



# The Conservation Strip

## John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District

### “Urban” Cost-Share Program

The Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP), which began last year will continue to be funded until at least June 2018. Funding incentives are still available for reducing storm-water pollution from urban and residential properties. VCAP reimburses eligible practices at 75% of the cost. There are a few changes to the program for this year, including an increase in many of the cost-share caps.

Urban Best Management Practices (BMPs) increase the filtering capacity of a site and work to reduce impacts from highly developed areas. All non-agricultural property owners, including residents, businesses and public facilities are eligible for VCAP assistance. Under VCAP, a JMSWCD staff member will visit the site to review

current conditions, potential water quality issues and the feasibility of installing various urban BMPs.

A conservation plan and design may be developed and submitted to the state VCAP committee. If the practice is approved by the committee, the practice will be installed, inspected and paid at the reimbursement rate. Property owners will agree to maintain the practice for ten years. Several of the practices have the added benefit of enhancing habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife.

VCAP will provide funding for the following practices: Impervious Surface Removal, Conservation Landscaping (meadow, tree, or mulched bed planting), Rain Gardens, Dry Wells, Constructed Wetlands, Vegetative Stormwater Conveyances (dry swales, wet swales, step-pool conveyances), Rainwater Harvesting, Bioretention and Infiltration systems, Permeable Pavement, Green Roofs, and Living Shorelines.

For more information or to schedule a District site visit, contact Kris Jarvis at 540-347-3120 x6525.

### Spring 2017

#### Mission Statement

Our Mission is to provide leadership, technical assistance, information, and education to the citizens of Fauquier County in proper soil stewardship, agricultural conservation methods, and water quality protection so as to ensure the wise use of the county's natural resources.



#### In This Issue

- ◆ Education Update
- ◆ How Do You Start A Farm?
- ◆ From the Rapp., For the Rapp.
- ◆ Strategic Plan Update
- ◆ Water Quality Program



# Education Update

Every year, the District offers a number of educational tools/programs and opportunities. One new tool is the Augmented Reality Sandbox, an interactive sandbox that can be brought to classrooms. It is designed so that elevation contours and colors are projected onto the sand in real time when the sand is moved around the box. In addition, a virtual rainfall can be created and it will flow like normal water, based on the topography of the landscape in the box. The District can bring this tool to various locations to conduct lessons on watersheds, water resources, contour lines, and topography.

John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District (JMSWCD) is also 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 for students to explore and experience activities in forestry and wildlife related careers and to experience hands on learning about natural resource conservation.



*A student electrofishing at Claytor Lake.*

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 for 2017 will 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.

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 or if you are interested in a demonstration or program involving the Augmented Reality Sandbox, call 540-347-3120 x3 or email: [michael.trop@fauquiercounty.gov](mailto:michael.trop@fauquiercounty.gov).

## How Do You Start A Farm?

Many people ask the Department of Agriculture every spring, what should I do when I begin farming? One of the best answers is to plan for your soil's health. Soil is a key ingredient for any type of farm. You need to do some conservation planning for the soil on your farm. Here are some of the best steps to do that.

- 1) Keep soil erosion to a minimum: you cannot tame something that is running away. To do that, always keep your soil under cover preferably with a green crop growing on it year-round. This will minimize tillage and maximize organic matter.
- 2) Prevent soil compaction by staying off the soil when it is wet.

- 3) Diversify crops, particularly ones that will supply organic matter as well as nutrients. Legumes are a good example of this as they can supply nitrogen to the other plants.
- 4) Last of all, give it some time. It takes mother nature years to build the soil, so we need to be patient. It may take five years or more for the real benefits of soil building to take effect.

For further information, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA at 98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 31, Warrenton. Additionally, you can email [roger.flint@va.usda.gov](mailto:roger.flint@va.usda.gov) or call 540-347-3120 x3.



## Third Annual From the Rapp., For the Rapp. Event

For the third consecutive year, the John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District, Friends of the Rappahannock, and the Piedmont Environmental Council are hosting *From the Rappahannock, For the Rappahannock: A Celebration of Land and Water Conservation* on April 9 at Marriott Ranch. It will be a day to celebrate successes for land and water conservation.

