



Shore Conservor

Eastern Shore Soil & Water
Conservation District

22545 Center Parkway, Accomac, VA 23301

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2006 TO JUNE 30, 2007

EASTERN SHORE CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Robin Rich-Coates, *Chair*
Richard F. Hall, III, *Vice-Chair*
Robert S. Bloxom, Jr.
W. Rawlings Scott, Jr.
Fred Holland, II
William E. Shockley, Jr.

LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS OTHER AGENCY PARTNERS

EASTERN SHORE CONSERVATION DISTRICT ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Jim Belote
Robbie Lewis
Gail Lee
Dave Lovell
John Chubb
Jeb Wilson
Edwin Long

EASTERN SHORE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STAFF

Jane Corson-Lassiter
District Manager

Carmie Duer
Admin/Cons. Specialist

Addison Nottingham
Conservation Specialist

Latonya Justice
Conservation Technician

Tamsey Ellis

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

LOCALLY-LED CONSERVATION

Vision

- to provide and develop leadership in natural resource conservation, meeting the needs of a diverse clientele through education, technical assistance and the promotion of cooperative programs.

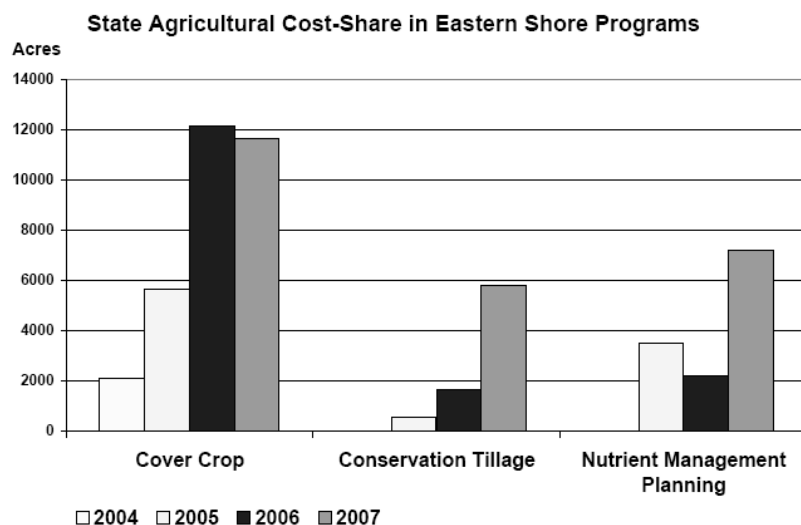
The District is a local committee that increases public awareness and participation in resource conservation. The work of the District is determined by Directors, elected by the people of the District at general elections or appointed by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board. Directors serve four-year terms and designate non-voting Associate Directors to assist with District efforts. Directors and Associate Directors serve as volunteer public servants.

Formed in 1945, The Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth as defined and established by § Code of Virginia, Title 10.1, Chapter 5, et seq.

The District's service area covers the Eastern Shore of Virginia—a region comprised of Accomack and Northampton Counties on the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula. This land area is bounded by the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean. The availability of natural resources has produced an economy based on agriculture and seafood production.

Farming has long been a trademark of the area and is the predominant land use. Because of the importance of sensitive Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean ecosystems within the area's watersheds, the impacts of farming and changing land use on surface and ground water quality is a focus for the District's conservation programs and services.

2004-2007 Enrollment Agricultural Best Management Practices



2007 Agricultural BMP Cost-share

Eastern Shore District administers the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practice (BMP) Cost-share program in Accomack and Northampton counties. Cost-share incentives encourage farmers and landowners to use management practices that help control pollution into our waters from excessive runoff, erosion, leaching and inadequate animal waste management on farms. The program is voluntary and funding is allocated based on highest priority watersheds and other water quality considerations.

