

Serving Albemarle, Fluvanna, Louisa and Nelson Counties

Resource Review

“To exercise leadership in promoting soil and water conservation by providing technical expertise and education to policy-makers and the public.”

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Thomas Jefferson Soil & Water Conservation District

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All programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

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TJSWCD Director Elections in November



- ◆ Are you interested in natural resource management?
- ◆ Would you like to have an impact on programs available to address natural resource issues in your community?
- ◆ Would you like to learn more about natural resource management in your community?

This year is an election year for the Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District (TJSWCD) Board of Directors, so, if you answered “yes” to any of the questions above, this may be your opportunity. During the 2003 general election on Tuesday, November 4, two Directors from each of our four counties will be elected.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are authorized under Title 10.1, Chapter 5 of the Code of Virginia and are defined as political subdivisions of the Commonwealth. Directors of SWCDs develop strategies and programs to address local natural resource needs, and serve as a focal point for the coordination of federal, state and local natural resource programs. Some recent areas of focus for the TJSWCD have been stormwater runoff from development areas, erosion and sediment control on construction sites, water quality issues related to agriculture, the protection of riparian areas through forested buffers and riparian easements, and water conservation practices such as rainwater harvesting from rooftops. The time commitment in being a Director is approximately 8 to 16 hours per month.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate, you must complete and file required forms with your local registrar by **7:00 p.m. on June 10, 2003**. All candidates must be a resident of Virginia for one year and must be registered to vote in the locality in which they are running.

Required forms can be downloaded from the State Board of Elections web site at www.sbe.state.va.us (link to “Candidates”, “Information for Candidates”, “Download Candidate Informational Bulletins”, “Download Candidate Forms”). Or, contact your local registrar or the TJSWCD office (434-975-0224). Please allow sufficient time to acquire 25 signatures from registered voters in your locality for your petition.

Phase II NPDES Program is Underway

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program, authorized under the Clean Water Act in 1972, regulates “point sources” of water pollution through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Point sources of pollution are those that originate from an identifiable point such as a pipe or ditch (as opposed to non-point sources that come from broad expanses of land). Most states are authorized by the EPA to administer the NPDES program on the state level. In Virginia, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issues Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) permits to meet the federal storm water requirements.

In 1990, storm water discharges became a part of the NPDES Permit Program. Under Phase I of the NPDES Storm Water Program, EPA required permit coverage for storm water discharges from: (1) “medium” and “large” municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), and (2) certain “industrial activities”, including construction activities disturbing five or more acres of land. Phase II of the NPDES Storm Water program began in December 2002, and expands required permit coverage.

In addition to Phase I requirements, Phase II requires permits for storm water discharges from certain “small” municipal separate storm sewer systems. Operators of regulated storm sewer systems must develop and implement a storm water management program that includes six minimum measures to reduce pollutants in urban storm water:

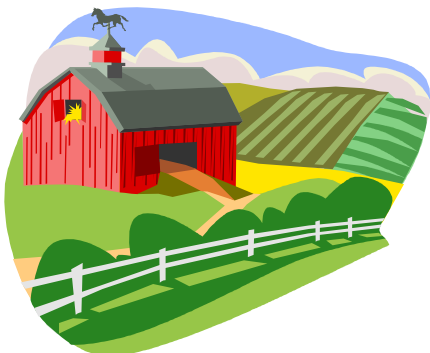
1. Public education and outreach on storm water impacts.
2. Public involvement/participation.
3. Development, implementation and enforcement of a program to detect and eliminate illicit discharges into the storm water system
4. Construction site storm water runoff control.
5. Post-construction storm water management in new development and redevelopment.
6. Pollution prevention/good housekeeping for municipal operations, including employee training to prevent and reduce storm water pollution from activities such as park and open space maintenance, fleet and building maintenance, new construction and land disturbances, and storm water system maintenance.

Phase II also added permit requirements for “small” construction activities that disturb one to five acres of land. The “operators” of such activities must apply to the DEQ for a General VPDES Permit for Storm Water Discharges From Construction Activities. The permit requires that a storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) be prepared for the site. Details regarding the requirements of a SWPPP can be found in the Virginia Administrative Code (9VAC25-180).

For more detailed information on obtaining permits, including information on permit fees, contact your regional DEQ office. For Albemarle, Nelson, and Fluvanna Counties, contact the Valley Regional Office in Harrisonburg at 540-574-7800. For Louisa County, contact the Northern Virginia Regional Office in Woodbridge at 703-583-3800.

Virginia’s Agricultural Stewardship Act

During the 1996 General Assembly, agricultural leaders supported the passage of the Agricultural Stewardship Act (ASA) (Code of Virginia, Title 10, Chapter 5, Article 3.1). The agricultural community saw the program as a show of its commitment to land and water stewardship. The ASA program gives farmers an opportunity to correct a water quality problem voluntarily before any enforcement action is taken.



TJSWCD Student Is State Scholarship Winner

Each year the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Educational Foundation, Inc. awards four \$1,000 scholarships to provide financial support to students continuing their education in a natural resource related curriculum. Full-time students enrolled in, or who have applied to, a college undergraduate or graduate level curriculum are eligible for the scholarships.

One of this year's scholarship winners was Kathryn Durkee, nominated by the TJSWCD. Ms. Durkee lives in Albemarle County and is pursuing a Master of Environmental Studies at Longwood University. In addition to her studies, in which she has excelled, Ms. Durkee has demonstrated her interest and involvement in conservation in many ways. She has been a volunteer instructor for the Holiday Lake Forestry Camp and for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries in their Project WILD and Project Learning Tree Programs. She served as an Associate Wildlife Biologist for the Wildlife Society, a volunteer leader for the 4-H Junior Naturalists, and president of the Esmont Garden Club. Ms. Durkee also edited a CD and guide – "Virtual Tour of the Forest".

