



**Shenandoah Resource Conservation and
Development (RC&D) Area
FY2011 - Current Projects
Updated: 1/20/11**

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Project</i>
GOAL 1: Promote managed growth and development, with an emphasis on protection of farm and forestland and open space.	Educating Shenandoah County Rural Landowners about Conservation Easements. Many rural landowners in Shenandoah County have expressed a desire to preserve their land. However, most landowners are unfamiliar with conservation easements. This effort will provide basic information, through two educational newsletters, about conservation easements to all Shenandoah County landowners who own parcels 20 acres in size or larger. These newsletters will also be posted on the internet and additional copies will be distributed as appropriate by Shenandoah County's Cooperative Extension, Office of Planning and Zoning and/or the Conservation Easement Authority. <i>(Shenandoah County but template is available for other counties)</i>
GOAL 2: Promote a sustainable agricultural sector.	On-Farm and Rural Production of Biodiesel – Heatwole Farm. This project will build a small scale biodiesel production by Fox Run Farms managed by Ian Heatwole. Mr. Heatwole's initiative to manufacture bio-fuels locally and use them on-farm will provide a critical model for local energy production and use. Fox Run Farms should be able to supply a more consistently-priced product by using locally-produced raw materials to manufacture fuel and reduce fuel-associated transportation costs. This project will allow local oil seed producers more marketing options and may allow more competitive pricing for this value-added product. A local processing facility also has the potential to generate more jobs in the local farm economy. In short, this project will help support the Valley's local agricultural economy and provide a critical source of biofuels. <i>(Augusta/Rockingham Counties)</i>
	Extension Community and Container Gardens. This project works to help citizens learn food productions skills while also providing garden fresh produce to low-income individuals through local social service agencies. <i>(Winchester/Frederick County)</i>
	Harrisonburg Farmers Market – SNAP Double Vouchers. This project is to support to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Electronic Benefits Transfer. This project essentially provides up to \$10 per week in matching benefits: spend \$10 on EBT tokens and get up to \$10 in double value tokens to buy additional fresh local food. This project covers the Harrisonburg Farmers Market.
	Technical Assistance to Shenandoah Valley Pure Water Forum. The Pure Water Forum requested that the Shenandoah RC&D act as a fiscal agent for a grant from the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation to continue its role as the state's premier watershed roundtable. The Shenandoah RC&D is managing DCR project funds for PWF for the coming year to allow them to reorganize their operations and is providing administrative support for basic PWF activities. <i>(Shenandoah River Watershed)</i>
	Shenandoah Valley Economic Study by Ken Meter. This project is working to strengthen regional agricultural economic development and build greater capacity for a local and regional food economy that will invest in local jobs and businesses in the Shenandoah Valley. This project promotes a home-grown economy that encourages community health and encourages the retention of local wealth through economic activities generated by a more focused community and place-based food system. The project goals are to compile solid quantitative farm production and consumer index data that can be used (a) as baseline data to understand the workings of the Shenandoah Valley regional farm and food economy; (b) to unify the work of diverse stakeholders who are and will be involved in strengthening local food systems; (c) to assist local stakeholders in identifying strategic priorities for community and regional agricultural economic development; (d) to assess the economic impact of community-based food systems for the Shenandoah Valley; and, (e) to serve as a model for other bioregions of Virginia. (Valley-wide)