Starting at 9:00 am, there will be a tree planting event where two acres will be planted in native trees and shrubs. From 1:00-4:30 pm, there will a lunch with fresh oysters from the Oyster Company of Virginia, picnic fare, and local beer and wine. There will

also be hay rides to tour conservation practices, an electrofishing demonstration, live music, fly tying demonstrations, and yard games.

Tickets are \$35 (children 14 and under admitted free) and can be purchased at <http://fromtherappahannock.eventbrite.com>. Those who come to plant trees in the morning will receive free admission to the afternoon event; however, you still need to reserve one of the tickets at the website listed above. For more information, contact Bryan Hofmann with Friends of the Rappahannock at [bryan.hofmann@riverfriends.org](mailto:bryan.hofmann@riverfriends.org).



*Serving oysters at Marriott Ranch. Photo Credit: Paula Combs, Piedmont Environmental Council.*

## District Strategic Plan Update

The John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District has completed the lengthy process of updating our 4-year strategic plan. This process has involved online surveys and individual interviews with stakeholders and partners. The draft version will be presented to

the Board of Directors at the April 12 Board Meeting for final approval. If you are interested in a draft copy, please contact the District. The approved version will be published on the John Marshall SWCD website.

**John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District**

98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 31  
Warrenton, VA 20186  
(540) 347-3120 x3  
johnmarshall.swcd@vaswcd.org

www.johnmarshallswcd.com

Hours: 7:30 am-4:30 pm  
Monday-Friday

**District Directors**

A. Gray Coyner, Chairman  
John Schied, Vice Chairman  
Deirdre Clark, Sec./Treas.  
Mary Lou Trimble  
Tim Mize

**Associate Directors**

John Bauserman  
Howard Grove  
Patricia Johnson  
Michael Webert

**Honorary Directors**

Henry Green

**JMSWCD Staff**

District Manager  
Jennifer R. Hoysa  
Conservation Manager  
Tom Turner  
Conservation Specialist  
Larry Dunn  
Conservation Specialist  
Claire Hilsen  
Conservation Specialist  
Kris Jarvis  
Conservation Education Specialist  
Michael Trop

**NRCS Staff**

District Conservationist  
Roger Flint  
Soil Conservationist  
Casey James

**Volume 34, No. 4**

# Water Quality Monitoring Program

Are you interested in becoming more involved with local water quality efforts? John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District (JMSWCD), in partnership with PEC and Friends of the Rappahannock, will be holding a Water Quality Monitoring Training on Saturday, April 29.

The classroom session will be held at the Orlean Volunteer Fire Department at 6838 Leeds Manor Rd in Orlean. It will be followed by a field training session at a nearby private property in Orlean.

You will be trained on how to identify and assess macro invertebrates, measure physical and chemical properties of a stream, and properly sam-

ple for bacteria. After completion of this program, you will have the knowledge to conduct water quality monitoring with the District and will be able to assist them with collecting important water quality data throughout Fauquier County.

The training is open to adults and children and will consist of a classroom and field session. All materials will be supplied, but please bring snacks and water. Suggested attire for the field session are boots or waders, pants that you don't mind getting dirty, and extra socks.

Registration is available online at: <https://www.pecva.org/events/747-water-quality-monitoring-training>.

## Calendar of Events

April 9	1:00 PM	From the Rapp., For the Rapp.	Marriott Ranch
April 12	4:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
April 18/19		JMSWCD 3rd Grade Farm Field Days	Local Farms
April 29	9:00 PM	Stream Monitoring Workshop	Orlean Fire Hall
May 10	4:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
May 20	TBA	JMSWCD River Cleanup	Kelly's Ford
May 29		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
June 14	4:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office

**Staying Connected:** The John Marshall SWCD makes it easy to stay connected through social media. If you're on Facebook, "Like" our page to get updates on what's happening at the District.



The Conservation Strip is a quarterly publication of the John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District. To be added to our email list, please send an email to Jennifer Hoysa at: jennifer.hoysa@fauquiercounty.gov.

All programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status.