



6969 Fox Hunt Lane
P.O. Box 677
Gloucester, VA 23061
(804) 699 - 3482
www.tidewaterswcd.org

Conservation News

Serving the counties of Gloucester, Mathews, & Middlesex

SPRING 2022 EDITION

College Scholarships Available Applications Due March 24th

The Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District, through the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, has TWO scholarship opportunities available. These scholarships are intended to promote the education of Virginia citizens in technical fields of natural resource conservation and environmental protection. The awards will be considered for students majoring in, or showing a strong desire to major in, a course curriculum related to natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies. All applicants must be residents of Gloucester, Mathews, or Middlesex County.

One scholarship, in the amount of \$1,000.00, was established in memory of Mathews County resident, Mr. Martin J. Menges, a former District Director. Mr. Menges was co-founder and past president of the York River Chapter of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and co-founder of the watershed group Save the Ole Piankatank. Tidewater Soil & Water Conservation District will select the winner for the Martin J. Menges scholarship.

The Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts will award four freshmen level scholarships in the amount of \$1,000.00 each on a statewide competitive basis. Each SWCD is to select one freshman applicant and forward the application to the VASWCD office for consideration. Applicants need to complete only one application which will be used for both the VASWCD and Martin J. Menges scholarships.

All programs and services of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District's Educational Foundation, Inc. are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or disability. All submitted paperwork is confidential and becomes the property of the VASWCDEF.

Scholarship guidelines & application are available at the district office at 6969 Fox Hunt Lane in Gloucester, VA – or online:
www.tidewaterswcd.org/Scholarship.htm

Applications are due March 24, 2022

Mail completed applications to:

Tidewater SWCD
P. O. Box 677
Gloucester, VA 23061

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2021 Clean Water Farm Award

2021 Forestry Best Management Practice Award

2022 Poster Contest

2021 Poster Contest Winners

Important Dates:

March 24, 2022
Scholarship Application Deadline

August 1, 2022
Photo Contest Deadline

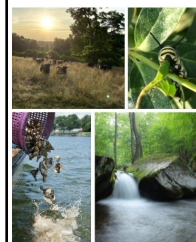
September 21, 2022
Poster Contest Deadline

Meeting Reminder

Monthly board meetings are held the 4th Thursday of the month except for the month of November. Please call our office to verify meeting date and time determined by current Covid-19 policies (804) 699-3482.

2022 PHOTO CONTEST

Presented by the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts



Enter up to 10 digital images that represent this year's theme:

"Conservation Moments"

- Images must be taken in Virginia
- One Overall Winner, People's Choice, & Young Photographer will be selected
- Full list of rules and entry form can be found online:

WWW.VASWCD.ORG/PHOTOCONTEST



ENTRIES DUE
8.1.2022



2021 Clean Water Farm Award Charles Rich - Richland Farms



Pictured left to right: Chairman Jason Bray awards producer Charles Rich of Richland Farms with his award and sign.

Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District is proud to honor Mr. Charles Rich of Richland Farms, with the 2021 Clean Water Farm Award. Mr. Rich has had quite the farming career! He grew up on a farm in Gloucester Virginia, and began farming on his own after graduating high school in 1967. Throughout the years, he has entered into many different agricultural ventures including raising cattle, hogs, grains and timber. No matter the avenue, Mr. Charles Rich always recognized the importance of conservation practices and the benefit they have on his land.

Charles Rich adopted conservation practices into his operation very early into his career. He noticed the advantages of controlling erosion and installed grass/sod waterways and drop structures into his farm. Both of these practices substantially cut back the risk of gully erosion. Charles has also been practicing no-till farming for over 40 years and grows cover crops through the winter. No-till farming and cover cropping keeps the soil in place and helps to maintain a beneficial soil structure and biological life. He maintains and follows an up-to-date Nutrient Management Plan on all of his cropland acres and has also been split applying his nitrogen fertilizers on both corn and small grains.

Mr. Charles Rich also has done quite a bit of work to ensure those who are interested in learning more about conservation practices have had the opportunity to do so. He played a critical role in the Gloucester Agronomy Tour, an education event for Gloucester farmers that highlighted different farmers' fields and crops as a way for farmers to learn from one another and to hear alternate perspectives and experiences on agronomic practices. He has also partnered with Virginia Cooperative Extension to host a Gloucester Area Field Day for middle peninsula farmers and agribusiness representatives. This educational event showcased field plots looking at hybrid seed varieties, tillage, and yield enhancers. Charles' farm has been used many times over the years for research endeavors by Extension Agents and Specialists.

