

Virginia Soil Conservation Practices Take Root

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SANGERSVILLE, Va. — Virginia's Governor Gerald Baliles endorsed the conservation efforts of local farmers during a visit to rural Augusta County recently. Excessive amounts of nutrients and sediments are among the main causes of pollution in the Chesapeake Bay, Baliles noted, adding that, nationally, Virginia ranks third in pasture erosion, sixth in cropland erosion and twelfth in total farmland erosion.

Only innovative farming methods, such as the Best Management Practices partially funded by the Chesapeake Bay Program, can reverse the process, Baliles maintained. Currently, 1,359 farmers have participated in the agricultural BMPs program which has been limited to headwaters in the Shenandoah Valley. This part of the Chesapeake Bay Program will soon be expanded to include other areas of the state, Baliles announced.

The governor's speech highlighted a tour of farms in the Moffat Creek watershed area of Augusta County where BMPs have been installed. Moffat Creek is a tributary of the James River with 1,000 of 1,252 acres of cropland and 7,300 acres of the 10,435 acres of pastureland in the watershed having erosion problems. Only 2,231 acres are involved in conservation programs, a figure local officials would like to see increase.

Bill Braunworth, an Augusta County tree farmer, received the 1986 Forestry Best Management

Practice Award from the Headwaters Soil and Conservation District and is sold on the benefits of conservation.

From 1985 to 1986 Braunworth planted 45 acres of white pine seedlings on marginal, erodible farmland with financial and technical assistance up to \$75 an acre from the Chesapeake Bay Program. He also received cost sharing funds from the Virginia Division of Forestry's Reforestation of Timberland Program amounting to 50 percent of expenses up to \$60 an acre.

Braunworth told the tour that trees are a renewable resource that must be utilized and there is a need to show people the benefits of a well managed forest. He manages woodlands to improve the land and stressed the connection between sound forest management and water quality as well.

More people are needed to practice forestry wisdom, he concluded, which results in greater profits, better habitat for wildlife, improved conservation and increased opportunities for recreation.

The tour also visited Neodak, the largest of three dairy farms in the watershed. Bill Hughes and his family own and operate the 90-cow dairy and farm 225 acres of corn and sorghum, 65 acres of alfalfa along with 125 acres of pastureland. In addition to strip cropping, the Hughes family also recently installed a concrete structure to store liquid manure with \$7,500 in cost sharing funds

from the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Fred Givens, an agricultural engineer working with the Chesapeake Bay Program, explained the importance of liquid manure storage structures as Best Management Practices. Nitrogen rich runoff from animal wastes is a major source of nutrient pollution reaching the Chesapeake Bay, he reported, especially when manure is applied to frozen fields in the winter. With a storage facility, however farmers can stockpile the manure and use it to partially replace commercial fertilizers.

The secret, Givens continued, is for the farmer to apply the manure during the proper times throughout the growing season. Crops will quickly take in the nutrients, slow any runoff that might occur and significantly reduce the chance of nutrient pollution. Manure from the Neodak's Holsteins will be applied three times a year to fertilize the small grains and corn crop as well as improve the fertility of the pastureland, he said.

Much of Augusta County's rolling farmland is actually steep pasture and erosion from the grazed hillsides is a major

problem in the area. One solution, local conservationists believe, is fencing for rotational grazing and woodland protection. At the Roland Roudabush farm, farmers and conservationists on the tour saw a fencing demonstration hosted by Rockingham Cooperative Farm Bureau.

According to Phil Liskey with the Cooperative, new technology in fencing materials, such as high tensile wire and fiberglass posts with urethane coatings, give farmers the flexibility to increase the number of fences they can put up by holding down their costs. Other innovations, such as solar panels to electrify these fences, also allow them to be built in more inaccessible areas of the farm.

Fencing is essential to voison rotational grazing, a form of pasture rotation Foy Hendricks, an agronomist with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Chester, Pa., was on hand to promote. Voison means rational, Hendricks told the tour, and the system calls for dividing a pasture into at least 10 separate paddocks.

That may not sound rational at first, the agronomist continued, but the logic is clear. In early spring cattle are moved off each

paddock when the grass has been eaten and onto the next. When the first paddock's grass has regrown, cattle are moved back — often leaving several of the 10 paddocks untouched. These can be hayed, Hendricks explained, increasing the amount of forage harvested from the pasture area.

As the season progresses, the growth of the grass slows and each grazed paddock takes longer to recuperate. By moving cattle through all 10 paddocks, the grass and sod is less stressed, the agronomist noted. During heavy thunderstorms this system prevents sediment from running into the streams and also reduces year-round soil erosion. When growth begins again in September, the old pattern of rotation can resume.

Erosion control, nutrient management and reforestation are essential to the clean-up of the Chesapeake Bay, and funds are available to help Virginia farmers do their part, tour members learned. According to Baliles, the state is determined to avert the decline of the Chesapeake Bay and while there are no easy or quick answers, he told farmers, Virginia is committed to the long haul.

PP&L Employees Team Up To Save Drowning Victim

In recognition of their efforts to save a drowning boy last June, three Pennsylvania Power & Light employees have received the company's highest honor, the Lifesaving Award.

Power Production Department employee Bob Stanley of Christiana, and Jeff Dietz and Ken Holdren of Danville, two Construction Department workers on temporary assignment at PP&L's Holtwood plant at the time, teamed up to save Daniel Stoltzfus, 15, of Green Tree in southern Lancaster County.

