

# Teacher's Conservation Corner

## John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District

### Soil Lessons Available Again for 2015-16 School Year

The John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District is once again offering soil lessons to students of all ages. The main program (Soil Tubes) is tailored for third grade students (SOL: 3.6, 3.7). The District also does soil programs for middle and high school classes (agriculture, ecology, environmental science, etc.) which go more in depth about soil processes.

In the past school year, the District conducted soil programs at eight schools in the county, reaching over 500 students.

The Soil Tubes lesson for third grade students takes about 30 minutes per class. Each student gets to make a soil tube featuring topsoil, subsoil, and bedrock and the District

supplies all the necessary materials for the lesson. Programs for older students involve a field component (soil sampling, pH measurement, etc.) and can be adapted to the length of the class period.

The District also has equipment that teachers can borrow to enhance their lessons. These include soil sieves (for comparing particle sizes), moisture meters, and soil pH meters.

If you would like to schedule a lesson or borrow any equipment, please contact Michael Trop at the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District by phone at: 540-347-3120 x3 or email [michael.trop@fauquiercounty.gov](mailto:michael.trop@fauquiercounty.gov).



Volume 9, Issue 1  
September 2015

#### In This Edition

- ◆ 2015-16 Soil Lessons
- ◆ Mountains to the Bay Watershed Academy
- ◆ Envirothon



John Marshall SWCD  
98 Alexandria Pike  
Suite 31  
Warrenton, VA 20186

Michael Trop  
Conservation Education Specialist  
[michael.trop@fauquiercounty.gov](mailto:michael.trop@fauquiercounty.gov)

540-347-3120 x 3



## Mountains to the Bay Watershed Academy

Mountains to the Bay is a professional development opportunity for 4th through 7th grade teachers. Mountains to the Bay participants travel from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Chesapeake Bay over four weekends throughout the school year and receive SOL-correlated curriculum and tools to deliver a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience in an interdisciplinary manner.

Upon successful completion of the program, schools are eligible for a **grant of up to \$150 per participant** and up to **80 recertification points**. Hotel, food and curricu-

lum are **FREE** to the teacher and school system.

Interdisciplinary teams of science, math, language arts and social studies teachers are encouraged to attend (art, librarian, and others welcome too!). Teams of 4-6 are preferred but smaller teams are welcome.

To register for the Academy, please visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M2BWatershedAcademy>. For more information, email Stephanie DeNicola at [stephanied@culpeperswcd.org](mailto:stephanied@culpeperswcd.org) or call 540-825-8591.

## Envirothon

Envirothon is a team based natural resources competition for high school students. Students who participate learn stewardship and management concepts and work to solve real world environmental problems. Each team consists of five students.

Throughout the year, students gain skills and knowledge in Soils, Aquatics, Wildlife, Forestry, and a current environmental issue. This year's current environmental issue will be invasive species. Previous topics have included sustainable agriculture, urban forestry, and salt water estuaries. At the competition, students take tests in all five subject areas and also give an oral presentation formulating a strategy to address the current environmental issue.

The program is field-oriented, community based, and gives students an opportunity to work and connect with natural resource professionals.

Area competitions are held in April with the State contest held in May. Dominion Power sponsors Envirothon on the local and state level and the contests are organized by Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Teams are now being formed for this coming school year. If you are interested in forming a team or know of students who are willing to participate on a team, please contact the District. For more details on the Envirothon program, check out the Envirothon website at: <http://www.vaswcd.org/promotion/envirothon-2012>.

Soils	Aquatics	Wildlife	Forestry	Special Topic (Invasive Species)
1. Physical Properties	1. Abiotic Factors	1. Birds, Mammals & Herps	1. Tree Physiology & Identification	TBD
2. Soil Ecosystems	2. Biotic Factors	2. Wildlife Ecology	2. Forest Ecology	
3. Chemical Properties	3. Aquatic Environments	3. Conservation & Wildlife Management	3. Sustainable Forest Management	
4. Soil Conservation & Land Use Mgmt.	4. Water Protection & Conservation	4. Wildlife & Society Issues	4. Trees as a Renewable Resource	
5. Soil Surveys				