



2018 Annual Report

This Annual Report documents our activities that have occurred during the 2018 Fiscal Year (FY), covering July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. The mission of John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District (JMSWCD) 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.” This year’s highlights for the District include:

Annual Awards Luncheon - The District held its annual awards luncheon on December 19, 2017 at Stoneridge Events Center in Warrenton. Five awards were presented to local farmers, instructors, contractors, and District partners to acknowledge their work in conservation. Full details can be found on page 6.

Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program - During FY 2018, Fauquier County farmers and landowners received over \$592,000 in cost-share for installing water quality protection practices on their farms. See page 2.

USDA Federal Programs - The Natural Resource Conservation service provided Fauquier landowners with technical assistance to install a variety of conservation practices through programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, the Conservation Reserve Program/Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, and the Conservation Stewardship Program. See page 3 for details.

Educational Programs - A record total of 6,485 students, parents, teachers, and members of the public participated in educational programs conducted by the District. These programs included Farm Field Days, educational displays, high school water monitoring, and classroom programs that discussed soil and water conservation. See page 4.

Community/Outreach Programs - JMSWCD staff conducted a variety of community and outreach programs including water quality monitoring and our tree planting projects which were conducted for the sixth consecutive year. The District also completed a project under the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP). More information on page 5.

Director Changes - In January, Mary Lou Trimble stepped down as a director for JMSWCD. Mary Lou had been involved with the District for over 30 years, serving as a director for 16 of those years. She was JMSWCD’s first female director and served as Board Chairperson from 2004 to 2012. Howard Grove was appointed to serve as Mary Lou’s replacement.

New Associate Directors - Four new Associate Directors were appointed by the Board of Directors this past spring. Ken Alm, Norman Bower, Ed Deberry, and Leslie Grayson were welcomed on as new Associates.

Contents	
Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program	2
USDA Federal Programs	3
Education	4
Community/Outreach	5
Awards	6

Cover Photo: Willingham Farm, 2017 Clean Water Farm Award Winner for the Rappahannock Basin. Credit: Kris Jarvis.

Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program

Since its formation in 1966, the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District (JMSWCD) has been a reliable partner for the farmers and landowners in Fauquier County. For the last 33 years JMSWCD has used two main vehicles to deliver conservation options to our community partners; the Virginia Agricultural Cost Share and Tax Credit Programs. These programs provide financial incentives for the installation of more than 60 different best management practices (BMPs) that improve water quality and conserve valuable soil resources.

Farmers and landowners that implement agricultural BMPs can qualify for reimbursement on allowable expenses, as well as a 25% credit on their Virginia state income taxes for their eligible out-of-pocket expenses. The tax credit can be as much as \$17,500.

To be eligible for cost-share or tax credit through the District, practices must be designed in consultation with JMSWCD staff to meet state and federal specifications, be included in a conservation plan, and be approved by the District Board prior to construction. As of July 2018, JMSWCD has allocated over \$10 million to Fauquier County farmers for the installation of conservation practices.

In FY2018 JMSWCD dispersed \$592,823.33. The majority of this funding went towards livestock exclusion practices (86%). Additionally, the District paid out 13% of our funds to cover crops and cropland conversion practices. By all accounts, agricultural conservation is a significant part of the JMSWCD mission and our office looks forward to another productive year of conservation partnership.

2018 Agricultural Program

PRACTICE	DESCRIPTION	INSTALLED	DOLLARS SPENT
Stream Exclusion (SL-6, WP-2, LE-2)	Fences livestock from streams, provides alternative water sources and crossings	42,320 feet of stream bank protected, 88 acres of riparian buffer created	\$377,049.68 Cost-Share \$7,410.62 Tax Credit
Continuing Conservation Initiative (CCI-SE1)	Provides incentives to extend the lifespan of livestock exclusion practices	135,043 feet of stream bank protected, 108 acres of riparian buffer protected	\$135,043.00
Small Grain Cover Crop (SL-8B and SL-8H)	Small grain, winter cover crop on cropland	1,983 acres in cover crops	\$61,680.97 Cost Share
Cropland Conversion (SL-1)	Plants perennial grass on cropland to reduce soil erosion	53 acres of grass planted	\$15,446.88 Cost Share \$62.50 Tax Credit
CREP (CP-22, CRFR-3, CRSL-6)	Stream exclusion, riparian forest buffer, and woodland forest buffer under CREP	920 feet of stream bank protected, 0.57 acres of riparian buffer protected	\$2,808 Cost-Share
Nutrient Management (NM-1A)	Provides assistance do develop a nutrient management plan	Plans written for 397.4 acres	\$794.80 Cost-Share
Summary		178,283 feet of stream bank protected, 3,202 acres of conservation treatment*	\$592,823.33 Cost-Share \$8,023.30 Tax Credit

*Includes pastureland covered under the SL-6 grazing land management practice.