In FY07 Eastern Shore was successful in allocating cost-share at the highest funding levels the District has ever seen. The District expended most of the funds on priority practices targeted for water quality improvements. These include planting cover crops, conservation tillage and nutrient management planning.

Small Grain Cover Crop for Nutrient Management (SL-8B)

2070 acres -Bayside / 3670 acres -Seaside

Cover Crop after Specialty Vegetables (SL-8)

225 acres -Bayside / 300 acres -Seaside

Legume Cover Crop (WQ-4)

825 acres -Bayside / 170 acres -Seaside

Small Grain Cover Crop 3-yr program (SL-8C)

2750 acres -Bayside / 1390 acres -Seaside

Nutrient Management Plans (NM-1)

4,700 acres -Bayside / 1,870 acres -Seaside

Five-year Continuous No-till (SL-15A)

3900 acres -Bayside / 1,870 acres -Seaside

Water Control Structure (WP-1) - (1) Seaside

Stream Protection (WP-2) - (1) Bayside

Harvested Cropland: Accomack — 70,100 acres / Northampton — 39,000 acres



Announcement!

It's time for Cover Crop Sign-up!

All seeds must have a minimum germination of 80% and have no more than 16 restricted noxious weed seeds per pound. Seeds must be tested prior to seeding. You will not be paid if the germination is not met at 80%. Please bring in 2 lbs. of seed and the District will send it off to be tested and no cost to the grower.

SL-8B/ Small Grain Cover for Nutrient Management (1 yr. practice):

- * A good stand and good growth of winter cover must be obtained in sufficient time to protect area in the fall and winter. Standard review must be based on 30 plants/ square foot with two tillers per plant by mid December (60 tillers sq. ft.)
- * No nutrients from any source may be applied before March 1, except that manure (with less than 40 lbs N per ton tested value) is permitted if animals are raised as part of applicant's operation and there is inadequate winter storage or application is in accordance with a certified nutrient management plan.
- * The cover may be killed using mechanical or chemical means or by grazing between March 15 and May 15. Harvesting for hay, haylage, silage, grain, straw or seed is not permitted. Pasturing is permitted as long as a 60% residue cover is maintained through March 14.
- * The state payment rate is \$20 acre if planted by November 15. A \$15 per acre early planting bonus is payable if planted on or before October 25. A \$5 per acre bonus is available for planting Abruzzi Rye.



SL-8H/ Harvestable Cover Crop (1 yr. practice):

- * Current Nutrient Management Plan is required. Any nutrients applied before March 1 must be in accordance with the Nutrient Management Plan.
- * A good stand and good growth of winter cover must be obtained in sufficient time to protect the area in the fall and winter (60 tillers/ sq. ft.), or a minimum of 60% of the land area must maintain sufficient cover to intercept rain drops and reduce the impact of wind generated erosion.
- * The cover must be harvested after March 14.
- * Harvesting for hay, haylage, silage, grain or seed is permitted after March 14. Pasturing consistent with sound agronomic management is permitted as long as 60% cover is maintained through March 14.
- * This practice is limited to 300 acres per applicant per year. Land enrolled in this practice may not be converted to or from another practice.
- * Recommended seed types are Winter Rye, Winter Wheat, Winter Barley, Triticale, and Winter Oats.
- * Must be planted before October 25.

SL-8/ Protective Cover for Specialty Program (1 yr. practice) :

- * This practice will provide incentives to keep a cover on cropland when it is not being used after harvest of vegetables. It offers flexibility to growers and vegetables.
- * The seeding must be planted by November 30. The cost-share rate is \$20 per acre.
- * Growth must be maintained for at least 90 days after seeding. Pasturing may be permitted but none of the growth may be harvested for hay or seed.

