

Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District

2020~2021 Annual Report

Bringing Conservation Home

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

BMP Cost Share Funding - \$160,807.00
BMP Cost Share Acreage - 3226
Number of Farms Assisted - 51

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Aerial Map Viewings - 4
Site Visits - 64
Soil Test Vouchers - 672

URBAN PROGRAMS

VCAP Funding - \$15,000.00
VCAP Practices Completed - 1

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Poster Contest - 143 entries
Classroom Programs - 1314 students
Scout Programs - 18 scouts

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Facebook - 783 likes
Instagram - 260 followers
Henricopolis Happenings - 2579 readers

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Acres protected - 124.33 acres in 20-21
Total acres protected - 727.85 acres

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community Events -1
Volunteer Hours - 260



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District

8600 Dixon Powers Drive
Henrico, VA 23228
804-501-5175
www.henrico.us/henricopolis

DIRECTORS

Nicole Anderson Ellis, Chair
James Beckley, Appointed, Vice Chair
Claiborne Yarbrough, Treasurer
Anne-Marie J. Leake
Ed Olsen

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Leon P. App
Elizabeth Beckley
Donald (Spec) Campen, Jr.
Joyce Davis
Herbert L. Dunford, Jr.
Terri Higgins
Jon Hruska

STAFF

Charles Lively
Lindy Durham, Secretary
Stacey Heflin

OUR MISSION

To educate and guide Henrico County citizens
in the sustainable use of our natural resources.

OUR VISION

Clean Waters, Productive Soil

OUR HISTORY

In September of 1940, Henrico County joined with Chesterfield and Prince George counties to form the James River Soil and Water Conservation District. For 35 years, they worked together to provide a soil and water conservation program for landowners within the three counties. Because of the rapidly growing population and complexity of issues, the James River District petitioned the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board for realignment of boundaries by creating a new District called Henricopolis. On April 24, 1975, the Board approved the petition and Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District was split from James River District. The boundaries of the new district were established as conterminous with those of Henrico County.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

The Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD) works on behalf of Soil and Water Districts throughout the state. Districts are represented in the VASWCD by geographic areas. Henricopolis is a member of Area III, a group of 8 conservation districts representing 20 counties in Central and Tidewater Virginia. Henricopolis Directors and Staff participate in the Marketing, Education, Legislative, Operations and Conference Planning committees.



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

The Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees (VACDE) is an organization consisting of Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District employees, directors, and district partner agency personnel. It provides professional development, leadership and a voice on behalf of conservation district employees. The VACDE sponsors and conducts an annual summer training session at Graves Mountain Lodge in Syria, Virginia.



ANNUAL MEETING

The VASWCD annual meeting was held virtually in December 2020 with education sessions for District Directors and Staff converted to a virtual education blitz that took place throughout the fall. Henricopolis' newly-elected Directors helped lead a networking session for new Directors throughout the state.



AREA III MEETING

The Districts within Area III include: Colonial, Hanover-Caroline, Henricopolis, Monacan, Northern Neck, Three Rivers, Tidewater and Tri-County/City. The Districts meet each spring to discuss conservation topics unique to the area. In 2021, the spring meeting was held virtually.

Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District

OUR MANDATE

Henricopolis SWCD is a governmental subdivision of the state and a public corporate and politic, with public powers set forth in the Soil and Water Conservation District Law of Virginia (Title 21. Code of Virginia—1938). This law was passed and the districts formed to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the state of Virginia.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Henricopolis SWCD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who serve a four-year term. Three directors are elected in the general election, and two are appointed by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board. One of the appointed members is always the County Extension Agent. District Directors and Associate Directors are not compensated for the time they serve on the District Board.

