



Search

West Virginia



West Virginia NRCS News and Views

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
February 2010

In this News and Views

- [Message from State Conservationist](#)
- [From the Field](#)
- [Mussel Habitat Restored](#)
- [High Tunnel Pilot Study](#)
- [PMC works with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Replace Trees](#)
- [Soil Carbon Takes Center Stage](#)
- [Bits and Pieces](#)
- [Useful Web Links](#)
- [Civil Rights](#)
- [Earth Team](#)
- [Meet . . .](#)
- [Personnel News](#)
- [Communications Tip: Cell phone etiquette](#)

News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

▶ Find a Service Center

[Message from State Conservationist](#)

[From the Field](#)



Mountain (White Oak Rail Trail Update), Wes-Mon-Ty (WV Community Food Security Symposium, Direct Marketing Meeting, Brownfields), Little Kanawha (2010 Lawn, Garden & Forestry Exposition).

[...More Info](#)

[Mussel Habitat Restored](#)



The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Weston Service Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFS), the West Virginia Conservation Agency (WVCA) and the West Fork Conservation District (WFCD) have been working together to improve the habitat for endangered clubshell mussels.

[...More Info](#)

[High Tunnel Pilot Study](#)



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in WV is one of 38 states participating in a 3-year study verifying if high tunnels are effective in reducing pesticide use, keeping vital nutrients in the soil, extending the growing season, increasing yields, and providing other benefits to growers.

[...More Info](#)

[PMC works with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Replace Trees](#)

[Soil Carbon Takes Center Stage](#)



David Kingsbury, Mike Jones, and Steve Carpenter review data on 640 different soil series in their search of common criteria for similar carbon stocks.

[Bits and Pieces](#)



Could chicken manure help curb climate change?, Rob Pate's Home Solar Panels, Getting Paid for your Carbon Credits.

[...More Info](#)

[Earth Team](#)



Seventy FFA students signed up as Earth Team volunteers and planted over 300 trees and shrubs (in the rain!) to create a two acre riparian forest buffer.

[...More Info](#)

[Useful Web Links](#)

[Civil Rights](#)



Getting More Involved in Civil Rights and Outreach, February is Black History Month, Meet Jared Beard and Carrie Crislip, New Members of the NRCS-WV Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC).

[...More Info](#)

[Meet](#)



Matt Finck, AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer, WesMonTy RC&D.

[...More Info](#)

[Personnel News](#)

[Communications Tip: Cell phone etiquette](#)

To submit news items for the May *News and Views*, please send an e-mail message to [Carol Lagodich](#).

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain and improve our natural resources and environment.

NRCS West Virginia State Office
1550 Earl Core Road, Suite 200, Morgantown, WV 26505
304-284-7540 | fax 304-284-4839
<http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Kevin Wickey, West Virginia State Conservationist

NRCS field offices are located throughout West Virginia
Visit <http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/> for addresses and phone numbers.

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

[< Back to West Virginia News](#)

Last Modified 02/18/2010

[▲ Back to Top](#)

[West Virginia NRCS Home](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [NRCS](#) | [USDA](#)

**Search**

West Virginia

**News**

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

Message from Acting State Conservationist

Serving as acting state conservationist for the past few weeks has been an eye-opener for me. I have the chance to see things from Kevin's perspective and what I have seen is an extremely busy work schedule. I have also had the opportunity to learn how busy our field offices are and to see and hear about the many good things that are being done at the field level. I want to convey to everyone how much we appreciate your efforts for conservation each and every day. While I usually think about soils all the time, I know how vast and complex the application of Farm Bill related programs is for our field staff. As the pressure on our environment becomes more and more challenging to deal with, we must stay focused on helping people help the land in the best way we can by working smarter and using new technology to save time. As you read through this issue of News and Views you will find that we are doing so many good things for the people in West Virginia.

Keep up the good work!

Stephen G. Carpenter
 Acting State Conservationist
 West Virginia

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

**Search**

West Virginia

GO

News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

▶ Find a Service Center

From the Field

Mountain Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

White Oak Rail Trail Update

Mountain Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) has completed phase one of three to a demo watershed education project located on the White Oak Rail Trail. The Council recognized an opportunity to incorporate watershed education while providing an attraction to a highly successful rail trail. During high use months this trail has over 500 visitors a day. The RC&D brought together a partnership of local, state and federal agencies, non-profits, and the local watershed association to develop theme kiosk to help inform the general public about topic which most have little to no knowledge.

Phase one kiosks covered:



Stream Macro Invertebrates



Stream Ecosystems



Riparian Buffers



Non-Point Source Pollution from the Home

Phase two addresses: What is a Watershed, The Water Cycle, Watershed Stewardship, and Appalachian Bogs. Phase three covers: Back Yard Conservation, Geology, General Wildlife, and Soils.

The Council expects to complete this project by the end of the 2010 calendar year with the help of our partnership. The Council also hopes to share panel material with others wanting to develop a watershed education program.

For more information contact [Mike Gasper](#) at 304-469-9738.

Wes-Mon-Ty Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

WV Community Food Security Symposium

Each year since 1995, USDA has monitored the level of food security -- consistent access to adequate food for an active, healthy life. 2008 saw the number of U.S. households classified as food insecure reached the highest level recorded since 1995. Nationally the number of food-insecure households grew to 17.1 million, or 14.6 percent of all households, up from 11.1 percent the previous year. Among households with children, the percentage increase was larger -- from 15.8 percent in 2007 to 21 percent in 2008. The Food Research and Action Center indicated that West Virginia prevalence of household food insecurity for 2006-2008 averaged 12.0%.

