



The Conservation Strip

John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District

SWCD Election in November

Fall 2015

As we move through fall and into November, one thing we can always count on is election season in Virginia. This year in Fauquier County, voters will cast their ballots for Board of Supervisors, School Board, Sheriff, and others. There are also three spots up for election to the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District (JMSWCD) Board of Directors.

This year, there are three candidates running for election to the JMSWCD Board of Directors: Deirdre B. Clark, Arthur Gray Coyner, and William R. "Bill" Frazier.

The John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District covers only Fauquier County and as a result, the board is comprised of five members: the three elected members, one member appointed by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board (currently held by Mary Lou Trimble), and the County agricultural extension agent (Tim Mize).

District directors are responsible for oversee-

ing the general operations of the District which include approving conservation plans, cost-share, and tax credit approvals. In addition there are seven duties listed in the Code of Virginia that District directors are responsible for:

1. Identify soil and water issues and opportunities within the district or related to the district and establish priorities for addressing these issues;
2. Seek a comprehensive understanding of the complex issues that impact soil and water, and assist in resolving the identified issues at the watershed, local, regional, state, and national levels;
3. Engage in actions that will improve soil and water stewardship by use of locally led programs;
4. Increase understanding among community leaders, including elected officials and others, of their role in soil and water quality protection and improvement;
5. Foster discussion and advancement within the community of positions and programs by their district;
6. Actively participate in the activities

(Continued on page 3)

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

- ◆ **Water Withdrawal Limits**
- ◆ **Rain Barrels for Sale**
- ◆ **The Importance of Soil Health**
- ◆ **Redesigned Website Coming**



Water Withdrawal Limits

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Office of Water Supply is reaching out to the agricultural community for farm-related water withdrawal information and is asking the District to share information with producers.

Water withdrawal information collected is used in the management of water resources. As an example, the information was recently used in the creation of the first comprehensive State Water Resources Plan. For that reason, it is important that agricultural water withdrawals are reported so they are taken into consideration.

Since 1982, water withdrawal information has been collected annually through the Water Withdrawal Reporting Regulation, which requires the reporting of any withdrawal (groundwater or surface water) for crop irrigation if the withdrawals for any single month meet or exceed one million gallons. DEQ estimates that both of the following examples, if one or the other were to occur during the course of one month, will meet the withdrawal threshold for crop irrigation:

- Irrigating 37 acres to a depth of one inch
- Irrigating for over 65 hours with a 250 GPM pump

Crop irrigators do not need to report withdrawals from ponds collecting surface water unless the ponds

have been dug to a depth that intercepts the groundwater table.

All other withdrawals such as those for livestock watering, cooling, and facility cleaning require reporting if the daily average withdrawal (groundwater or surface water) during any single month **exceeds 10,000 gallons per day**. Examples of farms that most likely meet the non-crop irrigation thresholds include dairies with 350 or more lactating cows, feedlots with 600 or more cattle, and a farm with more than 150,000 broilers.

Many farms do not have metering devices on their water sources. Producers may estimate their withdrawal amounts for reporting purposes. Information on how to calculate irrigation and livestock watering withdrawals can be found [here](#) (DEQ-OWS 07-15-2015). These will help determine if an operation meets one of the thresholds for reporting.

Withdrawal data is due to DEQ by January 31 for the previous calendar year. Information from past years is appreciated, as well as information from withdrawals that are under the reporting threshold. Reporting is quick and easy with the online reporting option, but hardcopy forms are also available. For more information, and to register to report, contact Sara Jordan, DEQ Water Supply Planner at 540-547-7901 or sara.jordan@deq.virginia.gov.

Rain Barrels For Sale

John Marshall SWCD only has **two** rain barrels remaining. These are 65-gallon EarthMinded barrels which can be used to store rainwater to wash vehicles, water your garden, or water your lawn.

These barrels are \$75 each or \$140 each for two. They come fully equipped with all the hardware needed to fully assemble and attach to your downspout. Grab yours now before somebody else does!

