



We work with the people who work the land.

Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Report 2007-2008

Representing the public and providing local leadership in the conservation of natural resources.

The Headwaters District is one of 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Formed in 1975, the District is a part of state government which provides citizens the structure and the capability to solve conservation problems at a local grassroots level. Soil and Water Conservation Districts administer Virginia's Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program, with technical assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Cooperation between agencies and sharing technical expertise enables the Headwaters District to assist the community in protecting its natural resources.

Headwaters District covers over 1,000 square miles of the Shenandoah Valley (approximately 621,893 acres), including Augusta County and the Cities of Staunton and Waynesboro. The District is flanked by the Allegheny Mountains on the west, and the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east. Soils derived from sandstone and shales extend along the mountains and foothills, while soils of limestone origin are in the rolling valleys between the mountains.

Headwaters is aptly named, as two river systems, which both empty into the Chesapeake Bay, originate here. The northern two-thirds of Augusta County drains to the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, and the streams in the southern third of the District flow into the James.

Augusta County has the second largest income from farming production and poultry production in Virginia, and is in the top five counties for dairy, beef, alfalfa hay and hardwood production. The growing population of the District causes increasing pressure for development on prime farmland.

Headwaters Vision Statement:
The Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation District, an elected body, guides land users and governments in the balanced and practical use of natural resources. The quantity and quality of these resources will be maintained or improved by providing technical assistance and education.

Board of Directors

Headwaters District is governed by an eight member Board of Directors, six of whom are elected in the general election and two are appointed, one at-large and one who is always a County Extension Agent.

Charles Horn, Chair (Executive Committee)
(full-time poultry & beef farming)

Richard Shiflet, Vice-Chair (Land Use Committee)
(full-time poultry & beef farming)

Roy Stephenson (thru 12/31/07), Treasurer (Finance/Legislative/Personnel Committee)
(retired newspaper editor and former Staunton city councilman)

Walter Flora, Secretary (Dam Safety Committee)
(retired education administration)

James Nichols (Education Committee)
(retired education administration)

Stephen Talley (Easements Sub-Committee)
(environmental scientist, engineering firm)

Brian Jones
(agronomist - VA Cooperative Extension)

Charles Schooley (Agriculture & Cost-Share Committee)
(full-time beef and poultry farming)

Daniel Metraux (as of 1/1/08)
(Professor of Asian Studies, Mary Baldwin College)

Associate Directors:

Appointed by the Board are Associate Directors, respected in their fields of natural resources, education or business.

Sharon Angle

Lee Beam

Otis Bilkins

James Boland

Becky Earhart

DuBose Egleston, Jr.

Ian Heatwole

Charles Huppuch (Forestry)

Rick Layser

Brian McReynolds

Crawford Patterson, II

Allen Norheim

Directors and Associate Directors serve the District as volunteers. The public is invited to Board meetings on 3rd Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Augusta County Government Center.

Headwaters Staff

John Kaylor, Conservation Specialist
john.kaylor@va.nacdnet.net

Cathy Perry, Office Administrator
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Sandy Greene, Conservation Education Specialist
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Joelle Hackney, TMDL Conservation Technician
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USDA

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Robert Whitescarver, District Conservationist
bobby.whitescarver@va.usda.gov

Chuck Cummings, Soil Conservationist
chuck.cummings@va.usda.gov

Martha Cowles, Administrative Support
martha.cowles@va.usda.gov

Agency Partners:

VA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (332-9991)
VA Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries (248-9360)
VA Dept. of Forestry (363-7002)
VA Dept. of Environmental Quality (574-7800)
VA Dept. of Health (332-7830)
VA Cooperative Extension (245-5750)
US Forest Service (432-0187)
Farm Service Agency (248-6218, ext. 2)
Shenandoah Resource Conservation and
Development Council (248-3321)

Financial Information

Headwaters SWCD is funded by these partners:

- VA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation
- County of Augusta
- City of Staunton
- City of Waynesboro
- Additional funds for operations were generated through the District's tree seedling sale.

