



Annual Report

CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

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JOHN MARSHALL SWCD 2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 was busy at the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District (JMSWCD). In carrying out our mission to serve and educate the citizens of Fauquier County to ensure the proper stewardship of soil, water and other natural resources, some of the many accomplishments included:

Annual Awards Luncheon - The District held its annual awards luncheon on December 17 at Vint Hill. **The 2008 Harry Jones Conservation Farmer Award** for the Potomac Watershed was presented to Lou Giuliano and Rock Hill Farm of The Plains. Rock Hill is a 90 head cow/calf operation with about 120 acres of pasture, 100 acres of hay, and 180 acres of managed forest. Rock Hill has protected over 11,000 feet of stream bank and created over 10 acres of riparian buffer. **The TMDL Conservation Farmer Award** was presented to Lee Sherbeyn, owner of Choice Longhorns in Bealeton. Choice Longhorns is located in the Deep Run Watershed. Mr. Sherbeyn raises longhorn cattle and has protected 4,000 feet of stream bank and created three acres of riparian buffer. **The Agricultural Contractor Award** was presented to Anthony Dores, owner and manager of Madison Steel and Water. Mr. Dores has completed six livestock watering systems in Fauquier in the last few years, including solar powered systems. **The Edwin Gulick Conservation Education Award** was presented to Jim Scibek for Goldvein for his years of assisting with field days and farm tours.

Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program - During Fiscal 2009, Fauquier County farmers and landowners received over \$459,000 in cost-share for installing water quality protection practices on their farms. For more details see page 2.

TMDL Program - The District's TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) program on Thumb, Carter, Great,

and Deep Runs is underway. See page 3 for details.

USDA Federal Programs - The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) converts cropland and marginal pastureland adjacent to streams back to native grasses and trees. Details on page 3.

Educational Programs - Over 4,000 students participated in educational programs conducted by the District. These included programs on point and non-point source pollution, erosion and sediment control, watershed studies, soil studies, stream and pond monitoring, field days, and the Third Grade Farm Tour.

Erosion and Sediment Control (E&S) - The Erosion and Sediment Control Program was transferred from John Marshall to Community Development in October 2008.



Jim Scibek of Goldvein, Lee Sherbeyn of Choice Longhorns in Bealeton, Lou Giuliano of Rock Hill Farm in The Plains, and Anthony Dores of Madison Steel and Water were recognized at the annual awards luncheon in December.

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL COST-SHARE PROGRAM

The Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program has been administered by the District for over twenty years. This program provides financial incentives for farmers and landowners to install more than 45 different Best Management Practices that improve water quality and conserve valuable soil resources.

Farmers and landowners that implement agricultural BMPs can qualify for a 75% reimbursement of allowable expenses, as well as a 25% credit on their Virginia State income taxes for their out-of-pocket allowable expenses. The tax credit can be as much as \$17,500 and spread out over a 5 year period. To be eligible for the program, the practice must be designed in consultation with

staff to meet NRCS specifications, included in a conservation plan and approved by the District Board prior to construction. Since 1985, the JMSWCD has paid Fauquier County farmers \$4,437,304.10 to install conservation practices on agricultural land. In FY 2009, \$459,940.16 was paid out in cost share.

Cost-share applications are taken on a continuous basis and ranked according to established criteria. Priority considerations are given to those practices that display the most cost effective means to improve water quality.

Highlights of the Virginia AG Cost-Share Completed in 2009

PRACTICE	DESCRIPTION	INSTALLED	DOLLARS SPENT
Grazing Land Protection	Fences livestock from surface water, provides alternative water sources, hardened crossings, and cross fencing.	36,028 feet of stream protection fence installed, 620 acres of pasture treated.	\$215,330.31
Stream Protection	Fences livestock from surface waters, provides for hardened stream accesses.	11,818 feet of stream protection fence installed, 33.3 acres of buffer created..	\$47,858.67
Small Grain Cover Crop	Small grain, winter cover crop on cropland.	3,674.8 acres planted in cover.	\$122,851
Animal Waste Storage Facility	Facility to store and contain dairy waste for application to crops under favorable weather conditions.	1 system	\$70,000
Summary		45,720 feet of stream protection fence, 4327 acres under conservation treatment.	\$459,940.16



Hardened Stream Crossing for livestock and machinery. Water gates allow water and debris to pass but restrict livestock from moving into the protected riparian buffer.

