



NORTHERN NECK
SOIL & WATER

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Annual Report
July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010

Northern Neck Soil and Water Conservation District programs, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Mission:

To promote the stewardship of natural resources through leadership, education and technical assistance for natural resource owners and users.

Directors, Staff & Partners

Elected Directors:

Junius C. "J.C." Berger, Chairman (Richmond)
E. Derwin Booker, Jr., Vice-Chairman (Lancaster)
J. Vince Garland, Treasurer (Richmond)
William D. Allensworth (Westmoreland)
John A. Kelley (Northumberland)
H. Shirley Powell (Westmoreland)
Lora Smith (Lancaster)
Robert Vanlandingham (Northumberland)

Appointed Directors:

Matt Lewis, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent (Lancaster/Northumberland)
James Minor, At-Large (Westmoreland)

Associate Directors:

John Barber
Richard F. Haynie
Luther Welch

Staff:

J. Craig Brann, District Manager/Conservation Specialist
Faye A. Andrashko, BMP Information/Education Coordinator
Kathy E. Clarke, Office Manager
Brandon W. Dillistin, Conservation Specialist
Sam Johnson, NPS Specialist

Natural Resources Conservation Service:

Debbie Bullock, District Conservationist
Robert Lewis, Civil Engineering Technician
Jeb Minarik, Soil Conservationist

Cooperating Partners:

DCR, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
DEQ, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
FSA, USDA Farm Service Agency
Lancaster County
NACD, National Association of Conservation Districts
NNLC, Northern Neck Land Conservancy
NNMG, Northern Neck Master Gardeners
NNPDC, Northern Neck Planning District Commission
NNTC, Northern Neck Tourism Council
Northumberland County
NPS, National Park Service
NRCS, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
RC&D, Tidewater Resource Conservation and Development Council
Richmond County
USFWS, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VASWCD, Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts
VCE, Virginia Cooperative Extension
VDACS, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
VDOF, Virginia Department of Forestry
VDGIF, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
VDOH, Virginia Department of Health
VDOT, Virginia Department of Transportation
Westmoreland County

Introduction

What are Soil and Water Conservation Districts?

Soil and water conservation districts are local government entities that were created in the 1930s to promote soil conservation and protection of natural resources. A Board comprising local elected and appointed residents oversees a staff responsible for accomplishing these goals in cooperation with local, state and Federal partners. The Soil & Water Conservation Law within the Code of Virginia states:

“A soil and water conservation district...shall constitute a governmental subdivision of this State, and a public body corporate and politic. Exercising public powers...” (§10.1-5.38)

“They (a District and its Directors) shall have power to develop comprehensive programs and plans for the conservation of soil resources and for the control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention or agricultural and nonagricultural phases of the conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water within District...” (§10.1-546)

The Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District (NNSWCD) is responsible for assisting the agricultural community, landowners, residential property owners and local government in Westmoreland, Lancaster, Richmond and Northumberland counties in the wise management and maintenance of the region’s valuable natural resource base.

How were Districts formed?

Congress passed the Soil Conservation Act of 1935 to provide a permanent program to control the ever-increasing problem of erosion, floods and sky-blackening dust storms that at the time swept through the country. This policy was addressed by the development of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly SCS). To encourage local participation, President Roosevelt sent all state governors a letter requesting that legislation be passed to form soil and water conservation districts. In 1938 the Soil Conservation District Law of Virginia was passed so that local residents would take responsibility for directing programs aimed at solving conservation problems in their communities. Virginia currently has 47 Districts that are funded by local government appropriations and federal, state and private grants.

The NNSWCD Board began with four local producers in Heathsville in July 1940.

What is the District’s governing body?

A Board of elected and appointed Directors oversees a District. In any one District, there must be at least five Directors, two of which must be appointed by the elected Directors. One of the appointed Directors must be an extension agent. The term of office is four years, and Directors receive no payment for their services. In addition, each year the Board elects one Director as Chairman and one Director as Vice-Chairman. Districts also have the right to appoint Associate Directors. These advisors to the Board serve no specified term and do not vote.

The NNSWCD has ten Directors and five Associate Directors. Eight Directors are elected, two from each of the four Northern Neck counties, and two Directors are appointed by the Board. The NNSWCD Board meets monthly to conduct and oversee District business. These meetings are public, and the Board encourages attendance by sending meeting notices to local newspapers. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month.



