



# From the *Fall Line*

Serving the Counties of King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford & the City of Fredericksburg



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# THE BENEFITS OF SMALL GRAIN COVER CROPS



This rye small grain cover crop is an example of an SL-8B.

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A small grain cover crop, such as rye, barley and wheat, (an “SL-8B” practice in the VA Agricultural Cost-Share Program) provides protection to cropland during the critical erosion periods in the fall and winter. The cover crop utilizes residual nitrogen from the previous crop, preventing the loss of those nutrients to runoff into streams and waterways or by leaching into ground water.

Through the VA Agricultural Cost-Share Program, a cost-share payment at a flat rate per acre (depending on how early the crop is planted) is offered as an incentive to encourage proper establishment of an effective cover crop. This helps offset the cost of seed and the seeding operation to plant the small grains as cover to protect the cropland rather than leaving the field fallow. To qualify, the cover crop must meet several key conditions.

In **Stafford** and **Spotsylvania** counties, the last date for “early” planting October 10, and the last date for “standard” planting is November 1. In **King George** county, the last date for “early” planting October 25, and the last date for “standard” planting is November 15.

No nutrients from any sources can be applied on cover crops receiving cost-share payments. This includes from the time the previous crop is harvested, to the time of planting the small grain cover crop, through to March 1 of the next calendar year.

A good stand and growth of vegetative cover must be obtained by December 1 to protect the area from nutrient leaching and runoff in the rainy fall and snowy winter seasons. All cover crop plantings must maintain a minimum of 60% cover crop plant material on the enrolled acres from December 1, 2020 through March 14, 2021.

Between March 15 and June 1, the cover crop must be killed by mechanical or chemical means or by grazing.

If you have any questions or would like to know about other practices offered, please call Etta Lucas, Conservation Specialist, at (540) 656-2402.



## RECOMMENDED READINGS

Have a suggestion you would like to see in the next issue? Contact **Mariya Hudick** at (540) 656-2402 or email [mariya.hudick@tccswcd.org](mailto:mariya.hudick@tccswcd.org)

### “Seeds of Hope:

#### Wisdom and Wonder from the World of Plants”

by Jane Goodall

Join the wise and elegant narrator, Jane Goodall, as she takes you on an adventure of the secret world of plants where she and the chimpanzees are enchanted by the fig and plum trees they encounter. From wild fruit to cultivated crops, see the world from the eyes of a conservationist in love with the beauty of nature. With a foreword by Michael Pollan, author of “The Omnivores Dilemma”, this book is a wonderful addition to your nature library.

### “Flight Behavior”

by Barbara Kingsolver

Set in the heart of Appalachia in southwestern Virginia, Dellarobia Turnbow is a farmer’s wife who seeks momentary escape from a decade of disharmony in her domestic life. What she discovers on her hike is a sea of fire as thousands of monarch butterflies light the forest before her in hues of red, orange, and yellow. Virginia native Barbara Kingsolver sets the stage, tackling the challenges of climate change and public education in her 2012 novel, “Flight Behavior”.



## SUMMER, SCOUTS, AND STORM DRAINS... OH MY!

While the task of keeping our waters clean is daunting, local Cub Scout Pack 22 wanted to step up to the challenge. With the help of TCCSCWD, Pack 22 decided on a storm-drain-stenciling project to raise awareness of storm drains' role in pollution and their connection to the Chesapeake Bay within their community.



Cub Scout Pack 22 members (and Dad) working hard to spread the message of water pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Impervious surfaces, such as roads, contribute to the amount and speed of pollution that travels to the storm drain. The trash and chemicals that wash away by rainwater carry these pollutants to the Chesapeake Bay, which in turn travels to the Atlantic Ocean. And yes, even the doggy scat is a form of pollution. It is estimated that by 2050, the amount of plastic in our oceans will outweigh the fish.

On a hot Saturday morning in September, the Cub Scouts gathered in the Lee Hill Park neighborhood to embark on a journey to discover the state of the Chesapeake Bay. Tri-County/City's Education Coordinator, Mariya Hudick, presented a two hour training teaching Pack 22 how water travels within the water cycle by having the Cub Scouts transform themselves into rain droplets as part of Project Wet's [The Incredible Journey](#) lesson. Once they mastered the flow of water, the Scouts then discussed pollution's connection to the water cycle and its ecological impact. But talking about an issue does not solve the problem at hand. (See next page)



Nothing is going to stop these Cub Scouts from becoming stormwater stewards!





