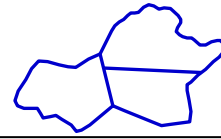


# Piedmont Soil & Water Conservation District Update



Serving the citizens of Amelia,  
Nottoway & Prince Edward Counties



April 2011

<http://piedmontswcd.org>



Hannah Roldan of Prince Edward County created the grande winning poster above. Hannah is a student in Joy Utzinger's art class at Prince Edward County Elementary School. The nine year old artist will receive a check for \$25.00. Over 900 students competed in the poster contest this year.

## FORESTS FOR PEOPLE— MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 as the *International Year of Forests*. Activities are scheduled around the world to raise awareness of the forest and the importance of sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

As part of their on-going BMP and TMDL cost-share programs, the Piedmont SWCD helps farmers establish forests along the edge of streams and ponds to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff from farms. These areas, called forested riparian buffers, improve water quality by reducing the amount of nutrient and sediment entering the

*FORESTS continues on page 3*

## COST-SHARE GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY

We all know that a healthy environment is good for the economy. A wide variety of businesses and industries all profit from clean water, functioning wetlands, and stable, productive soil. Agribusiness in particular profits when a farmer participates in an agriculture cost-share program.

Agribusiness is a term that includes farm production, but also includes the many businesses that provide support to farmers. The agribusiness input sector includes businesses that provide seed, fertilizer, chemicals, feed, and fencing equipment to farmers.

*Cost-share continues on page 2*

## 19,720' OF STREAM TO BE PROTECTED

At the regular February 2011 meeting of the Piedmont SWCD, the Board of Directors approved cost-share to install 19,720 feet of cattle exclusion fencing for streams in Amelia, Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties.

This newsletter is published from the office of the Piedmont SWCD. Its purpose is to keep conservation partners informed of events, news and information promoting soil & water stewardship.

Editor-Robin Buckalew

### **Cost-share from page 1**

The input sector also includes the financing sector, insurance, and services such as veterinary care. Agribusiness also includes a farmer output sector. This includes processing, transportation, storage, packaging, wholesaling and retailing of the food and fiber produced on the farm.

Agribusiness in our area profits when a landowner decides to participate in one of the Piedmont SWCD's cost-share programs. For example, let's say a farmer decides to fence cattle out of a stream. Because all Virginians will benefit from the resulting cleaner water, the farmer receives cost-share money from the state or federal government to share the burden of expense.

To exclude livestock from the stream on the farm, fencing will be needed and a well and watering trough system will be needed to give livestock an alternative, reliable water source. Hardwood trees or native grasses could be planted in the buffer area between the fence and the stream to help improve the filtering and water uptake capacity of the land and improve wildlife habitat.

To accomplish the work, the farmer purchases fencing, pipeline, water troughs and trough pad stabilization materials, hardwood tree seedlings, tree mats, tree tubes and support stakes. A company will be hired to drill the well, and approximately two thirds of program participants will hire someone to install the fencing, well pipeline, watering troughs and pad, and plant the tree seedlings. All of these activities generate income for the agribusiness community.

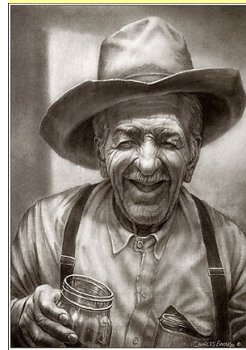
Sign-ups for Piedmont SWCD cost-share programs are continuous. The new program year starts in July, so call now! By participating in soil and water conservation, you will be doing yourself, the environment and the economy a big favor.

### **Virginia Agriculture Profile**

- Virginia has more than 47,000 farms
- Agriculture is VA's largest industry.
- Agriculture provides more than 357,000 jobs in the commonwealth.
- The industries of agriculture and forestry together have a total economic impact of \$79 billion.
- Every job in agriculture and forestry supports 1.5 jobs elsewhere in the economy.
- Production agriculture employs nearly 60,000 farmers and workers in Virginia.
- Value-added industries that depend on farm industries employ an additional 76,000 workers and generate \$26 billion in total industrial output.
- Agriculture-related industries contribute an additional 221,000 jobs and nearly \$26 billion in total output.

