The Shenandoah Valley Soil & Water Conservation District (District) is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The District serves Page and Rockingham Counties and the City of Harrisonburg. Programs are administered by staff under the supervision of the District Manager and the Board of Directors. The Board consists of six locally elected members and two appointed members. Board meetings are open to the public and held at 9:30 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month, typically at the Page County Extension Office or the Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services Harrisonburg office.

The District works with various federal, state, and local agencies and organizations to provide technical assistance to landowners and promote natural resource conservation. The District partners with a variety of organizations and agencies who share common conservation goals and objectives. This year the District partnered with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River (FONFSR), Friends of the Shenandoah River (FOSR), the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as well as other agencies and organizations on an array of programs and projects. The District appreciates support of these partners in accomplishing our mission.

The mission of the Shenandoah Valley Soil & Water Conservation District is to promote stewardship and conservation of our natural resources.
The District implements Best Management Practices (BMPs) through cost share programs to improve local water quality. The District currently provides four cost share programs offering a wide variety of conservation practices for agricultural producers, landowners and homeowners.

**Virginia Agricultural Cost Share (VACS) Program**
The VACS Program promotes the installation of conservation practices on farms. There are over 70 BMPs that reduce or prevent sediment, nutrients and other pollutants from reaching local waterways. Under this program, applicants can receive financial and technical assistance for the installation of BMPs. State Tax Credit is also available for some practices.

The District works closely with our federal partners, NRCS and FSA, to implement agricultural BMPs. This fiscal year the District worked with 130 participants to complete the installation of 401 BMPs.

The VACS Program is funded through grant funds from the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation. Below is the cost share and tax credit the District provided to participants through the VACS Program this fiscal year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virginia Agricultural Cost Share Program</th>
<th>Cost Share: $1,257,689.97</th>
<th>Tax Credit: $110,854.70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Linville Creek Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program**
The District continued a three and a half year TMDL Program in the Linville Creek watershed. This year the program funded fourteen septic system pumpouts and three septic system replacements. Cumulatively this program has funded 77 septic system pumpouts, repairs or replacements.

The Linville Creek TMDL Program is funded through a 319 grant provided by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Below is the cost share the District provided to participants through the Linville Creek TMDL Program this fiscal year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linville Creek TMDL Program</th>
<th>Cost Share: $8,461.17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)**
VCAP is a fairly new cost share program that provides financial assistance to all landowners to install BMPs in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

The goal of this program is to provide landowners an opportunity to improve their stormwater management. This program fosters the implementation of BMPs such as Rain Gardens, Conservation Landscaping, Permeable Pavement, Green Roofs, Rainwater Harvesting and Bio-Retention measures.

Through VCAP, the District funded the installation of five conservation landscaping practices, five permeable pavement practices and two impervious surface removals.

VCAP is funded through grant funds from the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Below is the cost share the District provided to participants through VCAP this fiscal year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virginia Conservation Assistance Program</th>
<th>Cost Share: $96,612.39</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Rockingham County Septic Assistance Program**
The District continued a multi - year Septic Assistance Program to provide financial assistance to Rockingham County homeowners to repair or replace failed septic systems. This year the program has helped fund ten septic system replacements, three septic system repair, and twenty-four septic system pumpouts.

The Rockingham County Septic Assistance Program is funded through a Water Quality Improvement Fund grant provided by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Below is the cost share the District provided to participants through the Rockingham Count Septic Assistance Program this fiscal year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rockingham County Septic Assistance Program</th>
<th>Cost Share: $44,273.63</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The District implements Best Management Practices (BMPs) through cost share programs to improve local water quality. The District currently provides four cost share programs offering a wide variety of conservation practices for agricultural producers, landowners and homeowners.
The District provided natural resources conservation education to over 1,450 students, teachers, chaperones and community members through 15 various Meaningful Watershed Education Experiences (MWEEs) and other presentations. In addition, various educational activities, models and resources were available to teachers and other organizations to support conservation education.

**Envirotthon**
The Envirotthon is a field-oriented competition for high school students focusing on natural resources. The goal of the Envirotthon program is to educate students in soils, forestry, wildlife and aquatics to enhance their knowledge of natural resources and conservation. This year nine teams from local high schools competed in the District’s Envirotthon held April 27, 2018 at the Westover Community Center in Harrisonburg. Teams from Eastern Mennonite School, Turner Ashby High School, and Harrisonburg High School advanced to the Area Envirotthon competition. Teams from Eastern Mennonite School and Harrisonburg High School advanced to the State Envirotthon competition.

