

Tidewater Soil & Water

Conservation News

Serving the Counties of Gloucester, Mathews, & Middlesex

WINTER 2026

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March 15, 2026
Nutrient Management Plans Due

March 25, 2026
Scholarship Application
Deadline

April 22, 2026
Youth Conservation Camp
Application 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. (804) 699-3482

College Scholarships

Martin J. Menges Scholarship & VASWCD Education Foundation Scholarships

Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District (TSWCD), through the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD), have **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. TSWCD will select the winner for the **Martin J. Menges scholarship**.

The Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts will award **four undergraduate scholarships** in the amount of **\$2,000.00 each**, on a statewide competitive basis. Each SWCD is to select one high school senior or college freshmen applicant and forward the application to the VASWCD office for consideration. Four applicants from among the 47 statewide conservation districts will be awarded the scholarships. Applicants need to complete only one application which will be used for both the VASWCDEF and Martin J. Menges scholarships.

Individual applicants must be full-time students enrolled in or who have applied to a college undergraduate curriculum. Applicants shall document a class ranking in the top 20% of their graduating class or a 3.0 or greater grade point average or appropriate equivalent of individual scholastic achievement. The applicant's most recent official high school or college transcript must accompany the application. A copy of a school transcript will not be accepted.

Applicants shall demonstrate active interest in conservation. Selection will be based on scholastic ability, leadership qualities, and educational goals. Individual recipients of scholarships may reapply for scholarship consideration in ensuing years. All programs and services of the VASWCD and TSWCD 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 and applications are available at the district office at 6969 Fox Hunt Lane in Gloucester, VA 23061 or on our website at the following link:
<https://www.tidewaterswcd.org/college-scholarships/>

Mail or hand-deliver completed application to:

Tidewater SWCD c/o Meredith Rose,
P. O. Box 677
6969 Fox Hunt Lane
Gloucester, VA 23061

Applications Due March 25, 2026

CLEAN WATER FARM & GRAND BASIN AWARD



Operators **Ronnie Russell and Evan Perry of Corbin Hall Farm** in Middlesex County were recognized as one of 10 winners of the Virginia Grand Basin Clean Water Farm Awards for 2025, as announced in a press release by Governor Glenn Youngkin on December 17th. These awards recognize outstanding agricultural operations across the state for their leadership in the conservation of our natural resources with a focus on water quality. Each of the winning farms represent one of Virginia's major river basins. "Virginia's farmers are environmental stewards whose innovation and hard work sustain both our economy and natural resources," said Governor Glenn Youngkin. "The Grand Basin Clean Water Farm Award winners exemplify how agriculture and conservation go hand-in-hand. Their leadership ensures that Virginia's lands and waters remain healthy for generations to come."

Corbin Hall Farm has been in agricultural production for over 350 years. The farm encompasses over 2,000 acres comprised of approximately 1,500 acres of cropland, 250 acres of pastureland, and 293 acres of woodlands, marshlands, ponds, and homesites. Despite changes in ownership, Ronnie and his family have remained an indispensable presence in farm operations for 66 years and counting. Corbin Hall Farm maintains a nutrient management plan, a conservation plan and three resource management plans. They utilize conservation crop rotation to improve soil health, manage pest and disease, enhance weed control, and increase crop yields due to better nutrient availability and increasing the soil's microbial diversity. The most useful advance in farming for Corbin Hall was their adoption of a no-till planting system. Wind erosion used to be a concern on the farm before implementing a no-till planting system and utilizing cover crops to keep living roots in the soil year-round to help hold the soil in place. The property has over 100 acres of vegetated buffers and utilizes rotational grazing for their herd of beef cattle during the growing season and range on cover crop acreage in the winter, minimizing supplemental feed needs. Corbin Hall Farm hosts agricultural education opportunities for school groups and supports Virginia Cooperative Extension's on-farm research. Ronnie Russell and Evan Perry's continued contributions to local water quality, conservation and education exemplify their dedication to Virginia's agriculture community and we are honored to see them win both of these awards.