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CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Letter from the Chairman

To Residents, Landowners, Producers and Local Governments:

The Northern Neck SWCD has continued its record of outstanding service to the Community during fiscal year 2009-2010. Our fine staff of five outstanding performers have met the challenges of administering a significant Ag BMP Cost-share program, participating in a pilot program to apportion water quality improvement goals in the Rappahannock Tributary Strategy to a county level in Richmond County, conducting or participating in LID educational venues and numerous other outreach and education programs to improve water quality, and working with Federal, state and local partners in various conservation programs and events. This report highlights many of those accomplishments.

I anticipate FY 2010-2011 will present a continuing challenge to the District, to our partners and to all of you. The recession has affected all of us. Our operating funds from the state have been further reduced, as well as cost-share funding. Our state Association (VASWCD) has been working and will continue to work with the Administration and the General Assembly to protect a viable level of operational and Cost-share funding for Districts. However, the requirement for improving water quality in the waters of the state will not diminish – only grow as population increases. So we will be in the proverbial position of ‘doing more with less’ once again.

Therefore, we continue to need your help and input as we tackle the daunting tasks of improving water quality in the Northern Neck creeks, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay; helping producers to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) which both reduce pollution and make economic sense; assisting local governments and partners in carrying out their responsibilities for conservation; providing or arranging for technical support to all our clients; and expanding an education program to reach our consumers, local governments and schools, and the public. Please contact any of our staff or Board members with your ideas, your suggestions for change, or to volunteer to help us accomplish our mission.

Sincerely,

J.C. Berger, Chairman

A partnership to conserve natural resources

Contributed Support

The NNSWCD receives funding from local government appropriations and federal, state and private grants. During FY 09/10, the NNSWCD received financial contributions from the following sources:

Local Funding:

Local Government Contributions:

In response to county support and partnerships, the District provides progress reports to each county's Board of Supervisors to keep local government leaders and staff informed and updated. In FY 09/10, NNSWCD presented to the Boards of Supervisors for the four counties, an overview of water quality issues and efforts, community financial and technical support of conservation practices, tributary nutrient reductions by basin, education programs, policy changes and special projects undertaken by the District. During FY 09/10, the NNSWCD continued to receive level funding from each of the four Northern Neck counties it serves: Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond and Westmoreland.

Newspaper Recycling Program:

The District began a newspaper recycling program in 1998 to create an educational fund for conservation projects, workshops, youth training and field days. A collection bin is located at the Warsaw office where students, town residents, producers, businesses and local newspaper offices contribute newsprint.

No-Till Drill Rental Program:

The NNSWCD promotes conservation seeding techniques through the rental of a no-till drill. In June 2006, the NNSWCD traded in its 10' John Deere™ no-till drill on a new 7' Great Plains™ no-till drill. Among some of the features of the new equipment were a V-bottom seed box for easy cleanout; a small seed box for clover, alfalfa and other small seeds; lockout hubs for reduced wear on chains and sprockets and a narrow transport width. With the reduced width, operators were able to access areas that were previously inaccessible and reduce the horsepower previously needed for operation. In FY 09/10, the no-till drill was rented for use on 386.6 acres.

Soil Survey CDs:

In January 2006, the NNSWCD began selling electronic versions via compact discs of the soil surveys for Northumberland/Lancaster, Richmond and Westmoreland Counties. The surveys delineate the soil types for land parcels and the associated traits of those soils. Information such as crop yield expectations, leaching variables, septic site suitability and many more traits are found in the surveys.

Sponsorships:

To help offset the cost of educational events and the District Newsletter, the NNSWCD often looks to local businesses and organizations for sponsorships.

In FY 09/10, the NNSWCD Sponsors included:

USDA-Farm Service Agency—Ag Day

State Funding:

DCR-Additional Staff Grant:

In FY 06/07, the NNSWCD was awarded a two-year Additional Staff Grant that enabled the District to hire additional staff to assist with the administration and implementation of the Virginia Ag BMP Cost-Share Program. Funding for FY 06/07 was for 1.5 technical staff positions; in FY 07/08, the funding was increased to 2.0 positions. During FY 08/09, the NNSWCD received a 9% reduction in funding due to mandatory statewide budget cuts. The 9% reduction continued in FY 09/10.

