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2009 Annual Report

Serving the Counties of: Augusta, Clarke, Frederick, Page, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren; and the Cities of Staunton, Waynesboro and Winchester



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NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



John Eckman

Whether encouraging local food production, bringing more flexibility and profit to farming, improving water quality and energy efficiency, supporting urban gardening or seeking regional government cooperation on economic development, the Shenandoah RC&D has a proven track record of getting things done and making real improvements on the ground. What makes it all work is great people.

We are in the unique position of being able to leverage every dollar we receive with the skill and helpful expertise of our highly qualified and award winning Coordinator, Kathy Holm, and Assistant, Lorraine Cormier. Project staff member Becky Barlow-Busé, our Organic Resources Marketer, has led efforts to turn farm waste into useful resources, keeping farming more productive and our rivers cleaner.

All of our work is done in partnership with communities, farmers, businesses, and other agencies and organizations. Shenandoah RC&D welcomes your inquiries and needs your support to continue to make the best of our region's many assets.

Sincerely,

John M. Eckman
Chair

2009 YEAR IN REVIEW

- 10 projects completed; 7 new projects; 19 ongoing projects
- RC&D livestock exclusion project spurred two pilot exclusion practices in VA through NRCS and DCR
- Funds leveraged, cash and in-kind contributions for on-going and completed projects in this FY: \$860,000
- Two statewide awards, Lorraine Cormier for Outstanding RC&D Assistant; Kathy Holm, Outstanding Performance by an RC&D Coordinator
- One SE Regional Award for Lorraine Cormier, Outstanding RC&D Assistant
- New officers: Chair, John Eckman; Vice Chair, Joan Comanor
- RC&D program funding restored by Congress
- Long time Council Member, Carl Luebben, retires from the Council

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS! IN-KIND AND DIRECT CONTRIBUTORS:

Agua Fund, Inc.
Chesapeake Bay Funders Network
Joan Comanor
John Eckman
National Association of RC&D Councils
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
SunTrust Bank
USDA-NRCS
Virginia Association of RC&D Councils
Virginia Department of Forestry
Virginia Environmental Endowment

10 COMPLETED PROJECTS

Dairy Parlor Demonstration Project: This project piloted use of a geo-textile fabric and polymer at a farm in Rockingham County, to reduce nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, suspended solids, and fecal coliform from typical dairy parlor waste.

Farming Fridays: This series of workshops was designed to guide aspiring farmers on how best to evaluate and manage their land, capital, and labor resources to achieve their agricultural goals while protecting the resource base. The series reached out to new landowners interested in small scale agriculture.

Growing Power! and the Urban Farm Project: This project assisted low-income families grow their own food in their neighborhoods and improve their nutrition, saving almost \$500 per family on grocery bills throughout the growing season. *The Urban Farm Project* employed low-income and homeless individuals in producing organic vegetables at an urban sustainable living site in Harrisonburg, VA, and sold produce at the Harrisonburg Farmers Market and to local restaurants.

Crossing Creeks: Crossing Creeks was a supportive, therapeutic community farm in Rockingham County where persons with persistent mental illness could live and work with others. The RC&D goal for this project was to expand the scope, capacity, and diversity of this small farm based on sustainable agriculture principles. Project funds were used to acquire small livestock, convert the current poultry operation to a free range model, and provide resources on permaculture and organic farming.



Goats at Crossing Creeks

Mini-Grants to Promote Community Forestry: Challenge grants were offered to local communities in the RC&D area to generate specific forestry projects. They included proposals to manage invasive species through workshops, control and/or demonstration projects; to conduct street and public spaces tree inventories; to promote use of native plants and the 'right tree in the right space'; and to conduct training in proper pruning techniques or using chainsaws and related tools safely. Mini-grants were awarded in the City of Winchester, two in the Town of Woodstock and two in the City of Harrisonburg.



Woodstock Veterans Memorial Park

Rain Garden and Riparian Forest Workshops in Shenandoah County: In the hands-on *Rain Garden Workshop*, participants learned to create a small rain garden using a variety of native plants and trees. *Riparian Forest Workshop* participants visited a farm in Edinburg where riparian forests were created to serve as buffers to protect rivers and streams in Shenandoah County. Participants learned how to create their own riparian areas, how to plant the right kinds of trees and shrubs, and which government programs are available to help with costs and technical assistance.

Rapid Watershed Assessment: Rapid Watershed Assessments (RWAs) provide initial estimates of where conservation investments would best address the concerns of landowners, conservation districts, and other community organizations and stakeholders within specific watersheds. This

project provided technical assistance in putting together a RWA for the North Fork of the Shenandoah River Watershed, specifically for coordinator and interested Council members to assist with distilling public comment related to watershed issues.

Steele's Tavern Research Farm: This three-year project of a replicated plot design evaluated different fertilizer sources, including poultry litter, at different application rates on cool season grass, hay and pasture. Fertilizer effectiveness on all plots was moisture dependent; the common rate of N for stockpiling fescue is 60-80 lbs/N per acre. Results of this project will be disseminated to producers and stakeholders to promote positive changes in cropping systems to increase soil quality while enhancing economic sustainability.

Treating Corn Fodder with Anhydrous Ammonia or Liquid Supplement for Winter Feeding of Livestock: This demonstration project looked at ammoniating corn fodder and adding liquid supplement to it for the purposes of extending/increasing winter feed supplies for cattle during drought.

Waynesboro Farmers Market: A group of citizens came together to try to restart the Waynesboro Farmers' Market. This project supported their efforts to hire a market manager to recruit vendors and distribute information about the Market through RC&D financial assistance and technical support.



Pumpkins at the Waynesboro Farmers Market

MISSION

The Shenandoah RC&D's mission is to sponsor and promote projects and programs that improve the quality of life and sustainable use of natural resources, primarily in the Shenandoah River Watershed, by providing volunteer leadership, technical resources, and financial assistance.



OFFICERS

John Eckman
Chair

Joan Comanor
Vice Chair

Jim Lawrence
Immediate Past Chair

Roy Stephenson
Secretary/Treasurer



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Cash Received From:

Grants (Restricted):	\$184,781
Grants (Released):	\$142,888
Dues:	\$2,000
Interest:	\$1,500
Reimbursements:	\$6,690
Total:	\$337,859

Expenses in FY2009:

Projects:	\$205,352
Administration:	\$17,438
Total:	\$222,097

The finances of the Shenandoah RC&D Council were reviewed by Thorpe & Helsley, PLLC.

Shenandoah RC&D filed an IRS Form 990 as a statement of financial activity in FY08.

Shenandoah RC&D is authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture and received approximately \$143,000 in technical support through the Natural Resources Conservation Service.