

Annual Report 2016-2017



ENTER Piedmont Soil & Water Conservation District



NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

LARKIN MOYER



Thank you for your support over the past year! Whether in the form of program participation, funding from localities and sponsors, or reading our newsletters, you have helped to make the year a success. The District staff, Board, and fellow natural resource conservation agencies couldn't have done their work in Amelia, Nottoway, and Prince Edward Counties without collaboration with the community, so we appreciate your cooperative efforts.

A highlight of your participation this year was our 2017-2021 strategic planning process. We sent surveys to program participants, stakeholders, and local government representatives. We received a generous response of surveys returned—thank you for your input! Your comments helped shape our goals for the next four years, which are:

1. Implement natural resource conservation programs by involving agricultural and non-agricultural citizens.
2. Implement youth and adult natural resource conservation education programs.
3. Increase the number and quality of natural resource partnerships.
4. Manage the 14 dams in compliance with the Virginia Dam Safety Act.
5. Keep Directors and staff informed, engaged, and connected.

On the cover: photo of our new District signs on Hwy 360, Hwy 460, and Rte 15!

Robin Buckalew, our Administrative and Public Information Specialist, retired in April after 12 years with the District. Robin's ability to think outside the box helped others, especially students, understand the importance of conservation efforts. Her creativity and artistic talent have been an invaluable asset to the District in many forms: educational displays, photography/videography, and publications, to name a few.

Education is one of the most vital parts of natural resource conservation. In order for our work to truly be effective, we must inform others why conservation is important and how they can make a difference in their everyday lives. Robin spent countless hours creating hands-on displays to transform environmental concepts into interactive experiences for thousands of students. She has a knack for talking about conservation topics in a way that all audiences can understand, a skill that is crucial for encouraging the next generation to continue the work that we have started.

The District is so grateful for the impact Robin made during her 12 years here. While she may have moved on to another chapter in her life, the legacy that she leaves behind will continue. We wish her many new adventures in the years to come!

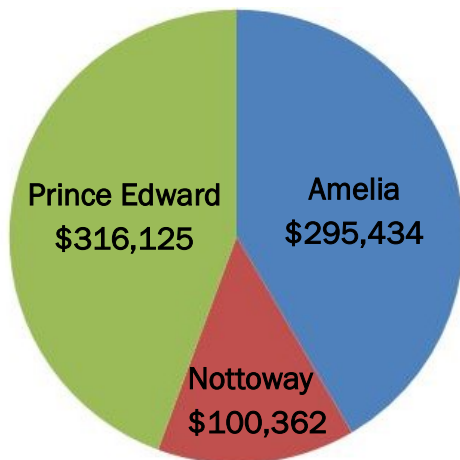


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District serves Amelia, Nottoway, and Prince Edward Counties. We operate primarily on a grant basis with funds from state and local governments. Some programs we administer are based on watershed location (such as grants only available for Chesapeake Bay residents), while other programs are available to applicants in all three counties that we serve. As part of an independent audit that occurs every two years, we were audited this fiscal year with no discrepancies found.

OPERATING BUDGET	FISCAL YEAR 2017
Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation Funds	
Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practice (BMP) Cost-Share Funds	\$663,875
Operations	\$169,880
Agricultural Technical Assistance	\$46,578
Flood control structure maintenance and repairs	\$47,000
Virginia DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic BMP Grants	\$45,632
Other grant-funded projects	\$23,086
Local funds (equipment rental, grants for special projects, locality appropriations, and sponsorships)	\$46,542

\$711,921 Cost-Share Funds Approved
(all programs)



72

Cost-share contracts
written



142

BMPs approved



1,940 students and
citizens reached through educational
programs



469
client visits
made

Keep reading to see the full summary of this year's accomplishments!

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION

Piedmont SWCD administers a state grant-funded cost-share program to agricultural producers who install and implement best management practices to improve soil and water quality. Certified, trained staff assist producers with identifying natural resource concerns, providing conservation planning, and ensuring practices are installed and functioning correctly. Technical assistance is always free of charge and participation in the programs is voluntary.

