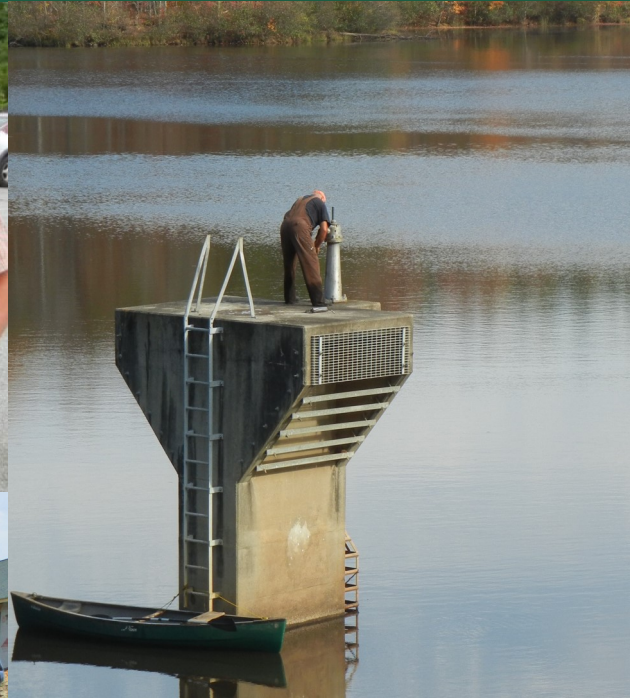


Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District

Annual Report 2018-2019



NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

LARKIN MOYER



The Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is one of 47 SWCDs in Virginia. Most counties in Virginia are supported by a District, and there are 3,000 conservation districts nationwide. Districts are governmental entities that work on the local level to improve soil and water quality through voluntary conservation measures. Districts also provide natural resource education to students and adults. Programs are initiated by an elected Board of Directors and are carried out by staff members. Board members volunteer their time and are not paid officials. They are committed to protecting the health of our natural resources and representing the conservation concerns of the local citizens. If you would like to reach out to one of the Board members who represents your county, call the District office at (434) 392-3782 ext. 108, and a staff member will connect you with your representative. We look forward to continuing our work conserving the natural resources of Amelia, Nottoway, and Prince Edward Counties and protecting our local waters flowing to the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound.

Piedmont SWCD Honors Reuben Blanton

At the February 2019 meeting of the Amelia County Board of Supervisors, PSWCD Chairman Larkin Moyer presented a resolution honoring late farmer Reuben Blanton. Mr. Blanton was a long-time supporter of natural resources conservation and went above and beyond in his efforts to be a good steward of the land. He implemented Best Management Practices (BMPs) on his farm, including stream exclusion, riparian buffer plantings, cover crops, and nutrient management plans. Additionally, he supported conservation education by hosting tours on his farm for local students, farmers, and government officials. The Piedmont SWCD is grateful for Mr. Blanton's contribution to conservation and to the local farming community.



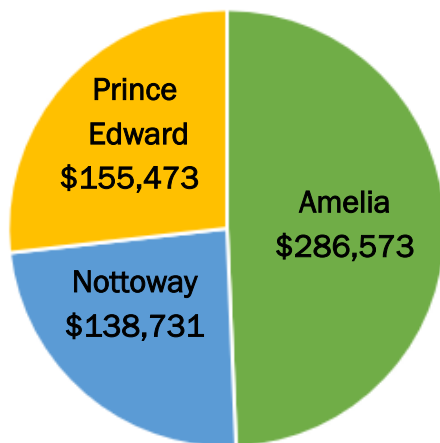
Left to right: Chairman Larkin Moyer presents the resolution plaque to Mary Nell Tatum (sister of Mr. Blanton), her husband Rev. Gene Tatum, and Mr. Blanton's farming partner Russell Leslie, Jr. *Photo credit: Amelia Bulletin Monitor*

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 residents in all three counties that we serve. Every two years, an independent audit is performed, and the District received successful audit results this year.

OPERATING BUDGET	FISCAL YEAR 2019
Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation Funds	
Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practice (BMP) Cost-Share Funds	\$417,254
Operations	\$169,880
Agricultural Technical Assistance	\$51,230
Flood control structure maintenance and repairs	\$47,000
Virginia DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic BMP Grants	\$98,851
Other grant-funded projects	\$14,821
Local funds (equipment rental, grants for special projects, locality appropriations, and sponsorships)	\$48,170

\$580,777 Cost-Share Funds Approved
(all programs)



108

Cost-share contracts
written



155

BMPs approved



1,858

students and
citizens reached through educational
programs



498

Client
contacts

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 (BMPs) to improve soil and water quality. Certified, trained staff provide technical assistance to producers by 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.