Charles Rich has truly had an exceptional career, and was on the forefront of advancements in conservation practices. Through these and other efforts, Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District is proud to recognize Charles Rich of Richland Farms as the Chesapeake Bay Coastal Clean Water Farm Award winner for 2021!

2021 Poster Contest Winners



Conservation Specialist Sam Markwith exhibits Julianna Laign's winning poster as she proudly displays her award.

The annual Conservation Poster Contest provides K-12th grade students an opportunity to convey their thoughts about soil, water and related natural resource issues through art. It also highlights the educational outreach efforts of conservation districts and their state conservation associations, auxiliaries and agencies. Julianna Laign, Ivar Golden and Scotty Chase are recognized as the winners of Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District's 2021 annual poster contest. The theme for 2021 was "Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities." They all received a \$25 gift certificate for winning in their age group and their posters went on to be judged in the state competition.



Ivar Golden displays his award winning poster at Bay School of the Arts in Mathews, VA.



2022 Poster Contest Announced

The annual Conservation Poster Contest provides K-12th grade students an opportunity to convey their thoughts about soil, water and related natural resource issues through art. It also highlights the educational outreach efforts of conservation districts and their state conservation associations, auxiliaries and agencies. The 2022 theme is “Healthy Soil: Healthy Life”. Contact our office for complete contest rules and applications.

Posters and applications due by September 21st, 2022

2021 Forestry BMP Award John M. Elkin, Jr.

Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District is proud to present Mr. John Elkin, Jr. of Hunters LLC and Bigfoot LLC with the 2021 Forestry Best Management Practice Award. Mr. Elkin has managed farm and forest land in Gloucester County since 2005, and nearly a quarter of his land serves to protect water quality as streamside management zones.

Mr. Elkin approached both of his land purchases from a stewardship perspective at the onset. He has carried out some of the work on his own, such as precommercial thinning with a brush-saw, tractor spraying areas for site preparation and weed control, and burning for site preparation. He maintains the hunting roads on both properties to prevent erosion through proper grading techniques and by establishing wildflower mixes on loose soil. Mr. Elkin has taken time to attend woodland owner education events, including a longleaf pine program and he became a Virginia Certified Prescribed Burn Manager.

By working with the Virginia Department of Forestry, Mr. Elkin received funds to offset the cost of some of his forest management activities. Pine Bark Beetle Prevention Program funding covered 60% of the cost of the longleaf pine establishment and precommercial thinning of loblolly pine. Reforestation of Timberlands funds assisted with site preparation and planting costs for some of the loblolly pine stands. In addition, the forested buffers alongside timber harvest boundaries provided Riparian Buffer Tax Credits for Virginia income tax.

The number of acres Mr. Elkin has set aside to serve as forested buffers between timber harvests and ephemeral, intermittent and perennial waterways, is well beyond what is required by federal, state, and local laws and policies. John has worked to increase species diversity by establishing longleaf pine and a small sugar maple grove. He has assisted with forest health monitoring by allowing the Virginia Department of Forestry to hang traps and scrape his ash trees for emerald ash borer, an invasive pest.

John Elkin, Jr. has been described as “innovative,” which was demonstrated when he made his own wicking brush-bar for his tractor to target blackberries, a problem species, in his longleaf pine plantation. Additionally, he is not afraid to try anything new, illustrated by being a beekeeper, establishing longleaf pine and sugar maple, collecting acorns and hand planting them in his hardwood management areas, and installing a solar-powered well. His enthusiasm and curiosity for trying new management ideas and dedication to conservation, make it an honor to present John Elkin, Jr. the 2021 Tidewater Soil & Water Conservation District’s Forestry Best Management Practice Award!



Pictured from left to right: Chairman Jason Bray, Mr. & Mrs. John Elkin, Jr. and Lisa Deaton with the Virginia Department of Forestry



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District Directors

Jason Bray, Chairman - Middlesex
Daniel Rilee, Vice Chairman - Gloucester
Keith Horsley, Treasurer - Gloucester
Frank Long, Secretary - VCE Agent
William Richardson, Jr - At Large
Alan Sutherlin - Middlesex
George Rogers - Mathews
Ronnie Lewis- Mathews

Return Service Requested

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Tidewater 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. All programs, services, and employment opportunities of the Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, handicap, or political affiliation.

District Personnel:

LaVerne Calhoun - District Manager
Sam Markwith - Conservation/Education Specialist
Meredith Rose - Conservation Office Assistant

NRCS Personnel:

Scott Hammond - District Conservationist