

2020-2021

Annual Report

Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District

<http://www.culpeperswcd.org>

Culpeper Office

351 Lakeside Drive, Culpeper, Virginia 22701
540-825-8591
540-645-6624 (F)

Orange Office

325-B Madison Road, Orange, Virginia 22960
540-308-6301
(855) 616-1654 (F)

Culpeper, Orange, Greene, Madison and Rappahannock Counties, member localities of the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District, provide annual financial support for district operations, district staffing, technical assistance and engineering assistance.

The Soil and Water Conservation District seeks out many project-based grants from the Commonwealth of Virginia-Department of Environmental Quality, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration BWET Program, the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, Chesapeake Bay Trust, the Virginia Resource Use Education Council and others, to support program development and staffing.

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Culpeper 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 of Directors

Culpeper County

Thomas O'Halloran, Treasurer
Dennis Verhoff
Bob Williamson, Associate Director

Madison County

Lynn Graves, Chair
Stephen Hill
L. Brad Jarvis, Associate Director

Greene County

Philip Morris, Vice-Chair
Robert Runkle
Steve Morris, At-Large Director
Sarah W. Sharpe, Ext. Agent At-Large

Orange County

Robert Bradford
J. Robert Brame III
Warren Lee, Associate Director

Rappahannock County

Mike Biniek
Mike Sands

District Staff

Greg Wichelns, District Manager
Stevie Ross, Administrative Secretary
JoAnn Neal, Administrative Secretary
Richard Jacobs III, Conservation Specialist III
W. Spencer Yager, Conservation Specialist II
David Massie, Conservation Specialist III
Henny Calloway, Conservation Specialist II
Amanda McCullen, Conservation Specialist II
Kendall Anderson Dellinger, Conservation Specialist I
James Henshaw, District Representative
Stephanie DeNicola, Information/Education Coordinator

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Rex Rexrode, District Conservationist
Ashleigh Cason, Soil Conservationist
Courtney Pooton, Soil Conservationist
Corey Bray, Soil Conservation Technician

John Jeffries, ACES

Table of Contents

About Us	4
Our Relationships	5
Member Counties	5
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts	5
National Association of Conservation Districts	5
Department of Conservation and Recreation	5
Natural Resources Conservation Service	5
Other Cooperating Agencies	6
Accomplishments of Committees	7
How We Operate	8
Annual Budget	8
Funding Sources	8
Technical Accomplishments	9
Priority Hydrologic Units in the Culpeper District	9
Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices	10
Virginia Agricultural Tax Credit Program	11
Erosion & Sediment Control and Stormwater Management Programs	12
Small Watershed Dams (PL-566 Structures)	14
Agricultural Stewardship Act	15
USDA Farm Bill Programs	16
2020-2021 USDA Conservation Incentive Programs	17
TMDL Implementation	19
Cost Share Allocated for Septic System Maintenance	20
Education	22
Youth Programs	22
Culpeper SWCD Continues Federal Grant for Educational Programs	23
Adult Education	24
Staff Professional Development	25
Community Outreach	27
Grant Funded Community Outreach Programs	28
Local Projects Funded through Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)	29
Annual Conservation Awards	30
Board of Directors	31
Staff	35

About Us

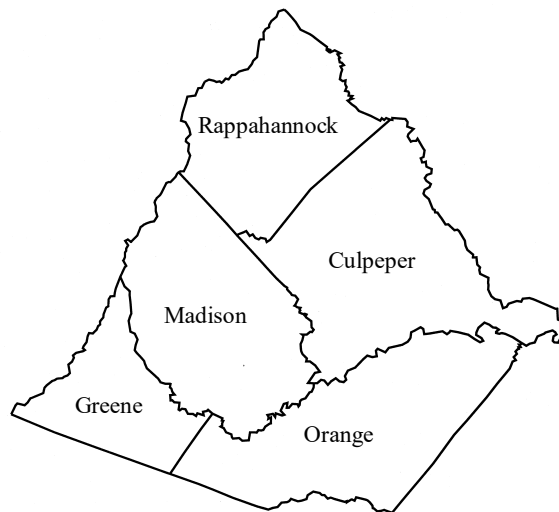
The Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) is a political subdivision of Virginia. Geographically, it includes the counties of Culpeper, Greene, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock. Founded in 1939 by citizens concerned about soil and water conservation, the CSWCD is the largest of forty-seven conservation districts within Virginia and serves an area covering 1,445 square miles with about 117,000 constituents. (according to US Census estimates)

The staff consists of a District Manager, six Conservation Specialists, an Administrative Secretary, an Information/Education Coordinator and a part-time District outreach representative.

A 12-member Board of Directors governs the District. Each of the five counties within the District elects two members in the general election, one member is appointed at large and a Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent from one of the member counties is appointed by Virginia Tech. Directors are not paid, but are locally elected officials who direct both the functioning of the district and the district staff as they work in partnership with the state and federal conservation staff. Directors are expected to attend monthly board meetings, participate on District Committees and work groups, represent the citizens of their county in regard to conservation issues and be willing to stay abreast of local conservation issues. They are also required to participate in policy and program development, as well as provide financial direction for proper expenditure and management of funds within

the District. The Board also appoints Associate Directors as needed. Associate Directors are non-voting members. The Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 9:30 AM and rotates meeting locations among the five counties.

All citizens of the District may have a voice in resource and conservation planning by attending monthly board meetings, communicating their concerns to directors or staff and by participating in District programs. The CSWCD develops a wide range of programs to encourage community participation in conserving and protecting soil, water and related natural resources, with particular focus on the impact of land disturbance and management of the Chesapeake Bay. District programs are funded by local, state and federal support and by District sponsored grants. Technical support is received from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).



Our Relationships

Member Counties

The CSWCD signs a Memorandum of Understanding with each member county, a document that outlines responsibilities and is the foundation for an enduring cooperative working relationship. Such cooperation allows a joint effort in the solution of problems relating to the planning and development of soil, water, and related natural resource issues. Through our relationship with our member counties, CSWCD provides input for each county's comprehensive plan, reviews case files for input to planning commission meetings and reviews site plans for four counties and two towns.

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The CSWCD is a member of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD). The mission of the VASWCD is to serve and strengthen member SWCDs in natural resource protection. The VASWCD also provides cohesive representation to legislative bodies on natural resource issues.

National Association of Conservation Districts

The CSWCD is a member of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). The NACD provides a national voice to America's 3,000+ conservation districts on conservation issues. Along with membership in the NACD comes membership in the National Watershed Coalition, an association of organizations that advocates resource management from the small watershed perspective.

Department of Conservation and Recreation

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is one of the lead state agencies for the control of nonpoint source pollution in Virginia; its soil and water conservation programs are delivered within the counties of Culpeper, Greene, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock by the CSWCD. Funding for program delivery and implementation is provided by the state legislature and administered by DCR. The DCR Conservation District Coordinator (CDC) serves as the liaison between the District and DCR. The CDC also provides administrative assistance for the state's conservation program, assures that there is compliance with DCR requirements and interacts routinely with district staff and directors.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The CSWCD works closely with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). A Memorandum of Understanding with NRCS outlines this cooperative effort. NRCS provides the services of qualified personnel for resource planning and technical assistance. The CSWCD annually reviews and provides comment on the agreement between the two agencies.

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board was established by the General Assembly to help guide the delivery of soil & water conservation services to citizens of the Commonwealth. The board's responsibilities include oversight and support of Virginia's soil & water conservation districts and oversight & enforcement of dam safety & floodplain management programs & regulations. District Directors interact with members of the Board on a myriad of topics.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)

VCE brings the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the Commonwealth. Local Extension Agents help design, implement and evaluate needs-driven programs such as pesticide collection, household water testing, farmers' markets and producer-targeted workshops. The District has a strong relationship with VCE agents.

Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF)

DOF provides technical assistance to private landowners to assist them in managing their forest land for forest products, water quality, protection of threatened and endangered species, historic resources and wildlife habitat. DOF also provides marketing and utilization assistance to forest industry and provides technical assistance in managing state owned lands of other agencies. This includes technical assistance and resource management plans; forest renewal; cost-share incentives; harvesting assistance and community grant assistance. District staff interact with DOF foresters on landowner assistance.

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

DEQ administers state and federal laws and regulations for air quality, water quality, water supply and land protection. In addition, other programs cover a variety of environmental activities, such as improving the ability of businesses and local governments to protect the environment, and offering technical and financial assistance for air and water quality improvements. The District interacts with many voluntary grant programs administered by DEQ.

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF)

DGIF is responsible for the management of inland fisheries, wildlife, and recreational boating for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Private Land Biologists advise landowners in the Culpeper District about practices that enhance or reestablish wildlife habitat.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)

FSA serves all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans. District staff rely on FSA assistance to effectively provide services to agricultural producers.

Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF)

VOF is Virginia's leader in land conservation, protecting more than 750,000 acres in 106 counties and independent cities. VOF is a public organization, created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1966 under [Virginia Code § 10.1-1800](#). The District co-holds conservation easements with VOF.

Virginia Resource Use Education Council (VRUEC)

The VRUEC is an inter-agency council that coordinates environmental education events and policy in the Commonwealth. The Culpeper SWCD holds one of the two seats reserved for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. This role on the VRUEC allowed Culpeper staff to participate in a NOAA Education grant and have a role in statewide environmental education policy.

Accomplishments of Committees

1. Technical

- Allocated over **\$2,519,006.32** in agricultural cost share funding to needed projects in 5 counties and **\$38,451.85** in state tax credits.
- Allocated **\$215,134.20** in residential cost share funding to **153** needed projects in the Upper Hazel, Upper Rapidan, Robinson River/Little Dark Run and Upper York TMDL watersheds in the District.
- Inspected, maintained & repaired 11 watershed flood control dams in Culpeper & Madison Counties.
- Committee Chair & staff provided input on programmatic improvements as a member of the State Agricultural Best Management Practices Advisory Committee & BMP Sub Committee.
- Reviewed **69** site plans in 4 counties and the Town of Culpeper for Erosion & Sediment Control & Stormwater Management Engineering.
- Participated in quarterly dam safety trainings for conservation districts.

2. Operations

- Reviewed monthly functions of all aspects of District business.
- Coordinated preparation of the annual budget & annual plan of work.
- Oversaw expenditures and provided guidance for organizational growth.
- Sought to increase funding from the Commonwealth.
- Sought out additional funding grants and project grants.

3. Education/Public Relations

- Delivered virtual classroom programs to **2,969** students **509** adults.
- Presented annually conservation award presentations on farms and at a school.
- Provided year long training to 1 Envirothon team, coordinated 1 State-wide virtual Envirothon training for coaches & students & organized Area Envirothon virtual competition.
- Coordinated NOAA B-WET grant for MWEES & assisted water & soil testing clinics.
- Sold **35** rain barrels and over **5,000** tree seedlings.
- Coordinated training for Board members on topics such as Cost Share Program Changes, Education Programs, TMDL updates and Virginia Conservation Assistance Program
- Published 4 editions of the newsletter & 10 articles for newspapers & other newsletters.
- Recognized 2 local students with college scholarships.

4. Legislative

- Participated in Legislative Day in Richmond.
- Drafted CSWCD positions on conservation & land use issues & provided opinions to VASWCD.
- Informed District Board on all legislative issues relating to conservation & funding affecting Districts.

5. Personnel

- Provided employee performance reviews & training guidance.
- Provided workload analysis & staffing level reviews.
- Guided policy development on all personnel matters.

6. Finance

- Reviewed monthly bank reconciliations & quarterly reports to DCR.
- Provided monthly review of treasurer's reports & input to annual budgeting.
- Provided oversight for longer term financial planning.

How We Operate

Annual Budget

The 2020—2021 operating budget (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 for the CSWCD was **\$968,997**. This does not include programmatic funds which are paid to landowners as cost share.

Funding Sources

Funding included **\$178,025** in general operating funds and **\$502,518** in agricultural technical assistance funding from the Commonwealth; **\$200,718** from member counties; **\$283,661** in watershed maintenance and repair funds from the Commonwealth; and **\$54,726** in other grant projects.

Our Mission

To promote the stewardship of soil and water and the conservation of our natural resources by educating and providing technical assistance to manage, protect and enhance the land and water for the benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of Culpeper, Greene, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock Counties

Technical Accomplishments

Cost-Share Program

The Culpeper SWCD locally administers the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) Cost-Share Program. Funded with state funds, this incentive program is designed to improve the quality of state streams, rivers and other water bodies through the implementation of BMPs. BMPs are designed to prevent soil erosion, minimize the introduction of nutrients, sediments and toxins into water bodies and enhance management opportunities. Sign-up for the program is on a continuous basis and eligible applicants, once approved, may receive up to 60-100 percent of the BMP installation cost up to \$100,000 per applicant per year. Watershed areas or hydrologic units within the district are prioritized for funding based on statewide prioritization and local concerns (see chart below). Hydrologic units (see map on following page) are determined and designated by the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) and can be a drainage basin, aquifer, soil zone, lake, reservoir or irrigation project.

Priority Hydrologic Units in the Culpeper District for 2020-2021

Water Body	Hydrologic Unit	County or Counties
Rappahannock River — Ruffans Run	RA18	Culpeper
Jonas Run	RA20	Culpeper
Mountain Run — Flat Run	RA21	Culpeper
Rappahannock River — Deep Run	RA23	Culpeper
Rapidan River — Marsh Run	RA27	Madison, Orange
Beautiful Run	RA29	Madison
Rapidan River — Poplar Run	RA30	Madison, Orange
Robinson River — Great Run	RA36	Madison
Rapidan River — Rapidan	RA37	Culpeper, Orange
Cedar Run	RA38	Culpeper
Rapidan River — Potato Run	RA39	Culpeper, Orange
Mountain Run — Mill Run	RA40	Culpeper, Orange
Rapidan River — Wilderness Run	RA43	Orange, Spotsylvania

Tax Credit Program

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the voluntary installation of Best Management Practices that address the state's nonpoint source pollution water-quality objectives. Agricultural producers with an approved conservation plan may take a credit against state income tax of 25% for eligible BMP expenses. The tax credit taken cannot exceed \$17,500 or the total state income tax obligation for the given tax year, but any excess can be carried over for up to five years. Tax credits granted by the District during the program year totaled **\$38,451.85** and were distributed as shown in the list below.

- **Culpeper** **\$15,786.41 (12 landowners)**
- **Greene** **\$0**
- **Madison** **\$11,552.56 (18 landowners)**
- **Orange** **\$3,726.44 (2 landowners)**
- **Rappahannock** **\$7,386.64 (7 landowners)**

Our Vision

To achieve clear, clean surface and ground water, and improved soil conditions that enhance the intrinsic value of Culpeper, Greene, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock Counties.

Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control and Stormwater Management Programs

The Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Program, adopted as state law in 1973, established minimum standards and guidelines to be followed when nonagricultural lands are disturbed. The state program is implemented primarily through local program adoption. The CSWCD is contracted with four of five member counties (Culpeper, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock) to provide plan review service for their Erosion and Sediment Control Programs and provides assistance to Greene County as requested. The Town of Culpeper also contracts for services. District responsibility as the reviewing authority involves reviewing site plans for developments and to review rezoning requests, special-use permit applications and preliminary subdivision plans upon request by the County.

There were 57 plans reviewed during the 2020-2021: 11 in Culpeper, 10 in Town of Culpeper, 9 in Madison, 26 in Orange and 13 in Rappahannock. These site plans include single family homes and private driveways that disturb greater than one acre.