COMMITTEES

Henricopolis SWCD has nine standing committees which function to keep the Board current on issues that directly impact the District and its mission. Committees meet regularly to conduct District business. District staff assist these committees by providing data and support on a wide range of business and conservation issues. The District's committees include: Agriculture, Awards, Education, Finance, Land Preservation, Legislative, Operations, Personnel, Public Relations and Urban. The Henricopolis Board also authorized an ad hoc committee to guide the District's engagement in the public comment process of the Henrico County 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

STAFF

The District Board employs a staff to implement programs and conduct District operations. The Board remains dedicated to supporting staff education and training to ensure that staff has the knowledge and tools needed to effectively meet the identified conservation needs within the community.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The District develops an Annual Plan of Work in order to meet the goals envisioned in the Strategic Plan. The purpose of the plan is to provide guidance for the board and staff on a long-term basis. The District completed a four-year Strategic Plan in 2018. That four-year plan has been the basis of the FY 2019-2020 Annual Plan of Work.

MEETINGS

The District conducts monthly board meetings to address conservation issues that impact the county. The public is invited and encouraged to attend these meetings and provide input or voice concerns for Board consideration. Meetings are scheduled on the third Thursday of the month at 4:00pm. During the pandemic our Board meetings have been conducted via ZOOM but are still open to the public. With the lifting of the Governor's state of emergency, Board Meetings have returned to in person meetings at various county libraries with a video option.

PARTNERSHIPS

Henricopolis conducts its work through a network of partnerships with other local, state and federal conservation agencies, including but not limited to, Henrico County, VA Cooperative Extension and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Henricopolis 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.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Community Outreach

RAIN BARRELS

Rain barrels are an excellent way to prevent soil erosion, conserve water and save money. The water collected in a rain barrel can be used to water plants and gardens, reduce flooding in your yard and help protect the Chesapeake Bay. Henricopolis sells 50 gallon barrels for \$100 year round. Each barrel comes with an installation kit and complete instructions. In 2020-2021, Henricopolis sold 84 rain barrels directly to Henrico County citizens.

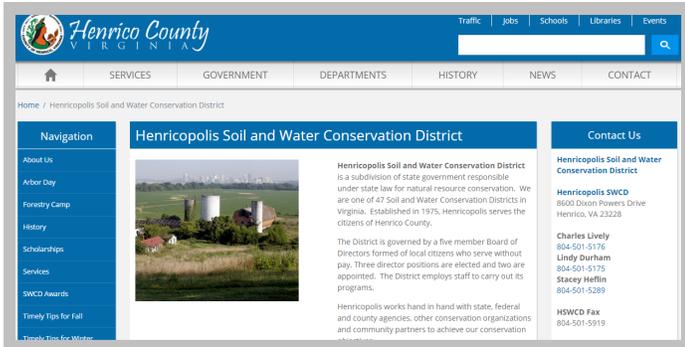


HENRICO AREA WATER QUALITY SAMPLERS (HAWQS)

Grant funding from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality supports the Henrico Area Water Quality Samplers (HAWQS) team. Volunteers monitor Henrico streams due to concerns about the water quality in the county. Twenty-one sites are being monitored by twenty-one volunteers in 2020-2021. The data from the HAWQS program is used to raise community awareness. Henricopolis partners with Keep Henrico Beautiful to conduct stream cleanups throughout the county.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Community Outreach



WEBSITE

The District maintains a website with the cooperation of Henrico County, enabling citizens easy access to information about the District. The recently updated site includes information regarding upcoming events and services offered by Henricopolis to citizens.



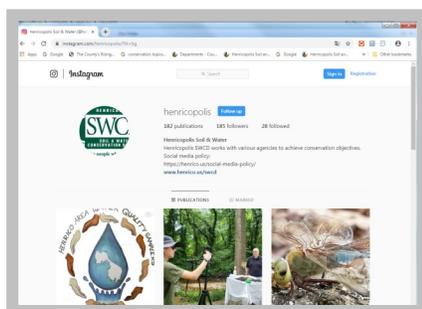
FACEBOOK

Friends of Henricopolis can quickly find out about events and programs and other interesting happenings in the soil and water world. Our Facebook page enjoys 783 likes.



E-NEWSLETTER

The District publishes a quarterly newsletter entitled "Henricopolis Happenings" which reaches over 3000 citizens, organizations and businesses per issue. The newsletter is available via email or on the District's website. The newsletter articles address local and regional conservation issues, important District news and events, and various District programs.



INSTAGRAM

Henrico County residents can enjoy photos of the many community activities in which Henricopolis Directors and Staff are involved. Our Instagram page enjoys 260 followers.

Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Education Programs

CONSERVATION POSTER CONTEST

Each year, Henricopolis sponsors a local poster contest in conjunction with the National Association of Conservation District's Poster Contest. As a result of ZOOM presentations by HSWCD staff, 143 electronic entries were received from Henrico County schools and Girl Scout troops for the 2020 theme **"Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators?"**.

The following Henrico County students submitted winning entries: Grades K-1 **Mary Grace Cale** from Twin Hickory Elementary, Grades 2-3 **William Cale** from Rivers Edge Elementary, Grades 4-6 **Caroline Wetzel** from Moody Middle School, Grades 7-9 **Nikhita Saravanan** from Moody Middle School and Grades 10-12 **Kyndal DeMena** from Highland Springs High School. Congratulations to Nikhita whose poster won 1st place in her age group for Virginia.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Education Programs

MEANINGFUL WATERSHED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

In 2020-2021, Henricopolis completed its three-year BWISE (Bay Watersheds in Science Education) partnership to deliver Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences to Henrico County 6th graders. Funded by a grant from NOAA and directed by the Maymont Foundation over the three-year period, all Henrico County Middle Schools were a part of this program. Henricopolis delivered virtual classroom outreach to approximately 600 Rolfe Middle School and Tuckahoe Middle School in 2020-2021.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Education Programs

CLASSROOM PROGRAMS

Classroom programs continued to be the foundation of Henricopolis environmental education in 2020-2021. Due to the COVID shutdown, classroom programs were delivered virtually to 1314 students.

Living In Your Watershed explores the importance of Henrico County's watersheds and how to protect them with Henrico County fourth graders.

I ♥ SOIL! is designed especially for third graders and explores the importance of soil to plants and animals.

Who Polluted the River? engages students in an interactive story to learn how, as human populations have grown and land uses have changed, many of our rivers have become polluted.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Education Programs

SCHOLARSHIPS

in 2002, Henricopolis established an academic scholarship award through an endowment with the Colonial Agricultural Educational Foundation. Through this program the District Henricopolis is pleased to award a number of college scholarships to deserving Henrico students. In 2021-22, we partnered with the Colonial Farm Credit Education Foundation to award scholarships to Marco Yannie (*Reynolds Community College*), Michael Montgomery (*Douglas Freeman*) and Grace Thorpe (*Maggie Walker Governors School*). Elizabeth Eroshenko (*Mills Godwin*) also won the coveted VASWCD scholarship.

In addition to the Colonial Foundation scholarships, Henricopolis was able to award an additional mini-scholarship of \$500.00 to Rithanya Saracanan and Theo Brandenberger. This scholarship was made possible by the stipend earned by Henricopolis as a partner in the NOAA Bay Watershed in Science Education (BWISE) program.



SCOUT PROGRAMS

Most Scout programs were put on hold during 2020-2021 due to COVID restrictions. By Spring we were participating in outdoor programs. Henricopolis participated in the Master Gardeners' Pollinator Festival at Deep Run and delivered the soil program to 16 Brownies of Troop 712.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Assistance



DISTRICT RESOURCES

Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District maintains and updates a large quantity of conservation reference materials, technical sheets and brochures in the District office. The District houses both current and historical aerial photos of Henrico County. These photos are available to both the public and private sector for review. The Henrico County Soil Survey, produced by the Natural Resources Conservation Service is available for review in the District office. Henricopolis staff is available to help individuals interpret the soil survey. Various other maps pertaining to topography, wetlands and hydrologic information are also available for review in the District office.

VIRGINIA BMP COST-SHARE AND TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

Conservation districts receive funding from the Department of Conservation and Recreation to administer this program and distribute cost-share funds to local agricultural producers and landowners. The program provides incentives to install Best Management Practices or to implement BMPs in their agricultural operation. These BMPs improve the water quality of the state's streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay by reducing the amount of water-borne sediments, nutrients and other pollutants which result from agricultural operations. Cost-share or state tax credit is available to producers in order to cover or defray the cost of BMP installation. Please contact our office for more details.

