



Our Land • Our Heritage • Our Future

Soil Health Education Program

Providing soil health education & training to conservation districts to support outreach activities & projects in their communities



Presentation Overview

- ❑ OCC Soil Health (SH) Education Program
- ❑ Role of conservation districts in SH outreach activities and projects
- ❑ What districts can do to help educate producers



OCC's Soil Health Education Program

- Statewide initiative to train conservation district employees, directors, and NRCS staff in the importance of SH so they can carry that message to their local communities.
- Teaches SH principles with easy to use techniques for understanding, assessing, and restoring soil health through multiple hands-on learning opportunities.



Soil Health, Soil Health, Soil Health

DONE

- ✓ SH 101: Principles of SH (2014)
- ✓ The Tools of SH (2014 Area Meetings)
- ✓ Producer Meeting for Farm Bill Programs & SH (2014)
- ✓ SH 201: Working Together to Promote SH (2015)

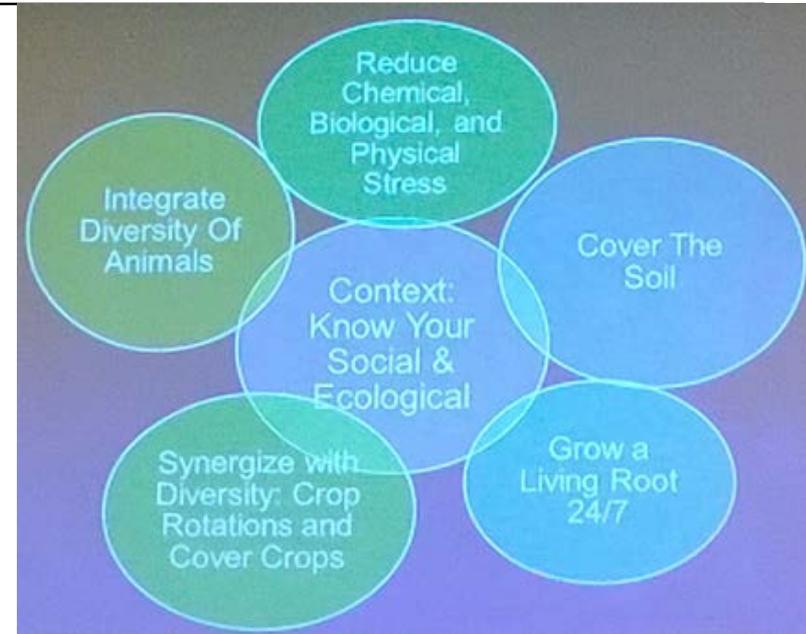
TO DO

- Assessing SH Field Day (2014-2016)
- SH Tool Bucket Make-n-Take Workshop (2014-2015)
- On-Farm Demonstration (2015-2018)
- SH Field Day for Producers (2015 & every year)
- Restoring SH (2016-2017)



SH 101: Principles of SH

- ✓ **What it is:** Learn the core principles of soil health and the importance of incorporating these principles into all aspects of conservation planning when providing information and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, and the public
- ✓ **Offered by:** NRCS
- ✓ **Offered to:** NRCS, district & OCC employees



United States Department of Agriculture
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SH 201: Working Together to Promote SH

- ✓ **What it is:** How to sell and promote soil health, manage workloads, plan, work with partners, and ideas about demo farms and workshops
- ✓ **Offered by:** NRCS
- ✓ **Offered to:** NRCS, district & OCC employees



Reserve your
training date
now!

Assessing Soil Health

- **What it is:** Introduction to field methods and tools for diagnosing soil health problems and how SH influences crop production, air quality, and water quality. Includes temperature, salinity, infiltration, slake, and pH tests.
- **Offered by:** OCC & NRCS
- **Offered to:** Groups of 3-4 districts including employees, directors, and NRCS staff



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OKLAHOMA
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

Assessing Soil Health: AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions
 - Basics of SH
 - Introduction to methods and tools
- Site 1
 - Instructions & group assignments
 - Review soil health card & demonstration of methods
- Lunch
- Site 2
 - Groups complete SH assessment
- Site 3
 - Groups complete SH assessment
- Return to start office
- Wrap up, Q&A, next steps
- Adjourn



Assessing Soil Health



Tool Bucket Make-n-Take Workshop

- ❑ **What it is:** Build and practice with your own bucket of tools to prepare to host field days for the public.
- ❑ Learn how to plan the logistics of a field day.
- ❑ Learn how to build your own soil health display.
- ❑ **Offered to:** Districts that attend a Soil Health facilitator training.
- ❑ **Offered by:** OCC, NRCS, OACD





On-Farm Demonstrations

- ❑ **What it is:** OCC is challenging every district to have at least one demonstration farm.
- ❑ The most influential way to change minds in your community.
- ❑ OCC will coordinate with you and our partners to provide planning, promotional, and educational support for demo farm field days.
- ❑ **Offered to:** Conservation districts
- ❑ **Offered by:** OCC with support from OSU, OACD, NRCS & others



**Proposals due for
summer projects by
April 15!**



Conservation through Demonstration

- Conservation districts were formed with the idea that local farmers and ranchers were the best suited to educate neighbors through demonstrations and education.