DCR-Cost-Share Grant:

The NNSWCD administers the state Agricultural Best Management Practice (BMP) Cost-Share Program, which provides funds and/or state tax credits for the installation of conservation practices preventing soil erosion and runoff that contribute to water-quality degradation in streams, rivers and the Bay. The program offers 45 different practices that can assist landowners and producers in maintaining soil on the land, with consequent benefits to crop production and water quality. The implementation of conservation practices also assists localities in working toward the nutrient and sediment reduction goals outlined in the Potomac and Rappahannock Tributary Strategy plans and the goals of the Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement.

The following table captures the practices installed and the funds used to assist residents with implementation during the FY 09/10 time period:

Conservation Practice:	Lancaster:		Northumberland:		Richmond:		Westmoreland:	
	Acres:	Funds:	Acres:	Funds:	Acres:	Funds:	Acres:	Funds:
Engineered Practices*	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ 1,500.00	-	\$ -
Permanent Cover on Cropland	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	6.2	\$ 1,948.35	-	\$ -
Continuous No-Till	681.2	\$ 17,030.00	2,287.1	\$ 61,760.00	1,122.0	\$ 39,112.50	2,208.5	\$ 67,782.50
Cover Crops	679.0	\$ 31,173.00	1,854.3	\$ 89,307.00	834.4	\$ 41,201.50	2,903.5	\$ 141,250.00
Nutrient Management Plan Writing	9,464.3	\$ 18,928.60	25,748.0	\$ 51,495.90	16,691.6	\$ 33,586.40	22,848.3	\$ 45,268.70
Nutrient Management Plan Implementation	474.2	\$ 2,845.20	1,340.4	\$ 7,510.50	894.4	\$ 2,683.20	20.3	\$ 60.90
State Tax Credit**	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -
TOTALS:	11,298.7	\$ 69,976.80	31,229.8	\$ 210,073.40	19,548.6	\$ 120,031.95	27,980.6	\$ 254,362.10

* Practices that require a site-plan design and must be maintained by the landowner for 5 to 10 years after installment.

**State Tax Credit for Agricultural Best Management Practices

DCR-Operations Grant:

Each year the NNSWCD receives funding from the Commonwealth, through the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, to support the costs of staff, rent, communications, travel and the like. In FY 08/09, the NNSWCD took an initial approximate 9% cut in funding followed by an additional 5.165% cut later during the fiscal year. In FY 09/10, operational funding endured an additional 15% reduction.

Federal Conservation Programs:

Federal funding was made available to landowners in FY 09/10 through the following programs:

The Conservation Reserve Program/Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CRP/CREP) provides two conservation options for landowners: 1) rental payments for removing cropland from production and establishing and maintaining vegetative cover for a minimum 10-year period; and 2) funding for the establishment of buffers on land adjacent to water. Landowners may choose a 10-year, 15-year or permanent easement contract. The program combines federal and state dollars to cover rental and incentive payments, materials to establish buffers or restore wetlands, BMP installation and annual maintenance costs. The programs are administered through the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD).

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) EQIP was approved in 1996 by amending the Food Security Act of 1985 (Farm Bill), reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 and again reauthorized in the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008. Locally, applications have been received and funded for forestry and a High Tunnel pilot project.

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative (CBWI) CBWI is part of EQIP. It is a new provision that was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. It provides technical and financial assistance to producers to minimize excess nutrients and sediments in order to restore, preserve, and protect the Chesapeake Bay. NRCS will offer incentive payments for specific conservation practices related to livestock exclusion and buffers, nutrient management, cropland rotations, and cover crops. Locally, applications have been received and funded for nutrient management, conservation tillage, cover crops, and crop rotation.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP) CStP encourages land stewards to improve their conservation performance by installing and adopting additional activities, and improving, maintaining, and managing existing activities on agricultural land and nonindustrial private forest land.

A summary of federal funding provided to landowners through these programs is presented as follows:

Fiscal Year 2009-2010

County:	CRP/CREP	EQIP	CBWI	CStP
Lancaster	\$7,508	-0-	\$22,805	\$137,082
Northumberland	\$10,732	\$5,562	\$24,535	\$282,567
Richmond	\$21,824	\$4,462	\$20,965	\$184,992
Westmoreland	\$27,238	\$18,586	\$19,545	\$373,006
*TOTALS:	\$67,302	\$28,610	\$87,850	\$977,647

**Federal fiscal year reporting dates are October 1st thru September 30th.*

Educational Programs/Community Outreach:

The NNSWCD provides ongoing services, programs, materials and information to producers, landowners and school groups throughout the year. District personnel also contribute to field-day and other community programs conducted by partnering agencies. In FY 09/10, the NNSWCD continued to build upon its educational activities and community outreach through a variety of programs and partnerships such as:

Agriculture Awareness Day (Ag Day):

NNSWCD held its annual Agriculture Appreciation & Conservation Day event this year in partnership with the Northern Neck Farm Museum. The April 29, 2010, event was held on the Museum grounds near Burgess.

