

Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District

# 2021-2022 Annual Report

## Bringing Conservation Home to Henrico

### AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

BMP Cost Share Funding - \$372,206.70  
BMP Cost Share Acreage - 5,100.6 acres  
Number of Farms Assisted - 66

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Aerial Map Viewings - 4  
Site Visits to Henrico Properties - 62  
Soil Test Vouchers - 399

### EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Poster Contest - 368 entries  
Classroom Programs - 2471 students  
Schools Served - 17  
Districts Served - 5

### URBAN PROGRAMS

VCAP Funding - \$1,794.00  
VCAP Practices Completed - 1

### CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Total Acres Protected - 727 acres

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community Events - 19  
Volunteer Hours - 428

Cover Photo  
Dorey Park, [visithenrico.com](http://visithenrico.com)

# Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District

8600 Dixon Powers Drive  
Henrico, VA 23228  
804-501-5175  
[www.henrico.us/henricopolis](http://www.henrico.us/henricopolis)

## **DIRECTORS**

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

## **ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS**

Leon P. App  
Elizabeth Beckley  
Joyce Davis  
Herbert L. Dunford, Jr.  
Terri Higgins  
Jon Hruska

## **STAFF**

Charles Lively  
Lindy Durham, Secretary  
Stacey Heflin

## **OUR MISSION**

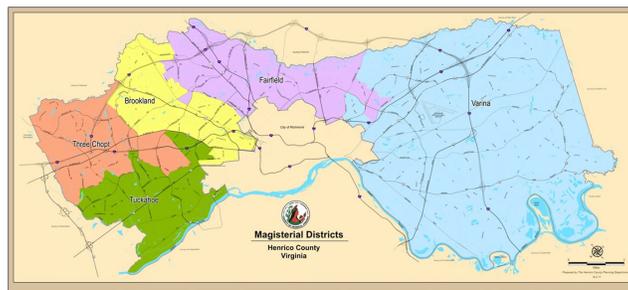
To educate and guide Henrico County citizens  
in the sustainable use of our natural resources.

## **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 coterminous 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. Henricopolis Directors and Staff participate in the Marketing, Education, Legislative, Operations and Conference Planning committees. Anne-Marie Leake of Henricopolis serves as Area III Chair.



### **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 on December 5-7, 2021 with sessions for District Directors and Staff converted to a virtual education blitz that took place throughout the fall.



### **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 in person at the Deltaville Maritime Museum on March 3. Our own Anne-Marie Leake presided over the meeting as Area III Chair.

# 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 2019. That four-year plan has been the basis of the FY 2019-2023 Annual Plan of Work.

## MEETINGS

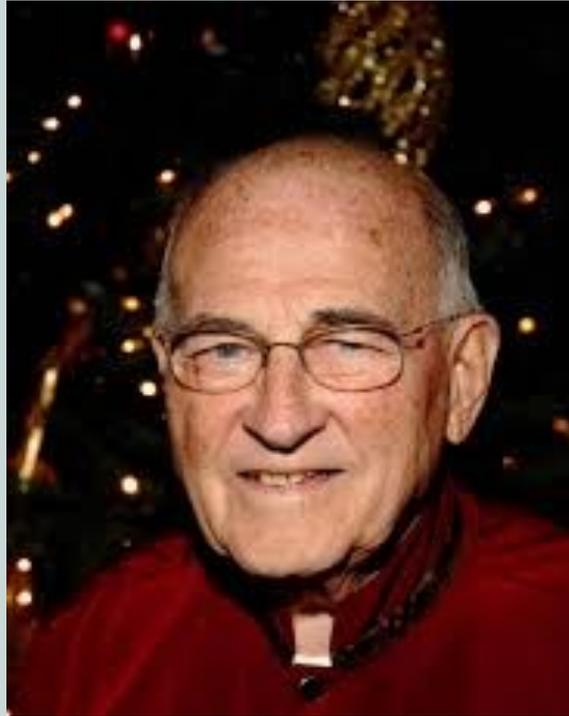
The District conducts monthly board meetings to address conservation issues that impact the county. The public is invited and encouraged to attend these meetings and provide input or voice concerns for Board consideration. Meetings are scheduled on the third Thursday of the month at 4:00pm. During the 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.



## Honoring Donald "Spec" Campen



Donald Oliver "Spec" Campen was a beloved member of the Henricopolis Board of Directors for 35 years. He served as elected District Director, Associate Director and Area III Chairman for the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation's 47 districts.

Spec was appointed to the Earth Team and served that organization for over 30 years. As the Earth Team's most senior member and longest tenure, Spec helped get the program off the ground! He was involved in conferences like Urban Conservation Initiatives, the Youth Envirothon and the Chesapeake Bay's Restoration programs. He received several awards as a Volunteer in the Conservation and Natural Resources world.

Spec quietly passed away at age of 101 in his home on November 16, 2021. He will be greatly missed in the Soil and Water Conservation community.

# 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 2021-2022, Henricopolis sold 36 rain barrels directly to Henrico County citizens. We estimate that 1,800 gallons of runoff was captured.



## HENRICO AREA WATER QUALITY SAMPLERS (HAWQS)

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 2021-2022. The data from the HAWQS program is used to raise community awareness and address pollution issues. Henricopolis also partners with Keep Henrico Beautiful to conduct stream cleanups throughout the county.



# Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Community Outreach

## Community Events

By Summer 2021, we were participating in outdoor programs again. Henricopolis participated in the Master Gardeners' Pollinator Festival at Deep Run, the Bug Bizarre at Deep Run, the Henrico Energy Fair at Fairfield Library, multiple Recreation & Parks Camps, STEMFest at J. Sargent Reynolds Community College and several Dorey Park Farmers' Market Saturdays.



# 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 930 followers.



## MONTHLY MINI-NEWS

The District publishes a monthly electronic mini-newsletter which reaches over 3000 citizens, organizations and businesses per issue. The newsletter articles address 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 292 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, 368 electronic entries were received from Henrico County schools and Girl Scout troops for the 2021 theme "**Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities**".

The following Henrico County students submitted winning entries: Grades K-1 **Ryo Tanaka** from Twin Hickory Elementary, Grades 4-6 **Aishwarya Anand** from Echo Lake Elementary, Grades 7-9 **Nikhita Saravanan** from Maggie Walker Governor's School and Grades 10-12 **Nirel Blake** from Highland Springs High School.



# Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District Education Programs

## CLASSROOM PROGRAMS



Classroom programs continued to be the foundation of Henricopolis environmental education in 2021-2022. Due to the COVID shutdown, classroom programs were delivered virtually for the Fall semester, then in person for the Spring semester. Our programs served 2471 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.

**Weathering-Erosion-Deposition** was our new program that investigated the three forces of nature that change the world.



# 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. Finally, with funds earned from staff participation in the NOAA BWISE program, Rithanya Saravanan (Randolph Macon) and Theo Brandenberger (Glen Allen High) also received scholarships from Henricopolis.



## YOUTH CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



Youth Conservation Leadership Institute is a recognition program for students in 9th- 12th grade that focuses on volunteer service and environmental stewardship. YCLI offers high school students interested in environmental conservation and stewardship an opportunity to build leadership skills and connect with local experts involved with environmental issues.

Program participants are required to complete a minimum of 20 hours of community service with a conservation focus. YCLI is a unique opportunity for students to receive experience and engage in networking opportunities to prepare them for future education and career paths.

In 2021-2022, Deep Run High School freshman Anjali Mukundan represented Henrico County in the program. Anjali created a video exploring climate change and recycling that she presented virtually to Henrico County fourth graders.

# 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 2021-2022, the District was able to provide \$372,206.70 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 2021-2022, the District issued 399 vouchers valued at \$3,990.00 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 2021-2022, six site visits were conducted. Henricopolis distributed \$1,794.00, 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

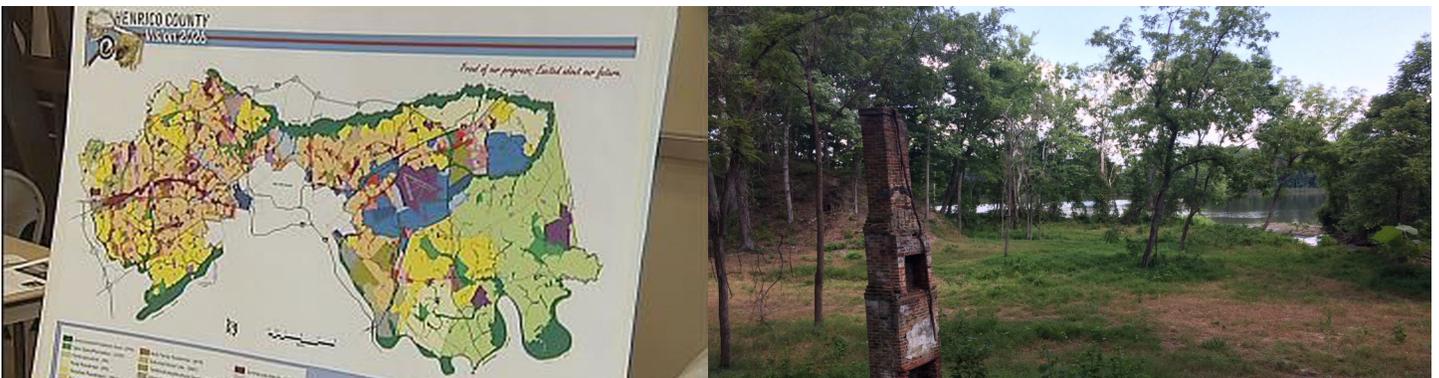
## CORNERSTONE FARM

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. We celebrate the Cornerstone Community Farm's ongoing success. Cornerstone's harvest is being sold at local markets, including Dorey Park Farmers Market and the 25th Street Market. In 2021-2022, the Cornerstone Farm was among 17 projects selected by the USDA for its People's Garden Initiative, which included a \$25,000 grant.



## CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Henricopolis partnered with the Capital Region Land Conservancy and Henrico County to help landowners voluntarily preserve acres of forest and farmland in 2021-2022, 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 2021-2022 program year, the following projects received support from grants.

### **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

\$2,000.00 was received from DEQ to support the Henricopolis soil test voucher program.  
\$918.00 was received in the same grant to gift 10 rain barrels to Henrico County schools.



### **CHESAPEAKE BAY RESTORATION FUND**

\$6,100.00 was received from CBRF to provide Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences to underserved Henrico County elementary schools.