Site Plans Reviewed by Culpeper SWCD			
County	Reviewed	Approved	Stormwater Management Facilities Approved
Culpeper	11	7	57 practices
Town of Culpeper	10	6	6 practices
Madison	9	6	2 practices
Orange	26	18	5 practices
Rappahannock	13	11	2 facilities



Figure 1: Active Erosion Control: Slope Remediation and Sediment Basin

The CSWCD relays complaints and observations regarding construction site activities to the appropriate county official. In addition, technical and educational assistance for E&S is provided to contractors, landowners and educators as requested.

The CSWCD has developed and provides several checklists for Erosion and Sediment Control Plans and Stormwater Management Plans. These checklists are guidance material for assisting contractors, engineers and developers in the planning and design of their land disturbing site plan. The Counties are encouraged to require the checklist as a prerequisite to site plan submission to ensure the quality of the site plan.

Land-disturbance activities not regulated under the Erosion and Sediment Control Program continue to cause problems for County development and the community. These activities include private agricultural and recreational pond construction, disturbance of wetlands, improper streambank alterations without appropriate permitting review and land clearing activities that lack an adequate plan for stabilization due to lack of clear intentions for future use of the land.

Within all reviews, the CSWCD consistently promotes the design and implementation of Low Impact Development (LID) design strategies. We have developed an updated Environmental Site Design (ESD) checklist to aid in the implementation of LID.

Best management practices have been inventoried from approved site plans within all five counties. There are a total of 435 stormwater management facilities within the five counties and Town of Culpeper. The following table depicts the amount of acreage served by these stormwater management facilities as of September 2015. This is the date that stormwater BMP reporting changed from local reporting to state reporting.

Watershed	Stormwater Control Measures and Stormwater Treatment Practices	Runoff Reduction Practices
James	Detention Basin (28.36 acres); Underground Detention (5 ac); Wet Pond (1014.69 ac); Ext. Detention (7.4 ac); Manufactured Filters (1.69 ac)	Bioretention (78.37 ac); Infiltration (4.09 acre)
Rappahannock	Detention Basin (2,005.54 ac); Ext. Detention (880.32 ac); Underground Detention (29.85 ac.); Wet Pond (1684.65 ac); Manufactured Filters (19.75 ac.)	Infiltration (64.13 ac); Bioretention (76.64 ac); Wetland (0.33 ac); Riparian Buffer (5,735 LF); Green Roof (9 ac); Permeable Pave (1.52 ac); Dry Swale (11.76 ac)
York	Detention Basin (362.52 ac); Ext. Detention (15.03 ac.); Wet Pond (45 ac)	Infiltration (2.19 ac); Bioretention (0.36 ac.); Permeable Pave (0.1 ac.)



Figure 2: Bioretention Basin for the Farm Credit in Culpeper County

Small Watershed Dams (PL-566 Structures)

The Watershed Protection & Flood Prevention Act (Public Law 83-566 usually referred to as PL-566) was established more than 50 years ago to help control the extensive damage caused by flooding and sedimentation. This law gave the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) the authority to work cooperatively with local governing bodies to construct and maintain dams throughout the country.

In the 1960s, the USDA Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS) constructed fourteen dams on both private and public lands within the District—five in Culpeper County and nine in Madison County. The District assumed local sponsorship of these dams and with this came the responsibility to uphold the operation and maintenance of these dams. The District continues to hold responsibility for eleven of the dam structures. Operation and maintenance of White Oak Dam in Madison County was transferred to the Rapidan Service Authority. Mountain Run Lake Dam and Lake Pelham Dam are operated by the Town of Culpeper. Lake Pelham in Culpeper County and White Oak Reservoir in Madison County also serve as water supply reservoirs. Lake Pelham and Mountain Run Lake were completely rehabilitated during Fiscal Years 2017-2020.

The Culpeper SWCD spent **\$283,661** during the 2020-2021 fiscal year for restoring embankment shorelines, installing filter drains, video inspection of all internal pipes, designing primary spillway pipe linings, mowing, weed control, fertilizer application, liming and fencing. Maintenance contracts are offered annually and are awarded by sealed bid. The District coordinates efforts to secure maintenance and repair funding from the Virginia General Assembly with the Virginia Association of Conservation Districts.

Operation and maintenance is crucial to dam safety. Responsibilities of the CSWCD include:

- Annual inspections.
- Hiring contractors for routine mowing and maintenance and access road maintenance.
- Critical period inspections and monitoring (for example, during unusually heavy rainfall).
- Keeping spillways clear of debris.
- Preventing trees or bushes from growing on the dams.
- Eliminating burrowing animals from dam embankments.
- Maintaining a healthy stand of grass on the dam and spillways to prevent erosion.
- Inspecting for seepage on the dam face and around all metal and concrete parts.
- Inspecting closely for signs of deterioration
- Replacing and rebuilding internal drains and embankment shorelines



Above left: Video inspections of spillway pipes Above right: embankment regarding on flood control dams

PL-566 Dams Within the CSWCD

Dam ID	Watershed	County	Normal Surface Area (Acres)	Drainage Area (miles²)
8A	Mountain Run	Culpeper	22	5
11	Mountain Run	Culpeper	75	5.86
13	Mountain Run	Culpeper	15	3.22
18	Mountain Run	Culpeper	46	3.99
50	Mountain Run	Culpeper	254	23.9
1B	Beautiful Run	Madison	13.5	2.31
2A	Beautiful Run	Madison	8.7	3.61
4	Beautiful Run	Madison	3.9	0.48
5	Beautiful Run	Madison	3.2	0.55
6	Beautiful Run	Madison	6.1	1.14
7	Beautiful Run	Madison	5.3	0.75
10	Beautiful Run	Madison	3.2	0.55
11	Beautiful Run	Madison	9.3	1.44
White Oak Dam	White Oak Run	Madison	46	5.05

Agricultural Stewardship Act

The **Agricultural Stewardship Act (ASA)** was passed into Virginia law in 1996 and enables the mechanism by which a complaint can be filed with the State Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services claiming that a particular agricultural operation is or will be polluting water. If the complaint is found to be justified, the producer is required by state law to remedy the situation. The CSWCD provides technical assistance to any producer who has been identified by an ASA complaint. By identifying new management options and utilizing the BMP

cost-share program and other incentive-based programs prior to mandated enforcement, the district can assist producers with remedial actions.

There were two ASA complaint in fiscal year 2020-2021 in the District. Both were unfounded complaints.

USDA Farm Bill Programs

Administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service, the following programs all provide financial incentives through multiple-year contracts to agricultural producers for the stewardship of natural resources.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) encourages farmers to convert highly sensitive cropland to vegetative cover, reducing erosion and runoff and providing wildlife habitats. Rent is paid per acre of land enrolled for a 10 to 15-year period. Cost share is available for BMPs to establish the conservation cover of trees or herbaceous vegetation. Offers are accepted and processed during fixed sign-up periods. (There is also a CRP continuous sign up program.)

CRP-Grasslands is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land that is not farmed or ranched can have conservation benefits. Participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species to control soil erosion.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is an enhancement of the existing CRP Continuous sign-up program. CREP provides significant financial incentives to encourage stream bank and wetland protection as well as restoration of streamside forests. Pasture and cropland adjacent to perennial and intermittent streams, seeps, springs, ponds and sinkholes are eligible to be enrolled. CREP provides a yearly rental per acre for 10 to 15 years (amounting to twice that offered by CRP), pays for fencing to exclude livestock from riparian buffers, alternative water source development, and hardwood tree planting. A flat rate incentive payment is also offered for placing a permanent riparian easement on the enrolled area.

Environmental Quality Enhancement Program (EQIP) is available for farmers who face threats to soil, water and related natural resources. It offers 1 to 5-year contracts to landowners and farmers who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production. Applications achieving the most

environmental benefits are ranked higher and will be funded first. Cost share assistance and/or incentive payments are available.

EQIP– Regional Conservation Partnership Program (EQIP-RCPP) funds fencing projects similar to the SL-6 practice under the Virginia BMP Program.

