



Agenda Item XI. D.

Meeting Date: January 3, 2017

Department: Robert E Lee Soil & Water Conservation District

Issue: **Watershed Coordinator 2017 January Quarterly Report**

Board Action: The Board is receiving a report.

Attachment: 2017 January Quarterly Report

Summary: The Amherst Watershed Coordinator continued to work on assessing the drinking water supply watersheds and promote conservation practices within these areas through various ways and programs. Visited and followed up with 12 property owners/managers. Carried out fall maintenance on 12 Amherst Tree Buffer Program projects. Three priority watershed landowners are installing conservation practices on their farms through the NRCS EQIP Program and the District's Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program. Another three priority watershed landowners are in the design phase of their conservation projects. Cattle access into streams and lack of riparian buffers continues to be the major impairment in the protected watersheds. No ACSA payments were made this quarter for conservation practices.

The Amherst Watershed Coordinator coordinates the Amherst Watershed Protection Program. The main goal is to assess the drinking water supplies for the Town & County of Amherst for water quality impairments and assist/educate landowners with/about installing conservation practices to protect drinking water supplies at the source.

Recommendation: None. For information only.

To: Amherst County Board of Supervisors, c/o County Administrator: Dean Rodgers
Dan French, Director of Public Utilities, Amherst County Service Authority
Gary Williams, Interim Director of Public Utilities, Town of Amherst

From: Anne Marie Clarke, Amherst Watershed Coordinator, Robert E Lee Soil and Water
Conservation District

Re: Quarterly Report for Amherst Counties' Protected Watersheds

I. Results: October 1, 2016- January 1, 2016.

1. **Watershed Surveys and Initiatives:** Consulted and visited with landowners on topics included but not limited to: agricultural best management practice needs, conservation programs, stream bank erosion, riparian buffers, stream surveys and storm- water/erosion issues, etc... Visited and followed up with 12 property owners/managers: (Roberts, Fritzler, Fitzpatrick, Watts, Shields, Cash, Garrett, Kay, Hill, Coblits, Chenault (SBC) and Eby). Three priority watershed landowners (Duff, Batman, Fitzpatrick) are installing conservation projects their farms through NRCS programs and the Districts VACS program. Three priority watershed landowners (BRR, Coffey, Kay) are in the design phases of their conservation projects. Carried out fall maintenance on 12 Amherst Tree Buffer Program projects (Dodgion, Stinnett, Shields, Pillow, Foster, Zirkle, Hite, Bonda, Loving, Wade, Dean and SBC. Developing an Amherst Watershed Protection Program permanent display. Attended the meeting with the Chesapeake Conservancy's about their conservation toolbox application needs for soil & water conservation planning. Attended the James River TMDL meeting which includes the Graham Creek and Harris Creek watersheds.
2. **Education:** Updated the District website. Participated in a NACD conservation webinars about soil & water management on horse farms. Attended the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Chesapeake Watershed Forum in Sheperdstown, WV at the USFWS National Conservation Training Center. Participated in the invasive species control class, live-stake stream stabilization class and the micro-plastic pollution class. Received 1 out of the 4 Chesapeake Forest Champion awards for most effectively engaging the public. Assisted J. Wooldridge and D. Sandman the day of the Farm field day held at the Appomattox High School. The day was filled with great presentations from many different agencies. Two priority watershed landowners were in attendance. Attended the VA Farm to Table conference soils health and management track. Taught a watershed program to a 4th grade class at Amelon Elementary school. Planning the 2017 Area V Envirothon competition to be held at Sweet Briar College.

3. **Best Management Practices:** Best Management Practices approved for the 2016-2017 cost-share program years. (No ACSA payments were made this quarter.)

II. **Plan of Work: January 1, 2017-April 1, 2017.**

1. **Watershed Initiatives and Surveys:** Continue to survey streams and complete site assessments through stream-walks, drive-through and aerial photography to determine land uses contributing non-point source pollution to the waterways and prioritize areas in need of conservation practices. Work with NRCS staff and District Ag. BMP Conservation Specialist to contact landowners about conservation programs and assist with designing conservation practices on various farms that have applied for a conservation programs. Update new GIS mapping system with BMP needs within the protected watersheds. Continue to update the watershed address database used for postcard mailings sent to priority landowners with agricultural and other conservation needs. Wait for an update of the Amherst County aerial imagery (LIDAR) to be able to better utilize the Chesapeake Conservancy's land use resolution mapping to locate riparian buffer projects.
2. **Education:** Continue to assist with the District website and other programs. Continue planning the 2017 Area V Envirothon.
3. **Grants:** Submit an application for the Virginia Trees for Clean Water grant to fund 2017 Amherst Tree Buffer Program projects.
4. **Best Management Practices:** Promote the program using various outreach measures. Continue to prioritize areas that need conservation measures using GIS maps, data collected by interns and site assessments.