The purpose of the annual Ag Day event is to allow students to see the different types of agricultural products and connect them to their daily lives, and to hear about how conservation practices relate to good farming and the products.

Some 180 third-graders and others from Richmond County Elementary School and Cople Elementary in Westmoreland County enjoyed the beautiful but chilly outdoors, and were educated and entertained at a variety of interactive agricultural and conservation exhibits.

On hand were volunteer expert presenters with hands-on SOL-based activities from nine areas of agriculture: grains, vegetables, horticulture, forestry, apiary, aquaculture, animals, soil & water conservation, and farm history. NNSWCD staff heard good student responses in interactive soil & water conservation decisions in demonstrations of runoff models; A.J. Erskine of Bevans Seafood and Cowart Seafood companies enlightened the students with facts on oysters and aquaculture, and Sam Johnson of NNSWCD, with his assistant Evan Johnson, showed examples of the green industry—horticulture—and demonstrated how to apply sod. Students were intrigued by the instant lawn. Bernadette Barber and Emily Simpson and their families introduced the students to their calf and goats and responded to many questions. Matt Lewis, NNSWCD board member and VA Cooperative Extension, Lancaster/Northumberland Counties, surprised students with facts about small grains grown on the Northern Neck, and Dana Boyle of Garner's Produce, Montross, engaged students in discussions and demonstrations on vegetable growing. At the VA Dept. of Forestry stop, Rich Steensma and Mike Aherron, students got dirty feeling the differences in soils, and noted different types of trees; and the Northern Neck Beekeepers demonstrated beekeeping and its importance to pollination. John Jenkins of the Farm Museum led a tour of the facility, highlighting old kitchen equipment and farm implements that surprised the students in the work needed to use them.

The day was capped by ice cream treats (associated with happy dairy cows), and a good time was had by all.

Clean Virginia Waterways:

As part of annual fall cleanup events coordinated by NNSWCD, volunteers from all four counties hauled over half a ton, 1134 pounds, of debris from five waterside sites around the Northern Neck.

On the morning of September 12, volunteers at the two Lancaster County sites recovered some 640 pounds of trash from shoreline areas at Windmill Point and Greenvale Creek Landing. Topping the list of items picked up were hundreds of cigarette butts, food wrappers, glass and

plastic bottles, plastic pieces, building materials, clothing items, tires, cans, Styrofoam, syringes, diapers, a pitch fork and a large stainless steel tank stuck in the sand at Windmill Point. Site captains Brandon Dillistin and Faye Andrashko led these efforts.

The September 26 volunteers arrived at Lodge Creek Landing in Northumberland County, first observing that there was little to pick up. Further scouting through the brush and bramble yielded 80 pounds of trash similar to earlier cleanups, but which included a large beach umbrella that had washed up and was tangled in the shoreline brush.

On October 10, seven trash-collectors, in cleaning up one mile of beach at Westmoreland State Park, found 61 pounds of debris that included, among other things, 784 cigarette and filters, 105 caps or lids, 53 food wrappers, 88 pieces of plastic, and 36 pieces of Styrofoam. Site captain Leah Coates of Chesapeake Governor's School, coordinated the effort there.

At Richmond County's Jones Creek Landing, on the afternoon of October 18, twenty-five men, women, and children braved the tail end of a nor'easter to recover 353 pounds of trash from, facing wind and misty rawness. Because of high tides, some debris had to be left for another time. Among the biggest numbers of items were 269 glass bottles, 134 beverage cans, 120 food wrappers, to name a few items. A deposited deer carcass was among the debris. A second cleanup scheduled for that day at a closeby site, Carter's Wharf Landing, was postponed until another date. NNSWCD's Kathy Clarke was site captain at this location.

Cost-Share Conference:

Due to the lack of any changes within the Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Program, the NNSWCD did not host a Cost-Share Conference during FY 09/10. Instead, the sign-up period was announced via radio announcements and ads in the local newspapers.