To read the full bio written about the history and legacy of Corbin Hall Farm operated by Ronnie Russell and Evan Perry in nomination of the Tidewater SWCD Clean Water Farm Award and the Rappahannock River Grand Basin Award, please visit our website: <https://www.tidewaterswcd.org/clean-water-farm/>

If you are interested in reading the full press release issued by Governor Youngkin it may be found on the Department of Conservation and Recreation's website at this link:

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/pr-relz-detail?id=2025-12-17-14-08-41-497471-skp>

Youth Conservation Camp Deadline April 22, 2026

Youth Conservation Camp is a week long camp that is sponsored by the VA Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts for a week of learning about Virginia's natural resources from conservation professionals and faculty from Virginia Tech. Most of the instruction is hands-on and outdoors. Two students are chosen by Tidewater SWCD to attend this camp at Virginia Tech each year. Youth Conservation Camp applications are now available at the Tidewater SWCD office for **Gloucester, Mathews, and Middlesex students** that are in the 9th -12th grade during the 2025-2026 school year. **Camp admission, meals and lodging during the camp (a \$550.00 value) are provided by Tidewater SWCD.** Transportation to and from camp is the sole responsibility of the camper. While at camp, students will bunk in the college dorms and be involved in many activities and educational events. Applications may be found on our website at www.tidewaterswcd.org/conservation_camp.html. Please complete and return application AND \$100 deposit to: Tidewater Soil & Water Conservation District, P.O. Box 677, 6969 Fox Hunt Lane, Gloucester, VA 23061.



2026 Conservation Photo Contest

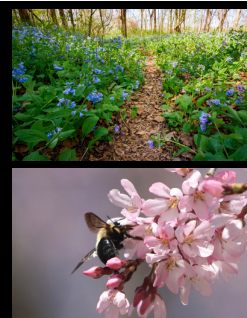
Presented by the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Enter up to 10 digital images that represent
"Stewardship in Sight"

Entries due by August 1, 2026

All photographs must be taken within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

For additional details visit www.vaswcd.org/photocontest



2026 Poster Contest Announced

The National Association of Conservation Districts selects a theme yearly for the national conservation outreach initiative. This year's is **"Soil. Where it all Begins"**. The winner in each age group will receive a \$25.00 Walmart gift card and will also have their poster advance to compete at the state competition. All entries are due to the Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District in Gloucester by **September 23, 2026**. The complete rules and required entry form may be obtained by contacting the Tidewater SWCD office at 804-699-3482 or by visiting our website www.tidewaterswcd.org/poster_contest.html.

Soil.
Where it all Begins



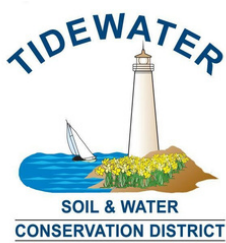
Cost-Share Updates

Nutrient Management Plan Deadline:

March 15- Producers are required to have an up-to-date nutrient management plan on file. Even if you have a 3-year plan, your plan writer is required to submit annual updates.

Cover Crop Kill-Down:

- March 15- Kill-down may begin for those NOT receiving the late kill-down incentive
- May 1- Kill-down begins for late kill-down incentive participants; additional \$10/acre
- June 1- All Kill-Down must be completed



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P.O. Box 677
Gloucester, VA 23061
(804) 699-3482

DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Amanda Armstrong, Chairman - Gloucester
Amy Maloney, Vice Chairman - Middlesex
Keith Horsley, Treasurer - Gloucester
Frank Long, Secretary - VCE Agent
Richard Hicks - Mathews
Jean Howard - Mathews
Jacob Kirby - Middlesex
William Richardson, Jr. - At-Large
Ronnie Lewis - Associate Director

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
Meredith Rose - Conservation | Education Specialist
Debbie Billings - Conservation Office Assistant

NRCS PERSONNEL:

Scott Hammond - District Conservationist

Tidewater SWCD
(804) 699 - 3482