Coming in
2016

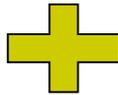
Restoring Soil Health

- **What it is:** Field sessions looking at problem soils and the steps that can be taken to improve soil structure, infiltration, water holding capacity, and temperature.
- **Offered to:** Groups of district employees, directors, OCC and NRCS staff who attended Assessing SH training
- **Offered by:** OCC, NRCS





Restoring Soil Health



What's Expected from Districts

- ❑ Coordinate with nearby districts and OCC to schedule trainings
- ❑ Invite your directors and local NRCS staff
- ❑ Use what you learn to provide SH outreach opportunities to producers
 - Field Days
 - On-Farm Demonstrations
 - Natural Resource Days
- ❑ Call us for support if needed



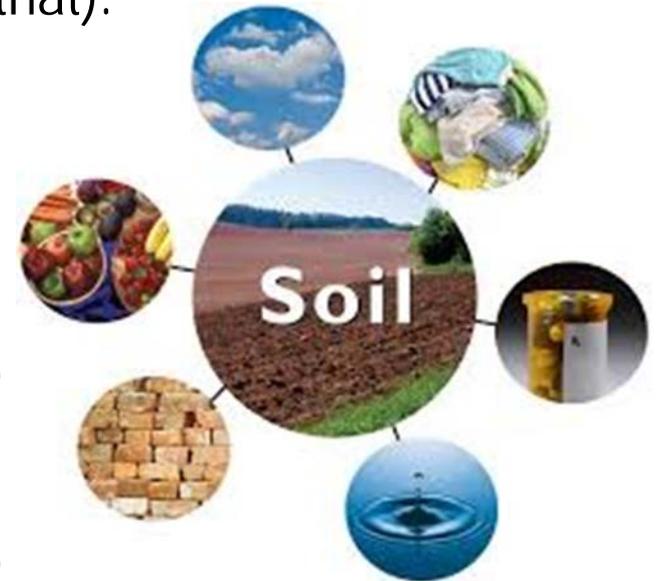
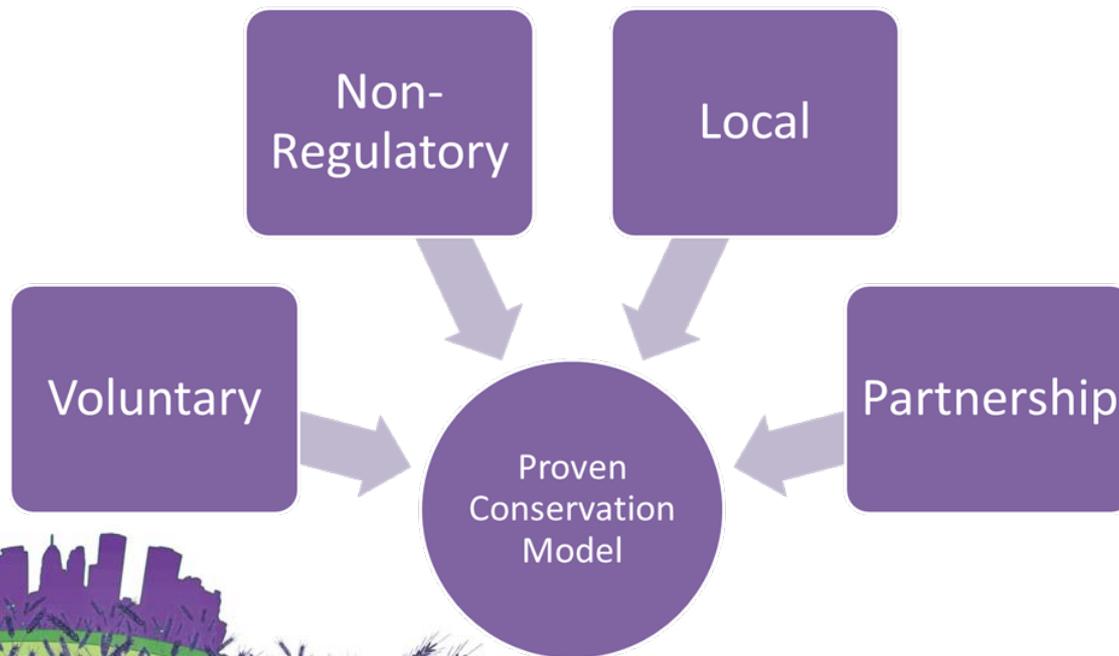
Why all of this is Important

- Our methods of communicating about and marketing programs and services must evolve to meet larger and more demographically diverse audiences.



What's the Message?

- Healthy soil and water are vital to sustaining life.
- We assist the public to implement practices that result in healthier soil and water (and we want them to know that).





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