

ANNUAL REPORT

2009 Environmental Day Camp Highlights

The 9th annual Environmental Day Camp was fun-filled and packed with learning. Seventeen campers from five counties participated this year. The core learning concepts were watershed awareness, GPS skills, agricultural best management practices, water quality monitoring, canoe skills, and understanding water treatment and conservation.



Comments on camper evaluations indicated that most campers significantly improved their knowledge of soil, water and other natural resource subjects. Many were surprised to learn what a large role clean water plays in planning healthy, productive communities. The campers took home excellent resource materials and were encouraged to share their new skills with others.



VA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS' ANNUAL MEETING

“Even if you are on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there.”

Mark Twain

The Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts represent the Commonwealth’s 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Director Ricky Rash served as President of the Association from 2006-2008 and Director Wilkie Chaffin is the current President. At the 2008 Annual Meeting, Director



Ricky Rash re-enacted his days traveling to speak with General Assembly members,

beginning early with chores around the farm.

AG BMP AND TMDL COST-SHARE PRACTICES

The Agricultural BMP and TMDL Cost-Share program’s 34 different conservation practices are primarily used to help improve water quality in the state’s waters. Through the BMP and TMDL program, producers can receive cost share funding, technical assistance and tax-credits while improving farm productivity.

PRACTICE	AMELIA	NOTTOWAY	PRINCE EDWARD	TOTAL	TOTAL COST SHARE
<i>Cover Crops/No-Till</i>					
Cover Crop(SL8B/8H)	1993.90 ac.	136.10	601.3 ac	2731.3 ac	\$119,709
Legume Cover (WQ4)	786 ac	-----	-----	786 ac	\$ 27,512
Continuous No-Till (SL15)	322.7 ac	-----	-----	322.7 ac	\$ 23,450
<i>Stream Exclusion/Buffers</i>					
Stream Exclusion (SL-6)	700'	-----	1385.8'	2085.8'	\$ 69,812
TMDL Stream Exclusion	12,967'	415'	15,874'	29,256'	\$169,603
CREP Buffer	29 ac	.6 ac	105.2 ac	134.8 ac	\$ 69,199
<i>Soil Stabilization</i>					
Vegetative Cover (SL-1)	.7 acres	13.5 acres	53.6 acres	67.8 ac.	\$ 21,458
Sod Waterway (WP-3)	2.37 ac	-----	-----	2.37 ac	\$ 5,431
Critical area repair (SL11)	.75 ac	-----	-----	.75 ac	\$ 1,995
Reforestation (FR-1)	1 ac	95.4 ac	16.2 ac	112.6 ac	\$ 19,780
<i>Animal Waste Facility</i>					
Poultry Litter Shed (WP4)	-----	1 unit	-----	1 unit	\$ 15,881
TOTAL COST SHARE					\$543,830

WATERSHED

The Piedmont SWCD is responsible for the maintenance and safety of 14 flood control structures in Prince Edward County. In September 2008 the VA Dam Safety regulations were revised and resulted in extra maintenance requirements for Piedmont SWCD. During 2008-2009 trees were removed from side embankment areas on 12 of the structures. In addition to annual maintenance inspections, all dams received an additional inspection by NRCS engineering

staff. Piedmont SWCD dams were found to be in compliance with the exception of several minor areas that received corrective action.

Perhaps the most important regulation change that affects all owners of dams is the requirement for flood inundation studies. Flood inundation studies will map flood action and levels downstream of the dam in the event of dam failures with and without storm events. These engineer-

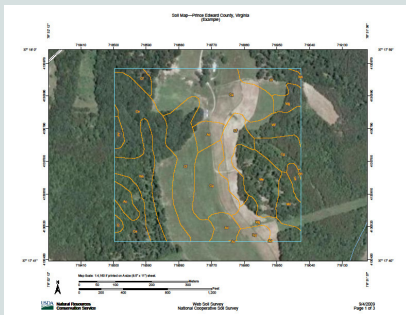
ing studies are conducted to support hazard classifications as well as provide information beneficial for local planning departments.