Reforestation of Timberlands (RT) encourages the development, management and protection of non-industrial private forest lands in the state through cost-share for site preparation, tree planting, and improvement of existing stands of trees. Practices are directed toward the production of soft and hard wood timber.

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) shares the cost of rehabilitating eligible farmlands damaged by natural disaster with agricultural producers and provides emergency water assistance for livestock and existing irrigation systems for orchards and vineyards during severe drought.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that encourages producers to address resource concerns by undertaking additional conservation activities & improving & maintaining existing conservation systems. CSP provides financial & technical assistance to help land stewards conserve and enhance natural resources on their land.

2020-2021 USDA Conservation Incentive Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides service to landowners in the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District through the following four programs with both technical and financial assistance.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that helps agricultural producers in a manner that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. Through EQIP, agricultural producers receive financial and technical assistance to implement structural and management conservation practices that optimize environmental benefits on working agricultural land.

Virginia has identified the following priorities:

- **Cropland** – Practices to enhance water and soil quality while improving plant health and productivity;
- **Forestry** – Practices that will lead to the conversion of marginal land (active cropland, pasture or abandoned open land) to hardwood, longleaf or shortleaf pine;
- **Livestock** – Practices to improve and protect water and soil quality, while benefiting plant and animal health;
- **Wildlife** – Practices to create, improve, and manage habitat for wildlife. (See also [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) initiative)
- **American Black Duck Initiative** – Focused conservation practices to restore wintering habitat in the Delaware Bay and Chesapeake Bay watersheds;
- **Conservation Activity Plans** – Development of site-specific plans to recommend conservation practices that will address an identified natural resource need.
- **Eastern Hellbender** – Targeted conservation practices to reduce sediment and nutrient inputs for improved habitat and water quality;
- **Golden-winged Warbler** – Young forest habitat restoration in Appalachian breeding territory;
- **High Tunnel** – Steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner;
- **Longleaf Pine** - Stand establishment and management within the historical range in Southeastern Virginia;
- **National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)** – Targeted practices to clean up impaired streams and improve aquatic habitats. Watersheds eligible for this fund pool are War Branch and Mountain Run in Rockingham County and Gap Creek in Rockingham and Shenandoah County;
- **Northern Bobwhite in Pine Savannahs** – Management strategies to convert commercial loblolly and shortleaf pine plantings to highly valuable pine savannah habitats;
- **[Northern Bobwhite in Working Grasslands](#)** – Native grass restoration to address habitat loss while maintaining or improving cattle production on the land;
- **On-Farm Energy** – Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) or farm energy audits to assess energy use and recommend ways to reduce it;
- **Organic** – Practices to help certified organic growers, those working to achieve organic certification, and specialty crop producers address resource concerns on their operations.
- **StrikeForce** – Priority ranking for cropland, high tunnel, and livestock practices to support program participation among underserved producers in rural communities.

2020-2021 USDA Conservation Incentive Programs

Conservation Stewardship Program

Our Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps producers build on their existing conservation efforts while strengthening their operations. Whether they are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop resiliency, or develop wildlife habitat, NRCS can custom design a CSP plan to help them meet those goals. NRCS can help identify natural resource problems in operations and provide technical and financial assistance to solve those problems or attain higher stewardship levels in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. For example, NRCS can look at ways to address the amount of soil lost; mitigate the impact of excess water; reduce the contribution of agricultural operations to airborne soil particles and greenhouse gas emissions; improve the cover, food, and water available for domestic and wildlife species; or promote energy efficiencies for on-farm activities.

New CSP Grasslands Conservation Initiative

This new initiative assists producers in protecting grazing land uses; conserving and improving soil, water and wildlife resources; and achieving related conservation values by conserving eligible land through grassland conservation contracts. Eligible lands are limited to cropland for which base acres have been maintained under FSA's ARC/PLC and were planted to grass or pasture, including idle or fallow, during a specific period. Enrolled acreage must be managed consistently with a grassland conservation plan. Producers will have a single opportunity to enroll eligible land in a five-year contract.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)** provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the **Agricultural Land Easement (ALE)** component, NRCS works through organizations with existing easement programs to protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses. Under the **Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)** component, NRCS directly assists **landowners** interested in restoring, protecting and enhancing enrolled wetlands.

NRCS developed 27 farm conservation plans during the year as follows:

- Culpeper 10 (2,033.1 acres)
- Greene 3 (209.3 acres)
- Madison 11 (406.4 acres)
- Orange 2 (40.6 acres)
- Rappahannock 1 (3.9 acres)



Left photo: Cattle drink from a water trough Right Photo: Tree planting

TMDL Implementation

The District regularly seeks out grants from both state and federal sources to assist landowners with the implementation costs for projects that both protect and improve local stream health. The District actively pursues implementation of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) projects and options available from federal nonpoint source 319 grant programs in the 5 member counties. As required under both state and federal laws, TMDLs establish water quality improvement thresholds for selected pollutants which have been identified through stream water sampling as exceeding state water quality standards for designated uses. Typically the TMDLs rely on federal funding from the Environmental Protection Agency directed through the Department of Environmental Quality. Water Quality Improvement Fund (WQIF) state grants at times provide similar opportunities.

In addressing the TMDL Implementation Plans for the Upper Hazel River watershed in Rappahannock, Madison and Culpeper Counties, the Upper York watershed in Orange County, the Robinson River watershed in Madison County and the Upper Rapidan River watershed in Greene, Madison and Orange Counties, the Department of Environmental Quality provided grants awarded on a competitive basis.

A newly established herbaceous riparian buffer in a tributary to the Thornton River; Upper Hazel TMDL



Allocated Projects Listed by Grant Project		
Upper Hazel River TMDL		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	22	\$3,800.00
Septic repair (RB3)	8	\$18,898.50
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	12	\$12,170.00
Septic replacement (RB4)	1	\$4,000.00
Septic replacement with pump (RB4P)	1	\$6,000.00
Septic Engineered (RB5)	1	\$15,600.00
Total	45	\$60,468.50
Upper Rapidan River TMDL		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	14	\$2,788.75
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	20	\$24,030.00
Septic replacement (RB4)	4	\$19,200.00
Septic replacement with pump (RB4P)	3	\$19,600.00
Total	41	\$65,618.75
Robinson River TMDL		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	12	\$2,183.00
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	16	\$18,205.50
Septic replacement (RB4)	4	\$18,234.88
Septic Engineered (RB5)	1	\$10,487.32
Total	33	\$49,110.70
Upper York River TMDL		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	4	\$910.00
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	29	\$29,426.25
Septic replacement (RB4P)	1	\$9,600.00
Total	34	\$39,936.25

Allocated Projects Listed by County		
Culpeper County		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	4	\$675.00
Septic repair (RB3)	2	\$4,273.50
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3R)	6	\$6,445.00
Septic replacement (RB4)	1	\$6,000.00
Total	13	\$17,393.50
Greene County		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	2	\$373.75
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	3	\$4,000.00
Septic replacement (RB4P)	2	\$15,600.00
Total	7	\$19,973.75
Madison County		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	19	\$3,458.00
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	20	\$24,280.50
Septic replacement (RB4)	6	\$26,959.88
Septic replacement Engineered (RB5)	1	\$10,487.32
Total	46	\$65,185.70
Orange County		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	10	\$2,225.00
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	41	\$41,156.25
Septic replacement (RB4)	4	\$19,200.00
Septic replacement (RB4P)	2	\$13,600.00
Total	57	\$76,181.25
Rappahannock County		
Practice	Number	Allocated
Septic inspection & pump out (RB1)	16	\$2,775.00
Septic repair (RB3)	7	\$15,625.00
Septic pump out & inspection (RB3M)	6	\$5,950.00
Septic replacement (RB4)	1	\$4,000.00
Septic replacement Engineered (RB5)	1	\$15,600.00
Total	31	\$43,950.00

Education

Youth Education Programs

The District sponsored or participated in the following events:

2020-2021 Envirothon

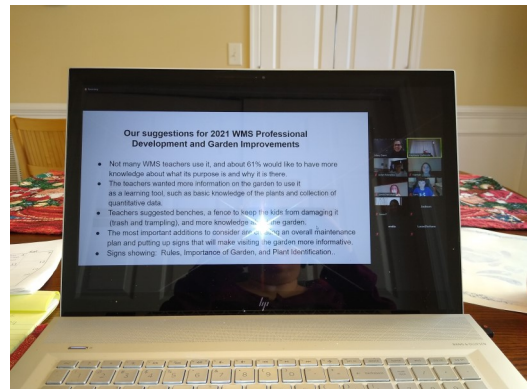
The District trained one Envirothon team at Wakefield Country Day School in Rappahannock County. The District helped to organize the virtual Area competition but . The District also coordinated 1 State-wide Envirothon training held virtually. Over 100 students and coaches attended the training.

Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE)

All MWEEs were cancelled due to the coronavirus. The District received a No Cost Extension through September 30, 2023.

Presentations at Local Schools

SOL-based activities were coordinated through Zoom or Google Meet with a number of local schools to discuss conservation topics throughout the District including Culpeper Middle School, Farmington Elementary School, Ruckersville Elementary School, Emerald Hill Elementary School, Floyd T. Binns Middle School, Epiphany Catholic School, William Monroe Middle School, William Wetsel Middle School, Locust Grove Elementary School, Gordon-Barbour Elementary School, Prospect Heights Middle School, AG Richardson Elementary School, Nathaniel Greene Elementary School, Waverly Yowell Elementary School, Madison County High School and Locust Grove Middle School. Over 2,500 students within the District participated in a classroom activity with District staff virtually.



Left: Education/Information Coordinator Stephanie DeNicola teaches watershed and Virginia Studies concepts with the Enviroscope to Gordon Barbour Elementary School 4th grade students over Zoom

Right: Stephanie DeNicola worked with a Statistics class at Madison County High School to survey William Wetsel Middle School staff about a raingarden on the campus. MCHS students developed the survey, delivered it to staff and reported results back.

Culpeper SWCD Continues Federal Grant for Educational Programs

In 2018, the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District was selected as a Bay Watershed Education and Training (BWET) grantee by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This three year grant brings \$250,000 into the District specifically to develop and deliver Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEES) for all sixth grade students in the five County District and also provides professional development programs for all instructors. The grant objectives include interdisciplinary activities with English, Math and Art, instructing students in developing relevant investigative questions to apply the Scientific Method and learn how to assess their schoolyard habitat for potential adverse environmental impacts and opportunities for improvements. Students are given the opportunity to write newspaper articles and have them reviewed by local newspaper editors. Through a Memorandum of Understanding with University of Mary Washington and Piedmont Virginia Community College, the District intends to engage third and fourth year science education majors to help deliver multiple programs to students.

The initial year of the grant began with teacher professional development in June 2018, with follow-up training planned throughout the grant.

For the 2020-2021 school year the grant was not delivered due to coronavirus. The Culpeper District plans to restart the grant in Spring 2022 and received a No Cost Extension.

The Culpeper District has been acknowledged as the first soil and water conservation district on the East Coast to be selected for this grant.

Top left: students from Rappahannock County Elementary designed their ideal watersheds

Top right: Farmer Jacob Gilley teaches William Wetsel students about chemical tests

Bottom left: NRCS Soil Conservationist teaches William Monroe students about chemical analysis

Bottom right: Forestry Consultant Jon Rockett teaches William Monroe students basic tree identification using dichotomous keys



Adult Education

CSWCD staff made presentations to adults throughout the five-county area. Many of these events were held virtually. The District sponsored or participated in the following events:

- Orange & Madison Field Days
- Greene Farm and Livestock Show
- North Piedmont Research Station Field Day
- Central Virginia Beef Educational Field Day and Sale
- Virginia Forage and Grasslands Conference
- Madison County Chamber of Commerce Business Expo
- County fairs
- Women in Ag meetings
- Woods and Wildlife Conference
- Farm Safety Day
- Corn and Soybean Producers Field Day
- VANTAGE No-Till Conference

The District also submits regular articles to Culpeper Quarterly, a newsletter that is sent to every address in Culpeper County.

The District sent letters to all landowners in the Towns of Culpeper and Orange to increase awareness of VCAP and lawn soil testing.

The District expanded its free lawn soil testing program for local landowners. The goal of this program is to educate homeowners to use science based decisions to guide lawn fertilizer use. The program allows landowners to collect their sample and mail it to the Virginia Tech Soil lab. The Soil lab sends the results to the both the landowner and the District and the bill to the District. In the 2020-2021, 78 landowners participated in the program.

Staff Professional Development

Continuing staff education is a priority at the Culpeper SWCD. This year the staff participated in training in the following areas:

Greg Wichelns, District Manager:

- Freedom of Information Act training
- Virginia Retirement System Political Subdivision Training
- DCR IT Security Awareness Training

Stevie Ross, Administrative Assistant

- DCR Security Awareness Training
- VRS Annual Training
- COVLC Record Management Training
- CMC Data Training
- VACS Program Training and Updates
- Providing Technical Service Webinar

Richard Jacobs III, Conservation Specialist

- DCR IT Security Awareness
- Video Creation and Editing Workshop
- Backyard Stream Repair Series
- Water Resource Management and Policy
- Limits of Analysis
- Clear as Mud: Three steps to become a better communicator

Stephanie Rose DeNicola, Communications Specialist

- Woods and Wildlife conference
- Introduction to Zoom
- Introduction to Class Marker
- DCR IT Security Training

David Massie, Conservation Specialist

- VFGC Winter Forage Conference
- Controlling Pasture Weeds Virtual Field Day
- Conservation Planner Recertification Webinar
- Soil Health Webinar
- 2022 Program Year Updates and Tracking Issues
- DCR IT Security Training

W. Spencer Yager, Conservation Specialist

- DCR IT Security Awareness Training
- VFGC Winter meeting
- Pasture condition scoring
- Cover crop training

Staff Professional Development

Henny Calloway, Conservation Specialist

- DCR Security Awareness Training
- DEQ Inspecting Non Standard Practices
- DEQ CE: Construction General Permit
- DEQ Regulatory SWPPP Inspections for Localities
- Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional Level 1 Certification

Amanda McCullen, Conservation Specialist

- DCR Ag Waste Management Webinar
- NRCS Pasture Scoring Webinar
- NRCS Grazing Plan Webinar
- DCR Cultural Resources Webinar
- BMP Survey Webinar
- DEQ Ag Loan Program Webinar
- DCR IT Security Webinars
- DCR No-Till Survey Webinar
- NRCS & DCR Cover Crop Webinar
- DCR Nutrient Management & Precision Ag Webinar
- DCR Conservation Planner Recertification Webinar
- Building Soil Health Webinar
- USDA Bale Grazing Webinar
- DCR Small Herd Initiative Webinar
- VACS Updates Webinar

Kendall Dellinger, Conservation Specialist

- DCR IT Security Awareness Training
- DCR Ag Waste Management Webinar
- NRCS Pasture Scoring Webinar
- NRCS Grazing Plan Webinar
- DCR Cultural Resources Webinar
- BMP Survey Webinar
- DEQ Ag Loan Program Webinar
- DCR No-Till Survey Webinar
- NRCS & DCR Cover Crop Webinar
- DCR Nutrient Management & Precision Ag Webinar
- Building Soil Health Webinar
- DCR Small Herd Initiative Webinar
- VACS Updates Webinar
- Conservation Selling Skills

Community Outreach

CSWCD staff focused outreach efforts throughout the five-county area. Outreach activities included:

- **Internet Home Page:** The Culpeper SWCD maintains and regularly updates a web site with information about the District, our programs and educational activities plus links to other informative and educational websites at www.culpeperswcd.org.
- **Quarterly Newsletter:** The seasonal 12-page newsletter is sent to all landowners in our member counties that receive land use tax benefits.
- **Newspaper Articles:** The District routinely submits articles to local newspapers on educational events, conservation news and various BMP programs available throughout the District.
- **Display Booth:** The Culpeper SWCD maintains a mobile display of District programs and accomplishments. We take these exhibits to agriculture-expo events, educational conferences and annual meetings. Conservation publications are offered to the public free-of-charge.
- **Literature racks:** Racks with conservation related brochures are in county libraries and planning offices.
- **Community events:** District staff attend community events ranging from farm tours, farmer education programs, STEM/STEAM nights at local schools and other events when requested.