Project Grants 2007-08

- VA-DCR – Dam Maintenance Repair & Rehab Fund, \$22,000 Small Dam Repair Grants \$8,769.42 (Canada Run)
- WQIF Septic Grant \$3,530
- Anonymous donations to the education program totaling \$1,238
- DEQ VA Naturally – MWEI Partner Grant, Energy Tools - \$1,000

- Writing Unlimited - \$700 Grand Caverns
- Shenandoah RC&D - \$4,000 Flexible Fencing Grant Support

Earth Team Volunteers

In addition to the District Board, who are elected, but receive no salary, and Associate Directors, there are 45 active Earth Team Volunteers affiliated with us who worked at least 1,415 hours last year, as water monitors, education volunteers, and advisors.

For more information on becoming an Earth Team Volunteer, call 248-6218(3)

Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP's) Cost-Share Program

The District has completed its 23rd year of administering the Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share program in Augusta County, Staunton and Waynesboro. The Va. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation funds this program through the Water Quality Improvement Act. These cost-share funds provide an incentive to agricultural producers and landowners to apply beneficial Best Management Practices to their land for more effective control of sediments, nutrient losses and transport of pollutants into our streams and waterways. During program year 2007-08, approved cost-share applicants were eligible to receive a maximum of 75% of total eligible costs not to exceed \$50,000. A \$50,000 per participant/per program year cap was also observed. Cost-share applications are accepted on a continual basis; however, approvals are subject to allocations received and caps are subject to change in future program years.

The Headwaters District paid landowners a total of \$385,438 in program year 2007-08 to install the following practices:

PRACTICE	# INSTALLED
• SL-8H Harvestable Cover Crop	70
• SL-8B Small Grain Cover Crop	55
• SL-1 Permanent Vegetative Cover (on Cropland)	12
• SL-6 Grazing Land Protection	8
• WQ-4 Legume Cover Crop	8
• SL-8C 3-yr. Small Grain Cover Crop	5
• SL-11 Permanent Vegetative Cover (on Critical Areas)	1
• FR-1 Reforestation	3
• WP-4 Animal Waste Control Facility	2
• FR-3 Woodland Buffer Filter Area	1

Under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), the District paid landowners a total of **\$45,774** in 36 state cost-share and rental payments.

Landowners who install conservation BMP's may also qualify for a 25% Virginia State Tax Credit on their out-of-pocket costs.

Invasive Species Program

Augusta County took steps to check the spread of the invasive multi-flora for an 8th year through a cost-share program administered by Headwaters District. **28** approved landowners redeemed **\$4,193.27** worth of vouchers for 50% of either the established average cost, or actual bills (whichever was less) for recommended herbicides and the necessary surfactant.

USDA

Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Practices Installed:

- Rotational Grazing Systems: **818 acres**
- Livestock Watering Facilities: **56**
- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans **20**
- Nutrient Management **5258 acres**
- Cropland Managed to Increase Organic Matter
- Bio-diesel Fuel Enhancement payments

- Fencing for Conservation: **22.5 miles**
- Pipeline for Conservation **7.9 miles**
- Stream Banks Protected from Livestock: **32 miles**
- Riparian Buffers Installed: **236 acres**
- Forest Stand Improvement: **144 acres**
- Wetlands Restored: **26 acres**
- Native Grasses Planted for Wildlife: **101 ac.**
- Hardwood Trees Planted **25,300**
- Forest Stand Improvement **251 acres**
- Grasslands Set Aside for Wildlife Nesting: **2465 ac.**
- Poultry Litter Transferred (tons/acres)

Fiscal Year 07 Funds Obligated:

Environmental Quality Incentives Program:
\$ 505,267

Conservation Reserve Program:
\$ 343,818

Total 2007 dollars obligated for Farm Bill practices to be installed: **\$849,085**

Total number of "active" Farm Bill contracts:
418

Tree Sale and Free School Trees

Headwaters District held its 14th annual Tree Seedling Sale in February/March, selling **1,236** native trees and 123 shelter kits to over **62** land owners. We also donated trees and tree shelter kits to a number of schools and civic groups to be planted on public land.

