



**Piedmont
Soil & Water
Conservation District**

Annual Report
July 2025 - June 2026



**Serving
Amelia, Nottoway,
& Prince Edward
counties**



Greetings From the Chairman

Larkin Moyer



The Piedmont Soil & Water Conservation District (PSWCD) Board is the local voice for conservation and allocates funding and resources to address water quality issues in our communities. Change is always happening and this year marked some endings and new beginnings at our District. Our faithful board member, Juan Whittington, passed away suddenly in May and we will miss his strong commitment to conservation and agriculture. Deanna Fehrer began working towards retirement and has been training Paula Totten as the new District Manager. We welcomed back Haley Norton (former VCE agent) as an Associate Director from Nottoway County. The District hired Claire Helmke as our new Program Support Specialist who will be assisting with all our conservation programs. The District received a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant to assist dairy farmers with manure injection and nutrient management on their farms. Although there were many changes, a constant at the District is our commitment and work toward conservation. This has been a very successful and productive year. Thank you for your support and participation in our programs. We hope you enjoy reading about our accomplishments.

Loss of a Beloved Board Member



It is with heavy hearts that we share the news of the passing of Juan Whittington, At-Large Director from Amelia County. Juan was a dedicated board member since 2007. He was an agriculture seed and beef cattle farmer for over 50 years. Juan was one of the first early adopters of no-till farming and promoted its conservation benefits throughout the state. He was a leader on many agriculture boards across the region and state, and as a lifelong educator, he valued the District's education program. Juan engaged in many deep and thoughtful conversations at our board meetings. His contributions to the District, agriculture, and conservation will be missed.

Deanna Fehrer Inducted into the SENACD Hall of Fame

Deanna was honored at the Southeast Region's National Association of Conservation District's (SENACD) annual meeting in Kentucky this past August. At this meeting, she was recognized for her significant impact and influence on conservation and partnerships at the local and state levels. Deanna has served as District Manager for over 20 years and is a leader on many state committees and programs. Congratulations Deanna on a much deserved award!



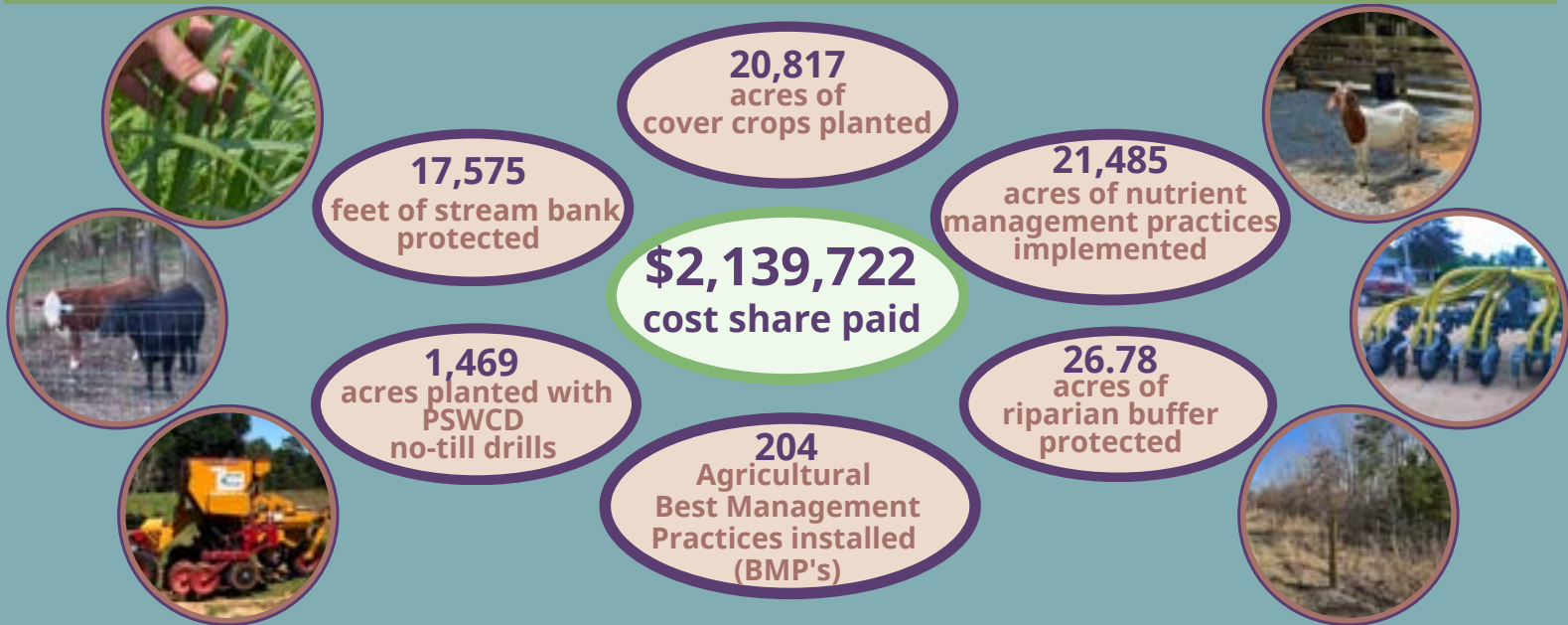
Welcome Claire Helmke - Program Support Specialist