College Scholarships: Two students from the Culpeper District were awarded \$2,000 academic scholarships based on academic standing, demonstrated interest in conservation, leadership and involvement.

- **Rachel Weghorst** graduated from **Rappahannock County High School**. She will attend **the University of Virginia**, majoring in **Environmental Science**.
- **Katelyn Woolfrey** graduated from **Orange County High School**. She will attend **the University of Virginia** where she will major in **Biology**.

All of the students received high accolades from teachers and other mentors for contributions above and beyond the requirements of the high school curriculum.

Summer Camps: Culpeper SWCD sponsored Janaria Brooks, a homeschooled 9th grader in Orange, to attend the Virginia Academy of Natural Resources. This was a virtual summer camp coordinated by VASWCD and the Department of Forestry.

The District sent letters to all landowners in the Towns of Culpeper and Orange to increase awareness of VCAP and lawn soil testing.

Grant Funded Community Outreach

The Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District received two grants through the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund (also known as the License Plate Fund). One grant uses the District's award winning Driveway and Gravel Road Best Management Practices Guide to select a public road to showcase maintenance BMPs. Staff have worked with VDOT and selected one of their projects to incorporate BMPs into. The other grant funds the construction of an outdoor classroom at William Wetsel Middle School in Madison County.

Also, the District Board of Directors decided to continue the popular lawn testing program, originally funded by a Chesapeake Bay License Plate Fund grant. This program allows landowners to collect their sample and mail it to the Virginia Tech Soil lab. The Soil lab sends the results to the both the landowner and the District and the bill to the District. In the 2020-2021, 78 landowners participated in the program.



Local Projects Funded through the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)

In 2020, the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program or VCAP received substantial state funding to implement stormwater and landscaping practices on non-agricultural lands. Funding was secured from the Water Quality Improvement Fund from Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the grant was administered by the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The District helped two landowners secure \$5,918.96 of funding assistance to convert 1,250 square feet of poorly vegetated lawn to native plantings and treat 982 square feet of impervious surfaces. These landowners were from Culpeper and Orange Counties.

Raingarden in Culpeper County

A 165 square foot rain garden was installed behind this Culpeper County residence. The rain garden collects runoff from 982 square feet of roof. (below left)

Conservation Landscaping in Orange County

The residents of this small lot in Lake of the Woods had erosion leading down to the Lake. Additional landscaping was installed along the drainage way to filter runoff and hold the soil. The practice converted 1,250 square feet of lawn to native landscaping. (below right).



2020 Conservation Awards

Each year, the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District holds an annual banquet to honor residents who have demonstrated leadership in the stewardship of local soil and water resources. This year in lieu of a banquet, District staff held individual presentations on farms and at school due to the pandemic.

The **Clean Water Farm Awards** are given to one farm in each county of the Soil and Water Conservation District that is exemplary in its protection of the state's soil and water quality, with particular emphasis on nutrient management. The recipients of the Clean Water Farm Awards were:

- Culpeper County, The Haught family, *FMO LLC*
- Greene County, W. Copley and Margaret K. McLean families, *Swift Run Farm*
- Madison County, *Goodall Family Farm*
- Orange County, The Sedwick family; *Lakeland Farm*
- Rappahannock County, Algis and Kathy Penkiunas, *F.T. Valley Farm at Mont Medi*

The District also recognizes individuals and landowners with District level awards recognizing commitments to wildlife habitat, forestland management and conservation education.

The **2020 Forestry Award** was given to **Bonnie Beers** of **Culpeper County**.

The **2020 Educator of the Year** was presented to Science teacher **Kathryn Thomas**, of William Monroe Middle School in **Greene County**.

The **2020 Wildlife Habitat Award** was given to **John Taylor and Jeannette Walls** of **Orange County**.

The **Goodall Family Farm** also received the **Rappahannock River Grand Basin Award**.



First row: Educator of the Year (left) ; Orange County Clean Water Farm Award (center);



Second row: Rappahannock County Clean Water Farm Award (left); Wildlife Award (Orange County)



Third row: Culpeper County Clean Water Farm Award (left); Forest Landowner Award (Culpeper) (Center); Greene County Clean Water Farm Award



Board of Directors

Soil & Water Conservation District directors are the local, legislatively mandated protectors & managers of natural resources. They are not public employees & receive no salary. Elected every four years in the general election, they work as volunteers to identify local conservation needs, represent local citizens in conservation issues, educate others about conservation issues & programs & work with local, state & federal agencies to resolve conservation problems. In the course of their work with the District, directors develop a working knowledge of the environmental sciences, agriculture, engineering & local state & national legislative processes. They also find it useful to develop skills such as leadership, personnel management, public speaking, negotiation & fiscal management.

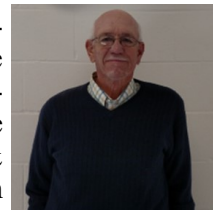
Lynn Graves, Chair

Lynn Graves has been a Director representing Madison County since 2005. Mr. Graves graduated from Virginia Tech in 1995 and was a member of the National Agricultural Fraternity, Alpha Gamma Rho. He has been a member of the Virginia Apple Growers Association Board and the Virginia State Apple Board. He also is serving on the Virginia Agribusiness Council Board and was the chairman in 2016. He also serves as 1st Vice President of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Mr. Graves and his family own and operate Graves Mountain Lodge and Farm, which is located on the Rose River. The Lodge consists of 55 motel rooms and 15 cabins, and the farm consists of crop fields, pasture for 100 head of cattle and 50 acres of apple orchards. Also a cannery is operated by the Graves family which produces jams and jellies, and apple cider, along with the favorite apple butter. The Graves Mountain hosts numerous festivals during the year, Music Festival, Apple Festival, Heritage Day (Fishing for kids) and more. The Farm does school tours for 7,000 school children annually to promote agriculture. For the past 16 years the Farm has also run aquatic programs that teach children about watersheds, rivers and ponds. Mr. Graves and his wife, Tricia have 2 children, Amelia and Cole. The Graves family have been living in the Syria area for over 5 generations.



Philip Morris, Vice Chair

Philip Morris was elected as a Greene County Director in November 2015 & began his term on January 1, 2016. He has been married to Sandra since 2006. He graduated from West Virginia University in 1964 with a degree in Civil Engineering. After serving in the US Navy he joined the Navy Oceanographic Service conducting hydrographic surveys of shorelines in locations around the Pacific & Atlantic Oceans for military operations. He also served as civil engineer with USDA Soil Conservation Service for three years building large earthen dams under Public Law 566. In 1970 he became manager of the Great Lakes Water Measurement Program & the National Tidal Network at NOAA. After several positions & 21 years of service, Mr. Morris retired from NOAA in 1997. He has gained great insight into the agriculture world by visiting his wife's family, who farm 1500 acres in central Ohio.