In 2020-2021, the District was able to provide \$160,807.00 towards the implementation of cost share practices this year. These practices included continuous no-till planting, planting of small grain cover crops, nutrient management plan writing and record keeping practices.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Assistance

SOIL TESTING PROGRAM

Henricopolis SWCD continues to offer a soil test incentive program that provides payment vouchers to requesting citizens to cover the cost of a soil analysis. The goal is for the homeowner to use the results to reduce the amount of nutrients entering the Chesapeake Bay through over-fertilization. In 2020-2021, the District issued 672 vouchers valued at \$6,720.00 to Middle James River Watershed residents for soil testing. This program is financed by a grant from the Department of Environmental Quality through the Middle James Roundtable.



VIRGINIA CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) is available to all homeowners, commercial and public land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This program provides financial incentives for 11 Best Management Practices (BMPs) to help non-agricultural landowners reduce their "stormwater footprint" and improve water quality. Those practices include: rainwater harvesting, bioretention systems, rain gardens, conservation landscaping, permeable paving, impervious surface removal, vegetated stormwater conveyances, constructed wetlands, dry wells, infiltration basins and green roofs. In 2020-2021, Henricopolis distributed \$15,000.00, to Henrico County homeowners and completed one VCAP practice.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Assistance

HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance to residents continues to be a fundamental component of district efforts.

Inquiries about pond management, stream stabilization, erosion, drainage problems, as well as soils and watershed protection all received attention from staff. Many of these inquiries are addressed via e-mail or phone call, while others involve a site visit and analysis or research on the part of the staff.



CONSERVATION AND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The District provides conservation planning services to local landowners in order to assist them in meeting the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. The District also provides the service of writing or assisting with writing nutrient management plans for Henrico agricultural producers to help minimize adverse environmental effects and avoid unnecessary nutrient applications.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Partnerships

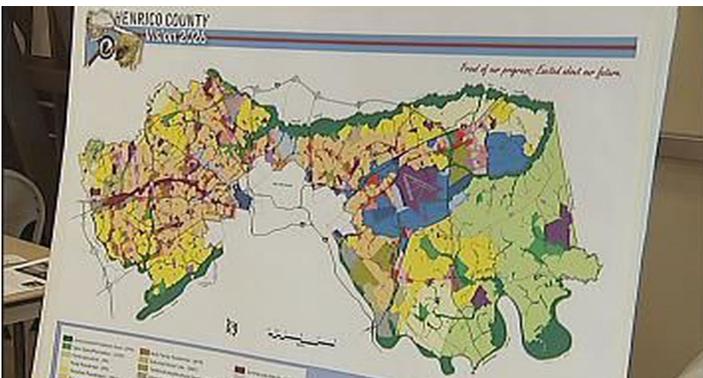
CORNERSTONE FARM

Henricopolis remains deeply proud of our partnership with Henrico County, Henrico County Public Schools, Fairfield Middle School and our allies in the world of urban agriculture, on Cornerstone Community Farm's ongoing success. Even during the pandemic - which limited volunteer access to the more-than-four-acres of cultivated fields and orchards - Cornerstone's harvest has continued to be sold at local markets, including Dorey Park Farmers Market and the 25th Street Market. We just can't wait to get the kids digging in the dirt again!



CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Henricopolis partnered with the Capital Region Land Conservancy and Henrico County to help landowners voluntarily preserve more than 124.33 acres of forest and farmland in 2020-2021, protecting fertile soils, clean water, clean air, habitat, and scenic beauty in both the James River and Chickahominy watersheds. 727.85 total acres have been preserved.



Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Grant Programs

Many of the Henricopolis programs are made possible by grant funds. In the 2020-2021 program year, the following projects received support from grants.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

\$3,000 was received from DEQ to support the Henricopolis soil test voucher program.

\$1,300 was received to gift rain barrels to Henrico County schools.



VASWCD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

\$1,000 was received from the VASWCD Education Foundation to support the Henricopolis Envirothon program. The program was put on hold in 2021. The funds will be rolled over to 2022.

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

\$6500 was received from NOAA in return for Henricopolis support of the BWISE program.



