

AREA V - District Reports
Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation District
Quarterly Board Meeting
April 4, 2019

Blue Ridge SWCD
Halifax SWCD
Lake Country SWCD
Patrick SWCD
Peaks of Otter SWCD

Peter Francisco SWCD
Piedmont SWCD
Pittsylvania SWCD
Robert E Lee SWCD
Southside SWCD

BLUE RIDGE SWCD



March 7, 2019: Area V Envirothon Training (Ag & Technology) at Ferrum College. Dr. Timothy Durham (right, Agronomy Professor at Ferrum College) prepares students, teachers and guests for the drone presentation/demonstration by Samantha Smith-Herndon from the Institute of Advanced Learning & Research in Danville, VA.).Bonnie Mahl (left, VASWCD Education & Training Coordinator)



Lazy Acres Angus Farm receives local press coverage for receiving the 2018 Roanoke River Basin Award and the 2018 Clean Water Farm Award in the March 13, 2019 edition of the Franklin News Post. Pictured left to right: Steve Furrow, Jason Thurman, Juanita Thurman and John Thurman.

Two separate Information for Bids for mowing/maintenance and herbicide/seeding went out for the district's watershed dams. A pre-site visit was performed on March 12th with a showing of five interested contractors.

Four directors and district staff attended the March 6th Area V Spring Meeting at the Glenwood Center in Huddleston, VA.

Blue Ridge SWCD FOIA Officer: Kathy B. Smith, Program Manager/Education Coordinator
Library of Virginia: Records Officer: Kathy B. Smith, Program Manager/Education Coordinator and
Additional Record Officer: Patricia R. Hodges, Administrative Secretary/Treasurer.

BLUE RIDGE SWCD, continued

The district's Conservation Specialist and Program Manager/Education Coordinator presented "Proper Septic Tank Maintenance" and shared information on VASWCD/Leo Painter Scholarship, Youth Conservation Camp and Dominion Envirothon to the Catawba Ruritan Club.

The District has begun planning the 2019 Annual Farm Tour which will feature Franklin County.

HALIFAX SWCD

Justin Smith and Luke Hudson, Conservation Specialists have started making site visit, conservation plans, and cost estimates for several producers who are interested in our DEQ TMDL grant. The Lower Banister River and Terrible Creek watersheds in Halifax County have been found to have above normal levels of E. coli bacteria in them. As part of their cleanup plan, DEQ has allocated funding to Halifax Soil and Water Conservation District to administer technical assistance and on-farm project funding to help farmers voluntarily exclude livestock from creeks and ponds in these impaired watersheds. These projects include stream exclusion, cross fencing and installing or developing clean, reliable water alternatives such as wells. The grant will cost-share 85% of eligible components of the projects.

Halifax SWCD along with other agriculture agencies of the county just wrapped up our Winter Ag Breakfast Series. The topics this year included Beef Cattle Genetics, Soil Health, Ag Policy, Row Crop Production and Forestry Management. We held this series the second Tuesday's of the winter months. Farmers enjoyed breakfasts we provided thanks to our sponsors.



LAKE COUNTRY SWCD

Oil Recycle Pick-up

The Lake Country SWCD is coordinating with Atlantic Industrial Services, Inc. to pick up approximately 1980 gallons of used oiled in March from producers located in Brunswick and Mecklenburg Counties. This program provides a service to producers to help dispose of used oil in an environmentally safe way.

Conservation Awards Banquet

The District held its annual Awards Banquet and presented producers with awards for their efforts in good conservation practices.

- Forestry Award receipts were Allen and Mary Turnbull
- Conservation Farm of Year and Clean Water Farm Samuel J Lambert, III and son Josh Lambert

Also several board members were recognized for their years of service & contributions to the district – William Austin Puryear, Sam G. Griffin, and Andrew T. Pittard, III.



- The District has four no-till drills and one manure spreader. The staff is preparing for a busy spring weather providing.
- The District received six Erosion and Sediment Control plans for review and approval this quarter.
- The district has been busy finalizing BMP designs with DCR engineers and finalizing soil samples and nutrient management plans for cover crop BMP's.
- Enviroscape Models
69 Clarksville Elementary fourth grade students were enticed with a demonstration presentation of the Environmental Enviroscapes model. Lake Country SWCD teamed with Southside SWCD for presentations educating students on watersheds, water quality and the importance of our natural resources.