**Youth Conservation Camp**
The District sponsors high school student’s attendance at a week long summer conservation camp. The program brings together students from around the state to learn about Virginia’s natural resources from conservation professionals and Virginia Tech faculty. This year the District sponsored camp participation for a student from Turner Ashby High School and a student from Spotswood High School.

**Scholarships**
Each year the District provides scholarships to students furthering their education in a field related to natural resources. This year the District awarded scholarships totaling $2,000 to a student from Turner Ashby High School and a student from Luray High School.

**Interns & Volunteers**
The District is dedicated to providing interns and volunteers with real world learning experiences in the field of natural resource conservation. Internship and volunteer opportunities are available seasonally. This year the District mentored eight interns who collectively contributed 1,325 hours in support of the District’s conservation efforts.

**Conservation Teacher of the Year**
Each year the District recognizes the outstanding conservation education efforts of one elementary (Kindergarten-5th grade) and one secondary (6th-12th grade) teacher. The local award winners are also nominated for the State Conservation Teacher of the Year Award through the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. This year the District recognized Jonathon Trice from Mountain View Elementary School as the Elementary Conservation Teacher of the Year, and Tola Ogundipe from East Rockingham High School as the Secondary Conservation Teacher of the Year.

**Rainbarrel Program**
The District continues to offer rain barrel workshops where attendees learn how to use and maintain a rain barrel. Workshop participants also assemble a rain barrel for use at home. This year the District partnered with the City of Harrisonburg to offer a workshop where participants constructed a total of twenty-one rain barrels.

Assembled rain barrels are also available throughout the year and can be ordered on our website. District staff assembled thirteen rain barrels this year for online orders.
The Clean Water Farm Award Program was established by the General Assembly to recognize exemplary farms in the Commonwealth that protect and enhance water quality and soil resources. Clean Water Farm Award winners are role models who deserve recognition. The Clean Water Farm Award Program is overseen by the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation, who relies on Soil & Water Conservation Districts to identify a worthy recipient in each County they serve.

PAGE COUNTY

Lindy Hill Farm, owned and operated by Cindy and Wes Lam, received the **Page County Clean Water Farm Award**. The Lam’s farm consists of approximately 140 acres set up with a rotational grazing system consisting of 11 pastures with centrally located troughs. All pasture is part of a Prescribed Grazing Plan where the livestock are rotated daily from April to May, then rotated based on forage availability, shade availability, and calving considerations. Fall stockpiling of forages help to reduce the number of days and amount of hay that has to be fed on the operation. When hay is fed, it is unrolled to help prevent erosion, spread out nutrients and improve forage growth. Periodically, the pastures are overseeded with clover, timothy and orchard grass. Livestock have also been excluded from a 20 acre section of woodland and a spring/wetland area. While the Lams do not have a specific wildlife management practice, due to the way the farm is operated, wildlife are abundantly present on the farm, particularly deer and hawks, and the clover in the fields helps to attract pollinators.

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

Valley Pike Farm, Inc. received the **Rockingham County Clean Water Farm Award**. Valley Pike Farm is owned and operated by the Lohr Family and includes over 240 acres of cropland with approximately 90 acres in corn/soybeans/barley, 138 acres of pasture and hay ground, and 12 acres of sweet corn. As a part of their Conservation Stewardship Plan, all planting is done using no-till methods and all crop acres are planted with winter cover crops which are killed and left on the fields to increase soil organic matter. The Lohrs also raise broilers for Pilgrims and background beef feeder cattle. Approximately 120 head of feeder cattle are grazed on the farm from spring through fall and are managed in a rotational grazing system. A litter shed and bin composting system is used to manage the waste from the poultry operation, until it can be transported off the farm or utilized in accordance with the farm’s Nutrient Management Plan. In addition to their conservation practices, the Lohrs view education as part of their farming mission; they host events to educate local, state, and federal officials of farming practices and in 2018 will partner with Virginia Tech to grow 6 acres of hemp for research. The Lohr Family recently completed the process to place the entire 240 acre farm in a permanent conservation easement.

DAM MAINTENANCE

The District owns and maintains eight flood control dams in Rockingham County. The District owns Briery Branch Dam, Dry River Dam, Dry Run Dam, Hog Pen Dam, Hone Quarry Dam, Northwoods Dam, Slate Lick Dam and Union Springs Dam. To comply with state regulations and to ensure the safety of downstream landowners, the District performs annual inspections.

---

**CLEAN WATER FARM AWARDS**

All programs and services of the District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, handicap or political affiliation.

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Shenandoah Valley SWCD through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) supports the Shenandoah Valley SWCD under a section 319 grant and a WQIF grant.