Animal Waste Storage Facility. Dairy waste is stored in this nearly complete concrete structure and then applied to crop fields when the weather is favorable.

USDA FEDERAL PROGRAMS

There are several voluntary USDA programs available to landowners and operators in Fauquier County that help provide cost-share assistance to install conservation practices. They are the Conservation Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentive Program, and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program.

There are also easement programs available to protect Wetlands, Grasslands, and Farmland. All of these programs have been recently funded through the 2009 Farm Bill. These federal dollars would not have been available to Fauquier Landowners and

The Environmentally Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) Through EQIP Fauquier landowners may receive financial, and technical assistance to install both structural, and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural lands. In 2009 eight were activated by Fauquier landowners protecting 466 acres with \$103,490 federal dollars obligated to Fauquier Landowners.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) helps Fauquier landowners improve wildlife habitat and protect these on their

CREP PROGRAMS COMPLETED THROUGH 2009

Watershed	# Tracts	Acres Planted	Miles Fenced	State Cost-Share	State Tax Credit	State Carry-Over
Potomac	36	278.8	24.2	\$ 86,173.50	\$ 304.75	\$ 8,825.00
Rappahannock	35	517.2	26.1	\$157,725.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 3,230.00
Total	71	796.0	50.3	\$243,898.50	\$ 304.75	\$ 12,055.00

operators without the assistance, and sponsorship of the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Conservation Reserve program (CRP) is usually piggy-backed with another District Program called Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). This program has been popular with Fauquier landowners providing 796 acres of riparian buffer protecting 50.3 miles of streambanks. This program encourages landowners to convert highly erodible cropland, marginal pasturelands, or environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover such as warm season-grasses, or mast producing trees.

land. This can include both flora, and fauna. In 2009, four contracts were written to improve habitat on 47 acres of land for wildlife with \$18,967 federal dollars obligated to Fauquier landowners.

Other easement programs protect agricultural, and forestal lands by setting aside environmentally sensitive areas such as grassland meadows or wetland marshes from development. Two Fauquier landowners were participating in the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) in 2009. Also, the Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program can help Counties with matching funds to preserve some of their prime farmlands as a resource base for future generations.

TMDL Planning and Implementation

The District continues to implement the TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) program in Great Run, Carter Run, Thumb Run, and Deep Run watersheds focusing on education and outreach. Outreach efforts for the year included many newsletter articles and newspaper/magazine articles. Additional outreach efforts for the year included a Twilight Farm Dinner and Tour at Soldiers' Hill Farm in Warrenton, VA. The event provided an opportunity for landowners located in TMDL watersheds to view installed practices and to speak with contractors. The program manager also conducted several civic presentations. In November, she conducted a TMDL presentation to the Rotary Club in Warrenton, VA. The presentation provided an opportunity for representatives from local businesses to learn more about TMDL efforts in Fauquier County. Throughout the year, she also conducted TMDL presentations to the Warrenton Ruritan Club and the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission. Outreach efforts continued with

TMDL displays at the Middleburg Mare Center, the Blue Ridge Cattleman's Association Meeting, and the Fauquier Livestock Exchange.

Currently, one project is underway in Great Run watershed, one in Carter Run watershed, two in Thumb Run watershed, and one in Deep Run watershed. Once completed, the five projects will provide more than **20,000 feet** of stream bank protection and more than **\$150,000** in TMDL funds. To date, we have completed more **28 projects**, protected more than **49,000 feet** of stream bank, and provided more than **\$190,000** in TMDL funds. The District continues to work with landowners to develop new projects and several exist in the development phase. The program manager and other district staff members plan to continue identifying new methods of outreach to target landowners in the TMDL watersheds.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The John Marshall SWCD conducted conservation education programs for over 4,000 individuals in Fauquier County for FY 2009. District employees worked with elementary through high school age students, and adult audiences, providing information on a variety of conservation topics such as point and nonpoint source pollution, water quality, stream monitoring, soils, erosion and sediment control, and best management practices. Programs are customized to meet the needs of the groups requesting the programs. Participating students represented public, private, and home schooled youth.

During FY 2009, the JMSWCD educational programs included:

Cedar Run Monitoring Project - Students from Erin Wyld's Fauquier High School Ecology class conducted water quality tests for nitrogen, phosphorus, and dissolved oxygen, and collected macroinvertebrates on a monthly basis at Cedar Run as part of a long-term educational watershed study.