USDA Federal Programs

There are several voluntary USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) 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 and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program.

There are also easement programs available to protect wetlands and farmland. All of these programs for 2018 were funded through the 2014 Farm Bill. These federal dollars would not have been available to landowners/operators without the assistance, and sponsorship of the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is usually piggybacked with another District program called the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). 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. There are 2 CRP/CREP contracts of 28 acres in Fauquier which are being reviewed for renewal.

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) provide landowners with technical assistance to install structural and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural lands. In 2018, eight contracts with 173 conservation practices were ap-

proved for landowners, to protect 470 acres with \$718,562 federal dollars obligated to Fauquier landowners. Two new CSP contracts were made to landowners for their continued conservation and protection of 266 acres of farm land in Fauquier County.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) protects agricultural and forestal lands by setting aside environmentally sensitive areas such as grassland meadows or wetland marshes from development. Federal funds were used to restore and enhance 70 acres for wetland species. Also, ACEP easements help the County with matching funds to preserve some of their prime farmlands as a resource base for future generations. NRCS has partnered with the Fauquier County PDR program, and the Piedmont Environmental Council to protect 400 acres of farmland.



Jim Hankins of the Fauquier Education Farm conducts a workshop with NRCS personnel to discuss no-till methods and cover crops.

Inter-Agency Cooperation

JMSWCD works closely with several other government agencies to meet its technical and educational goals. Staff from other agencies frequently assist the District in conducting technical field assessments, educational programs, and field days. JMSWCD staff in return, have extended their technical expertise to assist other agencies with their programs.

In the last year, personnel from Virginia Cooperative

Extension, Virginia Department of Forestry, Department of Conservation and Recreation, Fauquier Community Development, and numerous volunteers from local farms, the Fauquier Master Gardeners, and Piedmont Environmental Council have assisted with District programs. District staff have made presentations on best management practices, cost share programs, and stream monitoring, all in an effort to further our common interests and goals.

Educational Programs

JMSWCD conducted conservation education programs for a record 6,485 individuals in FY 2018.

District employees worked with student and adult audiences, providing information on a variety of conservation topics such as point and nonpoint source pollution, water quality, stream monitoring, soils, and best management practices. Programs are customized to meet each group's needs. This year's educational programs included the following:

High School Water Quality Monitoring

Students from Deb Fisher's Fauquier High School Ecology classes conducted water quality monitoring at Cedar Run. Kara Reffitt's Ecology and AP Environmental Science classes at Kettle Run High School conducted water quality monitoring on South Run. Students monitored stream velocity, width, depth, turbidity, temperature, pH, nitrates, phosphates, and dissolved oxygen, as well as collecting macroinvertebrates on a monthly basis to assess the ecological health of the streams.

Conservation Field Days

Field days were coordinated for approximately 560 third grade students, teachers, and chaperones in April. The Fauquier Education Farm in Warrenton and the Chapman Farm in Bealeton were the hosts for these educational events. Guest instructors presented talks on cattle, water quality/macroinvertebrates, soils, forestry, and insects among others.

Educational Displays

JMSWCD personnel set up and staffed educational displays at several events, including the Fauquier County Fair, Fauquier Public Schools Benefits Fair, Goldvein Jubilee, and Sky Meadows State Park Fall Farm Field Days.

Point & Non-Point Source Pollution

The Enviroscape model was used to demonstrate the impact of everyday rural and urban events on watershed health to over 400 2nd - 6th grade students.

Soil Studies

542 third grade students received hands-on instruction in soil studies, learning about structure, texture, the soil profile, and soil testing. All students made and took home soil tubes.

Soil Tunnel

Over 170 youth crawled through John Marshall's soil tunnel at school events, providing them a worm's eye view of the world.

Leaf Pack Project

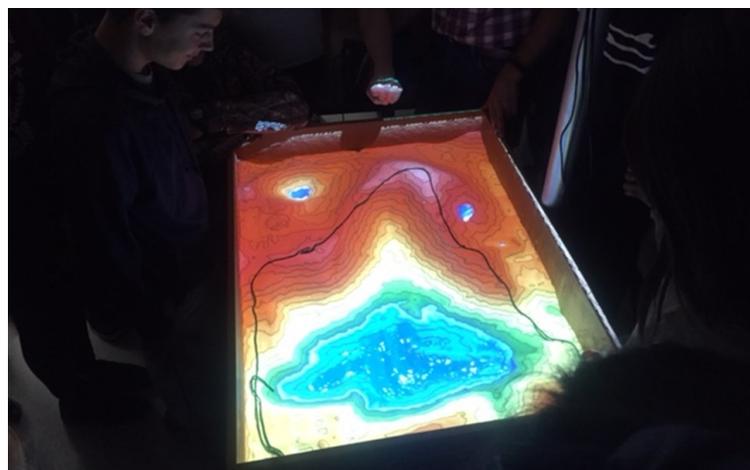
More than 250 students and teachers participated in the Leaf Pack Project which studied macroinvertebrates from local water bodies. This project demonstrates the importance of food chains in streams.