Down on the Farm Tour:

On Saturday, May 29, 2010, from 9 to 2, over 300 people visited four Richmond County family farms on the Northern Neck. The tours were part of the Down on the Farm: Gateway to Farming and Forestry event. Twelve local agencies and organizations and numerous local sponsors partnered to coordinate the event. Visitors traveled to sites that included dairy cattle, vegetables, a tree farm, grain crops, angus cattle, and even a vineyard (tastings included). Haywagon rides took visitors into the fields and forest with guides explaining the crops, forestry techniques and wildlife features. Petting dairy calves, fresh butter and honeybees were highlights. A shuttle bus at Rappahannock Community College in Warsaw provided free rides to sites. Stops included Tidewater Dairy Farm, Garner's Produce, Sabine Hall, and Belle Mount Vineyard.

Envirothon:

Envirothon is an internationally recognized competition which began in 1979. It is the largest non-athletic environmental high school competition that challenges students to use the information that they have learned to solve real-life environmental problems. Participating teams complete training in five natural resource categories: Soils, Aquatics, Forestry, Wildlife and a Special Topic. The 2010 Special Topic was "Protection of Groundwater Through Urban, Agricultural, and Environmental Planning."

For FY 09/10, while interest in participation increased due to expanded promotion of the event to teachers, the NNSWCD was unsuccessful in securing a local team and subsequently did not sponsor a Local Envirothon. The Area III event was hosted by Monacan SWCD on April 21st at

Camp Brady Saunders in Goochland County, VA. NNSWCD Education Coordinator Faye Andrashko assisted with preliminary planning and served as a team escort; Office Manager Kathy Clarke assisted with test scoring.

Farm Field Tours

NNSWCD staff assisted with two annual agricultural field days August 17th and 18th, 2009. The field days were organized for area farm producers by NNSWCD affiliates/Extension Agents Sam Johnson and Matt Lewis, Westmoreland and Lancaster/Northumberland County VA Cooperative Extension, respectively.

Producers saw corn and soybean plots and heard from host farm members, seed company representatives on their specific products, and Farm Bureau personnel on market outlook.

Chris Lawrence, State Agronomist with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, with a Rainfall Simulator demonstrated the cropping/production advantages of improving soil quality and maintaining residue on the soil surface, which can be achieved through no-till and use of cover crops.

NNSWCD and partners lent to the success of these tours. Craig Brann and Brandon Dillistin presented information on the VA Agricultural Cost-Share program, and NRCS's Debbie Bullock presented new cost-share programs available through NRCS. F.F. Chandler, Jr., of Windsor Farm, hosted the August 17 event. Brann Farm in Callao was the host farm for the August 18 program.

Hazardous Waste Collection:

Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District and Virginia Cooperative Extension staff assisted Westmoreland County in holding a hazardous waste collection day on Saturday, November 7, at the A. T. Johnson Human Services Building near Montross.

There, MXI Environmental Services collected 7,627 lbs of waste from 50 households. Materials collected included paint, old fuels, pesticides, cleaners, acids, batteries and fluorescent bulbs. Homeowners were very appreciative of this opportunity to rid their properties and the environment of these hazardous wastes.

On October 17, braving 48 degree temperatures and rain, in county-sponsored collections, residents of Lancaster and Northumberland Counties ignored the elements to get their hazardous material to the collection centers for disposal. In all, at the two respective county sites, a total of 162 citizens came out to rid themselves of almost two and a half tons of toxic materials, exactly 4,942 pounds.

Combined with this spring's June 13 Hazardous Waste Collections for Lancaster-Northumberland, when the waste specialists took in a record amount—almost six tons, or 11,621 lbs, the 2009 overall removal for the Northern Neck totals an impressive 24,190 lbs, over 12 tons, of hazardous materials removed from these three counties.

In Lancaster, fall electronics recycling by the Arc of Gloucester yielded 656 lbs of electronics, 950 lbs of computers/monitors, and 11 televisions.

Sam Johnson and Wendy Herdman assisted in Westmoreland, and Faye Andrashko and Matt Lewis, in Lancaster and Northumberland.

Holiday Lake Forestry Camp:

During the spring of 2010, the NNSWCD promoted the 2010 Holiday Lake Forestry Camp to schools, the public, and partnering agencies by offering to cover the registration fee for two area students 13-16 years of age. The camp is for students who have an interest in forestry, wildlife or related conservation activities and have a good academic standing. The camp was held on June 14-19, 2010 at the Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center located within the 20,000 acre Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. Despite efforts, no applications were received by NNSWCD.