378 farm and client visits

6 acres of streamside buffer planted

103 Best Management Practices approved

1,504 acres planted with no-till drill rental

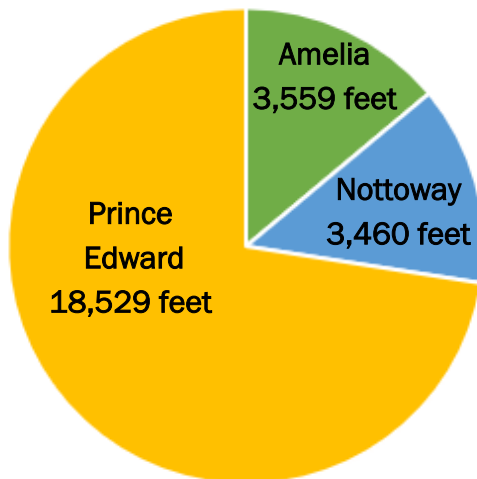
69 conservation and grazing plans developed

\$498,695 cost-share funds approved

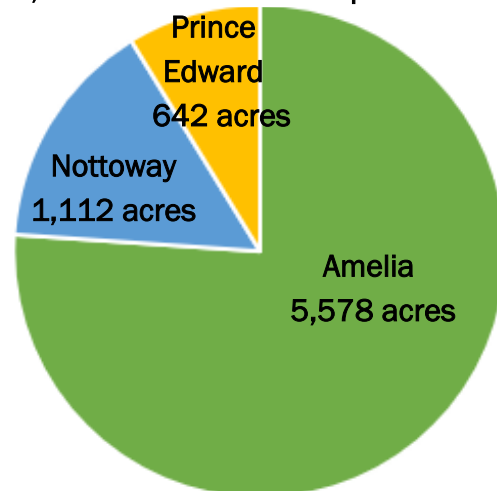
12,197 acres in a nutrient management plan

4 new BMP program participants

25,548 Feet of Streambank Protection Installed



7,332 Acres of Cover Crops Planted



In partnership with the Virginia Association of SWCD's Legislative Committee, the Piedmont SWCD hosted a successful tour for the Secretary and Deputies of Natural Resources, Director of Department of Conservation and Recreation, Deputy Secretary of Forestry, and Director of Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The event consisted of a presentation about the many roles carried out by Virginia SWCDs as well as their funding needs. To show the attendees a real-world example of the partnership between SWCDs and the agricultural community, Piedmont SWCD organized a tour of Mountain View Farm, operated

by Don and Janet Benson of Amelia. The Bensons are past recipients of the Piedmont SWCD Conservation Farmer Award for their ongoing effort to conserve the natural resources on their farm.

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, Nibbs, Deep, or West Creek watersheds in Nottoway and Amelia Counties, or the Spring Creek, Briery Creek, Sandy River, Bush River, or Saylers Creek watersheds in Prince Edward County. Contact the District to find out what watershed you live in.

21 site visits (in partnership with local Health Department staff)

54 Best Management Practices approved:
42 tank pump-outs, 8 repairs, 4 alternative systems

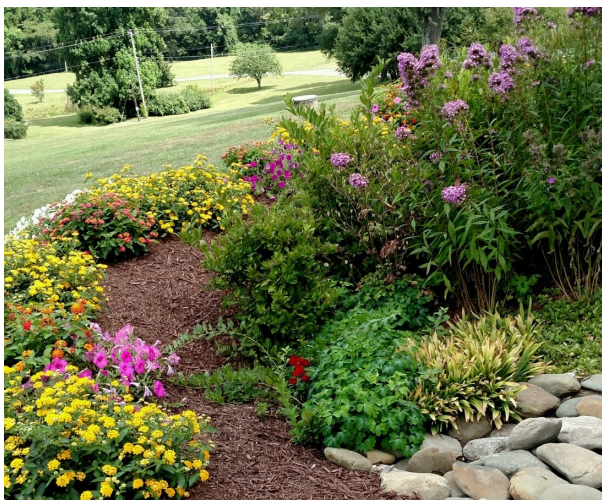
\$82,082.50 cost-share funds approved

The photo to the right shows a septic tank pump-out in progress. The Virginia Department of Health recommends pumping your septic tank every 5-7 years to properly maintain it. Not performing routine maintenance can cause a buildup of solids, which could clog the drainfield lines, resulting in a costly system replacement.