Thomas O'Halloran, Treasurer

Mr. O'Halloran was born & raised in Culpeper & graduated from Culpeper County High School in 1963. He received a degree in engineering from Virginia Tech and owns Glengary Tree Farm in Rixeyville. The farm was originally a cow/calf operation but, under the advice of his father, he started planting Christmas trees in 1978. Mr. & Mrs. O'Halloran have a son & a daughter plus 4 grandchildren & a great grandchild. His hobbies include motorcycle riding & reading. He is chairman of the Ag/Forestal



Advisory Committee & is a member of the Culpeper County Economic Advisory Committee. He is on the Extension Leadership Council & is a director of the Virginia Farm Direct Marketing Association, past president of the Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association & past director of the National Christmas Tree Growers Association. In 2002, the State Capitol Christmas tree at the Governor's mansion was from Glengary. In 2011, Mr. O'Halloran was appointed to represent conservation districts on the Rappahannock River Basin Commission & in 2016 was appointed to its Executive Council.

Mike Biniek

Mike Biniek & Susan Hoffman left their urban life to fulfill their dream of creating a model community for sustainable living. Belle Meade has grown into what it is today because of their flexible, nurturing patience as they developed the different components of their holistic vision. Mike, B.S. in Biology, is a lifelong student of nature & wildlife. He practices his ideology of creating a more sustainable, healthy planet as he cares for the animals, plants & community of Belle Meade. Mike also serves Rappahannock County as a member of the Planning Commission.



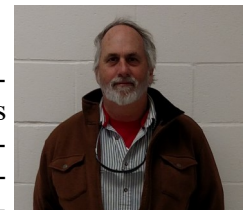
J. Robert Brame III

Bob Brame grew up on a working farm in Western Kentucky, but like many farm youths he was lured into the big city. After almost 50 years practicing law in Richmond, Washington and Charlottesville, he retired in 2014 and swapped Kentucky farmland for farmland just outside Gordonsville. He has worked closely with Culpeper SWCD staff and NRCS to implement and expand on the conservation vision he inherited from his Father. These conservation practices, including rotational grazing, eradication of invasives, replacement of KY 31 fescue with novel endophyte fescue and restoring native warm season grasses. He heard the first Bobwhite call and is still looking for dung beetles and listening for whip-poor-wills. He remains hopeful that his grandchildren will see the return of mature species. Bob was elected a Greene County director in 2007 and 2011 and an Orange Director in 2015 and 2019.



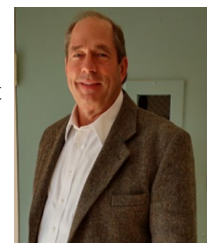
Robert Bradford

Mr. Bradford was elected as a Director in 1996 after serving as an Associate Director for three years. He lives in Orange County with his wife Virginia & his daughter Stella. He owns and operates a beef cattle operation & has been a building contractor specializing in renovations. He is very supportive of BMPs & water quality & has an active roof water collection system on his farm. Mr. Bradford's activity as Director includes Technical Committee Chair.



Dr. Stephen R. Hill

Dr. Stephen R. Hill was elected as a Director representing Madison County in 2015 and again in 2019. He previously served as Associate Director for Madison County. On his Madison County cow/calf operation he established clean water and forest best management practices to support his goal of year-round grazing. He is the tenth continuous generation of farmers in America since his Great (x7)-Grandfather emigrated from the Duchy of Wurttemberg (in modern Germany) in 1700. He is a certified Virginia Master Cattleman and a certified Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) producer. Dr. Hill earned a Master of Public Policy degree from the University of Michigan and a PhD from the University of Maryland.



L. Brad Jarvis

Brad Jarvis is the Agriculture Extension Agent for Virginia Cooperative Extension in Madison County. He received his degrees in Animal Science & Extension Education from Virginia Tech in

1987. Over his 30 year Extension career, he has worked with farmers, agri-business & community leaders to disseminate researched based information & developed educational programs in agricultural production & sustainability with an emphasis on nutrient management planning, cover crops, integrated pest management, commercial fruit production, forage production, local food systems & community strategic planning. Mr. Jarvis is an Associate Director of the Culpeper Soil & Water Conservation District Board, Madison Young Farmers, Madison Farm Bureau Board, Virginia Forage & Grassland Council, Central Virginia Cattlemen Association & National Association of County Agriculture Agents.



Warren Lee

Mr. Lee was appointed an Associate Director representing Orange County in 2002. He grew up on a wheat & cattle ranch in Montana. He earned his degree in agricultural engineering at Montana State University in Bozeman & spent his entire career in the field of resource conservation, holding NRCS positions in Montana, Washington State, Colorado & Hawaii. In 1993 Lee moved to Washington, D.C. to become the Director of the Conservation Operations Division. In the mid 90's he was appointed to head a team to develop wetlands policy. The Wetland team was later combined with the Watershed Division, which Lee directed for three years. When Congress passed the National Drought Policy Act, Lee traded his flood-fighting responsibilities to become the National Drought Policy Coordinator & the Director of the Resource Inventory Division. Lee retired in 2001 & lives with his wife Barbara in the Lake of the Woods community in Orange County. He enjoys spending time with the grandchildren & on the golf course with his golfing buddies.



Steve Morris

Mr. Morris was appointed as an Associate Director in 2006 & became an appointed At-Large Director in December 2013. He was born & raised in Greene County & graduated from William Monroe High School in 1966. From 1974-1990 he worked in quality control on the construction of nuclear power plants. From 1991-2009 he raised beef cattle on 165 acres. All of the streams on the farm are fenced out from livestock & some acres are in CREP. He received the 2000 Bay Friendly Farm Award from CSWCD. His farm is now used for hay production. Mr. Morris & his wife, Sharon, have one daughter. In his spare time he enjoys hunting, fishing, golf & muscle car restoration. Steve's farm is protected by a conservation easement. Mr. Morris was appointed to represent CSWCD on the Rivanna River Basin Commission.



Robert Runkle

Robert Runkle was elected Director representing Greene County in 2001. His Greene County Century Farm has been family owned for over 200 years. He graduated from James Madison University with a degree in Social Studies Education and was a teacher for 31 years. He was on the committee that prepared the original Greene County Comprehensive Plan. He also served as a member of the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. He is a member of the Greene County Farm Bureau Board of Directors. He is a past recipient of a CSWCD conservation award and has implemented numerous conservation practices over the years. He, and his wife, Janet, have two daughters. His hobbies include travel and reading. He serves as Chair of the Personnel Committee.



Mike Sands

Mike Sands was elected as a Director for Rappahannock County in 2019. Michael serves on the Technical Committee. Mike and his wife are the owner/operators of Bean Hollow Grassfed, a pasture based sheep and cattle farm in Flint Hill, VA. The farm practices include a number of BMPs

including rotational grazing of a combined herd of cattle and sheep, riparian area exclusion, and warm season grasses. Mike was the Founding Executive Director and is now Senior Associate of the Liberty Prairie Foundation (LPF) in Grayslake, IL. The LPF is a small private operating foundation dedicated to providing leadership in the integration of economically prosperous, ecologically sensitive farms and protected, high quality natural areas.



Sarah Weaver Sharpe

Sarah Weaver Sharpe joined the CSWCD Board as an Associate Director in July 2016 & assumed the role of the Appointed Extension Agent Board member in January 2017. She currently serves as the Greene County Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent with a focus in local foods & horticulture. Sarah grew up in Madison County on her family's pork, beef, hay & row crop farm. She is very passionate about helping producers start businesses & break into the local foods movement as well as helping to educate consumers about how food is grown & the production methods utilized. Sarah lives in Louisa County with her husband, two daughters & two dogs.



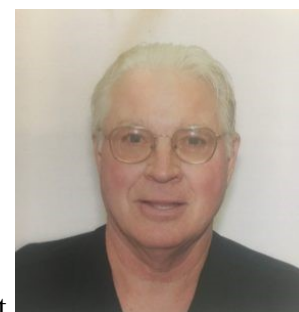
Bob Williamson

Bob Williamson was appointed as an Associate Director from Culpeper County in January 2020. Bob was born and raised on a beef cattle and burley tobacco farm near Abingdon, VA. He graduated from Virginia Tech with a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science, where he was a member of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity. He is married to Julie Gentleman Williamson. They have two children, Clifford and Lindsey, who are both Virginia Tech graduates. Bob and Julie are owners and operators of Step at a Time Farm, a horse boarding, breaking and training barn in Reva. Bob is retired from the USDA Farm Service Agency. He is an active 4-H volunteer and adult leader and member of the Virginia State Extension Leadership Council. He is also an active Farm Bureau member as a Virginia State and American Farm Bureau Convention Delegate and member of Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Political Action Committee Board of Directors.