Lancaster Middle School Science Fair:

For a second year, NNSWCD provided volunteer judges for the Annual Science Fair for grades 4 through 8, held this year on February 24, 2010. The volunteers consisted of Staff members Kathy Clarke, Brandon Dillistin, and Sam Johnson.

Lancaster Primary School Rain Garden:

During FY 09/10, the NNSWCD assisted in putting together a partnership interested in implementing stormwater and low impact development practices (rain gardens) at Lancaster Primary School. This partnership developed among the School, the NNSWCD, the Northern Neck Master Gardeners, and Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR). The school and master gardeners were interested in adding this component to their teaching garden. The NNSWCD and Friends were interested in promoting and demonstrating stormwater management practices in the Northern Neck. The FOR had grant funds for such a purpose so timing, need, resources and interest fell in place. During this time period, meetings were held with all parties to coordinate a work plan and roles. NRCS assisted the NNSWCD in surveying and location of practices. FOR and NNSWCD did closer soil study and discussion and location of practices. John Tippett of FOR did design and engineering drawings and developed a budget proposal. A school representative made local contacts for construction assistance. The master gardeners developed planting plans. Plans were expanded from a single rain garden at the teaching garden site with the addition of a larger bio-retention basin off the bus parking lot. The NNSWCD held presentations and demonstrations for the 3rd grade class on the upcoming plans for the gardens.

NNSWCD Newsletter:

The District produces and distributes a newsletter, *Conservation Around the Neck*, to producers, landowners and residents to inform them of new and existing programs, cost-share deadlines, legislative matters, water quality issues, regional meeting dates, educational opportunities for youth and other District and conservation events. Local businesses are encouraged to advertise to defray printing costs.

NNSWCD Publicity:

The NNSWCD issues timely press releases to all Northern Neck newspapers and radio stations, as well as to Rappahannock Connect, an electronic posting forum for non-profits.

NNSWCD Web Site:

The NNSWCD Web site, www.northernneckswcd.org or www.nnswcd.org, designed by VECTEC of Christopher Newport University from information and images compiled and coordinated by NNSWCD Education Coordinator Faye Andrashko, was officially launched March 26, 2008. During FY 09/10, Faye continued to manage and update the Web site.

Northern Neck Crop Production Conference:

On January 20, 2010 the annual Northern Neck Crops Production Conference was held at Cobham Park Baptist Church in Warsaw. As a result of financial contributions from NNSWCD, Three Rivers SWCD, and VCE, Dave Wolfskill, the National Corn Yield Contest Winner was obtained to provide his presentation “Breaking the Yield Barrier in No-Till Corn: Management Strategies.” NNSWCD Conservation Specialist Brandon Dillistin and NPS Specialist Sam Johnson attended the conference and provided an update on the current Ag BMP Programs.

Northern Neck Farm Museum:

In FY 05/06, the NNSWCD agreed to co-hold the easement on the Northern Neck Farm Museum (NNFM) with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF). The easement was finalized on December 27, 2006.

During FY 08/09, the NNSWCD took the lead in an environmental Low Impact Development (LID) initiative with the NNFM. Plans began in obtaining an engineering plan and grant funding for development and installation of a storm-water catchment system to manage and harvest rainwater at the museum’s barn building and grounds. At the request of NPS Specialist Sam Johnson, also a Farm Museum Board Member, the Williamsburg Environmental Group, Inc. offered its services, pro bono, to complete the design and engineering of the system.

During FY 09/10, the NNSWCD continued to assist the NNFM with the search for funding for a rainfall harvest and rain garden demonstration at the “Barn”/Museum site near Heathsville. Grant applications developed with District leadership were filed four times with no success. Efforts will continue to find support for this project.

Northern Neck Land Conservancy Boots & Barbeque:

In support of the Northern Neck Land Conservancy (NNLC), NNSWCD District Manager Craig Brann manned a booth at the group’s annual membership gathering, “Boots ‘n Barbeque” on Sunday September 20, 2009, at Cobham Hall Farm in Richmond County. The NNLC assists private landowners in protecting open space on their property through voluntary agreements that allow owners to retain title and use of their land for themselves and their heirs.

Northern Neck Master Gardeners Lawn Care Seminar:

On August 1, 2009, NNSWCD NPS Specialist Sam Johnson represented the NNSWCD at the NNMG annual Lawn Care Seminar “Beautiful Lawn, Healthy Bay” in Montross, VA. The event provided information on how to establish and maintain a lawn and was attended by approximately 60 people.