The Enviroscope model vividly demonstrates how water will travel over impervious surfaces to carry pollution to the nearest waterway.

With a paint brush in one hand and a stencil in the other, the Cub Scouts set out to divide and conquer the storm drains of a local neighborhood. Each group was assigned 2-3 storm drains to paint the messages “Don’t Dump” and “Chesapeake Bay Drainage.” Not only do the messages raise awareness on their own, they also invited community conversation that day. As they worked on the community project, nearby neighbors came out to ask, “What are you doing?” And with that hook, the Cub Scouts became the teachers and proceeded to use their new understanding to explain the importance of curbing water pollution and the role of storm drains. By sharing information in a creative and engaging manner to nudge us toward long-lasting behavioral changes, the Cub Scouts are doing their part to help keep the Chesapeake Bay clean. And so can you!

Want to defend the watershed in your neighborhood? Reach out to our Education Coordinator, Mariya Hudick at [mariya.hudick@tccswcd.org](mailto:mariya.hudick@tccswcd.org) to discuss scheduling a stormwater stenciling session for your Scout Troop or community group!

#### STEPS TO STENCIL A STORM DRAIN

1. Identify which storm drains you are interested in stenciling on a map.
2. Figure out what kind of sign you want to stencil. Think about what you want it to say and how big it will be. Make sure the stencil fits on the storm drain! Check out this [link](#) for some inspiration.
3. Contact your local Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (VDOT) office to fill out a Storm Sewer Stenciling Permit with an image of your stencil idea and map of storm drains (using Google Maps is an easy option). You can also call (804) 786-5056 where the Department of Conservation & Recreation can help you identify your storm drain stenciling contact for VDOT.
4. Once you have approval, you can make or purchase your stencil. A simple paint brush or spray paint will do the trick. We used [this paint](#), recommended to us by Lowes for the finished masterpiece.
5. Go forth and spread (or stencil!) the word!



# COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

KEEP IN THE KNOW AND UP TO DATE!

## Mark Your Calendars!

Click on the event title link to find out more online.

### Natural Area Management Services Webinar Series:

#### Expanding Green Industry Services to your Clientele

The Woods in Your Backyard Partnership

**October 22 & 29 — 7:00 PM**

**November 5 & 12 — 7:00 PM**

Are you a Green Industry professional interested in expanding your services to include creating and enhancing natural areas? Perhaps you manage land for an organization, work with volunteers, or are just an interested landowner? If so, then this series is for you!

#### Webinar:

#### Native Plants for Winter Interest

Virginia Cooperative Extension

**October 23 — 10:00 AM**

Cooler Fall weather is considered the perfect time to add woody plants to your landscape. Learn about some native trees and shrubs, as well as selected perennials, ferns and grasses, that you can still plant to provide interest and beauty to the garden throughout the winter.

#### Webinar:

#### Fifteen Minutes in the Forest Series

Virginia Department of Forestry &  
Virginia Cooperative Extension

**October 23, 30 — Noon**

**November 6, 13, 20 — Noon**

Join this weekly Zoom webinar to learn more about your local forests. Topics include "How Clean is Your Creek?," forest soils, holiday greenery, and much more!

#### Webinar:

#### Food System Financing in Virginia

Virginia Community Capital &  
Virginia Foodshed Capital

**October 27 — Noon**

**November 17 — Noon**

**December 15 — Noon**

Hear from food system funders, technical assistance providers, incentive programs, and organizations who have received financial resources.

### Webinar Series:

#### Livestock Genetics & Genomes

Virginia Cooperative Extension

**October 28 — 1:00 PM**

**November 4, 11, 18 — 1:00 PM**

**December 2 — 1:00 PM**

Hosted by the American Society of Animal Science Southern Section Extension Committee, this webinar series dives into the vast world of livestock genetics and genomes.

#### Webinar:

#### From the Group Up: Starting Community Gardens

Virginia Cooperative Extension

**October 30 — 12:30 PM**

Tools, tips, and tricks to start a community garden, including at a school or faith-based institution run by volunteers. Presented by Adria Bordas and Kristen Conrad of Virginia Cooperative Extension.

