Schools Career and Technical Education allowed the school system to add a new health science program in Shelby County Schools to meet the growing demand in healthcare. The grant purchased the training equipment for the surgical nursing portion of the program, as well as transportation costs associated with the Ready to Work program.



### **Sipsey Heritage Commission: Childers Landing**

By utilizing donations, a Cawaco grant and the hard work of volunteers like these, Childers Landing on the Warrior River in Walker County now has a canoe launch/take out! More improvements are planned, including a pavilion and restrooms! Thanks to Hannah Lewis and Barbara Ann Parnell Hall for braving the underbrush so everyone can have access to the river!

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- **Town of Cleveland: Cleveland Wildlife Recreation Area**

The need for this project is to give not only the citizens of Cleveland, but Blount County a place where a family can fish, walk, hike, or just watch the wildlife and not cost them anything. The area is home to turkey, deer, and small animals such as squirrels, rabbits, and many species of song birds.

- **City of Warrior: Warrior Fire Department Multi-jurisdictional Training Facility**

To serve as training props for structural firefighting and search and rescue to the surrounding volunteer fire departments

- **Visionary Ministries: Kitchen Upgrades**

The kitchen that is used by the church to provide culinary training needed an upgrade. The ministry pairs youth with the elderly to enrich their lives.

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**Creative Enrichment: Full Plate** is using space behind a community center in Fairfield to grow nutritious food for the community. Each week, volunteers bag and give away food to approximately 60 families. Cawaco helped them purchase a storage shed for their garden tools and equipment.

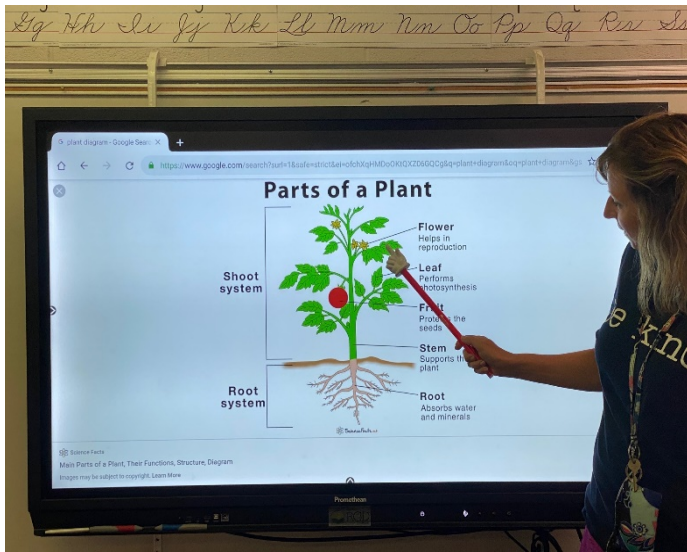


**Blount County Education Foundation Summer Learning:** This project annually provides students with learning opportunities in the summer to help them stay connected to learning, which is proven to negate the summer learning loss. The 2020 summer was especially important due to the school closures in March, helping students to regain lost ground occurring while students had to use remote learning options. Cawaco funds were used to provide supplies and resources for all eight camps. Schools hosting camps were Appalachian, Blountsville, Cleveland, Hayden Primary, Hayden Elementary, Locust Fork, Southeastern, and Susan Moore. All but the Susan Moore camp were one week camps. Susan Moore was a three week camp. Funds from other sources were used to provided staff for all camps.

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- **Jefferson County Soil & Water Foundation: Conservation for Decades**

The Foundation purchased 18 fabric posters that will be used at future Water Festivals, training demos, and workshops. Two additional posters were created and purchased for the Urban Forestry Fair. They are expected to stand up to years of use and allow for easy storage, as well as, providing adequate visual aides for the activities. Items related to booth events and creation of conservation activities were also purchased to help increase awareness and offer citizens a better understanding of conservation.



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### **Shelby County Elementary School: Activate Learning**

The ACTIVATE LEARNING grant allowed the school to update the technology in every classroom by adding InteractiveActivPanels. These panels are a significant upgrade from the former out-dated equipment that was in the classrooms. ActivPanels are multi-purpose in that teachers can use them to enhance their instruction with videos, maps, and images, and students can use them to practice skills, investigate new ideas, and collaborate with each other.