Controlling Erosion and Stormwater Runoff

Piedmont SWCD staff gave a presentation at the May 2019 Lunch and Learn event hosted by Prince Edward County Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Heart of Virginia Master Gardeners. The purpose of the Lunch and Learn program is to educate the public about various natural resource and gardening subjects. The presentation by Piedmont SWCD focused on common erosion and stormwater problems in residential settings and the steps homeowners can take to solve them. The primary topic was an overview of Best Management Practices (BMPs), which are implemented to address natural resource concerns. BMPs that can remedy erosion and stormwater runoff include conservation landscaping, rain gardens,



and rainwater harvesting. Attendees also learned about the benefits of choosing plants that are native to the Piedmont region of Virginia. Native shrubs and grasses protect against erosion and stormwater runoff as they have deeper root systems than lawn grass. The deep roots act as an anchor to hold soil in place and also function as a sponge to absorb excess runoff. The District informed the group about the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP), which is a cost-share program that incentivizes homeowners and businesses to install stormwater BMPs. In support of VCAP this year, District staff made ten site visits to assist landowners with erosion and stormwater issues.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Education for youth and adults 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
- * Education in schools and community: Family & Farm Day, Ag Awareness Days (Nottoway third graders), classroom programs and farm tours for Fuqua School and Longwood University students, Girl Scout workshop
- * "Life in the Soil" poster contest: 330 student entries
- * Youth Conservation Camp: 2 campers sponsored, staff counselor



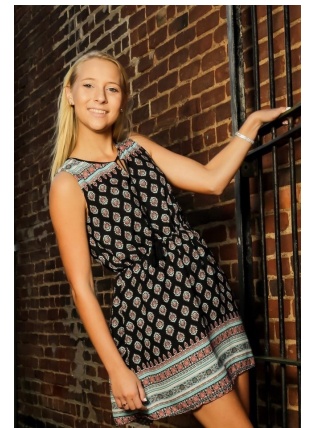
The District sponsored Amelia students Katie Stang (middle) and Peyton Coleman (right) to attend Youth Conservation Camp, a week-long camp hosted by the VASWCD to educate high schoolers on the importance of natural resources and agriculture. Piedmont SWCD staff member Emily Gibbs (left) served as a camp counselor.



During Ag Awareness Days, students crawled through a soil tunnel, which displays soil layers and components. They learned about the role of soil and its importance in providing the resources we use daily.



The District participated in Ag Awareness Days, which educate local third graders about natural resources. The Piedmont SWCD partnered with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (Derek Hancock) to teach students about the layers of the soil, as shown in the middle photo above.



2019 Lindy Hamlett Educational Scholarship Recipients: Maria Bonilla-Olmos (Prince Edward), Rebekah Cole (Nottoway), Laura Smith (Amelia), Kelsey Wallace (Nottoway). District Manager Deanna Fehrre, Director Bill Powers, and Chairman Larkin Moyer presented the awards.

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.

Tropical Storm Michael impacted Prince Edward County on October 11, 2018, dropping over 5-10 inches of rain in less than 5 hours and causing widespread wind damage. Out of the 14 flood control dams the District is responsible for, five auxiliary spillways activated and suffered damages, several culverts at access roads were damaged, and numerous tree debris washed onto risers and dams. Repair work is currently underway.



Conducted 100 inspections (storm events, repair projects, annual inspections, and inspections with the Department of Conservation and Recreation)

Performed routine mowing, debris removal, and other maintenance

Attended 4 dam owner workgroup seminars

Conducted an emergency planning exercise in partnership with PE County

VALUED PARTNERSHIPS

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

USDA Farm Service Agency
USDA NRCS-
Horace Adams, Derek Hancock,
Robert Hazlegrove, Rachel Loveday
VA Dept. of Forestry-
Doug Audley, Patrick Murphy, Kirby
Woolfolk
VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
VA Dept. of Environmental Quality
VA Cooperative Extension-
Haley Norton, Katy Overby, Laura
Siegle
VA Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries
VA Forage & Grasslands Council

YOUTH EDUCATION

Billy & Barbara Thompson — sponsors
Patty Jones— Girl Scouts
Amelia Ruritans — sponsors
Fuqua School
Prince Edward County High School
Full Circle Nature School
Longwood University

POSTER CONTEST

Brooke Eamigh, Joy Utzinger-
Prince Edward County
Elementary School
Judy Chambliss, Colleen Gleason,
Angela Whittaker -
Full Circle Nature School

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
Crewe Volunteer Fire Dept.

Virginia Association of Soil and
Water Conservation Districts
Heart of VA Master Gardeners
Middle James Roundtable
Southern Piedmont Agriculture
Research Extension Center

**Thank you to the many partners
who participated in and
supported Piedmont SWCD
programs this year. We look
forward to expanding our
partnerships in the coming year!**

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.

PIEDMONT SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
100-B DOMINION DRIVE
FARMVILLE, VA 23901



BULK RATE
U.S. Postage Paid
Farmville, VA
23901
Permit No. 71

DIRECTORS

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

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

GARY DILLARD
Amelia County
HORACE ADAMS
Prince Edward County

DISTRICT STAFF

DEANNA FEHRER ext. 108
District Manager
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 Coord.
KELLY ATKINSON ext. 132
Education Coordinator

Office: (434) 392-3782 ext. 5

DISTRICT STAFF



Left to right: Deanna Fehrer, Emily Gibbs, Kevin Dunn, Kelly Atkinson,
Charlie Wootton (not pictured: Stephen Reames)

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

