



Shore Conservor

Eastern Shore Soil & Water Conservation District
22545 Center Parkway, Accomac, VA 23301

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

DISTRICT STAFF

Carmie M. Savage, *District Manager*
Cole Charnock, *Conservation Specialist*
Mary Melson, *Education Director*
Latonya Justice, *Media Specialist*

ELECTED DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Robin Rich-Coates, *Chair*
Fred Holland, II, *Vice-Chair*
Davis Lovell
James A. Evans
Theresa Pittman
W. Rawlings Scott, Jr.

Locally-Led Conservation

Accomack County
Northampton County
Federal and State Agencies
Stakeholder Organizations
Local Citizens

DISTRICT ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Edwin R. Long
Richard F. Hall, III
Robbie Lewis
Ursula Deitch
Richard Davis
William Shockley, Jr.

Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board

The Eastern Shore Soil & Water Conservation District's FY18 Annual Report is a summary of our work over the past year. As a local entity we strive to increase public awareness and participation in natural resource conservation.

Formed in 1945, The Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth defined and established by the Code of Virginia, Title 10.1, Chap 5. The work of the District is determined by directors, elected by the people of the Districts at general elections or appointed by the VA Soil and Water Conservation Board. Directors serve four-year terms and designate non-voting associate directors to help guide

District efforts. Directors and Associate Directors service as volunteer public servants. The District also serves as a valued partner and service provider to various agencies and organizations working together towards resource conservation on the Shore. The District's service area covers the Eastern Shore of Virginia--a region on the Delmarva Peninsula comprised of Accomack and Northampton Counties, bounded by the Atlantic Ocean, the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland.

The Commonwealth of VA supports the District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the VA Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Accomack and Northampton Counties also provide financial assistance and support to the District. Two of our major roles are to administer the Virginia's incentive program for agricultural Best Management Practices and provide environmental education. Since conservation involves everyone, the District provides various programs to students and adults promoting awareness, action and support for the area's natural resources.

2018 Agricultural Best Management Practices Incentive Program

Nutrient Management Planning

Accomack Bayside 9,638.2 acs / Seaside 9,421.3 acs
Northampton Bayside 6,268 acs / Seaside 2,767 acs

Small Grain Cover for Nutrient Management

Accomack Bayside 2,117.5 acs / Seaside 1,263.2 acs
Northampton Bayside 410.7 acs / Seaside 210 acs

Harvestable Cover Crops

Accomack Bayside 533.5 acs / Seaside 1,013.5 acs
Northampton Bayside 592.8 acs / Seaside 361.4 acs

Small Grain Cover behind Vegetables

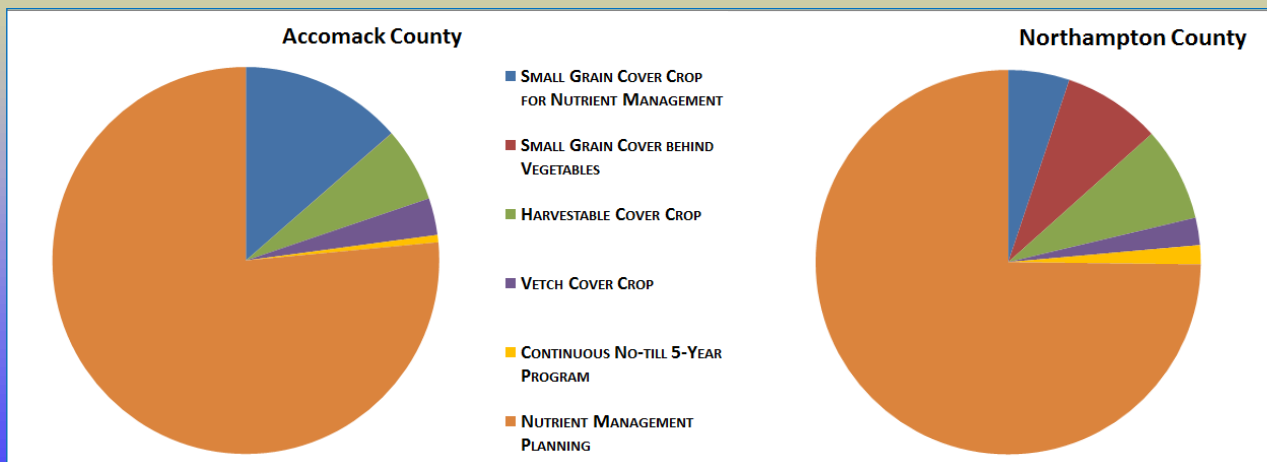
Accomack Seaside 5.5 acs
Northampton Bayside 425.9 acs / Seaside 568 acs

Vetch Cover Crop

Accomack Bayside 375 acs / Seaside 392.8 acs
Northampton Bayside 278.5 acs

Continuous No-till 5-Yr Program

Accomack Bayside 152 acs
Northampton Bayside 193.9 acs

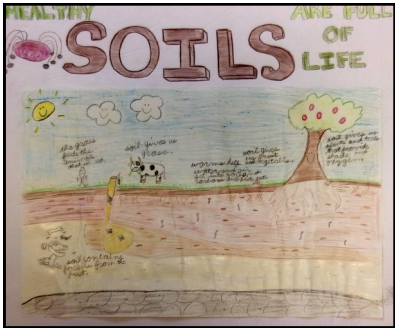


In FY18, the District provided \$344,180.5 in cost-share assistance to landowners and producers on the Eastern Shore. The VA Agricultural Best Management Practice Cost-share Program is administered by the VA Department of Conservation & Recreation through local Soil & Water Conservation Districts to improve water quality in the State's streams, rivers, Chesapeake Bay and the ocean. The program encourages voluntary installation of agricultural BMP's by offering cost-share assistance for implementation.