#### Webinar:

#### Get Paid to Go Green: Funding for Conservation Practices

Sustainability Matters

**November 10 — 6:00 PM**

Thought about planting a pollinator meadow or riparian buffer, but daunted by the expense? Find out how to get state and federal programs to cover most of the cost of eco-friendly improvements to your land!

#### Webinar:

#### Backyard Composting 101

Virginia Master Gardeners & R-Board

**November 16 — 7:00 PM**

Curious about backyard composting but have no idea where to begin? The Virginia Master Gardeners have you covered as they partner with the R-Board to present this virtual information session through the Central Rappahannock Regional Libraries.

## GREAT FOR KIDS & FAMILIES

### Webinar:

#### Virtual Storytime with Tarneshia

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

**October 23, 30 — 10:00 AM**

**November 6, 13, 20, 27 — 10:00 AM**

**December 4, 11, 18 — 10:00 AM**

Join in the fun on Facebook Live as Children's Educator, Tarneshia Evans, reads a few of her favorite stories! Books read: "The Runaway Pumpkin", "Press Here", "Mix It Up", and so much more!

### In-Person Event:

#### Halloween in the Park

Fredericksburg Farmer's Market

**October 31 — 9:00 AM**

This year for Halloween we will be taking part in Halloween in the Park, hosted by the Fredericksburg Farmer's Market. Come on out to Hurkamp Park for a day full of fun activities. Music, a hay maze, pumpkin patch, TRICK OR TREATING, arts and crafts, and a costume parade.

### In-Person Event:

#### Be a Ghost... and Leave No Trace!

Westmoreland State Park

**October 31 — 10:00 AM**

Empower the next generation by learning and sharing how responsible actions can help protect the outdoors and keep it Boo-tiful!!!

Join a Park Ranger and discover the 7 Principles of Leaving No Trace. All ages!

### In-Person Event:

#### Autumn Embers

Pocahontas State Park

**November 28 — 2:00 PM**

As the temperature drops, discover the role that fire played in the creation of human society. Compare modern fire making techniques to those of the past next to a cozy campfire. Suitable for all ages. Please dress appropriately for the weather.

# NRCS CORNER

## A Conservation Plan: Planning for the Future

Planning plays a pivotal role in our everyday lives. Whether you are putting together a “To Do List” or an itinerary for a trip or you are making the right choices to be more financially sound in times such as retirement, we all plan so we can be more prepared for what lies ahead and can reach our desired goals. It is no different when it comes to managing our natural resources on the landscape.

In the world of Conservation Planning, the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assists private land-users to manage and protect their natural resources. In cooperation with the local NRCS staff, landowners work to develop a road map that fits their needs to reach their unique operation’s goals. This road map is called the Conservation Plan. The Conservation Plan benefits landowners in many ways. Benefits include:

- decreasing input costs
- making land more productive
- increasing the value of the land
- improving both soil and water quality
- creating/improving wildlife habitat
- conserving soil and water for times of drought
- increasing livestock/crop production, and
- creating good neighbor relations.

The Conservation Plan provides eligibility for most USDA programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Crop Insurance. It also meets environmental compliance requirements for Highly Erodible Lands (HEL) and Wetlands. For more information on getting started on your Conservation Plan, contact your local USDA-NRCS office today at (540)-899-9492, Ext. 5 or visit our website at:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/va/technical/cp/>



Photo courtesy of Maryland USDA-NRCS.

## Fall Reminders

- For Crop Producers: Fall Crop Residue Checks will be starting soon! Be sure to let NRCS know when you have harvested your 2020 grain crop and when you planted your cover crops!
- NRCS is currently taking new applications for the 2021 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Contact NRCS at (540)-899-9492, Ext. 5 for more information, to schedule a site visit, and to apply!
- The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is currently taking signups for both the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Through these programs landowners can establish riparian forest buffers, grass buffers, or convert whole fields to wildlife habitat and receive cost-share for establishment expenses and rental payments for the land that is taken out of agricultural production. If interested, contact your local FSA staff at (540)-899-9492, Ext. 2 on how to apply!
- Are you or is someone you know (14 years or older) interested in conservation? Then become an Earth Team Volunteer with the USDA-NRCS today! Contact me at (540)-899-9492, Ext. 5 for more information or visit our website at [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/va/people/volunteers/?cid=nrcs142p2\\_018866](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/va/people/volunteers/?cid=nrcs142p2_018866)