Goal	Project
<p>GOAL 2: Promote a sustainable agricultural sector. (Cont.)</p>	<p>Sustainable Shenandoah Market and Educational Garden. This project is showcasing a variety of sustainable ecological practices such as permaculture, and is selling those sustainably produced vegetables at the local farmers market. This project offers education and outreach to the community through a variety of events at the garden, and helps fund a garden manager. <i>(Page County/Luray)</i></p>
	<p>Creating a Culture of Conservation from Farm to Table. This project promotes water quality improvement and agricultural sustainability by closing loop holes in the flow of sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus throughout the Shenandoah Valley regional food system and into the Chesapeake Bay. Everyone eats. The most direct way to appeal to everyone about their relationship to water quality and the agricultural community is to directly connect food production with consumption. This project ties food consumption to Bay nutrient and sediment reductions in key innovative ways: it will quantify real reductions farmers are making to improve water quality while producing local food; it provides incentives for farmers to capitalize on their water quality improvements they are making by marketing their products as “Bay Friendly;” it also provides direct payments for quantified reductions farmers are making with nutrients and sediments entering waterways. It also reaches out to homeowners to do their part in cleaning up the Bay. <i>(Valley-wide)</i></p>
<p>GOAL 3: Promote community development and diverse rural economies.</p>	<p>Muddy Bike Project - III. This project assists low-income families in growing their own food in their neighborhoods and improves their nutrition. This year the project includes school gardens. Another aspect of the project is that it employs low-income and homeless individuals in the production of organic produce at an urban sustainable living site in Harrisonburg, VA. The project is designed to ultimately be self-funded through building community shares and market sales. <i>(Harrisonburg/Rockingham County)</i></p>
	<p>Advanced Soil Fertility Management: Beyond N, P and K. It is the goal of this project to provide growers with a comprehensive educational program to assist in making both financially and environmentally sound soil fertility management decisions. This project will also compliment other ongoing research efforts in the watershed examining the effects of continuous no-till production on nutrient and sediment loss. <i>(Area-wide)</i></p>
	<p>Smith Creek Watershed Initiative. This project helps support the Smith Creek Showcase Watershed effort and works to help partners empower landowners and residents to effectively apply restoration and conservation solutions for water quality and land use challenges in their community. Technical support includes creating and maintaining a Smith Creek website and obtaining CCPI agreements to help fund conservation practices and grazing outreach and education in the watershed and beyond. <i>(Primarily Shenandoah and Rockingham Counties)</i></p>
<p>GOAL 4: Promote the conservation of natural resources, with an emphasis on improvement and protection of water and air quality.</p>	<p>Poague Run Watershed Demonstration and Education Site. The Poague Run Watershed is a 2,858.3 acre mixed agricultural/urban watershed situated along a highly travelled entrance corridor to the City of Staunton, the county seat of the second largest agricultural-producing county in Virginia. It is in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Poague Run is a tributary of Lewis Creek which is on the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality’s Impaired Waters 303(d) TMDL Priority List for excessive bacteria and an inability to support aquatic life. This Project partners will take a two-pronged approach concentrating on both the urban and agricultural portions of the watershed. Partners will demonstrate that agriculture, riparian buffers, clean streams and trout, bird and pollinator habitat go together, while encouraging the urban residents of this watershed to do their part in keeping this watershed clean. This project will be used to encourage watershed rehabilitation and restoration in agricultural, residential, and commercial sites throughout the entire Poague Run watershed. <i>(Augusta County)</i></p>

Goal	Project
	<p>Upper South River Funding Network. Provide timely and accurate information on state, federal, and private grant opportunities to partners engaged in riparian restoration, creation of a trophy brook trout fishery, and work to establish The Center for Coldwaters Restoration in the upper South River (Shenandoah) watershed. (<i>Augusta County/Waynesboro</i>)</p>
	<p>Virginia Farm Energy Resource Center. The Shenandoah RC&D in conjunction with James Madison University's Dr. Maria Papadakis, funded by the Virginia Association of RC&D Councils, will create a new website for the Virginia Farm Energy Resource Center and prepare and print fact sheets on wind and solar energy on farm. VERC will provide a centralized source of information on energy efficiency, conservation, renewable energy, and alternative energy for Virginia farms. It will also provide some technical assistance, particularly in estimating the economic payback of different energy investments and guiding farmers to appropriate resources and technical experts. (<i>Statewide</i>)</p>
	<p>Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI). This project seeks to direct CCPI funds over three years to implement conservation practices that farmers have expressed interest in local field offices in the Shenandoah Valley. It will also direct outreach to the thirty-two (32) poultry, eighteen (18) Grade A dairies, thirty (30) beef feedlots and the beef cow/calf operations identified in the Smith Creek Watershed. Priority will be given to applications for cropland and nutrient management practices in the Smith Creek watershed and there is a separate component for outreach and education related to grazing systems. (<i>Primarily Shenandoah and Rockingham Counties but available Area-wide</i>)</p>
	<p>Energy Savings and Conservation for the Home. This is a class that Dr. Maria Papadakis will teach at Blue Ridge Community College that assists residential homeowners in energy efficiency at home. The Shenandoah RC&D co-sponsored the class to raise visibility for the RC&D. (<i>Augusta County</i>)</p>
	<p>Herd Health. This project provides technical assistance to assist in securing funding for a Herd Health video presentation that would be available on DVD for outreach and education. The video would talk about the benefits to farmers of water quality improvement. (<i>Area-wide</i>)</p>
<p>GOAL 5: Strengthen Council Operations</p>	<p>Area Plan update. The Shenandoah RC&D is working to update its Area Plan to look at increasing impact throughout the Area. (<i>Area-wide</i>)</p>