

CONSERVATION NEWS

Tidewater Soil & Water Conservation District
6969 Fox Hunt Lane, P. O. Box 677
Gloucester, VA 23061
Phone : (804) 693-3562 ext. 5 Fax : (804) 693-7100
www.tidewaterswcd.org

Winter 2018 Serving the counties of Gloucester, Mathews, and Middlesex

College Scholarship Opportunities

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**.

A \$1,000.00 scholarship 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. 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 VASWCD and Martin J. Menges scholarships.

Individual applicants must be full-time students enrolled in or who have applied to a **college freshman 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. Scholarship guidelines and application are available at the district office at 6969 Fox Hunt Lane in Gloucester, VA or <https://www.tidewaterswcd.org/Scholarship-Guidelines-Application-2018.pdf>

Applications are due **March 12, 2018**. Mail completed application to:
Tidewater SWCD
P. O. Box 677
Gloucester, VA 23061
804-693-3562 Ext. 5

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Newsletter Mailing List

In order to help us conserve our natural resources please notify the office if you would like to be removed from our mailing list or would prefer to have the newsletter emailed to you.

Call 804-693-3562 Ext. 5

or

Email lcalhoun@tidewaterswcd.org

**2018 Youth Conservation Camp
Virginia Tech
Sunday, July 8 - Saturday, July 14 2018**

Youth Conservation Camp applications are now available at the Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District for Gloucester, Middlesex, and Mathews students that are in the 9th -12th grade during the 2017-2018 school year. Youth Conservation Camp is a weeklong camp that is sponsored by the VA Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The program brings together about 70 interested students 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 **free** camp at Virginia Tech each year. Camp admission, meals and lodging during camp is 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 participate in many fun educational activities.

More information is available at <http://vaswcd.org/conservation-camp>

[2018 Camp Application](#)

Please complete and return **application and \$100 deposit** by **April 20th** to
Tidewater Soil & Water Conservation District
PO Box 677
Gloucester, VA 23061

**USDA Farm Service Agency Offers Text Alerts
to Gloucester/Mathews/Middlesex County Producers**

The Gloucester/Mathews/Middlesex Farm Service Agency (FSA) Executive Director Jeff S. Davis announced that farmers and ranchers in Virginia now can receive notifications from their county office through text messages on their cell phone.

Whether producers are in the field, on a tractor or even on horseback, this service enables FSA customers and stakeholders to receive notifications while on the go. Producers will receive text messages regarding important program deadlines, reporting requirements, outreach events and updates.

Producers can text **VAGloucester** to FSANOW (372-669) to subscribe to text message alerts from the Gloucester/Mathews/Middlesex FSA Office. Standard text messaging rates apply. Contact your wireless carrier for details associated with your particular data plan. Participants may unsubscribe at any time. Please contact your local FSA office at 804-693-2691 if you have questions regarding FSA's email news service or the new text message option.

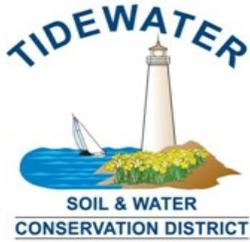
2017 Tidewater SWCD Clean Water Farm Award

Wayne H. Bray & Sons Inc.

The Clean Water Farm/Bay Friendly Award is sponsored by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. This award is given to recognize and thank Virginia farmers who implement nutrient management plans and are exemplary in their protection of the state's soil and water quality. These individuals are role models who encourage others' stewardship. Farmers spend time, energy and hard-earned money carrying out conservation practices that benefit many people. They themselves benefit because the investment in nutrients, pesticides, and chemicals remain on the land where it is most productive. The healthy soil necessary to grow crops also remains in the field because of conservation planting techniques. When potential pollutants are kept out of the surface and ground water, citizens benefit by having cleaner water for drinking, recreation, industry, wildlife and transportation. On a local level, each District can nominate one farmer per river basin to win a certificate of recognition signed by the governor and a sign to post at their farm for this award. Above and beyond the local award, one farmer or farm from each of Virginia's 10 major river basins is chosen for outstanding management that improves water quality. These 10 winners receive an additional award presented at a special recognition ceremony, one winner will then be chosen as a state winner.

The Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District proudly honors Wayne H. Bray & Sons Inc. as the 2017 Clean Water Farm Award Winner for the Chesapeake Bay Coastal Basin Watershed. Wayne and Jason Bray are a multi-generation farming family in Middlesex County. Currently the operation includes corn, soybeans, wheat, and barley for grain crops and beef cattle as well. When asked about farming, Wayne Bray said, "Anything we can do to keep the soil in place benefits the farm but also the aquatic health of all downstream as well." Between small grains and cover crops, all grain acres are covered with a growing plant year around to protect the soil and benefit soil health. The Brays have practiced continuous no-till in their operation for many years and many fields have filter strips. The Brays have noticed tremendous reductions in erosion with the combination of these practices. They also use current precision and variable rate technology for the application of nutrients which increases crop production while also reducing runoff. Their operation also includes cattle and they recently completed an extensive Stream Exclusion project. This involved installing significant lengths of pipeline and fencing to protect thousands of feet of streamline and a pond with wide natural buffers. Now instead of cattle accessing the natural waterways, they have continuous water from the installation of several water troughs. This also allows for pasture rotation to minimize over grazing and reduce erosion. The Brays strive to educate themselves on new strategies and ideas to assist in reduction of input and increase the soil health and crop yields. They are willing to try new things and have been especially active in promoting the use of different species and crop variations for effective cover cropping. Pictured left to right: Jason Bray, William Richardson Jr., and Wayne Bray.





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Gloucester, VA 23061

District Directors

Jason Bray-Middlesex-Chairman
Daniel Rilee-Gloucester-Vice Chairman
Ronnie Lewis-Mathews-Secretary
Keith Horsley-Gloucester-Treasurer
Robert Respass, Jr.-Mathews
Alan Sutherlin-Middlesex
William Richardson, Jr.-At Large

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
Kristal McKelvey- Conservation/Education Specialist
Joseph Gerdes - Conservation Assistant

NRCS Personnel

Mike Combs-District Conservationist
Sean Allen- Soil Conservationist

Cover Crop Reminder

If you have been approved for cover crop Cost Share with the Tidewater SWCD office, you must kill the cover crop stand between March 15th and **no later than May 15th**. Be sure and call the office (804-693-3562 Ext. 5) and report when you have completed this so staff can process Cost Share payments.

As soon as possible check with your Nutrient Management Plan writer to see if they need any additional information from you in order to write your plan. A current nutrient management plan must be on file **before** cost share payments can be made.