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

## **ASSOCIATE SPOTLIGHT CHUCK ARNASON**



*It was minus 7° the morning Chuck was born in North Dakota. He especially remembers the wind which was blowing at a sustained speed of over 20 miles per hour. Chuck's formative years were spent in North Dakota and Washington State before settling with his family in Virginia at the age of 13. He immediately fell in love with Virginia women and after college he married one, a lovely redhead from Southside. After over 35 years of working for the Department of Defense he settled in Nottoway County, home of his bride's family. He currently runs a small Cow/Calf operation. Chuck is blessed with the ability to have a biased opinion on everything. He may not always be right but he is never in doubt. Chuck considers himself a conservationist and takes extreme umbrage with anyone who doesn't adhere to his beliefs.*

**FORESTS** from page 1

stream, but they also improve the environment by absorbing carbon dioxide from the air and storing it as carbon. EPA statistics show that in 2004 the United States' forests absorbed 10.6% of the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) released in the United States by the combustion of fossil fuels. The action of absorbing carbon from the air and locking it in soil or plants is called carbon sequestration.

Trees and other terrestrial plants absorb carbon through the process of photosynthesis. During photosynthesis carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is absorbed by trees, plants and crops and stored as carbon in tree trunks, branches, foliage and roots and soils.

Agriculture and forestry activities can also release CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. The term "sinks" is used to refer to forests, croplands, and grazing lands when carbon absorption is greater than carbon releases over a period of time.

Riparian buffers effectively absorb and lock in carbon but they are also one of five priority practices identified by the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation that, if used on farms throughout Virginia's part of the Bay watershed, could achieve nearly 60 percent of the runoff reductions asked for in the Bay TMDL.

When you walk through a forest you immediately experience the beauty and serenity of the woods. We are beginning to understand all of the other important contributions the forest is making toward a quality environment: moderating climate, cleaning and storing water, bolstering the economy and absorbing carbon from the air. To get involved in the UN celebration visit <http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011>.



### Area V Envirothon Winners

*Congratulations to Nottoway High School's FFA Envirothon team who will represent Area V in the State Envirothon on May 22-23 at Camp Hanover in Mechanicville, Va. At the Area V competition on April 14th the team won first place Overall, and first place in the Wildlife and Special Topics Oral Presentation categories. This year's special topic was "Saltwater and Freshwater Estuaries." Team members, from left to right -J.J. Fitzgerald & Nolan Powell (alternates), Mitch Wallace, Maggie Shepherd, Michael Bingham, Ashton Paul, and Casey Lewis.*



### STUDENT FARM TOUR

*Over 55 students from Chesterfield, Nottoway and Amelia High Schools participated in the Piedmont SWCD's Student Farm Tour held at Waverly Farm in Nottoway County on April 11, 2011. Patti Rosenberg is pictured here leading the group in discussion on sustainability.*

**Piedmont Soil & Water  
Conservation District**  
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## AG DAY IN NOTTOWAY



*Over 300 third grade students from five public schools and one private school crawled through the Piedmont SWCD's Soils Tunnel at the Agricultural Awareness Day held at the Virginia Tech Extension Center April 12-13. The Piedmont SWCD also demonstrated soil conservation techniques using erosion boxes.*

## DISTRICT DIRECTORS UP FOR RE-ELECTION IN NOVEMBER

An election of directors for the Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District will be held in the general election on November 8, 2011. The Piedmont SWCD encompasses the Counties of Amelia, Nottoway and Prince Edward. Candidates for elected directors must reside within the boundaries of the above counties. Two directors shall be elected to represent all the citizens within each county.

Persons who wish to file the requisite nominating petition, statement of qualification, and declaration of candidacy with the general registrar must do so by 7:00 pm, on August 23, 2011. For details visit <http://www.sbe.virginia.gov>.