Hazard classifications are important information in preparing Emergency Action Plans, which are a requirement for all regulated dams. Currently flood inundation studies are being prepared for Buffalo dams #1 through #9 and Bush dams #2 and #7.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

The Farmville & Amelia NRCS offices assist landowners in Amelia, Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties with Conservation Farm Plans that solve natural resource issues on their land. Developing the conservation plan is a process of inventorying and evaluating the resource problems on the farm, developing alternatives to solve the problems and choosing the solution that meets the landowners needs while solving the problem at hand. Your Conservation Farm Plan is then the basis for financial assistance available from local, state, and federal conservation programs.

Soil Survey mapping is a valuable resource when planning conservation systems. A Soil Survey report can provide information on soil productivity, and limitations for a variety of land-uses and conservation practices.

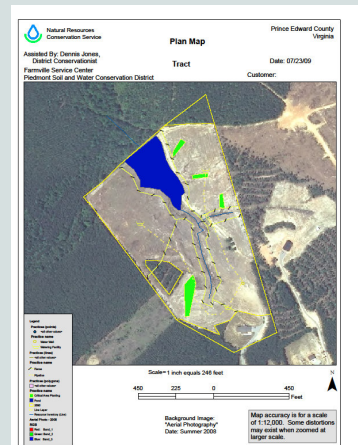


When a problem is identified, the landowner and conservation employees work together to come up with solutions. It is the landowner who decides what will be done on the land.



The planning process is a two way street. NRCS and SWCD personnel work with landowners to identify and evaluate resource problems.

The Farm Conservation Plan Photo provides a visual outline of the resource problem areas and location of possible conservation practices.



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

YOUTH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Nottoway FFA winning Envirothon team members



Youth Conservation Camp Scholarship winners Rudy Adams from Prince Ed. County, and Austin Hayes from Amelia County



Conservation Education Scholarship winner Scooter Cogar with District Manager Deanna Fehrer



Conservation Education served deli style at Agricultural Awareness Day in Prince Edward County

ENVIROTHON

Nottoway County High School FFA team members competed in the local Envirothon and represented Piedmont SWCD at the Area V and state competitions.

CLASSROOM PROGRAMS

During the year, 75 classroom programs provided natural resource experiences for over 1700 students.

YCC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Two students received full scholarships to attend Youth Conservation Camp valued above \$1,000.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

Marty "Scooter" Cogar, son of Marty and Beverly Cogar of Nottoway County Virginia, received the \$1,000 Piedmont SWCD Conservation Education Scholarship. Scooter is a Freshman at Virginia Tech working toward a double major in Forestry and Wildlife.

POSTER CONTEST

Over 350 posters were entered using the "Dig it! The Secrets of Soil" theme.



First Place winner Tyshaunda Green of Prince Ed. Co. Elementary School won the \$50 grand prize for the poster pictured above.

PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

FAMILY FARM DAY IN NOTTOWAY

There were 438 attendees at this fun day for families to learn more about how important agriculture is in their everyday lives. The Piedmont SWCD led fish print, soil baby and soil tunnel activities.

AG AWARENESS DAY IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

Students from Fuqua and Prince Edward County fourth grade classes cycled through 8 stations about the importance of agricul-

ture. Students were treated to "lunch" at the Piedmont SWCD Soils Deli. Costumed for Halloween, staff served up big helpings of geology, history, and soil & water conservation tips.

AG AWARENESS DAY IN NOTTOWAY COUNTY

Over 191 students attended. The Piedmont SWCD Soil Tunnel and Erosion Boxes were both a big hit with the students.

YMCA

HEALTHY FAMILIES DAY

The district's Backyard Conservation exhibit included rain barrels, native plants, and lawn care information.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

60 students from Nottoway County enjoyed the soils tunnel and soil baby activities.

FARM SAFETY DAY

Piedmont staff helped with the 5 County annual Farm Safety Day activities.

SCIENCE FAIR JUDGES

Staff judged science fair posters at Fuqua, Prince Edward County and Nottoway County Middle Schools.

ADULT EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

SEASONAL NEWSLETTERS

Winter, spring and summer newsletters were distributed to over 600 conservation partners.