Claire received her Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife Science from Virginia Tech and a Master's of Biology from Western Illinois University. Prior to joining the District, Claire was a Private Lands Biologist with Quail Forever in South Central Virginia. With over 10 years of experience in wildlife and habitat conservation, she is excited to work with the District to learn, grow, and develop new opportunities for the community.

Agricultural Conservation

PSWCD administers state grant funds to agricultural producers who install, implement, and maintain best management practices (BMPs) to improve soil and water quality. Certified and trained staff provide technical assistance free of charge regardless of a farmer's participation in our programs.



Doug and Christina Vaughan were recognized with the Department of Conservation & Recreation's Clean Water Farm Award for their work in implementing water quality BMPs on their four farms in Nottoway County. The Vaughans have excluded livestock from streams and ponds, created and increased riparian buffers, and practice rotational grazing. In addition, they have opened their farm to the community for educational events.

Residential Conservation

\$77,303

paid to homeowners to fix septic problems



Completed:

22 septic pump outs,
4 repairs and
2 alternative septic
installation

PSWCD provides state grant funding to homeowners for septic system pump outs, repairs and replacements, and storm water runoff and erosion issues. Call the office to find out if your home is located in an eligible watershed for our septic grants or learn how to mitigate runoff on your property.

Watershed Dams

PSWCD is responsible for complying with Virginia's Dam Safety Regulations for 14 flood control structures in Prince Edward County. These dams were designed for watershed and flood protection and have been in operation since the 1960's.



Completed wave berm replacement and seepage repairs at Buffalo #1

Inspected 4 principal spillways and gate valves

Maintained 9 remote monitoring stations

Performed seasonal mowing and debris removal

Performed 10 annual owner inspections

Completed updates to Emergency Action Plans

Attended 4 dam owner workgroup meetings



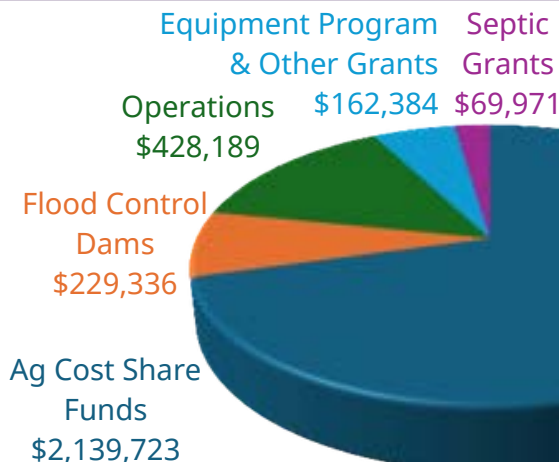
EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN
FOR
Buffalo Creek Dam #3 (147002)

Financial Overview

PSWCD operates primarily on a grant basis with funds from state and local governments. Our equipment rental program invests earnings back into the program. Our education programming is supported through small grants, local contributions, and private donations. Independent financial audits are conducted every two years.

**Expenditures
Total:
\$3,029,603**

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the PSWCD through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR).



Education Acknowledgements

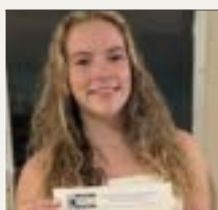


Education for youth and adults is a key initiative for PSWCD. Youth education includes classroom activities, the Envirothon program, the poster contest, interactive displays, learning journeys, library programs, family and partner events, and scholarships to continue higher education. Adult education consists of farm tours, exhibits at public events, news releases, social media outreach, field days, and workshops. This year we reached over 4,100 adults and youth!