The TJSWCD extends its congratulations to Kathryn Durkee, and wishes her the best in her future studies.

Monticello High School Team Wins First Place In Area II Envirothon

Five students from Monticello High School and their coach have been working diligently through the winter to prepare for the big event, and on April 25, their hard work paid off as they won first place in the Area II Envirothon, which was held at Montpelier in Orange County. The Envirothon is a national environmental competition for high schools that begins at the local level and ends with a competition that includes nearly 50 teams from the United States and Canada.

Envirothon competitions include field activities that test the knowledge of the team in the areas of forestry, soils, aquatics, wildlife, and an annual issue. This year's issue is "Agricultural Land Conservation and Preservation". In addition, the teams must conduct an oral presentation based on a problem related to the annual issue.

The Area II Envirothon consists of one to two teams from each of six Soil and Water Conservation Districts including the TJSWCD. The top three teams from the Area competition will be competing at the Virginia Envirothon in Wakefield. The winner of that competition will travel to Emmitsburg, Maryland for the National event. This year's Monticello High School team was coached by Andrea Trank, and team members included Ashley Young, Katie Willcox, Sarah Beggerly, Christian Hoehner and Elena Samel. The TJSWCD wishes the Monticello High School Team the best of luck in Wakefield!

Ag Stewardship Act

(continued from page 2)

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) administers the program in partnership with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The objective is to work with farmers on a local level to resolve water quality problems that have been reported to VDACS. The ASA can also be considered an opportunity to educate all parties involved about best management practices and concerns about water quality.

Nutrients in farm runoff, sediment from erosion, or toxins from pesticide runoff may be the subjects of ASA complaints. Complaints regarding water pollution resulting from agricultural activities can be registered with the Commissioner of Agriculture. If a complaint is under the jurisdiction of the ASA, the local Soil and Water Conservation District is contacted and given the opportunity to investigate it. (If the local SWCD does not wish to investigate, VDACS will conduct the investigation.) After a complaint is investigated, the Commissioner's Office reviews the findings and determines if the complaint is founded and requires further action under the ASA. If so, the farmer is required to develop a plan to correct the problem and then complete plan implementation within eighteen months. The Commissioner's Office contacts complainants to inform them of the findings.

The ASA does not cover agricultural activities subject to water quality permits from the Department of Environmental Quality, forestry activities, air pollution, odor concerns, and landfills or waste problems that do not involve agricultural products and that have no clear water quality impact.

Bay Restoration Goals Now Include Sediment

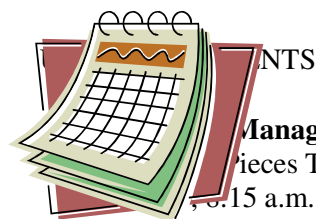
Since 1987, efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay have focused on nutrient reduction goals. Recent discussions among the Bay states have resulted in agreements to not only increase nutrient reduction goals, but also to include sediment reduction goals for the first time. Unlike previous agreements, the new agreements include the Bay headwater states (Delaware, New York, and West Virginia) in addition to the original Bay Program Partnership (EPA, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia). The ambitious hope is to reach the new goals by 2010.

In March, Bay leaders agreed to reduce nutrients flowing into the Bay by almost 50% of their 1985 levels. The goal for nitrogen levels will be 175 million pounds per year, down from the current level of 285 million (the 1985 level was 338 million pounds). For Virginia, that translates into a goal of 51.4 million pounds per year (currently 78.1 million; 1985 level was 92.2 million). The phosphorus goal for the Bay is now 12.8 million pounds per year, down from the current 19.1 million (which is down from the 27.1 million pound 1985 level). For Virginia, the phosphorus goal is 6 million pounds per year (currently 9.6 million; 1985 level was 13.5 million). In April, additional discussions led to an agreement to reduce sediment levels in the Bay from the current 5.06 million tons per year to a maximum of 4.15 million tons per year by 2010.

In addition to the nutrient and sediment reduction goals, the participants also set a new goal of restoring underwater bay grasses to 185,000 acres by 2010. Currently, bay grasses cover 85,000 acres of the bottom

The new goals focus on the “living resources” of the Bay with the establishment of five “habitat zones”. Each habitat zone will need to meet specific levels of dissolved oxygen, water clarity and chlorophyll to provide water quality tailored to the health of the plants and animals that reside in that zone.

To reach the new goals, each state in the 64,000-square-mile Bay watershed has agreed to develop strategies to encourage homeowners, farmers, developers, local governments, wastewater treatment plant operators and community watershed organizations to reduce the amount of nutrients and sediments flowing into local waterways.



NTS

Management -

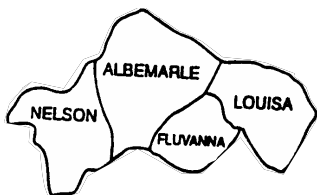
“Pieces Together” – Harrisonburg, May

10:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. Contact: Lisa

Blankenship, Virginia Tech, 540-231-6921,

lisab@vt.edu

- ◆ **James River Sojourn** - June 22-29, 2003. Contact: Hadley Milliken, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, 804-775-0951
- ◆ **TJSWCD Board Meetings**—Last Wednesday morning of each month. (Call 434-975-0224 for location and time.)



Thomas Jefferson

Soil & Water Conservation District

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