RAIN BARRELS

The Piedmont SWCD continues to be a leader in rainwater harvesting promotion, co-hosting two *Backyard Rainwater Harvesting* workshops and a *Train the Trainer* workshop with Clean Virginia Waterways, an affiliate of Longwood University.

The Piedmont SWCD donated two decorated rain barrels to the YMCA in Farmville to be installed at their new building.

A rain barrel workshop conducted by Piedmont SWCD staff for a garden club in Blackstone included water harvesting concepts and rain barrel construction demonstrations.

MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

Deanna Fehrer conducted training sessions for Heart of Virginia Master Gardeners on Rain Gardens.

COUNTY FAIR DISPLAYS

Consider the Earth as an Apple display won first place in the educational exhibits at the Amelia County Fair.

Be Clean and Green was on display at the Five County Fair in Farmville.



TMDL Conservation Specialist Paula Totten and producer Delbert Southall with the PSWCD Conservation Friendly Farmer sign.

FARM TOUR

Farm tours introduce many new producers to the benefits of conservation BMPs. A well attended tour of Delbert Southall's beef cattle farm in Prince Edward County showcased a hay stockpiling plan that saves him time and money. Farm tour participants listened with interest as Southall talked about how investing in a rotational grazing system has resulted in lower fuel bills, cleaner water, and healthier cattle.

"I would not have made it this year with the dry weather if it had not been for my rotational grazing system" Southall explained.



Dinner served at the Farmers Meeting in Prince Edward County.

FARMER MEETINGS

The Piedmont SWCD arranged for farmers and their natural resource partners to meet and discuss ways to cut costs and improve water quality, while enjoying a meal together. Agency representatives shared recent program updates with producers from the District's three counties. A breakfast held in Notoway County and a dinner meeting held in Prince Edward county gave producers the opportunity to attend a meeting whatever their schedule demands.

Cost-share survey card comments:

"The BMP program is off the charts. It is so beneficial to clean water conservation and farmers."

"Good communication and cooperation among the agencies; USDA, PSWCD, NRCS & DoF."

"I was kept up to date from planting stage to completion of project. I highly recommend the program."

"Received 1st-class treatment throughout the whole process. "

"The hardwood buffer will be a beauty for all to see hopefully for 100's of years. The wildlife also thank you."

BREAKING NEWS...

The Piedmont SWCD has a new website. Look for us at <http://PiedmontSWCD.org>

Piedmont SWCD
serving Amelia,
Nottoway and Prince
Edward Counties



MISSION

The mission of the Piedmont SWCD is to provide technical, educational and financial resources to citizens of the Piedmont SWCD in order to promote the conservation of soil, water and related resources.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Recognizing that change is inevitable, the Piedmont SWCD tries to anticipate external forces and factors that will impact the District's future by preparing a strategic plan every four years.

In 2009, time was set aside to review the mission and vision of the Piedmont SWCD, examine strengths and weaknesses, and look at current realities and a desired future.

District Directors and staff invited community stakeholders to participate as partners throughout the strategic plan-

ning process. Surveys were sent out to agency partners, local government officials, educators, agricultural producers, and citizen partners in conservation. Survey results informed the planning sessions held by District Directors and staff.

Piedmont SWCD Directors participated in three strategic planning sessions during which strategic issues were identified, sorted and prioritized. The final 2009-2013 Strategic Plan was approved at the June 2009 Board meeting.

The Piedmont SWCD activities and programs are guided by the goals set forth in the four-year strategic plan.

Continued citizen input is a critical aspect of the Piedmont SWCD's success in representing local concerns at state and national levels. All board meetings are open to the public and meeting minutes are distributed to all partners in conservation. Additionally, survey cards are distributed to producers that participate in the best management practice, cost-share program.

DISTRICT FINANCES

The Piedmont SWCD receives funding from several sources. The District's operating funds & agriculture BMP cost-share funding comes through Dept. of Conservation & Recreation. Amelia, Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties also support operations and Prince Edward County assists with watershed dam maintenance costs. Sponsorship donations help

REVENUE SOURCES	
Agriculture BMP Cost Share Funding	\$243,577
TMDL BMP Cost-share Funding	\$387,500
DCR Operating Funds	\$ 79,290
Watershed Dam Maintenance	\$ 30,850
Equipment Rentals	\$ 20,062
Locality Funding for Operations	\$ 28,240
Youth Education Sponsorships	\$ 500
Grants	\$ 2,299
Total Revenue	\$792,318

provide educational opportunities.