Augmented Reality Sandbox

Over 850 students and teachers saw the District's new Augmented Reality Sandbox in action. Demonstrations on watersheds, landforms, and topography were provided.

Other Events

Staff members also assisted the Town of Warrenton with Arbor Day activities, Bradley Elementary School with a cleanup of Cedar Run, and the Old Rag Master Naturalists with their class training.



Students learn about watershed delineation with the Augmented Reality Sandbox.

Community/Outreach

Web Presence

The District maintains a website hosted through Fauquier County. Our website can be reached by going to: www.johnmarshallswcd.com. The District also maintains a Facebook page which is used to disseminate conservation information. To follow us, go to www.facebook.com/jmswcd.

Water Quality Monitoring

JMSWCD staff and volunteers continued monitoring sites for macroinvertebrates. Streams are monitored quarterly and data entered on the SOS website. Sites on Thumb Run, Great Run, and Marsh Run were tested on a monthly basis for *E. coli* in cooperation with DEQ. Bacterial colonies were grown in the office using Coliscan Easygel, and results entered on the DEQ website. Streams were also monitored to collect baseline water quality data before new conservation practices are established.

River Access

The District began working with partners to increase public boating access along the Rappahannock River. Several potential access sites have been identified and discussions with willing landowners are ongoing.



A group of students from Highland School after planting trees on Blue Ridge Farm.

Tree Planting

Approximately 160 students and adults helped plant trees on about 5.8 acres of riparian buffers on six farms. Students received lessons on how to plant trees and the benefits of trees for water quality.

Community Events

The fourth annual From the Rappahannock, For the Rappahannock event was held at Marriott Ranch in April and was attended by over 110 people. In the morning, volunteers planted trees to restore a riparian buffer and in the afternoon, Rappahannock River oysters were served and tours of the conservation practices were held.

Virginia Conservation Assistance Program

The District completed one new contract under the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) which focuses on treating erosion and stormwater issues from developed sites. The completed practice was for conservation landscaping which converted areas of bare soil and fescue into mulched beds with native plants. This makes 3 projects completed in the 2 years that the program has been running.



Ryan Yates practices tree identification with Counselor Emily Gibbs at Youth Conservation Camp.

2017 AWARDS

exclusion practices at his family's two farms, for a total of 3.5 miles of stream bank protection and the creation of 26 acres of riparian buffer. A portion of this buffer has been planted to native trees and shrubs. Daron was also the Grand Winner for the Rappahannock River Basin, one of only 10 basin awards given across the state.

Conservation Farm Award

GONE AWAY FARM (owned and operated by Stan and Susan Sloane) has worked to protect 2,950 linear feet of stream bank, created two acres of buffer and improved grazing on 47 acres of land. They planted one of their buffers to native hardwood trees and shrubs.

Clean Water Farm Award

DARON CULBERTSON has completed a total of five stream

Conservation Contractor Award

JASON PAYNE, CREST HILL LANDSCAPING LLC has installed over 14,000 feet of stream protection fence for multiple landowners in many challenging landscapes with high praise from all program participants. Jason has demonstrated exceptional professionalism with all of his work.

Conservation Partner Award

PIEDMONT ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL has consistently assisted in the promotion of the District's conservation goals, particularly the installation of stream exclusion practices, the restoration of the Thumb Run watershed, and most recently, the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program.

Edwin F. Gulick Conservation Educator Award

JIM HANKINS (Fauquier Education Farm) has worked to educate local citizens about agriculture and leads multi-week classes and evening workshops open to the community about a variety of agricultural and conservation topics.



The John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District recognized (from left to right) Daron Culbertson, Jason Payne, PEC, Jim Hankins, and Susan Sloane.



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Kris Jarvis

Conservation Education Specialist

Michael Trop

Office Administrator

Wendy Merwin

NRCS STAFF

District Conservationist

Roger Flint

Soil Conservationist

Casey Dietzen Iames

OUR MISSION

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.

OUR VISION

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.

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, the Department of Human Resources, and the IT Department to administer payroll, benefits, personnel matters, and provide IT support.

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

BOARD MEETINGS

The District conducts monthly board meetings to deal with conservation issues and landowner concerns within Fauquier County. The public, as well as cooperating agencies, are invited to attend meetings and provide input. Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm at the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District office at 98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 31 in Warrenton.

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.