This fall is a great time to get a rain barrel and be ready for an early spring planting.

RIGHT: 65-gallon EarthMinded Rain Barrel. Photo: EarthMinded Consumer Products



The Importance of Soil Health

Via Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

What's critical about soil health now?

World population is projected to increase from 7 billion to more than 9 billion in 2050. To sustain this level of growth, food production will need to rise by 70 percent. Between 1982–2007, 14 million acres of prime farmland in the U.S. were lost to development. Improving soil health is key to long-term, sustainable agricultural production.

Soil health matters because:

Healthy soils are high-performing, productive soils, reduce production costs and improve profits, protect natural resources on and off the farm, and reduce nutrient loading and sediment runoff, increase efficiencies, and sustain wildlife habitat. Franklin Roosevelt's statement, "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself," is as true today as it was 75 years ago.

What are the benefits of healthy soil?

Healthy soil holds more water, and loses less water to runoff and evaporation. Organic matter builds as tillage declines and plants and residue cover the soil. In fact, one percent of organic matter in the top six inches of soil would hold approximately 27,000 gallons of water per acre. Most farmers can increase their soil organic matter in 3-10 years if they adopt conservation practices to achieve this goal.

How to keep your soils healthy:

1. Keep it covered.

2. Do not disturb.
3. Use cover crops and rotation to feed your soil.
4. Develop a soil health management plan.

What is a Soil Health Management Plan?

It's a roadmap to soil health which outlines a system of practices needed to enhance crop production and soil function, and improve or sustain water quality, air quality, energy efficiency and wildlife habitat. Some of the recommended conservation practices include: Conservation Crop Rotation, Cover Crops, No Till, Mulching, Nutrient Management, and Pest Management. It provides environmental, economic, health, and societal benefits by saving energy (by using less fuel for tillage, and maximizes nutrient cycling), saving water and increases drought tolerance (by increasing infiltration and water holding capacity as soil organic matter increases), and reducing disease and pest problems. It also improves income sustainability for farms and ranches and improves plant health.



NRCS: Soil is one of our important and limited Natural Resources.

SWCD Elections in November (cont'd.)

(Continued from page 1)

of the district and ensure district resources are used effectively and managed wisely; and

7. Support and promote the advancement of districts and their capabilities.

The JMSWCD Board of Directors meet on a monthly basis. The public is always welcome to attend these meetings which are held the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm (unless otherwise noted) at the JMSWCD office: 98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 31, Warrenton, Virginia.

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
William Frazier, Vice Chairman
Deirdre Clark, Sec./Treas.
Tim Mize
Mary Lou Trimble

Associate Directors

John Bauserman
Howard Grove
Patricia Johnson
John Schied
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
TMDL Specialist
Kris Jarvis
Conservation Education Specialist
Michael Trop

NRCS Staff

District Conservationist
Roger Flint
Soil Conservationist
Casey Dietzen

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Redesigned Website Coming

Fauquier County is currently in the process of redesigning its website. As a result of these changes, the website for John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District will be redesigned into what we hope will hopefully be a more organized and user-friendly interface.

The web address for the District will not change and you will still be able to visit us at www.johnmarshallswcd.com.

We are looking to add features to our website which will allow users to find

their watershed, download cost-share forms, obtain contractor information, and check specifications for agricultural best management practices.

We are currently in the process of working on the website redesign and if you have suggestions for any additional content or features, please contact us at 540-347-3120 x3 or johnmarshall.swcd@vaswcd.org. It is much easier for us to add content now during this redesign process than it will be for us to add it later, so please get your suggestions in as soon as possible!

Calendar of Events			
October 1	9:30 AM	John Marshall SWCD TRC Meeting	JMSWCD Office
October 12		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
October 14	4:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
November 3		Election Day (directors up for election)	
November 11		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
November 18	4:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
November 26-27		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
December 16	2:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
December 24	12:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
December 25		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
January 1		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	

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.