

## Financial Assistance for Farm Improvements

With pressure building on improving the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay, it is more important now than ever to find ways to reduce our contribution to pollution. Fortunately, there are financial programs available to assist with the costs of making your property a greener, Chesapeake Bay-friendly farm. These programs help keep animal wastes outside of our waterways, protect the soil, provide your livestock with healthy, green pastures, etc. Here are some Better Management Practices that these financial programs can cover:



- Rotational grazing—interior fencing and alternative water sources
- Streamside/pond fencing
- Maintenance on existing streamside/pond fencing
- Crossings over wet areas for livestock and/or farm equipment
- Manure storage
- Eliminations of mud
- Cover crops during the winter season

If you are interested, please contact the District. For more information on these programs, as well as other programs available:

1. Go to [www.dcr.virginia.gov](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov)
2. Click on Stormwater Management in the left hand column, and then click on SWCDs
3. Click the Ag. BMP cost-share tab at the top right
4. Click on the link next to "for a table of contents with links to specific practices"

## Adopt-A-Stream

Would you like to volunteer to help clean up a stream in Prince William County? A stream cleanup involves volunteers walking along a stream or paddling a stream channel, collecting trash. Stream cleanups are an effective way to improve habitat, water quality, and aesthetics.

For upcoming clean-ups visit: <http://www.pswcd.org/adopt-a-stream.html>.



Trash collected by BAE Systems and Youth Ambassadors along Bull Run in March 2012

*Affordable Farm Services, Inc.*  
**Let us manage your mess!**  
 Manure Removal & Farm Consultation  
 Serving Northern Virginia  
**(703)400-8446**  
[www.affordablemanurereoval.com](http://www.affordablemanurereoval.com)

If you would like to be removed from the newsletter mailing list or would prefer to receive it by e-mail, call 571-379-7514, or email [pwsxcd@pwsxcd.org](mailto:pwsxcd@pwsxcd.org).

Electronic Address Service Requested

8850 Rixlew Lane  
 Manassas, VA 20109



# Conservation InFARMation

**OUR MISSION...**  
 The mission of the Prince William Soil & Water Conservation District is to provide leadership in the conservation of soil, water, and related resources to all Prince William County citizens, through technical assistance information and education.

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### Newsletter Kickoff!



Staff from left to right: Jeannie, Laurie, Jay, Kelly, & Nicole. Not pictured: Cleve

The "Conservation InFARMation" (formerly "Prince William at Bay") newsletter is back! We have been very busy since the last publication of our newsletter; we have a new office location, new personnel, and enhanced conservation plans.

The Prince William Soil & Water Conservation District (PWSWCD) moved from Nokesville to Manassas on Rixlew Lane in the office buildings next to Stonewall Jackson High School in November 2011. Over the past couple of years, we've said our good-byes to Beata Coss, Meg Doppee, and Kate Norris. We welcomed Laurie Raines, Jay Yankey, and Cleve Benton. We have an improved website and a new Facebook page that are regularly updated with the latest information and upcoming events. Come check us out!

### What Is Conservation Agriculture?

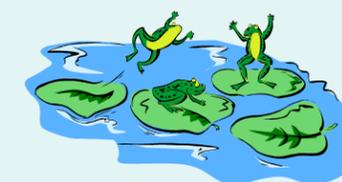
#### A Bit of History

In the early 1940's, techniques in farming to decrease erosion and protect top soils began to be explored in the United States. This was largely in response to the environmental and human devastation of the Dust Bowl in the 1930's. Through the 60's, 70's, and 80's, with the development of new farming machinery and new chemicals applied to the land, techniques were modified and changed to fit the current conditions of the day. *Continued on Page 2...*

### Pond Seminar

Pond Management Seminar, Friday May 17th, 2013, 1:00–5:00, Windy Knoll Farm, Nokesville, VA. **\$10/person registration is due by 5/10/13.** Topics include:

- Pond Weed Management
- Creating Wildlife Habitat
- Leaking Pond Solutions
- Fish Stocking
- Fishery Survey and Management Demonstration
- Ask your question!!!!!!



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

C/S/Z: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: PWSWCD, and address to: Attn: Pond Seminar, 8850 Rixlew Lane, Manassas, VA 20109

For information call (571) 379-7514, visit our website [www.pwsxcd.org](http://www.pwsxcd.org) or e-mail [nicoleethier@pwsxcd.org](mailto:nicoleethier@pwsxcd.org).

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Cleve Benton – Conservation Planner  
Laurie Raines – Education Specialist  
Kelly Jimenez – Outreach & Education Specialist

**Conservation Aides:**

Carrie Brausieck  
Chris Lund

If you would like to join our **mailing list**, e-mail [pwsxcd@pwsxcd.org](mailto:pwsxcd@pwsxcd.org), or visit our website at [www.pwsxcd.org](http://www.pwsxcd.org) (left hand column). Future newsletters may only be delivered electronically to save paper and be more environmentally conservative.

For our events calendar and board meeting dates visit: [www.pwsxcd.org/calendar.html](http://www.pwsxcd.org/calendar.html) (board meetings are open to the public).