"This action showed what it means to be a human being," said DeForrest S. Bast, PP&L's director - Safety & Health, who made the presentations, "to come to the aid of your fellow man in an emergency."

"Ken and I had just finished dinner at the Green Tree Inn when someone burst in and shouted that a young boy was drowning in a nearby pond," Dietz remembered. "I just jumped up and sprinted out the door, jumped over a fence, stripped down to my shorts and dived into the pond."

Holdren — and Stanley, who happened to be in the same restaurant — followed closely behind and stayed on shore, directing Dietz in his search.

"I finally found him in about 12 feet of water," Dietz said. "He was stuck in the mud and unconscious. I got hold of him and tried to bring him up, but I swallowed a good bit of water."

"I had to let go of him. I had been down too long and had to come up for air."

When onlookers saw Dietz come up without the boy, the pond's owner, Elam Zook, jumped into the water to help.

"We both went back down to the boy," said Dietz. "I managed to wrap my legs around his torso and we pulled him up and out of the mud. Ken and Bob threw a rope out to us when we got to the surface and pulled us all in to shore. It was a good thing too. I was in no shape to swim I needed that rope."

By that time, local rescue units had arrived and took the victim to Lancaster General Hospital. They also took Dietz, who had become sick from swallowing the pond water during his rescue effort, to the hospital.

Stoltzfus was listed in critical condition immediately after the



Bob Stanley of Christiana, an employee in Pennsylvania Power & Light Co.'s Power Production Department, displays the company's Lifesaving Award presented to him in recognition of his assistance in saving the life of a Lancaster County youth recently.

rescue, but improved steadily. Before Dietz helped bring him to the surface, the boy had been submerged for more than 10 minutes.

"I saw him in the hospital in late July, and the doctors said once he's recuperated and had some physical therapy, he's got a good chance of a full recovery," Dietz said.

If not for Dietz, though, the youth wouldn't have made it at all.

"There was no delay. There was a quick response to the emergency and that's what saved the boy,"

said Donald Mowrer, Bart Township police chief. Mowrer also explained that the boy had been in the pond with other youngsters, and that one jumped in and accidentally landed on Stoltzfus, knocking him unconscious and causing him to sink.

"PP&L encourages its employees to help out whenever they can," said Bast. "We're a public utility and we're here to serve the public in any way possible. It's always a thrill and a pleasure for us to recognize people like we have here today."

30 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

-Harvesting of the main crop of late varieties of Pennsylvania peaches is approaching its peak, and supplies should be plentiful on local markets over the next two weeks, the State Department of Agriculture announced today.

-Loss was estimated at \$75,000 when fire caused by lightning Saturday night destroyed the stone and frame bank-barn and machinery shed, a frame machinery shed and corn crib on the Arthur and Chester Tout farm, R1, Lancaster, a mile north of Oyster Point Saturday afternoon.

-Crop development in the northern reaches of the Commonwealth is slow, a trip through sections of Potter County into New York State last weekend showed. Rainfall is more than adequate, especially with the 1956 crop of potatoes about ready for harvest around the Potato capital of the world — Potato City, Pa.

-There was no Labor Day holiday Monday in the tobacco fields of Lancaster County, where the heavy 1956 crop is at its peak of movement into drying sheds.

-Pushing through a bamboo thicket to find an acre of Sacred Lotus grown by the ancient Egyptians 4000 years ago sounds like an expedition into the lands along the Nile, or a journey into the deep jungles of the Orient. But it's a case of Lancaster farming. Taro from the Philippine Islands thrives in waters shared by Chinese Lotus, Egyptian Lotus, papyrus - the Egyptian paper plant, exotic bloom we once thought could only grace magazine cover illustrations or in encyclopedias. But the Sacred Lotus is growing on the 112-acre farm of Lloyd W. Nolt, R1 Lancaster, near Silver Springs-Nolt's Ponds, a fabulous form of farming that seems as out of place as a statue of Buddha in Lancaster's Penn Square!

-Placed end to end there was two miles of chicken served to the

100,000 people that attended the Poultry Festival and the Dutch Days celebration at Hershey, PA on Aug. 23, 24, 25 and 26, sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Poultry Federation and the Dutch Days Committee. For those hungry people who did not eat chicken there was available: one ton of ground cooked turkey made into delicious turkey burgers and Turkey (white meat) sandwiches; 200 gallons of chicken corn soup; 10,000 servings of egg nog and 3,000 pickled eggs.

-Prospects that Lancaster County this year may produce one of the finest corn crops in years become more evident day by day, after adequate rains pushed corn to the point where it may give one of the best yields in five years.

-Proof that Lancaster County has scored a bulls-eye on soil conservation and strip farming is most conspicuous and colorful from the air. Without any advance notice, it's certain an outsider would recognize the Garden Spot with no trouble.

-Mrs. Pauline (Melvin) Stoltzfus, R1 Ronks, and her daughter, eight year-old Nancy, Tuesday topped the ladies' and juniors' judging division of the Lancaster County Guernsey Breeders Association Field Day at the Frank Hershey farm northwest of Witmer. Little Nancy scored 292 points out of a possible 300, her mother 285. Nancy received a salt and pepper shaker.

— (From For Farm Women) Imperial Crab- one pound backfin crab; good-sized tablespoon capers, plus some juice; salt and pepper to taste; three or four dashes red pepper; one-half cup mayonnaise... (another item) along the seafood line, there's a Louisiana seafood soup that takes days and days to make, and fish of several varieties, bouillabaisse it is.