411 farm and client visits

80 acres of streamside buffer planted

100 Best Management Practices approved

1,373 acres sowed with no-till drill rental

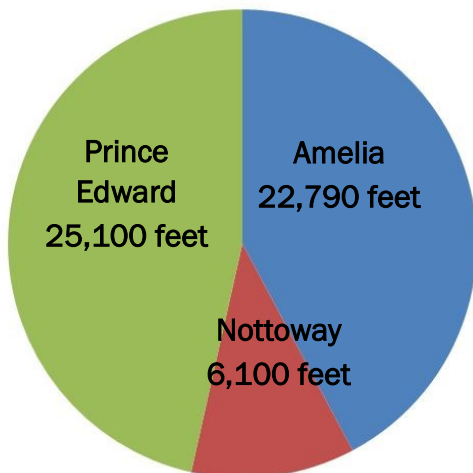
17 conservation plans developed

4 Resource Management Plans reviewed

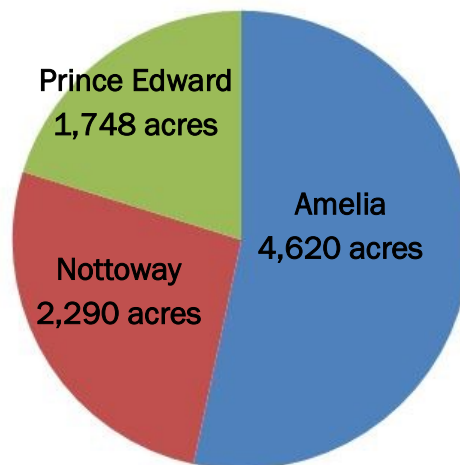
\$664,372 cost-share funds approved

8 new BMP program participants

53,990 Feet of Stream Exclusion Planned



8,658 Acres of Cover Crops Planned



Piedmont SWCD partnered with the American Farmland Trust to host three workshops as part of the **“Women & Land” Conservation Learning Circles**. The program is designed for women landowners who own or make management decisions on Virginia forest or farmland. The series focused on strategies that landowners can use to increase their knowledge and to set and achieve conservation goals for their land. Piedmont SWCD hosted the event and invited several partner agencies. A total of 18 participants and 12 partner representatives attended.

Pictured above: Joan Poore (Amelia FSA), Haley Norton (Virginia Cooperative Extension – Nottoway), Bonnie Thompson (Area III NRCS), and Rachel Loveday (Amelia NRCS).

RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION

Piedmont SWCD administers two grants from the Department of Environmental Quality to provide financial assistance to homeowners for a percentage of the costs of septic system pump outs, repairs, and replacements. The program also educates residents about proper septic system care and about the environmental and health impacts of failing septic systems. Applicants must live in the Flat or Nibbs Creek watersheds in Nottoway and Amelia Counties, or the Spring Creek, Briery Creek, Sandy River, Bush River, Little Sandy Creek, or Saylers Creek watersheds in Prince Edward County.



Failing septic system

Leaking sewage can cause water quality impairment in nearby streams

47 site visits (PSWCD staff and local Health Department staff)

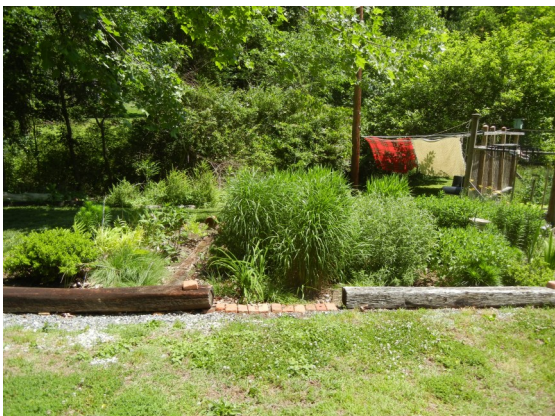
4 educational workshops

36 Best Management Practices approved:
19 pump outs, 17 repairs/replacements

\$47,549 approved cost-share funds



New drainfield of a repaired septic system



Rain garden

Collects water from downspouts or overland flow across a property. The water is then able to slowly seep into the soil, which removes pollutants.

Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)

Piedmont SWCD is one of many Virginia SWCDs located in the Chesapeake Bay that participates in the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP), a cost-share program that incentivizes the installation of features that reduce stormwater runoff. These practices can be installed in small-acreage settings at the source of stormwater discharges that may cause erosion or poor drainage. All non-agricultural property located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed is eligible for the program. The Piedmont SWCD serves on the VCAP Steering Committee, and last year, staff attended multiple VCAP training seminars, prepared a VCAP exhibit for the State Fair, and conducted 11 site visits with potential clients interested in the program.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Education for adults and youth is a key initiative for Piedmont SWCD. Youth education includes classroom programs, Envirothon program, camps, poster contest, interactive displays, and scholarships to continue higher education. Adult education consists of exhibits at public events, newspaper and radio releases, social media outreach, and workshops.

Provided four (4) \$1,000 academic scholarships

Fuqua School Envirothon team placed 1st in area competition

Education in schools and community: 1,940 participants

Family & Farm Day, Ag Awareness Day (Nottoway 3rd and 5th graders), classroom programs, Girl Scout patch programs

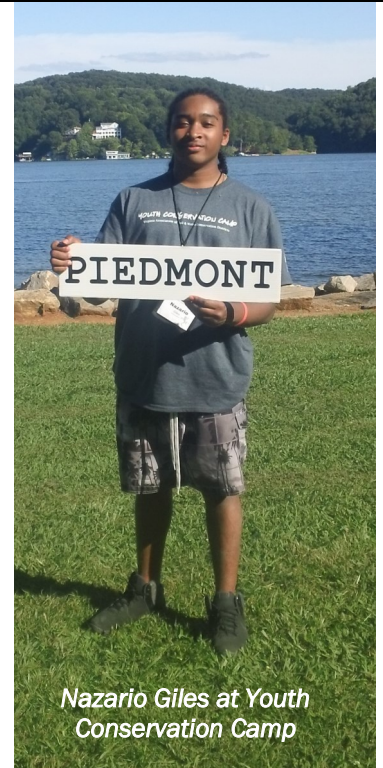
“Healthy Soils Are Full of Life” poster contest: 435 student entries

