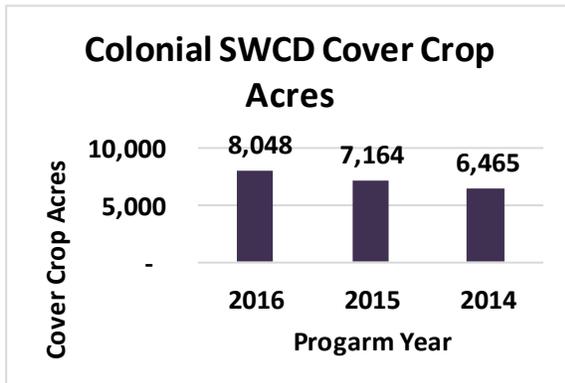


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Virginia Agricultural Cost Share Program

Implementation of BMPs within the CSWCD during the fiscal year continued to be brisk. As part of the District’s contract with the Commonwealth, a minimum of 90% of Virginia Agricultural Cost Share Program funds are required to be utilized annually for agricultural conservation practices which reduce nutrient and sediment pollution.

BMP	\$	Acres
No-till	\$62,407	2,423
Split N Apps	\$9,208	2,046
Cover Crops	\$305,084	8,048
Nutrient Man Plans	\$44,024	22,012
BMP Expenditures	\$420,723	



The 2016 VACS program saw a record level of cover crops planted, which means fewer farm acres laid fallow over the winter months. All cover crops do not function similarly, however. Legume cover crops such as clover, vetch, and peas fix nitrogen from the atmosphere, while cereals like rye and wheat mine residual nutrients from the soil reducing leaching potential.

Envirothon



Members of the Jamestown High School Envirothon team finished second in the Dominion Envirothon State Competition. Pictured left to right are: Charlie Dubay, Rachel Smith, Elizabeth Horley, YuBin Kang, Audrey Root, Anna Song, Joanna Stathopoulos, Rebecca Elton, and Elsa Barrientos. At far right from the VASWCD are Kendall Tyree and Beth Beran.

Jamestown High School Envirothon Team once again represented the Colonial Soil and Water District at Dominion Envirothon State Competition held at Eastern Mennonite University on May 15-16, earning a second place finish. The team, led by senior Elizabeth Horley, earned the right to advance to the state level by winning the regional competition held in Fredericksburg, VA. Coach Charlie Dubay said “The team is filled with young, talented students”. Later, while referring to the four freshmen on the squad, he added “I think they’ll be competing at the North American level before they graduate.”

The Colonial SWCD congratulates the Jamestown team on their success and encourages others to join or create a team to learn about our environment and develop knowledge based learning skills.



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Students from the Blayton Elementary School explain to Colonial SWCD directors and Dominion staff members how they designed and built the rainwater harvesting system at their school.

Blayton Elementary School Garden

The CSWCD recently concluded a grant project supported by Dominion Virginia Power, which supplied resources needed to install rainwater harvesting equipment at the school's learning garden. Charles Morse, a retired Blayton teacher, engaged the school's Engineering Club to design the system which catches rainwater off of the pavilion roof in rain barrels, then transfers the water to a holding tank via a solar pump. Then, utilizing gravity, the water is used to irrigate the raised bed garden. The Colonial SWCD supports and encourages such efforts with financial and technical assistance.

Natural Resources Farm Link Center & Warhill Community Garden

The Colonial SWCD continues to be involved with the development of the NRFLC and Warhill Community Garden near the Warhill Sports Complex in James City County. Located in a Dominion Power transmission line easement, the garden will be used to demonstrate conservation techniques such as cover crops, pollinator species, and integration of wildflowers and



meadow grasses into the landscape. The project has been supported by financial resources from the USDA and Dominion Virginia Power.

The Colonial SWCD is grateful for the support of everyone who has contributed to this project in the past and those who have committed to moving the efforts forward in the future.

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Leaves were deposited in 2014. After debagging, leaves were evenly distributed across the 1 acre site.

The Colonial SWCD and James City County have been partnering over the past two years on a project at the Warhill site to demonstrate the utilization of yard waste, particularly fallen leaves, in the effort to improve soil quality. In the fall of 2014, approximately 50 tons of leaves were picked up from James City County residents and brought to the site, where the leaves were debagged and distributed over an area approximately 1 acre in size. In the fall of 2015 approximately 250 tons of leaves were distributed over a similarly sized area. Over the course of approximately two years, the leaves were mulched and turned numerous times to assist with decomposition.

Today, the leaves dumped in 2014 have mostly decomposed into an organic layer rich in microorganisms and biological diversity. The improved soil structure and water holding capacity have allowed wild flowers to thrive. The area will be planted in the fall of 2016 with a mixture of cover crop seeds that will enhance decomposition by fixing atmospheric nitrogen and improving soil quality.

Project leaders are excited to be able to utilize this type of yard waste in an environmentally friendly and productive manner, as opposed to the alternative of using valuable land fill space to dispose of leaf and yard debris.

Today, leaves deposited in 2014 have decomposed to create a great environment for wildflowers.



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70th Annual Holiday Lake Forestry Camp

Four students from Jamestown High School attended Forestry Camp at Holiday Lake this summer. Forestry Camp is a residential (overnight) camp with a structured, academic focus. Campers enjoy outdoor field experiences on the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. The program centers on classes such as forest management, wildlife and environmental protection, supplemented by special presentations from natural resource professionals.



Left to right: Rachel Smith , Audrey Root , Joanna Stathopoulos, and Anna Song at Holiday Lake.

The focus of the camp is on learning, and all campers should be prepared to participate fully. There are daily quizzes and a final exam. Campers receive study materials and instruction from experts in their field. The camp provides excellent preparation for those interested in pursuing natural resource careers.

The cost to the camper is only \$85 for the entire week, thanks to generous sponsors and donors whose donations offset the cost of camp. The Colonial SWCD proudly supports Holiday Lake Forestry Camp.



2016 Youth Conservation Camp



The Colonial SWCD sponsored two campers at this year's Youth Conservation Camp in Blacksburg, VA. Sophie Ripchick of New Kent and Elsa Barrientos of James City each received a \$450 scholarship to help offset camp costs. While attending the camp, students are introduced to a variety of topics relating to our environment.

The Youth Conservation Camp program is provided for Virginia high school students. For more information contact the Colonial SWCD or the VA Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts at 804-559-0324.

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The Colonial SWCD hired three new staffers during FY 2016. Please reach out to our new employees and help us welcome them!

Tom Dunlap, Conservation Specialist

Tom is an environmental and conservation young professional with a background in aquatic ecology. Tom has lived in the Richmond area for the last 8 years and previously worked in the fields of environmental education, urban forestry, and horticulture. Since coming on with the district in June, Tom has enjoyed becoming more familiar with the Colonial SWCD's localities and all the folks that call this region home.



Sheila Jaruseski, Office Coordinator

Sheila joined the district in November of 2015. Originally from the Midwest, Sheila came to Williamsburg in 2003 and has previously worked in the James City County school system. In her current role, Sheila handles all administrative and financial tasks, as well as helps with Envirothon and educational programs. Sheila can be reached at Sheila.Jaruseski@ColonialSWCD.net.



Jim Wallace, District Manager

Jim returned to the Colonial SWCD in March 2016 after being away for several years. Jim brings with him a solid background in district operations and program implementation as he assumes responsibility for the day to day operations of the organization as District Manager. Contact Jim at Jim.Wallace@ColonialSWCD.net.



All programs and services of the Colonial Soil and Water Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.