Flood Control Dams

Headwaters SWCD maintains, inspects and makes repairs for **11** SWCD flood control dams, and five additional dams of partner agencies. Total funds expended for dam repair and maintenance for FY-07/08 were **\$28,799(local)** and **\$24,851(state)**.

Flood Control Dam Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation at Robinson Hollow Dam, protecting Waynesboro and Augusta County from flood damage, was completed in August of 2007. The **\$1.3 million** upgrade was sponsored by NRCS, Headwaters SWCD, Augusta County, City of Waynesboro and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Rehabilitation of Inch Branch flood control dam began March 1st of 2008 and was estimated to cost just under \$700,000.

Conservation Education

Last year, Headwaters education staff, partners & volunteers led **31 field trips** and field days for over 2600 students (including over 50 teen helpers and Earth Team Volunteers). Of these, 10 were at Augusta Springs, 12 were at Grand Caverns and 5 at McCormick Farm, with the remainder scattered through the district. We led **5 teacher workshops**, 2 day-long tours, made **38 classroom & schoolyard presentations** (22 Down to Earth Delicatessens, Jeopardy, watersheds, alternative energy) to over 750 students, presented 7 civic programs, attended 6 fairs and community conservation days and provided conservation education displays and education materials for educators both locally, watershed and statewide.

Headwaters continues to partner with other state and federal agencies, including the US Forest Service at Augusta Springs, with the Upper Valley Regional Park Authority at Grand Caverns, and the McCormick Farm AREC for the Marl Creek Trail, among other programs. The annual Directors' Tour

focused on the Waynesboro area, including flood control dam rehabilitation, trout and quail habitat and urban storm water planning. Headwaters also coordinated the Shenandoah Scavenjourn raft trip for over 100 people in June.

Envirothon

This year’s competition topic was “Recreational Impacts on Natural Resources”. Fort Defiance High School won the Virginia state championship and placed 6th in the international competition in Arizona.

Conservation Easements

Headwaters defends 23 riparian conservation easements, which help landowners establish and conserve riparian buffers to improve water quality and serve as wildlife corridors. The Forestry and Riparian Buffer committee conducts an annual on-site review of each easement in January.

Contact Info: **Headwaters SWCD
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Fax: 540-248-1142
E-mail: cathy.perry@va.nacdnet.net
Website: www.headwaters.vaswcd.org**

Award Winners 2007

**2007 Watershed Connections
Director/Shenandoah Watershed –
*James W. Nichols***

**Headwaters Conservation Farmer of the Year:
*Buddy L. Shaver, Jr.***

**Headwaters Forestry Award:
*Zeb Harry, Hidden Valley Farm***

**Headwaters Conservation Educator of the Year:
*Jason Hallacher, Senior Fisheries
Technician*
VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

Jason built a native fish aquarium at Grand Caverns. Also recognized in this award was Courtney Rodgers, a 7th grade life science teacher at Wilson Middle School. Together they produced a watershed video, online at www.grandcaverns.org.

**Headwaters Urban Conservation Award:
*Gail and Willy Ferguson***
of Staunton, who have personally undertaken an industrial-sized stream bank cleanup and planting on Lewis Creek.

**Wildlife Conservationist of the Year:
*Harriet Hanger, Cobble Hill Farm***

**Headwaters Special Recognition:
*Gerald (Jerry) Wright***
NRCS dam rehabilitation engineer and agency partner

**Headwaters SWCD programs, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability or political affiliation.
An Equal Opportunity Employer.**

HEADWATERS SWCD - OPERATIONS EXPENSES FY-07/08

