



We work with the people who work the land.

SHENANDOAH VALLEY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021

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.

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 Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Sciences (VDACS), 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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Page County Representatives

Linda Campbell
Charles Newton
James Burke

Rockingham County Representatives

Kevin Craun, Chair
Stephen Lohr

Harrisonburg City Representatives

Dale Chestnut
William Latham, Vice-Chair

Appointed Board Members

Keith Sheets
Matt Booher

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Dan Downey
Walter Heeb
Lisa Perry
Blake Rogers
Rebecca Stimson
Keith Thomas

DISTRICT STAFF

Megen Dalton – District Manager

Elizabeth Dellinger – Conservation Technician/Operations
Leader

Megan Trice – Conservation Technician/Education
Coordinator

Chelsea Trice - Conservation Technician/Education Assistant

Josh Walker—Conservation Engineering Technician

Brian Willis – Conservation Technician

Shayna Carter – District Technical Assistant

Linda Sauder – Administrative Coordinator/Program Assistant

Keith Thomas – Program Assistant

Wayne Showalter – Conservation Aide

Felicity Zimmerman – District Technical Assistant

Melanie Lewis - PSNT Technician

Mary Milby - PSNT Technician

To learn more about the District, visit our website www.svsxcd.org
Like us on Facebook! [Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District](#)

COST SHARE PROGRAMS

The District implements Best Management Practices (BMPs) through cost share programs to improve local water quality. The District delivered 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 102 participants to complete the installation of many 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.



Virginia Agricultural Cost Share Program

Cost Share: \$811,872.14

Tax Credit: \$75,100.38

VIRGINIA CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(VCAP)

VCAP provides financial assistance to landowners to install urban BMPs.

The goal of this program is to provide landowners an opportunity to improve storm water management on their property. This program fosters the implementation of BMPs such as rain gardens, conservation landscaping, permeable pavement, green roofs, rainwater harvesting and bioretentions.

VCAP is funded through grant funds from the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts.



HARRISONBURG CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HCAP)

HCAP is an urban cost share program that provides financial incentives and technical assistance to property owners installing storm water projects in Harrisonburg. The City of Harrisonburg provides funding to the Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District to administer the HCAP program.

Similar to VCAP, HCAP fosters the implementation of urban BMPs such as conservation landscaping, permeable pavement, green roofs, rainwater harvesting and bioretentions. This fiscal year the District worked with 3 participants to complete the installation of 4 BMPs.

Harrisonburg Conservation Assistance Program

Cost Share: \$28,460.95



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 sixteen septic system replacements, six septic system repairs, fifty-nine septic system pump-outs and one public sewer hook-up. The Rockingham County Septic Assistance Program is funded through a Water Quality Improvement Fund grant provided by the Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Below is the cost share the District provided to participants through the program.

Rockingham County Septic Assistance Program

Cost Share: \$163,120.42

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The District provided natural resources conservation education to numerous students, teachers, chaperones and community members through Meaningful Watershed Education Experiences (MWEEs) and other educational and outreach presentations. In addition, various educational activities, models and resources were available to teachers and other organizations to support conservation education.



ENVIROTHON

The Envirothon is a field-oriented competition for high school students focusing on natural resources. The goal of the Envirothon program is to educate students in soils, forestry, wildlife and aquatics to enhance their knowledge of natural resources and conservation. This year's competition was conducted virtually due to COVID-19, and two teams from local high schools competed in the District's Envirothon held April 19-25, 2021. Harrisonburg High School advanced to the Area Envirothon virtual competition where they placed first, and therefore advanced to the State Envirothon Competition.

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. The District partners with the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County Parks & Recreation to offer workshops. Assembled rain barrels are also available throughout the year and can be ordered on our website at <https://svswcd.org/rain-barrels>



POSTER CONTEST

The District received a large number of posters created by local students in Grades K-12. These posters give the students an opportunity to convey their thoughts about soil, water and related natural resource issues through art. The poster contest starts at the District level, then SVSWCD forwards our local winning poster entries to the State for consideration at the state level. Below is a sampling of the posters received:



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 \$3,000 to a student from Harrisonburg High School, a student from Turner Ashby High School, and a student from East Rockingham High School.

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 Laura Henry of Lacey Springs Elementary School as the Elementary Conservation Teacher of the Year and Chris Riley of Luray Middle School as the Secondary Conservation Teacher of the Year.

CLEAN WATER FARM AWARD

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.

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY— G. GLEN AND ARLENE REID AND FAMILY



G. Glen and Arlene Reid, along with their children Deanna, Caroline, George and David received the **2020 Rockingham County Clean Water Farm Award**. The farm consists of 26 acres of hay ground, 25 acres of pasture, and some woodland. The Reid's manage a herd that consists of primarily red angus cattle including some that are registered. The Reid's have excluded the livestock from a spring fed tributary to Linville Creek on the property. To further their conservation efforts, the Reid's have also planted trees in the excluded areas on their property to enhance the riparian area and promote wildlife habitat.

In addition to the farming operation, the Reid's own and operate Glenhaven Greenhouses. Glenn and Arlene have been in the greenhouse business for over 35 years. The greenhouses are used to produce retail garden vegetables, herbs and flower plants as well as hanging baskets. In addition to the greenhouses, a high tunnel is intensively managed from March through Thanksgiving to grow a variety of vegetables that are sold wholesale.

Arlene is known as "The Plant Lady" from her regular segments of "The Green Thumb" on WHSV TV3. She also volunteers her time to work with the local FFA chapter in their greenhouse and hosts numerous field trips to Glenhaven Greenhouses every year.

Over the years, the Reid's have made significant improvements to their farming operation. Because of the time required by the greenhouses, the 50 acre farming operation is set up and managed in such a way that it requires minimal inputs of time. The farm is a showplace for how an operation can be managed for production while also providing wildlife habitat and improving soil and water quality.

PAGE COUNTY— ROBERT CUMBIA AND FAMILY OF THE L. M. LAWLER FARM

Rob, Amy and Linzy Cumbia of the L. M. Lawler Farm received the **2020 Page County Clean Water Farm Award**. The farm consists of 35 acres of hay ground, 100 acres of pasture, and some woodland.

The Cumbia's manage a Charolaise cow/calf herd. These cattle are managed year round on pasture in a rotational grazing system. The Cumbia's make multiple cuttings on the operation's hay fields before stockpiling forage in these fields for strip grazing in the winter months.

The Cumbia's have excluded their cattle from the South Fork of the Shenandoah River and the tributary that flows through the property. To further their conservation efforts, the Cumbia's have also planted trees in the excluded areas on their property to enhance the riparian buffer and promote wildlife habitat.



DAM MAINTENANCE

The District owns and maintains eight flood control dams in Rockingham County—Briery Branch Dam, Dry River Dam, Dry Run Dam, Dry River 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 and routine maintenance on these dams.



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 WQIF grant.