Lindy Hamlett Scholarships Awarded

The Lindy Hamlett Education Scholarship provides financial support to college students majoring in, or showing a strong desire to study a course curriculum related to, natural resource conservation, agriculture, environmental studies, or a science related field. This year, four students each received a \$2,000 scholarship

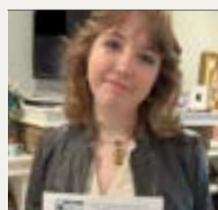
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



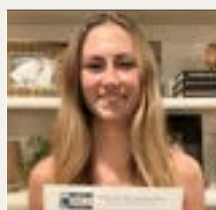
Rudee Atkinson
James Madison University



Laila Jones
Virginia Wesleyan University



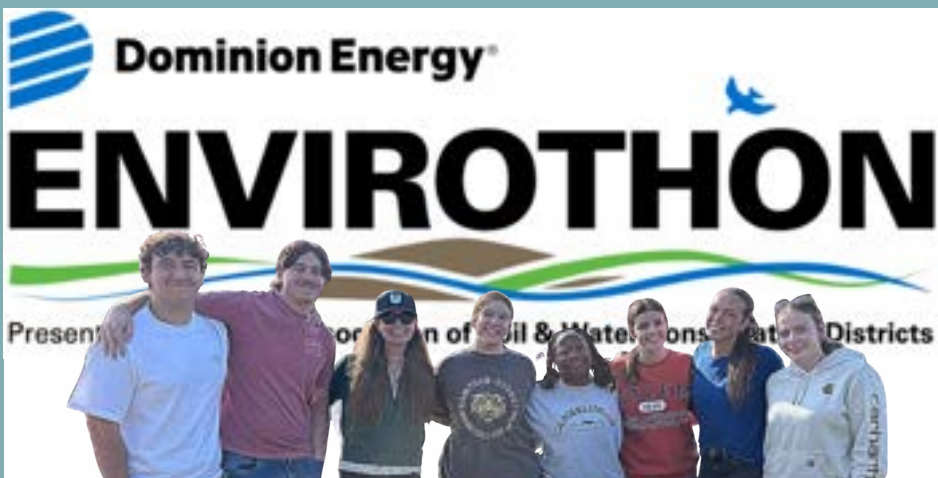
Julia King
College of William & Mary



Marina Morris
Coastal Carolina University

Envirothon

Since 1995, PSWCD has supported the Envirothon program by providing training materials, training events, and funding. This year we sponsored the Fuqua School team, under the coaching of Dr. Dina Leech. The team attended a training workshop and traveled to Holiday Lake State Park for the Area V competition.



Team members (L-R): Collin Jamerson, Nathan Davis, Dr. Dina Leech, Aviva Bloom, Chelsey Branch, Brynn Atkinson, Collins Easter, Rudee Atkinson

Watershed Education

This year, many miles were put on our Enviroscape model. Participants of all ages enjoyed learning how a watershed functions and about our local watersheds.



Local Library Partnership

We had many outreach programs at the Farmville-Prince Edward County Public library. Library patrons enjoyed



learning about composting with worms, the importance of pollinators, and our seasonal conservation bulletin boards, which featured various natural resource topics.

Environmental Education

Our connections with our local schools grew this past year. Kelly and staff worked with private and public schools in Amelia, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties. Students learned about watersheds, soil, reptiles, amphibians, ecosystems, vermicompost, carrying capacity, habitats, and more. Teachers and students enjoyed the hands-on learning about the natural environment.

Amelia County School's Outstanding Teachers Bring the MWEE to Their Students!

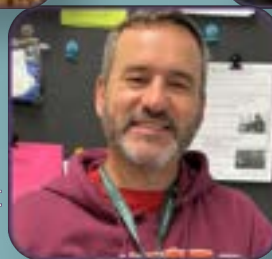
A Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) is a framework that teachers use to engage students in hands-on learning. To teach students about local environmental issues, these teachers organized cleanups, wildlife-learning days, birdhouse-building activities, native-planting projects, and soil-improvement initiatives on school grounds.



Ms. Bailey
6th Grade



Ms. Borum
Elementary
STEAM



Mr. Dunnivant
Grades 3-5



Ms. Hill
8th Grade

Conservation Poster Contest *'Soil Where it all Begins'*

Our annual conservation poster contest was a huge success this year! Thanks to judge Audrey Sullivan, owner of Red Door 104 in Farmville, all the posters were evaluated and awarded. Participants came from homeschools, Girls Scouts, Amelia County Elementary & High Schools, Fuqua School, and Prince Edward County Elementary School.



GRAND
WINNER
Autumn Hardy
9th Grade
ACHS

We
received
583
posters!



