



Virginia Chapter News

Winter 2005

Upcoming events

Feb. - Scholarship applications due to local Soil & Water Conservation Districts

April 6 - Virginia Chapter Board meeting

Spring 2005 TBA - Technical workshop

July 13 - Virginia Chapter Board meeting

July 30 - Aug. 4 - International meeting of the SWCS, Rochester, NY

Sept. 14 - Virginia Chapter Board meeting

Oct. TBA - Annual meeting

Invite a friend at work to join!

Officers:

Stu Wilson, President
 Phil McClellan, Pres. elect
 John Myers, Vice-President
 Jackie Byars, Secretary
 Larry Wilkinson, Treasurer
 Council members:
 Jim Cox, 2nd year
 Brian Benham, 1st year
 Dawn Shank, Past-Pres/
 newsletter editor

Virginia Chapter website:
www.bse.vt.edu/swcs

New Officers sworn in at Annual Meeting

Stu Wilson from the Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, was sworn in as President at the SWCS Annual Meeting Oct. 2004. Other officers for 2005 include: Phil McClellan of Map Tech, Inc. as president-elect, John Myers of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as vice-president, Jackie Byars, USDA NRCS as secretary, Larry Wilkinson, USDA NRCS as treasurer, and council members Jim Cox, National Association of



Above: 2004 President Dawn Shank turns over the helm to Stu Wilson.



State Conservation Agencies (NASCA) and Brian Benham, Virginia Tech. Officers took their oath during the Awards Luncheon as part of a two-day technical workshop on Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), which was held at the Blacksburg Marriott. The luncheon speaker was Jim Cox of NASCA. Presentations from the workshop can be downloaded from the society's website.

Left: Jim Cox, NASCA, gives the luncheon address.

2004 Awards presented

The society recognized several groups and individuals with awards at the TMDL Workshop and Annual meeting. The Virginia Resource Use Education Council, Bill Portlock of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Randy Shank received a merit award for coordination and implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Academy, a week of experiential watershed education training for teachers.

Karl Huber & Gina Beale received a merit award for updating Virginia's Hydrologic Unit to the national level standard. This will enable planners in different agencies to better define common natural resources concerns and needs in Virginia and surrounding states.

Appropriate to the TMDL theme of the annual meeting, a merit award was also presented to the Center for TMDL and Watershed Studies. The center has developed 25 TMDLs throughout Virginia since 1999. Often these TMDL plans were for circumstances where the methodology for a specific type TMDL is not yet well defined, such as in the development for bacteria and biological or benthic



Staff of the Center for TMDL and Watershed Studies at Virginia Tech were presented with a merit award.

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impairments. The center has developed and delivered technology transfer workshops. The society recognized the staff of the Center for TMDL and Watershed Studies at Virginia Tech: Brian Benham, Director; Kevin Brannan, Dr. Theo Dillaha, Dr. Conrad Heatwole, Dr. Saied Mostaghimi, Dr. Mary Leigh Wolfe, Dr. Tess Wynn, Dr. Gene Yagow and Rebecca Zechoski for its influence on TMDL and watershed planning development, evaluation and implementation at the local, state and national levels.

Several years ago, the society initiated a unique media award in memory of June Sekoll, former editor of *Farm Journal*. The award recognizes an individual or group that writes or produces materials which significantly increase public understanding and promote the wise use of Virginia's natural resources. This year's winner is the Eastern Shore Environmental Education Council for their quarterly newspaper insert *Shore Outdoors*. Each issue has a specific theme such as migratory birds, groundwater and impaired waterways (TMDLs). The insert also serves as a seasonal guide to exploring the area's natural resources and highlights the environmental work of the many individuals, teachers, agencies and organizations that make up the council.

This year's Conservationist of the Year award was presented to the Student Chapter at Virginia Tech for developing an environmental education curriculum for Apple Ridge Farm. Apple Ridge Farm received the 2003 award for their environmental education program working with children in the Roanoke area. For many years the student chapter has volunteered working with students at the farm and has now put together a curriculum correlated to the Virginia Standards of Learning. Last year, the student chapter also held its successful environmental career fair for VT students. Members of the student chapter also won second place in the poster session at the International Society meeting in Minnesota this summer. Student Chapter President Sheila Ranganath accepted the award on behalf of the club.

Dillaha recognized for outstanding service



An Outstanding Service Award was presented to the Student Chapter's advisor, Dr. Theo Dillaha. Theo has 30 years of university, international and consulting experience in soil, water and natural resource management. He served the Virginia Chapter as president, has been the student chapter advisor, developed and served as the Virginia Chapter's webmaster, newsletter editor, is the Southeastern Representative for the National SWCS Chapter Development Committee, and served as its chair in 2003.

Theo has supervised 19 graduate student theses and dissertations and is an expert in curriculum development and assessment. He has been the principal investigator on 97 projects worth more than \$6.2 million and published 31 refereed publications, hundreds of papers and technical reports and book chapters.

He has been an invited speaker at numerous national and international conferences, served on the Fulbright Africa Scholars Review Panel, was a member of the National Research Council Committee on Riparian Zones and been involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of sustainable agricultural and natural resource management-related projects in North and Southern Africa, Micronesia, Central Asia, Albania, Japan, the Soviet Union, Russia, Ukraine and the US. Theo has received many awards and honors in the past. The chapter is pleased to honor Dr. Theo Dillaha with the Society's Outstanding Service Award for his dedication and service to the Soil and Water Conservation Society and his contributions to conservation around the globe.

Virginia Chapter sponsors two VASWCD Educational Foundation scholarships

The Virginia Chapter sponsors two \$1,000 college scholarships each year through the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Educational Foundation. Society members or those whose relatives are members are given extra points when the scholarship applications are reviewed and scored. For information and an application, contact your local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) or visit www.vaswcd.org. There is criteria information and an application you can download on the site.