Northern Neck/Regional Recycling Project:

After informational meetings with the four Northern Neck county administrators and school superintendents, NNSWCD entered into a Memorandum of Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding with the counties of Northumberland, Richmond and Westmoreland, allowing for NNSWCD to initiate the coordination, research resources for startup funding, and establishment of a pilot program—a one-year regional school recycling pickup—to allow the counties to set the recycling program in place and to see firsthand the cost and conservation benefits for the counties, and to allow the children and teachers to participate in the stewardship of the region. Several local organizations, including Tidewater RC&D, VA Cooperative Extension, Master Naturalists, Recycling Network of the Northern Neck, lent their support to the project, agreeing to assist with educational programs and other advisory and outreach activities.

In 2009, grant fund proposals were submitted to VA Dept. of Mines, Minerals, and Energy and to a US EPA Educational grant. The first proposal was not awarded, and the EPA proposal was still pending at end of fiscal year.

Northumberland County Young Farmers Corn Contest:

In June 2007, due to the lack of an Advisor for the Northumberland County Young Farmers, the NNSWCD was approached by the group about assisting with their annual Corn Contest. The NNSWCD Board agreed that this was an excellent opportunity to show support to the local farmers and other local businesses and agribusiness groups. During September and October of 2009, NNSWCD Staff checked corn yield test plots in all four counties of the Northern Neck.

Richmond County Elementary School Fun Day:

On May 28, 2010, NNSWCD Office Manager Kathy Clarke manned a booth at the Richmond County Elementary School Annual Fun Day. Students and parents visited the booth and learned about the NNSWCD and conservation efforts.

Richmond County Fair:

On August 25-29, 2009, the NNSWCD hosted a booth at the Annual Richmond County Fair. Each member of the staff was assigned to man the booth one night out of the five-night event. Literature and bags were handed out to residents of the Northern Neck visiting the booth.

Strategic Plan:

In April 2008, the NNSWCD publicly announced in accordance with the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3707.(C) a public meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 22, 2008, from 10:00AM to Noon EST in the Community Room (beside Fire Department) of the Northern Neck Electric Cooperative on 173 Pine Street in Warsaw, VA. The purpose of the meeting was to review the Draft Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2009 through 2012 and solicit comments from the general public as well as interested groups.

Comments received at the meeting, as well as any written comments received in the office prior to the meeting, were considered in developing the final Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2009 through 2012. The final plan was adopted by the NNSWCD at the meeting held on May 14, 2008.

Stormwater Management Forum:

In March 2010, some 80 county, real estate, and construction professionals and interested citizens took part in a natural resource informational program sponsored by Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District, in cooperation with Friends of the Rappahannock. "Low-Impact Development (LID) Strategies for the Northern Neck: A Forum on Virginia's New Stormwater Management Amendments & Development Strategies Compatible with Stormwater and Water Quality Goals" was held at Rappahannock Community College in Warsaw. The program was a forum for providing specific information on the upcoming Stormwater Management amendments for new construction, to offer information and clear up misconceptions, and to provide further resources on Stormwater Management and LID processes.

The featured speakers provided valuable overviews: "The New Virginia Stormwater Management Amendments," Lee Hill, Asst. Director for Stormwater Management Programs, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation; "Low-Impact Development (LID) Review", Richard Street, Senior Environmental Engineer, Spotsylvania County; "LID Design Specifications and Cost Comparisons", Doug Beisch, Program Manager, Williamsburg

Environmental Group; “Shoreline Management and Strategies”, Karen Duhring, Shoreline Advisory Scientist, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester.

Realtors and other professionals were offered Continuing Education Units approved by the Virginia Department of Professional Regulation.

VASWCD Annual Meeting:

The 71st VASWCD Annual Meeting was held in Richmond, VA on December 6-9, 2009. The theme of the 2009 meeting was “*Virginia SWCDs: Conservation in Action; Showcasing District Work*”. The NNSWCD was represented by Staff members: Faye Andrashko, Craig Brann, Kathy Clarke, Brandon Dillistin, and Sam Johnson; and Directors: Chairman J.C. Berger and Vice-Chairman E. Derwin Booker, Jr.