PEAKS OF OTTER SWCD

During our third quarter, Peaks of Otter SWCD approved our remaining 100% cost-share SL-6 backlog projects! Installation has been a battle with the record rain fall but we hope to get all the old backlog projects off the books by the end of the year! Two SL-6 projects were completed protecting 4,218 feet of streambank. Our District partnered with USDA, NRCS, FSA, VCE and the Forest Farmer's Market to host the Direct Market Success informational meeting. This meeting was held to spotlight women in the agricultural sector of Bedford County and offer information on local farm programs. Peaks of Otter also hosted the Area V Meeting at the Glenwood Center in Huddleston on March 6th. We received many compliments on the venue and the superb catering! Many thanks to our guest speaker, Martin Leamy, from the National D-Day Memorial.



PETER FRANCISCO SWCD

Education

Peter Francisco Soil and Water Conservation District's Education Coordinator was injured leaving us to have to cancel a few scheduled programs. Elise is back in the office a few hours a week. The District is sponsoring Envirothon teams from both of the high schools in the counties we serve. We also awarded four \$1,000 scholarships for college-bound students residing in Buckingham and Cumberland Counties.

The District teamed up with Cooperative Extension and Forestry for its annual Earth Day program at Buckingham County Preschool. Due to scheduling conflicts, we had to move the event up a month. Below are some photos from the event.

PETER FRANCISCO SWCD, continued

Technical Conservation

Currently finishing up Outlet Basin Repair on 4 watershed flood control dams; returning them to the original as-built design. Projects are funded through the Small Dam Repair program and assisted by DCR Dam Safety Consultant Engineer Charles Wilson. Pictures shown are the before and after versions of one structure.



PIEDMONT SWCD

Education and Outreach

The District hosted 2 landowner breakfast meetings, which were attended by 75 participants. Topics included **“Landowner Liabilities and Risk Management”** and **“What to Know Before Building a Pond.”** Partner agencies present: DEQ, DCR, Army Corps of Engineers, NRCS, VCE

Piedmont SWCD hosted an Envirothon workshop in conjunction with Peter Francisco SWCD. Schools from both Districts attended the workshop, which included presentations from a local grain producer and a representative from a precision agriculture consulting firm about how technology is used to complement farming operations. Partner agencies (DOF, NRCS, VDGIF) put on presentations and hands-on activities.

The District hosted a Girl Scout watershed patch workshop as well as a soils demonstration and farm site visit with Longwood University students.

PIEDMONT SWCD, continued

Watershed Dams

Piedmont SWCD is serving as the lead District for the RFP for engineering services for SWCD-maintained dams across the state of Virginia. The District has received several signed MOUs from other Districts who will be participating in the joint procurement of the engineering services process and contract.

Staff Awards

Staff were presented with awards at the 2018 VASWCD Annual Meeting. Kevin Dunn received a 10-year service award from the VACDE. Deanna Fehrer and Emily Gibbs received the Chaffin Employee of the Year Awards for their service categories: more than 10 years and 1-4 years, respectively. Charlie Wootton received the Outstanding Employee Award from the VACDE.



Photo: Kirby Woolfolk (Area Forester) shows students how to measure trees using a Biltmore stick

ROBERT E LEE SWCD

Weather has held up a lot of progress on fencing construction projects. Doing a lot of inspections of watershed dams. Working with OCB backlog landowners on revising their cost-estimates to turn into DCR.

SOUTHSIDE SWCD

Education Report:

Southside SWCD has been busy doing educational programs despite the fact that some programs that were cancelled due to weather:

Clarksville Elementary: Conducted a program with the enviroscape for the 4th grade classes for Lake County SWCD.

Eureka Ecology Club: Endangered species program for 18 5th grade club members.

Bacon District Elementary School: Soils program for the 3rd grade students.

Central Middle School: pH program for 123 8th grade students.

The Educational Project program is expanding to include hand-painted flower pots along with the hand-painted habitat houses.

Southside SWCD will be assisting the Bacon District Elementary school in formulating an Ecology Club. The big project that we have planned is to install a butterfly garden at the school!

Watershed Dam Update:

Southside SWCD staff, directors and a county supervisor have just completed the annual inspection of the 12 Roanoke Creek Watershed Dams in Charlotte County. The repair to the storm damage at Roanoke Creek Dam 68 caused by Hurricane Michael will be completed within the next few weeks.



ESC Program

During the last 3 months, Southside SWCD has approved two ESC plans for construction projects in Charlotte and Lunenburg Counties.

SOUTHSIDE SWCD, continued

VACS Program

Southside SWCD had four BMP projects to be completed within the last 3 months; 3 SL-6 projects and 1 SL-9, totaling \$107,038.31 that was paid to producers. In FY '19, the District has allocated \$362,125.00 for 5 SL-6 projects, 8 cover crop practices and 1 stream crossing. Currently, Southside SWCD has 14 remaining pending SL-6 practices totaling in estimated cost at \$458,033.72.

Respectfully submitted,

Wilkie W. Chaffin

Area V Chairman

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