WQ-4/ Legume Cover Crop (1 yr. practice):

- * This practice is for use only on land being planted to a grain crop. No-till planting must be established into an existing legume stand or newly established stand. Removal of the legume residue by baling or by any other means is not allowed. Grazing is not permitted for this practice.
- * Legume cover crop must be left on surface intact to serve as mulch for the no-till planting of grain crops.
- * Hairy vetch at a rate of 20 lbs must be planted by October 15. The cost-share payment is \$25 per acre. Documentation (fertilizer bills) must be submitted to be kept on file in the District office.

Contact the District office at 757-787-0918 or just drop by for more information!

Annual Awards



Some of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District award recipients include, from left, Cora Ann Johnston, Wayne Heath, Steve Johnsen and Donovan Morrow.

Wayne Heath — Conservation Farmer

Farming a total of 1,700 acres in lower Northampton County, Wayne Heath is one of the largest potato growers on the Shore with over 800 acres planted this year. In addition to vegetables, Mr. Heath grows small grain. He participates in the District's cover-crop program, uses nutrient management planning and rotates his acreage for vegetable production.

Lynwood Guy — Bay Friendly Clean Water Farm Award

Lynwood Guy tends 190 acres of a third generation family farm. Farming a total of 390 acres, Mr. Guy has recently transitioned his operation from vegetables to no-till grain production. He keeps Nutrient Management Plans and participates in State cost-share incentive programs for conservation tillage. In 2007, Mr. Guy placed his family farm under conservation easement with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. The District is an easement co-holder.

Kathy Killmon — Wildlife Conservationist

Kathy Killmon enrolled 4.2 acres of cropland in the Federal NRCS Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) where hardwood trees and shrubs were planted to benefit the more than 200 species of birds which converge on the Eastern Shore each fall during their migration to Central and South America.

Steve and Barbara Johnsen — Forestry Conservationists

Steve and Barbara Johnsen have worked closely with the Virginia Department of Forestry on several management projects on their farm, Whitehall, near Pungoteague. These included pre-commercial thinning, aerial release of herbicides to control hardwood competition in pine stands, and compilation of an in-depth forest stewardship plan on approximately 100 acres of woodlands. The Johnsens have also constructed shallow-water waterfowl impoundments and planted wildlife food plots.

Donovan Morrow — Conservation Student

Donovan Morrow graduated from Nandua High School this spring. For the past two years he's been a member of their Envirothon team and attended this year's State training at Camp Blue Ridge. He's an enthusiastic participant and ambassador for the program.

Debby Milburn — Conservation Educator

Debbie Milburn is a Science teacher at Broadwater Academy and has been coaching Envirothon for fourteen years. She has taught environmental conservation materials in various high school classes for 22 years. Ms. Milburn sets an example for her students and the community by planting Spartina and switch grass to prevent shoreline erosion on her Occohannock Creek property. She assists her neighbors in restoring buffers and is a member of several national conservation organizations.

CELEBRATING CONSERVATION

Environmental Education

Envirothon: Eastern Shore SWCD coordinated a two-day local event for over 45 area high school students at the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. Local winner, Nandua High School, placed 7th in state-wide competition.

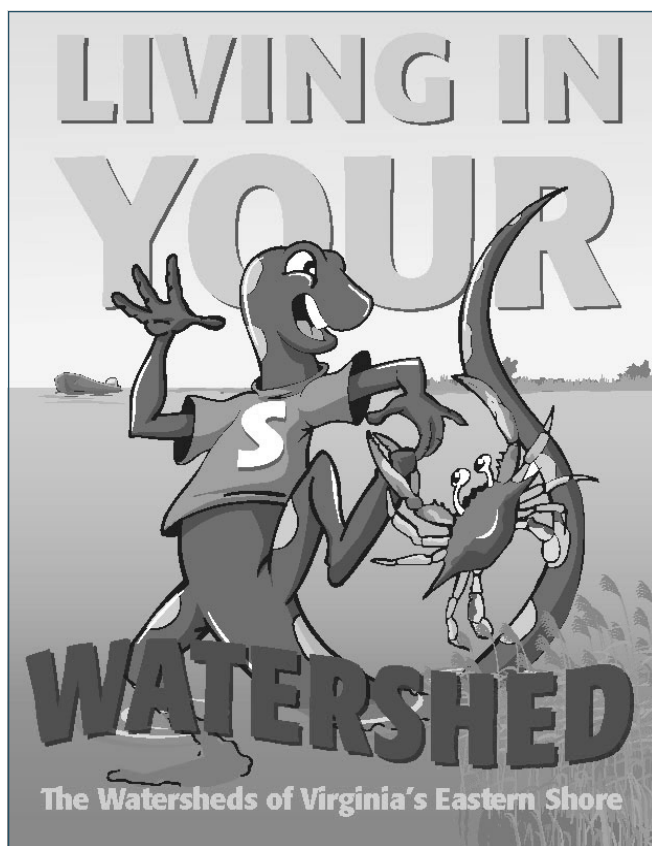
Shore Conservor: Distributed District's newsletter to over 850 households.