VASWCDEF Scholarship Program:

Each year the NNSWCD locally promotes the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts Educational Foundation (VASWCDEF) Scholarship Awards Program. The Program supports the education of Virginia citizens in technical fields involving natural resource conservation and environmental protection through financial support to students majoring in or showing a strong desire to major in a course curriculum related to natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies. Four (4) \$1000 scholarships are awarded throughout the state each year.

Individual applicants must be full-time students enrolled in, or who have applied to a college freshman level curriculum. Applicants must reside or attend school in one of the four counties served by the NNSWCD: Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond or Westmoreland. Applicants must document a class ranking in the top 20% of his or her graduating class, a 3.0 or greater Grade Point Average or appropriate equivalent of individual scholastic achievement.

In FY 09/10, the NNSWCD received four applications. Given the strong pool of applicants, the Staff and Education Committee were tasked with selecting only one to submit to the VASWCDEF. Sam Frere, a 2009 NNSWCD sponsored Youth Conservation Camper, was chosen and ultimately awarded the Virginia Chapter, Soil and Water Conservation Society Scholarship in the amount of \$1000.

Virginia Ag Expo

The 2009 Virginia Ag Expo was held on August 6, 2009, at John N. Mills & Sons Farm located in Hanover and King William Counties. Noted as the largest agricultural field day in the state of Virginia, the event gave growers the opportunity to view the 2009 Virginia On-Farm Corn and Soybean Test Plots. Among the plots available were corn and soybean seeding rate, weed control, seed treatments and fungicide plots. Soybean planting dates were demonstrated with early, mid and late season plantings, along with barley versus wheat beans. In keeping with the diversity of the Mills operation attendees viewed pasture management, a unique silage storage system and wetlands and stream side mitigations. The NNSWCD was represented by District Manager Craig Brann, Conservation Specialist Brandon Dillistin, and NPS Specialist Sam Johnson.

Water Festival:

On September 29, and October 1, 2009, NNSWCD Education Coordinator Faye Andrashko participated as salt marsh instructor at the annual water conservation education event for sixth-graders of Lancaster and Northumberland Counties. Office Manager Kathy Clarke served as a

group escort for the September 29th event. The event was held at Camp Kekoka YMCA in Kilmarnock. In its eighth year, the event has primarily been run by some fifty volunteers on the Northern Neck.

Youth Conservation Camp:

For the past 33 years, the VASWCD has sponsored a weeklong summer conservation camp for Virginia high school students on the campus of Virginia Tech. The program brings together interested students for a week of learning about Virginia's natural resources from conservation professionals and faculty of Virginia Tech. Most of the instruction is hands-on and outdoors.

Each year the NNSWCD accepts applications to sponsor campers for the weeklong session. Applicants must be in grades 9-12 during the academic school year and cannot have previously attended. The total cost per student for FY 09/10 was \$550.00. The 2009 Youth Conservation Camp took place July 12-18, 2009, at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA. This year's camp hosted 60 students from across the state, representing 31 of the 47 SWCDs statewide. The NNSWCD sponsored three campers, Sam Frere of White Stone, Karsten Coates of Colonial Beach, and Haydon Garland of Callao. Also, representing NNSWCD as a YCC Counselor Intern was Jennifer "Charli" Crandell of Colonial Beach, who was voted by her camper peers as female YCC Camper of the Year in 2007.

Representation:

District Directors and Staff serve on various Boards, Councils and other committees to maintain knowledge and information of current natural resource issues and to provide input into developing programs, policies and funding.

In FY 09/10, the District represented its localities through the following:

- Ag BMP Advisory Committee & 3 Sub-Committees
- Ag BMP Modernization Steering Committee
- Ag BMP Modernization User Group
- Area III Spring Meeting Planning Committee
- Area III Challenge Steering Committee
- Area III Envirothon Planning Committee
- Area III Excel Roundtable
- Northern Neck Farm Museum (NNFM) Education Committee
- Northern Neck Master Gardeners (NNMG) Seminar Steering Committee
- Northern Neck Master Naturalists (NNMN) Curriculum Committee
- Northern Neck Recycling Regional Network
- Potomac Conservation Council (PCC)
- Potomac Watershed Round Table
- Rappahannock River Basin Commission (RRBC)
- Richmond County Tributary Strategy Implementation Pilot Project Steering Committee
- Three Rivers Environmental Educators (T.R.E.E.) Board & Planning Committee
- Tidewater Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D)
- Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees (VACDE) Finance Committee
- Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD) Executive Committee
- Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Leadership Council