



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Contact: Bridget Munger
Phone: (919) 715-6680

CONFERENCE TO ADDRESS WORKING LANDS PRESERVATION

RALEIGH – State conservation leaders, politicians and others will meet in Wilmington starting Sunday for a three-day conference aimed at preserving land in one of the nation's fastest urbanizing states.

Conserving working lands has become a hot button issue in North Carolina, where officials estimate that farms and forests are being lost to development at a rate of 383 acres every day.

More than 650 people are expected to participate in the N.C. Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts annual meeting. The meeting will be held at the Hilton Riverside, 301 N. Water St., Wilmington.

State Sen. Charles Albertson, D-Duplin, will speak at the conference about North Carolina's emerging conservation issues at 8:30 a.m. Monday. State Rep. Carolyn Justice, R-Pender, will speak at noon Tuesday. Also speaking are Bill Ross, secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Steve Troxler, commissioner of the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

In addition to working lands preservation, speakers will examine coastal management issues, the 2007 Farm Bill, development of markets for biofuels and the newly enacted Community Conservation Assistance Program. The Community Conservation Assistance Program is of particular interest in the Wilmington area where the New Hanover Soil and Water Conservation District led statewide efforts to start the program.

The public is invited to attend any of the speaking and panel discussions during the conference.

For more information, contact Bridget Munger, public information officer with the N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation, at (919) 733-2302 or (919) 218-3491.

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N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation
Manly Wilder, Director
1614 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1614

Bridget Munger, Public Information Officer
Phone: (919) 733-2302, FAX (919) 715-3559
bridget.munger@ncmail.net