Dennis Verhoff

Dennis Verhoff joined the CSWCD Board as an elected Director from Culpeper County in January 2020. Dennis grew up on a diversified farm in northwestern Ohio that included dairy, hogs, poultry (chickens and ducks), sheep, tomatoes, corn, soybeans, wheat, oats, alfalfa and, in the early 1950s, sugar beets. He is a graduate of the University of Dayton, the University of Pennsylvania and the Ohio State University with degrees in French, Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic and international relations. Among many other endeavors, he was an English teacher in Tunisian public schools as a member of the US Peace Corps. This was a life-changing event in so many ways. After his return to the US, in addition to continuing his education, he taught school in New Jersey, worked as a Senate aide, analyzed and developed international policy in several Washington, DC organizations and owned his own construction business. In 1995, he began an organic vegetable operation in Culpeper County and marketed his produce at farmers' markets in Charlottesville, Culpeper and the Washington, DC area. In retirement, his travels have taken him to Germany, Italy, China, South Korea, India, Morocco and Iran among other countries.



Staff

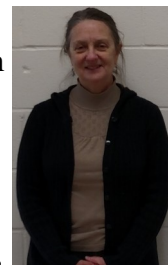
Greg Wichelns

District Manager Greg Wichelns joined the District in January 1998 as the District Manager. He earned a BS in Ecological Agriculture from Evergreen State College & an MS in Horticulture at Washington State University. Previous to employment with the CSWCD he served as Greenhouse Facilities Manager & Staff Horticulturist for the Institute of Biological Chemistry at Washington State University.



JoAnn Neal

Administrative Secretary JoAnn Neal started working for the District as Administrative Secretary in May of 2003. She was born & raised in Cleveland, Ohio. She developed a love of the land & nature spending summers on her grandparents' farm in the Ohio countryside. JoAnn studied Business Administration at Germanna Community College & underwent extensive training in computer programming & systems analysis with IBM. She worked for many years as a Programmer & Systems Analyst with Rental Uniform Service in Culpeper & the Culpeper Farmer's Coop. She also served as the Database Administrator for Communications Corporation of America in Boston, Virginia & was the Office Manager & Administrative Assistant for the Culpeper Country Club. In 1985 she worked with her husband Greaner to turn their interest & experience in organic gardening into the Boston Spice & Tea Company, a small business growing & selling culinary herb products. JoAnn's hobbies include kayaking, hiking & just "being in the outdoors." They have two daughters, Carly & Logyn & four grandchildren. In 2014 JoAnn was recognized along with other District staff as Conservationist of the Year by the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Society.



Richard Jacobs III

Conservation Specialist Richard Jacobs joined the Culpeper SWCD in January of 2005 as a Conservation Specialist. He attended Virginia Tech & graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Systems Engineering. He is a licensed professional engineer & certified stream monitor with Save Our Streams. He has a wonderful wife & two beautiful daughters. He is an Eagle Scout & enjoys camping, hiking & caving with his family.



Stephanie DeNicola-Turner

Education & Information Coordinator Stephanie Rose DeNicola joined the Culpeper SWCD in January 2005. She was born & raised in Queens, NY & moved to the area in 2000 to serve as an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow in Washington, DC. Stephanie earned a B.A. in English from Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. Stephanie has worked at local non profit organizations that address volunteering, homelessness & domestic violence. In addition, Stephanie has trained for & participated in 2 marathons for the Arthritis Foundation: the 2001 Honolulu Marathon & the 2002 Bermuda Half-Marathon, while raising over \$10,000 combined for the organization. In her spare time, she is a patient success story for Johnson & Johnson. In June 2011 Stephanie was recognized as a Certified Watershed Educator by the Virginia Departments of Education & Environmental Quality. Stephanie lives in Albemarle County with her husband & daughter.



W. Spencer Yager

Spencer Yager joined the District in September 2005 as a Conservation Specialist. Spencer was raised on his family's dairy farm. He graduated from Orange County High School, where he was very active in FFA & served as the regional vice president. He worked at Orange Madison Co-op & on the family farm while in high school & college. He graduated from North Carolina State University with an Associate's Degree in General Agriculture. Spencer worked on the family dairy & for a lumber company prior to working at the District. Spencer, his wife & their three children live in Somerset on a part of his old family farm. In his spare time, Spencer enjoys camping, hunting, fishing & watching Virginia Tech games.



James Henshaw

James Henshaw joined District in October 2005 as a District Representative. Jimmy was born & raised in Greene County. He received The Governor's Model Clean Water Farm Award in 1992. He spent 4 years in the Air Force before marrying his wife of 30 years, Gayle. His farm currently has beef cattle, although he has had hogs & sheep in the past. He has fenced all of the streams on the property he owns & most of the streams on the land he rents. He is a past member of Culpeper SWCD board, Greene County School Board, Greene County Board of Supervisors & the Greene County Social Services board. Jimmy & his wife enjoy spending time with their 3 daughters & grandchildren.



David Massie

David joined the District in October 2006 as a Conservation Specialist. David was raised on his family's beef cattle farm. He was born in Charlottesville & raised in Rappahannock County. He graduated from Rappahannock County High School, where he was a 4-H All Star & an Eagle Scout. He graduated from Roanoke College in May 2006 with an Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Policy. David has worked on the family farm since he was 13. The farm is a 5th generation commercial operation that has installed CREP & various Best Management Practices. While in college, David interned at Piedmont Environmental Council & Mill Mountain Educational Park in Roanoke. In his spare time, David enjoys fishing, canoeing & working on the family farm.



Henny Calloway

Henny joined the District in April 2012 as a Conservation Specialist. She graduated from Virginia Tech with a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science. She has worked on the family horse, cattle & crop farm for many years. When she is not performing District tasks, she enjoys working on the farm or with her animals.



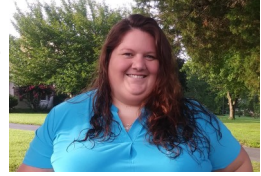
Amanda McCullen

Amanda McCullen joined the District in September 2016 as a Conservation Specialist. She grew up in Fauquier County on her family's farm & enjoyed participating in 4-H while growing up. She graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Biology from Christopher Newport University, with minors in Chemistry & Psychology. After college she volunteered at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal, where she worked with cheetahs, black-footed ferrets & several species of endangered birds. Amanda joined Culpeper SWCD with 2 years of experience working for the Lord Fairfax SWCD in the Shenandoah Valley. She is an amateur birder, who enjoys hiking, skiing and time with friends and family.



Kendall Anderson Dellinger

Kendall Dellinger joined the District in May of 2018 as a Conservation Specialist. She grew up in Culpeper county on her family’s beef cattle farm, and was an active member and officer in both 4-H and FFA clubs throughout her youth. She was active in the agriculture community showing cattle, and participating in local and state livestock judging events. She was invited to participate in the 1st Governor’s School for Agriculture, where her focus was Natural Resources. Kendall attended Virginia Tech where she was an active member of the Block and Bridle club, serving on the membership committee, and participated on the Virginia Tech Livestock judging team. She graduated from Virginia Tech in 2005 with an Animal Agriculture degree. Kendall and her husband live on a farm in Orange County. In her spare time she enjoys farming and spending time with her family.



Stevie Ross

Stevie joined the District in February 2021 as an Administrative Secretary. She grew up in Rappahannock County and studied Accounting in college. She has one daughter and together they enjoy soccer, gardening, and travel.

