



# Conservation Matters

A Newsletter of the Piedmont Soil & Water Conservation District  
Awards Issue

March 2016

## PIEDMONT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

100 B DOMINION DRIVE  
FARMVILLE, VA 23901  
PHONE: 434-392-3782  
WWW.PIEDMONTSWCD.ORG

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## Poor House Dairy

Robert "Bobby" M Jones

### Clean Water Farm Grand Basin Award Recipient

Third generation dairyman Bobby Jones of Prince Edward County knows that taking care of the land is good for his cattle and good for water quality. He has invested time and money to address the resource concerns on Poor House Farm and in doing so, he has improved his herd's health and improved water quality.

Bobby has worked with his natural resource partners so that all necessary best management practices can be put into operation on the farm. For this reason, Bobby's farm was selected to receive the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation's prestigious 2015 Clean Water Farm, James River Grand Basin Award.

Poor House Dairy operates under a comprehensive nutrient management plan through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the highest level of NRCS planning available. He is a faithful supporter of cover crops, following his grain crops with winter cover to prevent erosion and capture nitrogen. He has installed a loafing lot management system with conservation planning and cost-share assistance that includes a free stall barn, concrete liquid manure tank, pack barn, grazing paddocks with waterers, travel lanes and hardened stream crossings.

Bobby voluntarily installed 7,720 feet of cattle exclusion fencing, and with VA Agriculture cost-share through the Piedmont SWCD and NRCS cost-share he installed over 5,600 feet of additional fencing. Riparian buffers were planted or allowed to re-vegetate in the areas between the fencing and the streams. Several pastures were created with cross fencing and frost-free trough waterers installed.



Robert "Bobby" M Jones of Prince Edward County accepted the Clean Water Farm Grand Basin Award from VA Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Todd Haymore (left) and VA Department of Conservation and Recreation Director Clyde Cristman (right) at the VA Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' Annual Meeting in December.



Commonwealth of Virginia General Assembly, House Joint Resolution Number 189, Commending the 10 River Basin Grand Winners of the Clean Water Farm Award.

All programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status or handicap.



From left, accepting the Nottoway County Conservation Farmer award for Bill Black were his daughter and son-in-law Missy and Donald, Katie Register accepting the Conservation Educator award, Robert and Smith Hutchinson accepting the Amelia Conservation Farmer award, Bobby Jones accepting the DCR Clean Water Farm award, and Jason Fleming accepting the Young Conservation Farmer award. Not pictured: Susi Wilson, Wildlife Stewardship award.

## 2015 Conservation Award Winners

**Agricultural producers and others involved in land stewardship activities are praised for their willingness to partner to achieve their conservation goals.**

Five outstanding conservationists from Amelia, Nottoway and Prince Edward County were recognized at the District's award banquet February 23. Awardees and invited guests were treated to a meal, after which the awards were presented. A video created to describe the tremendous conservation work accomplished by each awardee was played before every award presentation.

A common thread that runs through each award story is the fact that conservation on a large scale isn't accomplished without effective partnerships. Individuals can take steps and do their very best, and everyone benefits from these actions through cleaner water and healthier soils, but effective partnerships leverage everyone's efforts for a greater outcome.

Right, Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Soil & Water Director Darryl Glover and District Manager Deanna Fehrer.



Above, from left, Amelia Co. Administrator Taylor Harvie, Amelia Co. Board of Supervisor Thomas Gleason, District Director Ricky Rash, & Amelia Co Board of Supervisor Carroll Barnard.



Katie Register, Wilkie Chaffin and Juan Whittington make their way through the chow line.



## Other Awards

Master Gardener Sandy Willcox was nominated by the Piedmont SWCD and received a USDA NRCS Earth Team

award for her work organizing the improvement of the conservation landscaping around the USDA Service Center that includes VCE and District offices.



Directors Larkin Moyer, Wilkie Chaffin and staff member Robin Buckalew received pins for 20, 15 and 10

years of service respectively at the Virginia Association of Conservation District's (VASWCD) Annual meeting in December.

Dr. Chaffin, center, also received a merit award from the Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees Association for years of dedicated support to district employees.



Robin Buckalew received the VASWCD Educational Exhibit award for the SPLASH exhibit. Splash is made of 100 one-gallon water jugs, the approximate number of gallons of water used per day by the average American. Splash, pictured here with Amanda Hancock, sits by the exhibit, waiting his turn to stand up and walk around to greet folks.



## Septic System Maintenance Financial Assistance Program

The Piedmont Soil & Water Conservation District is offering financial assistance for residential septic maintenance to residents of the Flat and Nibbs Creek Watersheds located in Amelia and Nottoway Counties. In addition to providing financial assistance, the purpose of the project is to educate residents about proper septic system care and about the environmental and health impacts of failing septic systems. The program's goal is to improve water quality in the Flat and Nibbs Creek Watersheds, which have been classified by the Environmental Protection Agency as impaired due to elevated levels of bacteria, which is found in human and animal waste.

The program helps cover a portion of the cost of residential septic system maintenance. Residents can receive 50% off of septic pump-outs, repairs, replacements, and the installation of both conventional and alternative septic systems. Some may be eligible to receive up to 75% off based on income eligibility.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, determining if you live in an eligible watershed, or applying for financial assistance, please contact Emily Gibbs at (434) 392-3782 ext. 131 or via email at [egibbs@piedmontswcd.org](mailto:egibbs@piedmontswcd.org).

Emily is the District's Urban and Program Support Coordinator. She graduated from the University of Mary Washington in 2015 with degrees in environmental science and Spanish.



# PIEDMONT SWCD

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Fuqua team members, from left, Nicholas Davis, Ashley Chipman, Sarah-Jane French, Andrew Murphy and Max Gebaur.



Nottoway team members, from left, Zack Maitland, Mary Rash, Christopher Hunter McCraw, Kelsey Wallace, and Casey Sousa.

The District's 2016 Dominion Envirothon season began with the Piedmont District's local competition held March 16th at Longwood University's new Environmental Education Center. Nottoway and Fuqua High Schools competed, with Buckingham High participating but not competing.

Students were tested on their knowledge of natural resources and a current environmental issue. This year's issue is Invasive Species.

Fuqua team placed first in the Soils, Forestry, Oral Presentation and



Buckingham team members, from left, James Guajardo, Alex Wood and Daniel Wood.

Special Topic categories. Nottoway placed first in the Wildlife category. Fuqua placed First Overall and will compete at the Area V competition April 21 at Holiday Lake State Park in Appomattox, Virginia.

Many natural resource professionals helped make the Local Envirothon a success including Oral Presentation judges Tina Wells, Sandy Willcox, Betsy Lookofsky, and station testers Dave Sandman, Derek Hancock, Johnathan Wooldridge, Kelly Snoddy, Elise Corbin & Katie Martin.