



Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts

P. O. Box 658 • Temple, Texas 76503 • 254-778-8741

April 20, 2011

To: Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Subject: Stewardship Week in Texas

We hope your district has a successful Stewardship Week, which will be celebrated Sunday, April 24 through Sunday, May 1, 2011.

We would appreciate knowing how your district observed Stewardship Week and how our committee can be of help to your district to improve the observance of Stewardship Week by completing the enclosed District Participation Questionnaire and returning it to the State Association office in Temple by June 30, 2011.

NACD is also interested in knowing about your Stewardship Week activities and events. For additional information, please go to NACD's website at www.nacdnet.org/stewardship.

We did receive a proclamation signed by Governor Rick Perry proclaiming April 24 – May 1, 2011 as Stewardship Week in Texas. We are also enclosing a copy of the proclamation for your information.

Roy Jacoby
Chairman, SWCD #215
Soil & Water Stewardship Committee

Henry Chevront
Member, SWCD #166
Soil & Water Stewardship Committee

Nelda Garcia
Member, SWCD #355
Soil & Water Stewardship Committee

Stuart Traylor
Member, SWCD #452
Soil & Water Stewardship Committee

W. J. Hopper
Member, SWCD #554
Soil & Water Stewardship Committee

Enclosures: Questionnaire (*please return by June 30*)
Governor's Proclamation
Proclamation for local use
Origin & Observance of Soil Stewardship week

STEWARDSHIP WEEK

(April 24– May 1 2011)

DISTRICT PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of District _____ # _____

Does your district observe Stewardship Week? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, explain how:

How can the Soil and Water Stewardship Committee help your district improve the observance of Stewardship Week?

PLEASE RETURN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE BY JUNE 30, 2011 to:

Association of Texas Soil & Water Conservation Districts
PO Box 658
Temple, TX 76503



STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Our Texas landscape is a natural treasure. From the Hill Country to the Gulf Coast and from the East Texas pine forests to the West Texas plains, the Lone Star State is abounding with beauty and natural resources.

As growth and development increase, demand on these precious resources also rises. It is imperative that we work to ensure healthy soil for nurturing crops, and a stable, safe and sufficient water supply capable of meeting demand now and in the future.

To highlight the importance of this issue, an awareness campaign will be conducted across the Lone Star State.

At this time, I urge all Texans to remember that it is our duty and responsibility to preserve our environment and protect our great state's natural resources. Through conservation and commitment to maintaining a healthy environment, we will ensure that Texas remains a natural treasure today and in the future.

Therefore, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim
April 24 – May 1, 2011, to be

Soil and Water Stewardship Week

in Texas, and urge the appropriate
recognition whereof.

In official recognition whereof,
I hereby affix my signature this the
1st day of April, 2011.



Rick Perry
Governor of Texas



Stewardship Week 2011

PROCLAMATION

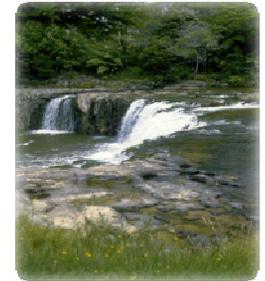
Whereas fertile soil and clean water provide us with our daily sustenance, and
Whereas effective conservation practices have helped provide us a rich standard of living, and
Whereas our security depends upon healthy soil and clean water, and
Whereas stewardship calls for each person to help conserve these precious resources,



Therefore, I do hereby proclaim

April 24 to May 1, 2011

Stewardship Week



Name

Title

Date



The Origin and Observance of Soil Stewardship Week

At a time when pressures grow on the land, it is useful to remind ourselves of the origins and history of the Soil Stewardship observance. They stress the allegiance of all men to God and their dependence on His grace for all good things.

Throughout the ages, men have offered humble thanks to their Creator for the priceless gifts of air, soil, water, and sunshine which make all living things possible.

The custom of setting aside special days---Rogation Days---for this purpose began more than 1,500 years ago in the neighborhood of Vienne, France. Bad weather and earthquakes had brought crop failures and widespread hunger. The Bishop of Vienne called for prayer and penance on the three days preceding Ascension Day. The people responded and implored God for help in their suffering and privation.

Word of what had happened in Vienne spread throughout France and then to other countries. The supplication filled a need in the hearts and minds of the people, and as the years went by, Rogation Days were widely observed as an annual custom. By the end of the eighth century, the church formally adopted the custom. Now, the world over, people on Rogation Days beg the mercy of God and ask that He spare His children the evils of soul and body – and give good increase to the plants of the field.

In our own land it has met an evident need of the people to set aside a week each year to acknowledge before God our gratitude for His gifts of soil and all the bountiful resources associated with it. The week has become a special time to remind people that these gifts warrant their best in Christian stewardship.

In America, the soil stewardship observance has always traced its origin to the Rogation Days. Throughout parts of the South, earlier in this century, churches and their congregations began to set aside the fifth Sunday after Easter as Soil and Soul Sunday.

Subsequently, this became Soil Stewardship Sunday when, in 1946, the publishers of Farm and Ranch magazine suggested to religious leaders in a few southern states that one Sunday be set aside each year to remind their congregations of man's duty to be a steward of the land.

The response of clergymen and laymen was so warm and widespread that observance of Soil and Stewardship Sunday spread steadily to additional states. In 1954, the publishers of the magazine suggested to the officers of the National Association of Conservation Districts that a still wider observance of Soil Stewardship Sunday could aid significantly in bringing about a national awakening and recognition of man's obligations to the Lord's earth. The publishers offered to relinquish their limited sponsorship of Soil Stewardship Sunday to the Association – which represents some 3,000 local soil and water conservation district organizations throughout America.

The Association accepted, and beginning in 1955 undertook to encourage a nation-wide observance – a mission to which it has dedicated itself ever since, under the guidance of a special Soil Stewardship Advisory Committee of clergymen representing many of the country's religious denominations. In 1956, recognizing possible conflicts with the observance of Rural Life Sunday, which was on the calendar of many churches, Soil Stewardship Sunday was changed to Soil Stewardship Week – beginning with the fifth Sunday after Easter and continuing through the sixth.