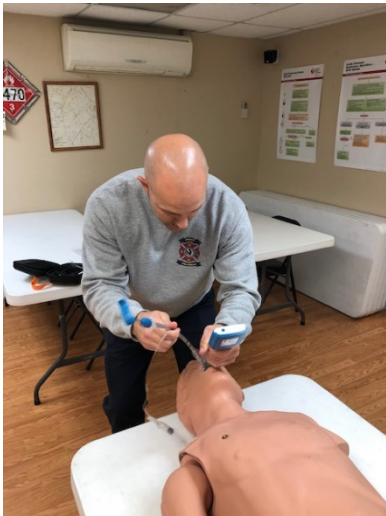
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### **Jones Valley Teaching Farm: Woodlawn High School Apprenticeship**

A key component of JVTF's work has been the establishment and cultivation of a 2-acre production farm located behind Woodlawn High School. Each year, a select group of Woodlawn High School students have the opportunity to participate in a paid apprenticeship that involves successfully managing a weekly student-run farmer's market which gives Woodlawn neighborhood residents, school staff, and students access to fresh, affordable, sustainably-grown produce.



**Allgood Fire & Rescue: CERT (Community Emergency Response Trailer & Training)** The CERT trailer is a mobile unit that can/will arrive on scene and assist with all aspects of natural disaster and emergencies. It will also be used as the training trailer for sets of teams such as chainsaw crews, search and rescue etc.



**Oneonta Fire & Rescue Service: UE Video Laryngoscope Purchase**

During medical emergencies in which patients needed to be ventilated, it was found that some patients were difficult if not impossible to establish an advanced airway in due to numerous factors including but not limited to physical anatomy and environmental issues such as lighting and size of area needed to work. This grant paid for two kits, one for each of our front-line advanced life support emergency vehicles.



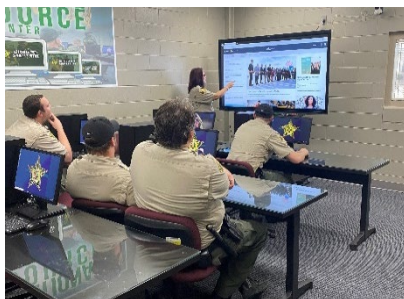
**Jasper Main Street: Patriots of Walker County**

Supplemental funding for banner arms displayed during patriotic events and holidays in downtown Jasper.



**Alabama Public Television: Career Tech Opportunities**

Printing and distribution of brochures and other educational materials to highlight technical programs available to students in Walker and Chilton Counties. Students without access to internet were targeted. Career Tech staff were given the brochures and shared them with students, parents and other interested persons. The intent is for the information to help dispel any negative perceptions about career tech and look at them more seriously and as pathways to viable careers.



**Walker County Sheriff's Office: Workforce Development**

Purchase of equipment to be used for continuing education for county employees and workforce development training for inmates.

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- **Walker County Humane Society: Transport Boxes, Kennels and Houses**

Purchase items that improved sheriff transport of animals and housing animals that are abandoned, injured or abused. This is a county wide project.

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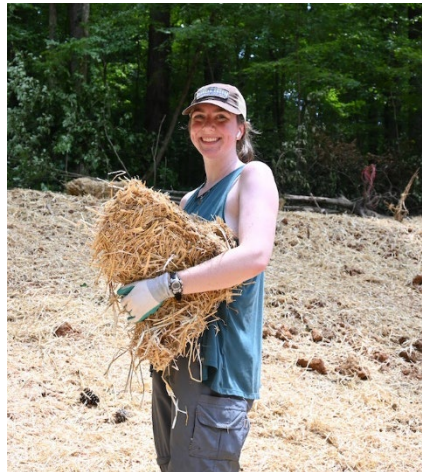
### **TORAH Project- High Tunnel**

Funds were used to purchase and install high tunnel house and lumber, and transport soil to our location on Dennison Ave. Our goal is to work with local community leaders and volunteers to provide a quality enrichment program for youth and teens to learn the basics of gardening, that will, in turn, teach valuable life skills.



### **Bryan Elementary: 3D STEAM Dream**

Funds were used to purchase a 3D printer for the STEAM lab at Bryan Elementary. Students gained experience with Computer Aided Design program, used their chromebooks to access the web-based CAD program to complete their project, and were able to print Christmas tree ornaments for the school tree.



### **Cawaco RC&D: Summer Interns**

Cawaco provided four internship/apprenticeship opportunities in the natural resource field. These opportunities provided students with resume-building experiences and be exposed to professionals in the field that they are pursuing.



### **Chilton County Industrial Development Board: Chilton Strategic Plan**

The plan will create a diverse business friendly environment which will enhance quality of life and promote job creation. Exit 212 will soon be home to the Alabama Farmers Federation Ag Centennial Park and this exit is still undeveloped enough a thorough master plan of State Hwy 145 from Jefferson State Community College to County Road 43 would enhance its potential of sustainable commercial, agricultural, residential, and industrial development. See the plan [HERE](#).

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### **Thanks to our Partners**



Cawaco RC&D programs and activities are available without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status