— **Matt Roberts**, Acting District Conservationist



## 2019 CLEAN WATER FARM AWARD WINNER RECOGNIZED!

As the local Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) for the three counties of King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford and the one city of Fredericksburg, Tri-County/City SWCD's Board of Directors has the privilege and responsibility of awarding the local Clean Water Farm Award (formerly the "Bay-Friendly Farm Award"), given in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation. This honor is awarded to farmers, selected in the fall, who demonstrate outstanding management practices to protect the environment here in the Rappahannock, Potomac and York River watersheds and so helping preserve the Chesapeake Bay.

Usually, in the spring our county governments honor local winners of the Clean Water Farm Award as selected the previous fall by the District. But, like so very many things in 2020, things did not quite



Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Meg Bohmke of the Falmouth District, read aloud the Board's resolution recognizing Robert & Virginia Greenlaw's conservation efforts through their work at Earth's Echo Farm.



follow the typical plan. Even though it is now Fall of 2020, we are still delighted to announce that on September 1, 2020 Earth's Echo Farm of Stafford County, operated by Robert and Virginia Greenlaw, was recognized by resolution of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors for their exemplary conservation stewardship and were awarded the 2019 Clean Water Farm Award. Robert Greenlaw was presented with the Clean Water Farm Award, a sign to display on the farm, and a framed copy of the Board of Supervisors' resolution.



Vice-Chair of the Board, Tom Coen of the Washington District where Earth's Echo Farm is located, presented the award and resolution to Robert on behalf of the Board of Supervisors.



# Tri-County/City Soil & Water Conservation District Directory

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### APPOINTED DIRECTORS

**VA Cooperative Extension**, Extension Agent  
Mike Broaddus, since 2012

**VA Soil & Water Conservation Board**, At-large  
Ray Simms, since 2020<sup>1</sup>

### ELECTED DIRECTORS

#### **Fredericksburg**

Giannina D. Frantz (Chair), since 2012  
Charles "Chuck" Koch, since 2020

#### **King George**

Janet Gayle Harris (Treasurer), since 1990  
Robert "Bob" Wernsman, since 2016

#### **Spotsylvania**

Jan Massey (Vice Chair), since 2016  
Wayne W. Miller (Secretary), since 1972

#### **Stafford**

Jeff Adams, since 2016  
Tim Makee, since 2020

### ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

John Howe, Stafford - since 2015<sup>2</sup>  
Lucia Street, Spotsylvania - since 2019

## STAFF

Jen Benson, Administrative Professional  
Mariya Hudick, Education Coordinator  
Etta Lucas, Conservation Specialist  
Marta Perry, District Manager

## PARTNERS

### **VA Department of Forestry**

David Houttekier, Area Forester

### **USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Matt Roberts, Acting District Conservationist

### **VA Department of Conservation & Recreation**

Amy Walker, Regional District Coordinator

<sup>1</sup> Also elected as Director for Spotsylvania 1974-75, 1982-83, and 1995-2015,

<sup>2</sup> Also appointed as Director for VA Cooperative Extension from 2000-2010.

**TCCSWCD maintains a working relationship with the following agencies and organizations to reach common conservation goals:**

City of Fredericksburg  
King George County  
Spotsylvania County  
Stafford County  
Friends of the Rappahannock  
Plant Central Rappahannock Natives Campaign  
Tree Fredericksburg  
George Washington Regional Council  
Potomac River Watershed Roundtable  
Rappahannock River Basin Commission  
York River & Small Coastal Basins Roundtable  
Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts  
VA Department of Conservation & Recreation  
VA Cooperative Extension  
VA Department of Environmental Quality  
VA Department of Forestry  
VA State Parks  
VA Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
VA Department of Wildlife Resources  
VA Outdoors Foundation  
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service  
USDA - Farm Services Agency  
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

All programs and services of the Tri-County/City Soil and Water Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, age, marital status, disability,

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports Tri-County/City Soil & Water Conservation District through financial & administrative assistance provided by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.