

Lincoln County SWCD spread Enviroscape throughout county

By Sarah Campbell, Lincoln County district secretary



With a return to normalcy on the horizon, Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation District has been getting back into the swing of things by reaching out to children about our greatest natural resources. On May 6, we had the opportunity to spend the day with Andrew Hall and his rotation of sixth graders for science class. For most of the classes, we did different scenarios on our Enviroscape.

This piece of equipment allows us to set up communities and talk through different exposures to pollution that they might face and its impact on the water quality. Through the discussions, the students learn about watersheds and understand the impacts of everyday pollutants, even when in small scale. In the explorer class, the group of students had seen an earlier demo of the Enviroscape, so Ruth Groce did an interactive food web to explain the importance of all animals and to show how environments and other species are affected when one species fails. We taught six classes in total and was able to change

the dynamic with each one. The students were enthusiastic and especially loved the hands-on portion of making it rain and watching the effects.

On May 11, we had the Farm City Day event. This event is co-hosted with the Farm Bureau Women's Group. First-grade classes from all cities, county and private schools came together at the event center on Deer Valley Farms. The owners and managers, Fred Clark, Jonathan Perry, and Jeff Coble are always very accommodating and gracious hosts for this annual event held for almost 400 children. The day consists of classes being assigned a guide and walking through a series of fifteen-minute presentations. The guides are High School FFA member volunteers from both the city and county high schools. They walk their assigned class to each station where they learn about forestry, row cropping, produce picking at a stand, livestock health and safety, the breakdown of where a typical hamburger comes from and water/soil health and the health of its inhabitants.

Our station, of course, was the water and soil health. We conducted two interactive demonstrations. One for soil, where Ruth Groce discussed different types of species of bugs, how plant root systems work and the cohabitation of plants and animals through pollination and soil regeneration. The second demonstration was about aquatic animals and their life cycles.

Sarah Campbell discussed the life cycles of frogs, butterflies and dragon flies and walked the children through how each one depends on the other, as well as the health and survival of fish and aquatic plants. The entire day is a coordinated dance of rotating classes through all of the lessons and ended by gifting teachers and students with goodie bags filled with all kinds of things from all of the agencies represented in the event. Once the children are safely on their way back to the schools, the volunteers enjoy a lunch provided by Frito Lay, Purity, Deer Valley Farms, Farm Bureau Board and Farm Bureau Women.

On May 12, Ruth Groce and Mary Douglas Hastings traveled to Moore County to present the Enviroscope to the first graders for their Farm City Day. There were rotations from our department, but also the children got to meet Smokey the Bear, talk to the sheriff's department about gun safety, see a search and rescue dog and greet several farm animals. To end the day, Moore County SWCD and Frito Lay provided lunch for the one hundred students and volunteers.

With the pandemic slowing down, hopefully for good, we hope to have so many more teaching opportunities next school year. We have such a good time teaching the children and getting them excited about where their food comes from and how to protect the environment. Watching them grow and learn through play is one of the most rewarding things that we do here at the SWCD. The children are very smart and it is exciting to be a part of their development and nurture them into a healthy and sustainable way of life for themselves and the habitat that surrounds them.



FCD Water Display



FCD Soil Display