



VACDE

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF
CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

VASWCD Board Meeting Report September 2020

VACDE Meetings/Activities

The VACDE will hold our quarterly board meeting November 9th. The agenda will include a review of our annual employees training sessions hosted Virtually through the zoom platform, planning for the SECDEA mid-year meeting in March 2021, planning for the upcoming virtual winter business meeting in December, discussion of items on our annual plan of work for the remainder of 2019 and what to expect for 2020.

The VACDE's DEI committee developed a Statement of Solidarity, which went out for public comment in September and was adopted September 9, 2020.

VACDE Fundraising efforts are on hold due to limitations on physical meetings due to the COVID-19 concerns.

SECDEA Annual Conference

The South East Conservation District Employee's Association annual conference in Pigeon Forge, TN in November has been canceled due to the COVID-19 concerns. We will hold a virtual Business meeting on November 4, 2020. Due to the cancelation of the SECDEA's mid-year planning meeting for the SECDEA executive officers in April 2020, we will be "re-hosting" in March 2021. Planning is currently under way to re-negotiate with the venue on a contract.

VASWCD Annual Meeting

The VACDE is planning for our winter business meeting to be held virtual on the zoom platform on Tuesday, December 8th at 9:00a.m. Elections for the positions of: President, Vice President, Area 2, 4 and 6 representatives will take place at the business meeting.

Annual Service Awards recognizing employees for their years of service will be presented during the virtual meeting, as well. Awards will be mailed to employees. To be eligible to receive a service award, an employee must be a current VACDE member (have paid membership dues for the current calendar year).

The VACDE will also recognize an employee who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and professionalism in their job duties with the Outstanding Conservation District Professionals Award. Nominees must have been employed for three (3) years and be a current member of the VACDE. The recipient will be recognized during the Virtual Winter Business Meeting and will receive a plaque and a check for \$300. The deadline for submission of nominations is **Monday, October 19th** and applications should be sent to Kelly Snoddy, VACDE President at Kelly.snoddy@vaswcd.org.



VACDE

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF
CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

Virtual Employee Trainings in partnership with VASWCD **(Graves Mountain Training Agenda options listed)**

- Technical: Ag Waste Management -- 85 attendees (2 CEUs)
 - Trainer: Amanda Pennington and Ben Chester, DCR
- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Training -- 45 attendees (2 CEUs)
 - Trainer: Guy Johnson
- New Employee Meet & Greet (All Employees Welcome)
 - Facilitator: Tabea Zimmermann, Colonial SWCD & Chris VanVlack, Loudoun SWCD
 - Registration and Session Details:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAtce6hrz4sGtHFfOKnMeJ_KrCvI_PhqDc
- Technical: Pasture Condition Score (2 CEUs)
 - Trainer: JB Daniels, NRCS
 - Registration and Session Details:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUldemqrjgoHNwzJRrdRQR0plm1YDw5lhMU>
- Technical: AM Portion – Erosion Fundamentals (RUSLE2 Background)
- PM Portion – Assessing Sheet & Rill Erosion with RUSLE2 (Running RUSLE2)
- (4 CEUs for Conservation Planners - Must Attend AM & PM)
- (2 CEUs for Nutrient Management Planners)
 - Trainer: Chris Lawrence, NRCS
 - Registration and Session Details:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcpduGoqzsuGtGZMBpWaE9Nef8JmkxogMwN>
- Technical: Grazing Plan Development (2 CEUs)
 - Trainer: JB Daniels, NRCS
 - Registration and Session Details:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlkfuCogzkiHNFfHtFClaxDnZsC6RkYYee>
- Personnel Management Training
 - Trainer: Terri Higgins, HR Specialist
 - Registration and Session Details:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwucumtqjMiHNG2Zssahk1zFxcGvXF5faO>
- Education Outreach: Water Conservation & Literature
 - Trainer: Julie Head, Eastern Shore SWCD
 - Registration and Session Details:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYkdu2urD0tHNO0eGROFmkyV47fgR5MllbF>

Special thanks to the Beals Fund as managed through the VASWCD Educational Foundation for contributions to assist us as we host a different kind of training opportunity. Scholarship funds for employee attendance to Graves Training/Annual Meeting were under-utilized due to not having an in-person meeting. The VACDE has instead directed the funding to assist in speaker fees for virtual trainings.

Employees Training Financial Report

Income:

Registrations	\$0
Support from Beals Fund	\$1,500

Expenses:

Venue	\$0
Speaker	\$400
Scholarships paid	\$0
	<hr/>
	\$400

MANY THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS, DIRECTORS AND DISTRICT EMPLOYEES WHO PROVIDED/ARE PROVIDING TRAINING DURING THESE VIRTUAL SESSIONS!



Statement of Solidarity and Support

The members of the Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees (VACDE) are tasked with protecting the Commonwealth's natural resources by assisting its residents in understanding, appreciating, and implementing conservation efforts. The VACDE supports Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD's) in partnering and serving all of Virginia's residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, gender identity, education, economic status, political affiliation, physical ability, and the many other aspects of diversity. The events unfolding across the country in recent months clearly expose that there is much work to be done to achieve equitable and just treatment for all. Particularly in this moment, we stand with and support our Black, People of Color, and Indigenous employees and communities as we work together to encourage mindfulness and inclusion of all aspects of diversity.

The VACDE acknowledges the role that conservation employees play as representatives of their local SWCD's in promoting conservation efforts within their communities and ensuring their programs and initiatives are accessible to all. The VACDE's recently-formed Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has held meetings since March 2020 to begin conversations about how District employees may increase their awareness and sensitivity to diversity and inclusion issues. We seek to translate such knowledge and skills into on-the-ground education, outreach, and technical conservation efforts that are accessible to everyone. The VACDE supports the DEI Committee in its pursuit of training and educational opportunities for its membership that will lead to positive personal and organizational change. All SWCD employees, directors and affiliate partners are welcome to attend a meeting and/or connect with committee members to learn more.

It is challenging to disassociate current events unfolding across the nation and Virginia from the VACDE's mission of equipping conservation professionals to best serve all of Virginia's residents and communities. The VACDE stands in its mission to provide professional development, leadership, and to serve as a voice on behalf of District employees. We are committed to listening to and representing its membership. We welcome your questions, your feedback, your concerns, and your stories. It is imperative that we strive to make our organization and the work we carry out more inclusive and accessible to the diverse and evolving constituency we serve. We will continue to examine and pursue ways for the VACDE to adopt policies, practices, and promote initiatives that are inclusive of and accessible to our diverse membership. We are here to listen to and support you as we continue addressing members' concerns and visions for advancing conservation efforts in Virginia.

Approved on September 9, 2020 by:

VACDE Board

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee members:

Chris Van Vlack (Co-Chair)

Mariya Hudick

Hannah Tillotson

Tabea Zimmermann (Co-Chair)

Allen Jackson

Kathleen Watson

Bonnie Mahl

The VACDE strives to maintain a standard of quality for Conservation District employees and encourage excellence in the fulfillment of their duties by establishing and supporting continuing education and training to ensure the conservation of Virginia's natural resources