The equipment rental program is self

supporting. Four no-till drills, a straw blower and a ditch pan are available to rent by

agricultural producers. In 2008-2009 program year, 1699 acres were seeded with the District's No-Till Seeder.

A cover crop / roller crimper is available at no charge. Roller crimpers are being studied to see if rolled residue provide adequate weed control without a post emergent herbicide.

CONSERVATION AWARDS

YOUNG CONSERVATION FARMER

Michael Whitaker, partner in a family dairy operation in Amelia County, helps implement a Conservation Plan, and Nutrient Management Plan developed for Whitaker Farm, Inc. Over the years the use of best management practices enabled the farm to obtain high yields while improving soil and water quality.



Young Conservation Farmer Michael Whitaker, Wildlife Conservationist Billy Ford, and Conservation Farmer James L. Hamner with their awards. Not pictured, Conservation Educator Ray York.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST

W.B. "Billy" Ford's lifelong interest in wildlife led him to install conservation practices on his tract in the Mannboro area of Amelia County. His

field borders and annual food plots create cover and food sources for wildlife. A stream-side forested buffer planted with oak, walnut, apple, pear and persimmon will increase the diversity of

wildlife on the farm while improving soil and water quality.

CONSERVATION FARMER OF THE YEAR

James L. Hamner excluded livestock from

four miles of streams and ponds, and installed a thirty-five foot forested buffer between the new fencing and the water-bodies through the TMDL program. An alternative water source now supplies clean, consistent water to Hamner's herd.

CONSERVATION EDUCATOR

Ray York is the Environmental Resource Manager with Amelia County and in this capacity he takes every opportunity to make recycling a priority. Amelia's program is setting the standard for recycling in Southside, Virginia.

TMDL COST-SHARE PROGRAM

Since 2007 the Piedmont SWCD has helped producers exclude cattle from 133,335 feet of stream, or approximately 25.25 miles, under the TMDL program.

Funding for the Piedmont SWCD TMDL program is due

to expire on June 30, 2010. Livestock producers wishing to take advantage of this program to exclude their animals from streams and install a grazing system are encouraged to act now.

Eligible producers can receive up to 85% cost share for ex-

clusion fence, well, pipeline and water troughs. In addition, cost share is available for cross fencing in conjunction with a prescribed grazing plan.

Piedmont SWCD Conservation Specialists Paula Totten and Charlie Wootton are available to

come by the farm and discuss ways the TMDL Cost-Share program might work on your operation. Technical assistance provided by the District's Conservation Specialists is available at no cost, even if producers do not receive cost share.

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Conservation District**

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2008-2009 GRANTS

ESC WORKSHOPS

First the bad news, erosion from construction sites can be up to 500 times greater than that from undisturbed, vegetated sites. All that erosion washes dirt into the Bay where it prevents light from reaching underwater grasses, buries oyster reefs, and carries pollutants that harm animals and water quality.

Now for the good news. The Piedmont SWCD was selected as the beneficiary of *Be The Bay's* (a Chesapeake Apparel and Green Living Products online store) profit donation program to hold 2 workshops (the first one was held May 14 in Farmville) where participants learn everything they always wanted to know about construction site erosion but were afraid to ask.

SEPTIC SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND PUMP OUT PROJECT

Nottoway homeowners learned how to properly care for household septic systems by attending one of three educational workshops presented by Piedmont SWCD and Nottoway Department of Health. Workshop attendees with failing septic systems applied for grant funding that would assist with repairs. The Piedmont SWCD and Nottoway County partnered with the Water Quality Improvement Fund Grant and Small Community Development Block Grant to fund the repairs. Qualified applicants were identified and repair work is underway. For tips on maintaining a household septic system, please contact the Piedmont SWCD office.