Youth Conservation Camp: 1 camper sponsored



Nature Day Camp was a great success! The camp, hosted at Twin Lakes State Park from June 19-22, was a hands-on day camp for 10-13 year old students; 16 campers attended. Each day covered a different natural resource topic: soil, water, plants, and wildlife. Activities included tree identification, creating soil profiles, macroinvertebrate identification,

animal pelt identification, electrofishing, and canoeing. Many thanks to our partners who made this day possible: Virginia Cooperative Extension— Laura Siegle (Amelia), Haley Norton (Nottoway), Katy Overby, Caitlin Miller, and Madelene Gwaltney (Prince Edward); Twin Lakes staff; and the Virginia Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries (Dan Michaelson).



Nazario Giles at Youth Conservation Camp



2017 Lindy Hamlett Educational Scholarship Recipients: Erin Amiss (Amelia), Dillon Dunn (Nottoway) with Director Bill Powers, Mary Rash (Nottoway; not pictured), Kenny Townsend (Prince Edward).

WATERSHED DAMS

Piedmont SWCD is responsible for maintaining and meeting the safety regulations of 14 flood control dams in Prince Edward County. These dams are designed for watershed protection and flood prevention. All dams have an approved Emergency Action Plan that is utilized during significant storm events.



Inspections include:

storm event inspections

annual owner inspections

inspections with a Professional Engineer
from the Dept. of Conservation and
Recreation

Routine maintenance performed

Attended 2 dam owner workgroup seminars

Submitted dam repair grants for 7 repair projects

VALUED PARTNERSHIPS

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

NRCS-

Horace Adams, Rachel Loveday,
David Smith, Derek Hancock, and
Robert Hazlegrove

VA Dept. of Forestry-

Kirby Woolfolk, Patrick Murphy,
and Doug Audley

Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
Department of Environmental Quality
Farm Service Agency

VA Cooperative Extension-

Katy Overby, Caitlin Miller, Haley
Norton, and Laura Siegle

Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries
Heart of Virginia Master Gardeners
American Farmland Trust

VA Forage & Grasslands Council
Rice Vol. Fire Dept.—workshop host

YOUTH EDUCATION

Billy & Barbara Thompson
Thomas DeWolfe

Patty Jones—Girl Scouts
Twin Lakes State Park
Amelia Ruritans
Fuqua School
Holiday Lake 4-H Center

ENVIROTHON

NRCS-Derek Hancock, Louise Jacques,
and Bonnie Thompson
DGIF –Marc Puckett
Dept. of Forestry– Heather Dowling
Peter Francisco SWCD—Kelly Snoddy and
Elise Corbin
VASWCD—Beth Beran
VA Master Naturalist– Dr. James Gates
Sunny Slope Farms - Host

POSTER CONTEST

Joy Utzinger—PECES
Carol Edmundson—PECES
Emily Grabiec - LCVA

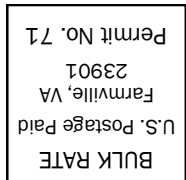
MEDIA SUPPORT

Amelia Bulletin-Monitor
Farmville Herald
Southside Messenger
Blackstone Courier Record
Crewe-Burkeville Journal
WFLO

LOCAL PARTNERS

Amelia, Nottoway, and Prince
Edward County:
Board of Supervisors
Administrative staff
Farm Bureau Agencies
Health Department staff
Virginia Association of Soil and
Water Conservation Districts
Heart of VA Master Gardeners
Middle James Roundtable
Mike Foreman
Central VA Regional Library
Southern Piedmont Agriculture
Research Extension Center

Piedmont Soil & Water
Conservation District
100-B DOMINION DRIVE
FARMVILLE, VA 23901



DIRECTORS

LARKIN MOYER
Chairman - Amelia County
RICKY RASH
Vice Chair - Nottoway County
WILKIE CHAFFIN
Treasurer - Prince Edward Co.
CHUCK ARNASON
Secretary - Nottoway County
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Amelia County
BILL POWERS
Prince Edward County
JUAN WHITTINGTON
Amelia County - Appointed
HALEY NORTON
VCE Appointed

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

GARY DILLARD
Amelia County
HORACE ADAMS
Prince Edward County

DISTRICT STAFF

DEANNA FEHRER extension 108
District Manager
AMANDA HANCOCK ext. 132
Admin & Education Coordinator
CHARLIE WOOTTON ext. 128
Senior Conservation Specialist
KEVIN DUNN ext. 116
BMP Conservation Technician
STEPHEN REAMES
Equipment Program Coordinator
EMILY GIBBS ext. 131
Residential Conservation &
Marketing Coordinator

DISTRICT STAFF



Left to right: Stephen Reames, Kevin Dunn, Charlie Wootton, Amanda Hancock, Deanna Fehrer, and Emily Gibbs

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Piedmont SWCD through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

All programs and services of the Piedmont SWCD are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, handicap or political affiliation.

This publication is sponsored in part by Colonial Farm Credit, ACA. 1700-A South Main St. Farmville, VA. (434) 392-3193