Conservation Youth Camp: Sponsored Arcadia High School student, Elizabeth Simko to one-week summer camp in Blacksburg, VA organized by the VA Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

W. Foster Fletcher Conservation Scholarship: Awarded \$1,000 scholarship to Cora Ann Johnston who is attending Hampshire College and \$500 scholarship to Clara Vaughn attending the College of William and Mary.

Spring Conservation Grants Program: Awarded grants totaling \$5332 to several area educators for special classroom conservation programs or class field trips.

Publications: Living in Your Watershed is a colorful twenty page booklet where "Sammy Salamander" explains the watersheds of the Eastern Shore and how to take care of them. Material is presented on a level that is easily understood by third and fourth graders. Content reflects elementary school Standards of Learning, but is a resource for conservation stewards of all ages.



Conservation Poster Contest:

Held in conjunction with National Soil and Water Stewardship week, there were over 50 student entries illustrating the 2007 theme on energy conservation.

Special Events: The District assisted with developing the 15th annual Birding and Wildlife Festival "family passport", and offered displays and activities at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Conference and Trade Show, Birding and Wildlife Festival, Shore-wide Science Fair, and Accomack County Farm Field Days.

Classroom and Community: Contact was made with approximately 1,100 students and teachers at Nandua Middle and Northampton High School Career Days. In partnership with the Master Gardeners and Northampton County 4-H, the District participated in a Skill-a-Thon" for 260 3rd and 4th graders in Northampton Public Schools. At the Accomack County Instructional Academy the District presented a wetlands training demonstrating teaching techniques for elementary teachers.



Special Projects and Acknowledgments

Virginia DCR Tributary Strategies

- Grant funds supported a District program to install and evaluated innovative erosion and sediment control measures in fields under plasticulture.

Virginia DCR Mini Grants

- Established a website for the Eastern Shore Watersheds Network.
- Printed student worksheets to accompany the "Living in Your Watershed" booklet and purchase a groundwater model and watershed model for classroom demonstrations.
- Supported research on managing Italian Rye Grass for sediment control in plasticulture

Conservation Easements

- Agreed to cohold conservation easements on 1,136.82 acres with the Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust .
- Entered a cooperative agreement with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation to monitor VOF Eastern Shore easements.
- Agreed to cohold conservation easement on 162 acres in Northampton County with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

Outreach to Farmers

- Partnered with VA Cooperative Extension to host a farm tour for State and Federal agency partners and to highlight local resource concerns.
- Promoted participation in agricultural best management practices by posting signs in farm fields enrolled in state cost-share.

Awards from the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

- Jane Corson-Lassiter: Chaffin Soil and Water Conservation District Employee of the Year
- Dr. Gail Lee from Nandua High School: Conservation Educator of the Year



All programs and services of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

**The Shore Conserver is published quarterly by the Eastern SWCD to provide information to land users.
Please contact the district office to be added to the mailing list at 757-787-0918.**

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