*The Commonwealth of Virginia funds the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).*

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With the Clean Water Act of the 1970's, the focus was not only on protecting top soils, but on reducing pollution in our waterways as well. This led to Conservation Agriculture (CA), a development of best management practices (BMPs) that are applied to the land in order to protect and maintain top soils as well as protect the integrity of our watersheds.

Studies have estimated that as the benefits of CA are realized, the number of farmers using BMPs on their lands is steadily increasing. As of 2006, about 250 million acres of farmland in America make use of CA practices.

**Best Management Practices (BMPs)**

Below is a list of some of the BMPs that are most commonly used with Conservation Agriculture in Prince William County.

- **Riparian buffers:** a permanent area of trees, shrubs, and/or other vegetation directly adjacent to a body of water. Buffers reduce the impact of pollution by filtering sediments, nutrients, and chemicals. They also supply food, cover, and thermal protection for fish and other wildlife.
- **Stream exclusion/alternative water sources:** fence protection along all water bodies and streams in a field. This will prevent stream bank erosion, direct deposition of animal waste into water bodies, and decrease nutrient runoff.
- **No-tillage or minimum/reduced tillage:** a method that decreases disturbance to the soils and increases plant residue for soil protection. This increases biomass/soil quality and reduces the movement of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediments, and runoff.
- **Cover and green manure cropping:** vegetative cover on cropland that protects the soils from erosion and reduces nutrient losses to groundwater. This vegetative cover, also known as cover crops, is planted around October in order to provide cover during the winter season.
- **Grazing management:** a rotational grazing system that allows previously grazed pastures to rest and regrow while livestock graze in pastures that are ready. This prevents pastures from being overgrazed, thus protecting the soil.
- **Heavy use area stabilization:** a hardened area of land without vegetation; used to decrease erosion and promote grass cover on pastures. It is utilized best when grass isn't growing, the grass is wet, or the fields need to rest and regrow.
- **Animal waste control/ composting facilities:** a way to manage livestock waste in order to improve water quality by storing and spreading waste at the proper time, rate, and location. This helps to control nutrient inputs.

**Resources:**

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006, Conservation Agriculture a Agricultural BMP Program Guidelines, 2010, Section II – Best Management Practices

*Carrie Brausieck, Conservation Aide*



**Conservation Plans: A must have for farms/equine properties in Prince William County**

Did you know that all land in Prince William County that is zoned agriculture and has livestock (this includes equine) and/or crops is required to have a conservation plan? If not, then you need a conservation plan! Contact us today so we can get you squared away! All of our services are **FREE**, and we are **non-regulatory**. Our conservation plans include: **\*Soil sampling \*Fertilizer recommendations \*Lime recommendations \*Useful maps**

**\*Mud and manure management assistance \*Pest management assistance \*And more!**

**FREE!**

For those who already have a plan, we can update it and retake soil samples. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us for assistance at: **(571) 379-7514** [conservation@pwsxcd.org](mailto:conservation@pwsxcd.org)



Have poop? Then we can help you learn how to environmentally collect, store, and utilize manure produced by our equine.

**Welcome to the Poop-Scoop**

Most of us do not realize or visualize the amount of waste that our large four legged friends produce. The average 1,000-pound horse will produce 45-50 pounds of manure per day, which is equal to approximately 8.5 tons of manure per year! Add to that the soiled bedding material, which will vary by type (shavings, sawdust, straw). That is another 8-15 pounds of waste material per day. Thus, the combination of manure and stall waste produced from one horse accounts to about 55-65 pounds per day, or a total of 10-12 tons per year!



When managed properly, horse manure is a valuable source of nutrients for gardens and pasture production that can be utilized as part of a pasture management strategy to improve soil quality. The fertilizer value of the 10+/- tons of waste can amount to 102 pounds of nitrogen (N), 43 pounds of phosphorous (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>), and 77 pounds of potash (K<sub>2</sub>O). (Note: nutrient values for manure vary widely by type and quantity of bedding material.)

Let us help you put your abundance of nutrient rich material to good use on your property. Contact us for a manure sample analysis and soil sampling for precise/appropriate fertilizer recommendations for your property.

So this is the "WHAT" of the Poop-Scoop story. The next newsletter article will cover the "WHY" we need to manage this ever-growing pile. Be safe and hug your horse!

**Resource:** Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) article.

*Cleve Benton, Conservation Planner*

**Gardener's Gold**

Do you have manure/compost that you want to get rid of from your farm? Are you looking for compost for your property? Then check out our Gardener's Gold brochure: <http://www.pwsxcd.org/home-owners.html>.

We are updating our list of local farmers who have compost they want to give away to the public. Contact us if you are interested in being on our list, or want more information (571) 379-7514.



**Intern Spotlight**

Carrie Brausieck has been interning with the District since our Farm Field Days event in October 2012. After 8 years traveling all over the world working for North Atlantic Treaty Organization, she and her husband landed in Northern Virginia. With an education in and passion for environmental issues, she began interning with the District. Carrie has been helping the District by writing conservation plans, designing maps using ArcGIS, taking soil samples, assisting with Adopt-A-Stream clean-ups and monitoring, surveying stream crossings, and more! We are fortunate to have such a hard worker here at the District!