

De-Go-La RC&D News April 2003

Building a Better World Through Partnerships

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De-Go-La Resource Conservation and Development Mission Statement

The mission of the RC&D area is to provide leadership and coordination, to provide a quality life and a quality environment for people living in rural communities.

Anniversary Issue

In early 1966 De-Go-La RC&D was organized. The project was comprised of three counties, six sponsors and covered 1.9 million acres. From those humble beginnings De-Go-La now serves sixteen counties, has forty-five sponsors and spans 6.5 million acres. The population served is 663,643. The project area is 100 miles from Houston, 25 from San Antonio, 66 from Austin and also includes Corpus Christi. These metropolitan areas combined have a population of about 3.4 million.

Throughout the years De-Go-La has proposed and carried out many projects. Listed are some of the projects accomplished with De-Go-La's help.

Critical area treatment which was applied in Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca and Victoria counties to aid erosion control.

Working in conjunction with game associations to help improve hunting and fishing. Roadside erosion control; measures in Gonzales, Lavaca, DeWitt, Jackson and Goliad counties.

Watershed diversion ditches in Calhoun and Jackson counties. Shoreline erosion control in Calhoun County. Water based recreational facilities at Indianola Park; Calhoun County, Riverside Park; Victoria County and Independence Park and Gonzales Sportsman Club; Gonzales County.

Solved water drainage concerns at Yorktown and Yoakum high schools; DeWitt County and the Shiner City park; Lavaca County. Flooding problems City of Edna; Jackson County and Cuero; DeWitt County.

Helped Goliad, DeWitt, Gonzales, Lavaca and Victoria counties with city park and recreational facilities. Sanitary landfill facilities in Goliad and Victoria counties.

Implemented a matching grant program. Promoted installation of dry-hydrants in all counties. Assisted in community center in Port O'Connor. Provided surplus equipment and furniture to numerous entities.

Local area SWCD's and NRCS have also facilitated in the completion of projects within the De-Go-La area.

Former executive board members for de-Go-La are Heine Bade, Leroy Belk, Odell White, George White and Darren Scharer, Kenny Finster.

Past Coordinators are Carl Wood, Dexter Svetlik, Ronnie Boston and Rindle Wilson.

PROJECTS

1990- Residents of bayside, Refugio County, prepare to install a wave barrier in Copano Bay as part of a shoreline erosion project. The wave barrier is placed in front of the area to be planted in order to protect young plants during establishment. Many types of materials have been used but best results were obtained using surplus military cargo parachutes. The volunteers planted smooth cord grass to slow the erosion process. In many instances areas that were eroding began to build up silt and became productive wetland areas. Shoreline erosion control not only beautifies the area, it improves water quality of habitat in bays and estuaries.

1976- An early project was located at Riverside Park, Victoria County. This project provided the construction of several grade stabilization structures to control erosion. In addition, barriers to vehicle traffic were installed and new playground equipment was installed.

1994- Past recipients of the matching grant program offered by De-Go-La are Friends of Wood-Hi, Victoria County, the Friends of Wood-Hi built a community center with the funds and Refugio County Commissioners Court, Refugio County, built a drop off recycling center.

1970 thru 1980- Roadside erosion control was carried out during the 70's and 80's under the RC&D Critical Area Treatment (CAT) Program. USDA provided cost share funds that encouraged private landowners and counties to shape and vegetate eroded roadsides and other areas where concentrated runoff created gullies.

1976- Maxwell Ditch in Calhoun County was selected for area critical treatment and involved major shaping of a large drainage channel. USDA provided funding and supervised construction under a formal contract. The project was completed and was then turned over to the county for maintenance and operation. Annual inspections were carried out over a 25 year periods.

2000- Erosion Control on the creek bank in Lions-Shelley Park in Refugio County. This project was completed to make the area more attractive and useable by park visitors. Lions-Shelley Park was the site utilized by area teachers for a continuing education workshop. Personnel from Texas A&M Corpus Christi and USDA-NRCS participated in hosting the workshop.

2003-De-Go-La obtains surplus federal property and makes it available for local government and organizations on long-term loan. Of the many surplus property loans, is a new project to furnish the Gonzales County jail with furniture as well as two lap-top computers for the Gonzales County Sheriffs Department.

1993- The Port O'Connor Community Center Association began applying for grants from private foundations to help build a multi-purpose center. With the help of De-Go-La they were able to obtain enough funds to complete the \$300,000 project in less than two years with absolutely no debt.

2002- Refugio County Boys and Girls Club received surplus computers obtained by De-Go-La for use in after school programs. Over the years De-Go-La has been able to help many non-profits, schools and units of government obtain good usable equipment at no cost. This equipment is on permanent loan and must be maintained by the recipient.

2001- Alternative litter disposal study. De-Go-La cooperated with NRCS, the Lavaca SWCD, Yoakum Experiment Station, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

and EPA to evaluate methods of properly applying poultry litter on pasture land. This was a three year study and was completed in 2001.

Another study conducted during 2001 was that of composting poultry mortalities. This project involved the construction of six demonstration, Delmarva style compost facilities for on-farm disposal of poultry mortalities. USDA-NRCS, Gonzales County SWCD, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and TNRCC cooperated in the three year demonstration. As a result on farm composting of poultries has gained acceptance in Gonzales County.

Jerrys' Corner

Celebrating thirty years as a council is a very remarkable accomplishment. I am very proud to be associated with De-Go-La RC&D at this time. The accomplishments that are shown in this newsletter are just a small portion of what has been done here over thirty years. I think the key to De-Go-La being successful as a council lies in the leadership. We were very fortunate to be able to recognize Mr. Heine Bade at the Annual Meeting this year. His thirty six years of faithful commitment to RC&D is evidence of the strong tradition of service by board members. It is easy to forget that each director is a volunteer, and often give above and beyond in terms of personal time to further the goals. THAT is the reason why RC&D is such a success in getting things done in rural communities.

This year the National Association of RC&D Councils will be holding their National Conference in San Antonio. We will be sending several of the directors to promote the good work that De-Go-La is doing in our service area. While we are there, we plan to brag about the past thirty years of service and find new ideas for the next thirty years. HAPPY 30th De-Go-La!!!

“All De-Go-La RC&D programs and services are offered on a nondiscrimination basis without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status, political beliefs, parental status or protected genetic information.”