Ashley Palmer
7th Grade Fuqua



Nora Boyle
1st Grade PECES



Connor Pettus
4th Grade ACES

Educators of the Year



Pictured L-R: Dr. Carol Wilkinson,
Kelly Atkinson, PJ Shepherd

This year, we were honored to award two conservation educators - Dr. Carol Wilkinson and PJ Shepherd from the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Blackstone. They do a fantastic job bringing Family and Farm Days and 3rd & 5th grade Ag Days to our region. We enjoy this partnership and look forward to working together for many more years.

Celebrated Partnerships

Continued Partnership with SPAREC

We are grateful for our continued partnership with the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research & Extension Center (SPAREC). Once again, our outreach efforts were successful at their Family & Farm Day and 3rd Grade AG Days where over 2,000 contacts were made!



Partner of the Year

We recognized Denney Collins as our partner of the year! Denney is the District's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Conservation District Coordinator (CDC). She provides positive support to our District board and staff.



Thank you Denney for all you do!

Pictured on left with Board Member Chuck Arnason



Partnerships

STATE & FEDERAL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

- USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
- VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)
- VA Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- VA Dept. of Forestry (DOF)
- VA Cooperative Extension (VCE)
- VA Dept. of Wildlife Resources (DWR)
- Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD)
- VA Forage & Grasslands Council (VFGC)
- VA Association of Environmental Education (VAEE)
- VA State Small Farm Outreach Program (SFOP)

YOUTH & ADULT EDUCATION

- Roger Pinholster
- Girl Scouts
- Amelia Academy
- Amelia County Schools
- Fuqua School
- Nottoway County Schools
- Holiday Lake State Park
- Twin Lakes State Park
- Saylor's Creek State Park
- Farmville-Prince Edward Library
- Crewe Library
- Hamner Public Library
- Longwood University

POSTER CONTEST

- Jean Martin, Joy Utzinger at PECES
- Caroline Stargardt at ACHS
- Katarina King ACES
- Red Door 104

LOCAL PARTNERS SERVING AMELIA, NOTTOWAY & PRINCE EDWARD COUNTIES

- Board of Supervisors
- Local Gov't-Administrative staff
- Farm Bureau offices
- Health Department staff
- Heart of VA Master Gardeners
- Central Piedmont Master Naturalists
- Middle James Roundtable
- Southern Piedmont Agriculture Research Extension Center (SPAREC)
- James River Association (JRA)

MEDIA SUPPORT

- Amelia Bulletin-Monitor
- Farmville Herald
- Blackstone Courier Record
- WFLO
- WHL

Vision Statement

The Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District envisions Amelia, Nottoway, & Prince Edward counties as communities engaged in the conservation and stewardship of soil health and water quality.

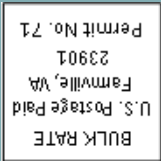
District Meetings

Board of Director meetings take place on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 11:00 am in the conference room of the Prince Edward County Natural Resources and Agricultural Building located at 100 Dominion Drive, Farmville. The public is invited to attend.

Mission Statement

Promotes the wise use and conservation of soil and water resources by providing technical guidance, education, and financial resources to the communities of Amelia, Nottoway, & Prince Edward counties.

Thank you for your continued support!



Directors: (L-R)

Jennifer Morris- Director Amelia County,
Larkin Moyer- Chairman Amelia County,
Dr. Jimmy Gates- Director Prince Edward County,
Erin Small- Associate Director & Prince Edward
County VCE,
Ricky Rash- Vice Chair Nottoway County,
Haley Norton- Associate Director Nottoway County,
Chuck Arnason- Treasurer Nottoway County
Not Pictured:
Horace Adams- Secretary Prince Edward County,
Mackenzie Gunn- Appointed Director & Amelia
County VCE,
Dr. Kathy Gee- Associate Director Nottoway County

**Piedmont Soil & Water
Conservation District**
100-B Dominion Drive
Farmville, VA 23901



District Staff: (L-R)

Deanna Fehrer- Finance Manager, Ty Smith-
Conservation Technician, Paula Totten- District
Manager, Charlie Wootton- Senior Conservation
Specialist, Claire Helmke- Program Support Specialist,
Kevin Dunn- Senior Conservation Specialist, Kelly
Atkinson- Education Coordinator, (Not Pictured) Billy
Patterson- Equipment Manager



Office: (434) 392-7071
Website: www.PiedmontSWCD.org
Follow us on
Facebook & Instagram



Serving Amelia, Nottoway, and Prince Edward counties