Conservation Field Days - 150 seventh-grade students, teachers, and chaperones from Taylor Middle School and 160 from Highland School and the Fauquier Home School Program participated in conservation field days at Messick's Dairy Farm in October. Guest instructors presented talks on milking, newborn calves, nutrient management, water quality, macroinvertebrates, soils, forestry, insects, and composting.



Dairy Farmer Morgan Ott exhibits dairy cows to third grade students at Choice Longhorns during the annual Third Grade Farm Tours.

Farm Tours - JMSWCD personnel coordinated and hosted over 800 third grade students, teachers, and chaperones at local farms in April. Students rotated through beef, swine, dairy, horse, nutrient management, farm life cycle, plant, nutrition, insect, soil, and water quality stations. Baerback Farms in Orlean and Choice Longhorns in Bealeton hosted the events.

Educational Displays - JMSWCD personnel set up and staffed educational displays at several events, including the Fauquier County Fair, Fauquier Benefits Fair, and the Children's Festival at Crockett Park.

Point and Non-Point Source Pollution - The Enviro-scape model was used to demonstrate the impact of everyday rural and urban events on watershed health to 420 3rd and 6th grade students..

Soil Studies - Over 500 third grade youth received hands-on instruction in soil studies, learning about structure and texture, the soil profile, and soil testing. All students made soil tubes.

Soil Tunnel - Over 1400 youth crawled through John Marshall's new soil tunnel at school events and the Fauquier County Fair.

Leaf Pack Project - The District helped the Environmental Club at P.B. Smith Elementary School conduct the Leaf Pack project which studied macroinvertebrates from Cedar Run and Great Run

Upper Rappahannock Monitoring - JMSWCD staff and volunteers continued monitoring of 8 sites for macroinvertebrates using the Modified Virginia SOS method. Streams are monitored on a quarterly basis and data entered on the SOS website.

E. coli Monitoring - Ten sites on Thumb Run were tested on a monthly basis for E. coli in cooperation with DEQ. Bacterial colonies were grown in the office using the Coliscan Easygel method, and results entered on the DEQ website. E. coli monitoring on Great Run began in June 2009.

Presentations - District personnel made numerous presentations to garden clubs, Master Gardeners, the Rotary Club, and other business and civic groups.

Warrenton Natural History Day Camp - Two members

Inter-Agency Cooperation

of the John Marshall SWCD staff assisted over 30 youth campers with macroinvertebrate monitoring and chemical testing in the Rappahannock River near Orlean.

Litter Pick-up - The staff of John Marshall SWCD took part in the annual Clean Waterways Virginia program and picked up over 400 pounds of litter on Rt. 802 where it crosses the Rappahannock River

TMDL Monitoring—JMSWCD monitored 8 streams for nitrogen, phosphorus, dissolved oxygen, and E. coli to serve as baseline data before new conservation practices are established. The streams included Deep Run, Great Run, Carter's Run, and Thumb Run which are TMDL streams.

Rain Barrel Workshops - The John Marshall SWCD hosted two Rain Barrel Workshops where 66 participants



made 90 rain barrels at the Fauquier Extension Office. Rain barrels have become very popular since the dry summer of

2007 and Conservation Districts around the state are conducting workshops. Future workshops are planned to meet the demand.



Tim Mize, Extension Agent, conducts the Soil Station at Baerback Farm during the Third Grade Farm Tour.

The Annual Report is a yearly publication of the **JOHN MARSHALL SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**, 98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 31, Warrenton, Virginia, 20186-2849.

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The Vision of the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District is to serve the citizens of Fauquier County as the leader in ensuring proper stewardship of soil, water and related resources.

The Mission of the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and education to the citizens of Fauquier County in proper soil stewardship and water quality protection to ensure the wise use of the county's natural resources.

BOARD MEETINGS

The District conducts monthly board meetings to deal with conservation issues and landowners' concerns within Fauquier County. The public, as well as cooperating agencies, are invited to attend District meetings and provide input. Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held the second Wednesday at 5:00 pm each month at the JMSWCD office on Alexandria Pike in Warrenton.

SUPPORT

The Fauquier County Board of Supervisors supports the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District through an annual contribution and provides administrative assistance through the Department of Finance and the Department of Human Resources, to administer payroll, benefits, and personnel matters.

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

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