

Teacher's Conservation Corner

John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District

Earth Day and Arbor Day Approaching

Arbor Day is scheduled for April 27, although different schools and communities celebrate throughout the month of April. Earth Day was first celebrated in 1970 and is a celebration of support for environmental protection. The first Arbor Day was observed in Nebraska in 1872 and it has become an annual observance that celebrates the role of trees in our lives.

Many similar activities can be done to celebrate both days.

If planting a tree on your school grounds is not an option (they usually end up getting mowed down), the Arbor Day Foundation has many ideas for students that include art, reading, writing poems, picking up litter, and observing

nature.

Navigating through the Arbor Day website www.arborday.org should give you plenty of ideas if you want your students to observe the event. The National Education Association has a number of Earth Day resources for elementary school students [here](#).

John Marshall SWCD can assist with any ideas or events you may want to plan.



Chesapeake Bay 101

Every few months, the Chesapeake Bay Program releases a short 3-4 minute video about different factors that affect the Bay. All videos can be found [here](#). The most recent video, titled "Fish Food," discusses the food chain of the Chesapeake Bay and the scientists who are studying it.

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Forestry and Conservation Camps

John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District (JMSWCD) is seeking applicants for two conservation-oriented camps this summer.

Holiday Lake Forestry Camp is scheduled for June 19-24 at the Holiday Lake 4-H Center near Appomattox, Virginia. This camp is for students ages 13-16 who have an interest in forestry and natural resources. The cost to attend is \$85 for the week. Holiday Lake Forestry Camp is ideal



Students at Forestry Camp test their skills in the Lumberjack Field Day. Photo: VA Dept. of Forestry.

for students to explore and experience activities in forestry and wildlife related careers and to experience hands on learning about natural resource conservation.

Students must be nominated for Forestry camp by an adult such as a teacher, youth leader (scout, church, etc.), or a natural resource professional. Nomination forms are available at <http://dof.virginia.gov/forestry/camp/>.

Nominations close on April 7.

The second camp is the Youth Conservation Camp, held July 9-15 on the campus of Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. This camp is for students in grades 9-12 (including students graduating in May or June).



Students at Youth Conservation Camp ride on a VA Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries boat to go electrofishing.

Students will learn about fisheries, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and agricultural best management practices. Field trips include visits to Claytor Lake State Park, the Cascades waterfall, and a canoe trip down the New River. The camp is free for the top two Fauquier County applicants and \$550 for all other applicants. To apply for Youth Conservation Camp, contact the JMSWCD to get an application. Applications are due to JMSWCD by 5:00pm on May 1. For more information on either camp, call 540-347-3120 x3 or email: johnmarshall.swcd@vaswcd.org.

Soil Studies Still Available

Some schools will study soils in late winter or spring and the District still has a supply of materials for



Soil sieves can be used to separate out different sized particles of soil.

teachers who want the Soil Tube program (geared for third grade students).

The District also has the Soil Tun-

nel available to bring to schools. This tunnel allows students to see what it would be like if they were able to crawl underground.

In addition to soil tubes, the District also has soil sieves. Students can place a dry soil sample in the top compartment and shake it to their hearts content and observe the different size soil particles that filter thru the screens in each compartment. The District has five sets of sieves to lend out to schools.

If you have yet to study soils or you want to give your students a review before the SOLs, contact Michael Trop at michael.trop@fauquiercounty.gov or call 540-316-6639.