Environmental Education Programs

The past two years the District's education programs have reached approximately 12,000 people on the Eastern Shore. Using a tracking program created by David Ruble from DCR, the Education Director has been tracking the District's program reach for several years. In 2018 the District reached approximately 7,000 Accomack and Northampton residents. The following programs include some of the environmental education outreach programs presented to residents of the Eastern Shore by the District.

***Conservation Poster Contest:** The 2018 Poster Contest theme was "Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home".



The District had over 160 entries. Each year the District's first place local winners are entered into the State Conservation Poster Contest. Last year's first place local winner won first place in the State in Grades Category 2-3 (Noah Steele of Shore Christian Academy shown above).

***Watershed Festival:** The District's EE Council sponsors the biannual Watershed Festival. This educational festival event has been shaped into a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience for sixth graders. It is a three-part event that focuses on a project that encompasses getting the children outside with hands-on activities. This educational festival focuses on aquatic and biological activities demonstrating our relationship to the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The exhibitors are organizations and governmental agencies who work with VA Science Standards of Learning (SOLs) along with how citizens can protect their watersheds thus protecting our local wildlife, migratory birds, groundwater and soil quality. This past year, it was held at Makemie Park for all 226 Accomack County sixth graders and at Kiptopeke State Park for all 160 Northampton County sixth graders.



***Billie Fitzgerald Memorial Spring Grants:** Spring 2018, the District's Endowment Committee awarded \$2,500 for 12 projects in Spring Grants. The spring

grants are nominal but go towards far-reaching, long-term educational projects reaching the entire Eastern Shore. This year the grants have funded a Pre-K Pollinator Garden and Insect Project at Broadwater Academy, a Butterfly Life Cycles Curriculum at Accawmacke Elementary, a Monarch Waystation at Sawmill Park in Accomack, a Field Trip to the VA Living Museum for 55 Kiptopeke Elementary second graders, a Garden Classroom at Metompkin Elementary, an Outdoor Film for Nature Film Series at Kiptopeke State Park, Birding Identification Program in an Outdoor Classroom for the entire 5th grade at Kegotank Elementary, a Nature Film Series for Master Gardeners at Island Theatre on Chincoteague, a Weather Predictions Program at Occohannock and Kiptopeke Elementary Schools, an Outdoor educational field trip about birds for the Eastern Shore Migrant Head Start program, a Butterfly Garden expansion at Arcadia High School and a Raised Bed Soil Quality Monitor program for a free spring, summer and fall garden club in Cape Charles for youth ages 3-12 years old. The spring grants help programs and children over the entire Eastern Shore of VA.



***Nature Detectives Camp:** For four years now, the District has been working in conjunction with Ker Place to hold a weeklong Nature Detectives Camp. This year, ten campers performed water quality testing, animal tract identification, solar heat cooking and bird identification. They made a glass terrarium and crafted nature paperweights. With these activities they are better able to canvas their environment around them.

Educational Programs (...Continued from page 3)

*New Program: Outdoor Exploration Day



The 1st annual Outdoor Exploration in October 2017 welcomed 1,600 visitors to and from the Shore to learn about migratory birds, wildlife, culture and history. The Flight of the Raptor program was viewed by over 500 local students. The District partners with Kiptopeke State Park to organize this event. The District had a booth teaching participants about different bird beak adaptations for what they eat.

***Youth Conservation Camp:** The VA Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts has sponsored the weeklong Youth Conservation Camp at Virginia Tech annually for 42 years. Ye Accawmacke Garden Club sponsored Neomi Castro who is homeschooled in Northampton County. The District provided financial support toward traveling expenses.

***Dominion Energy Envirothon:** 2018 marked

the 26th year the District has sponsored the local Envirothon, a natural resources competition testing high school students on Pasture Land Management, aquatics, wildlife, forestry and soils. All five local high schools had one or more teams this year. Arcadia High School placed 1st at the local competition.

***Arbor Day:** On April 28th, the District gave away 6,500 seedlings and over 90 nursery donations from six local nurseries at the Northampton Grounds in Eastville, VA, the ES Community College in Melfa, VA, and the Annual County Fair at Campbell Air Field in Franktown, VA. Over 600 people attended the event at the 3 locations. The District gave out another 1,500 seedlings on May 4, 2018 at the Department of Forestry in Accomac, VA.



***W. Foster Fletcher Conservation Scholarships:** The District's Endowment Committee awarded two Scholarships totaling \$1,000 to a Broadwater Academy student and Northampton High School student, Palmer Smith and Hayley Marshall.

Farmland Easements

Sixty percent of Chesapeake forests have been divided into disconnected fragments by roads, homes, and other gaps that are too wide or dangerous for wildlife to cross. The District is proud to do its part and serve as a co-holder of conservation easements in an effort to help conserve open spaces. The District currently co-holds 28 easements totaling nearly 5,000 acres with Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust and co-holds one with the Virginia Outdoor Foundation for the benefit of future generations.

All programs and services of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap. The Shore Conserver is published quarterly by the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District to provide information to land-users and the community.