Farmers can help remedy this problem, and assist in creating innovative solutions to improve diet quality. On March 3, 2010 the WV Small Farms Conference will host the WV Community Food Security Symposium. The conference will include presentations related to community food security, "A condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice." In addition, presentations will include the latest research on how farmers can assist in improving community food security issues. Also included will be upcoming legislation as well as important West Virginia demographics. Opportunities for farmers to participate in federally subsidized nutrition programs and methods for accepting SNAP benefits at farmers markets will be covered. This symposium will be a great opportunity for farmers to communicate with dietitians, social workers' and health professionals about the role of agriculture in promoting community food security. Additionally, introductory gardening classes and contacts to specialists will be provided to increase the role of gardening to improve community food security.

Matt Finck (VISTA) and Jason Teets have been assisting in organizing this event. This event is a component of a grant that Wes-Mon-Ty has received from the USDA-MS Farmers Market promotion program.

Direct Marketing Meeting

On January 28, 2010, the Wes-Mon-Ty RC&D Council and Heart and Hand Ministries held a meeting for producers interested in expanding their local food operations with farm-to-institution direct marketing in Barbour County, West Virginia. The meeting, held at a local restaurant in Philippi, WV, was coordinated and led by VISTA Volunteer Matt Finck. The meeting was a critical step in Wes-Mon-Ty and Heart and Hand's goal to increase the capacity and expand the market share for local growers.

The Barbour County Community Garden Market and Heart and Hand Ministries held a meeting in April 2009 to explain to producers the various aspects of their vision for expanded local agriculture. One of those goals involved direct marketing agricultural goods to local institutions, such as Alderson Broaddus College and local restaurants. This meeting was the first step in the implementation of this goal. Fifteen interested producers attended the meeting, as well as a representative from Sedexo Food Services, Brenda Hunt and Ben Simmons from Heart and Hand Ministries, Bob Wilkins from Wes-Mon-Ty RC&D and Jason Teets from the NRCS.

Matthew Finck opened the meeting by explaining various aspects, opportunities and hurdles to expanding from direct marketing at farmers markets to expanding to direct marketing to institutions. He then moderated discussion between the various growers and stakeholders. Sedexo's representative, giving the growers valuable information to the buyer perspective of direct marketing interactions, answered many questions from producers. The producers expressed interest in coordinating their marketing activities and asked Matt to do further investigation into specific questions that had been raised. They wished to create a brokerage system to coordinate distribution and create a single point of contact for institutional buyers. The producers are now the primary stakeholders of the project and have asked to hold another meeting in order to discuss the first marketing strategies for the coming season. Jason Teets also spoke on the High Tunnel Cost-Share

Program from the NRCS.

Overall, the meeting was a tremendous success. The producers learned of many different paths they can take to expand their share of the local market and they are moving forward with planning an approach to direct marketing to institutions this season. This will allow the farmers, institutions and residents of Barbour County to reap the economic benefits of supplying your local food markets from local producers.

Wes-Mon-Ty RC&D Receives Grant

Wes-Mon-Ty has received funding thru a 2010 FOCUS WV Brownfields Program award. For more information, go to <http://www.wvbrownfields.org/news.cfm> .

For more information, contact [Jason Teets](#) at 304-457-4596.

Little Kanawha Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

2010 Lawn, Garden & Forestry Exposition in Mineral Wells

The Little Kanawha RC&D helps sponsor the 2007 Lawn, Garden & Forestry Exposition in Mineral Wells April 10 to April 11 2010. For more information on the show, go to <http://www.lkrcd.com/pages/wvexpo.html>

For more information, contact [Norm Bailey](#) 304-679-3049.

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

**Search**

West Virginia

GO

News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

▶ Find a Service Center

Mussel Habitat Restored

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Weston Service Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFS), the West Virginia Conservation Agency (WVCA) and the West Fork Conservation District (WFCD) have been working together to improve the habitat for endangered clubshell mussels. The project was funded through the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP).

The stream bank project was designed by Stephen Starcher, Watershed Technician with the WVCA. Angela Greene, WV State Conservation Engineer, reviewed the design and recommended the use of bioengineering techniques to stabilize the banks after the channel bank and bench construction process.

"This project would have never happened without Rebecca Flanagan's (NRCS Soil Conservationist, Weston Service Center) hard work and coordination with the property owner, Steve Cronin, WVCA, and USFWS, Said Angela Greene. "She worked to keep this project going for a long time".

A Bioengineering Field Day Training was held at Jackson's Mill on November 12, 2009. The class participated in a Cronin Farms Hackers Creek Stream Stabilization Project. The class used natural stream restoration techniques to help stabilize the banks.



Employees from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the West Virginia Conservation Agency and the West Fork Conservation District placed and anchored plant material along the banks of Hacker's Creek at the Cronin farm to help establish good environmental conditions for the endangered clubshell mussels. The stakes and wire will hold the material until it roots. The material planted is soft, woody and will bend when the water rises and help protect the soil.



Hacker's Creek before the project.



Hacker's Creek after the project

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

**Search**

West Virginia



High Tunnel Pilot Study

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in WV is one of 38 states participating in a 3-year study verifying if high tunnels are effective in reducing pesticide use, keeping vital nutrients in the soil, extending the growing season, increasing yields, and providing other benefits to growers. NRCS will provide financial assistance for the project through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the EQIP Organic Initiative, and the Agricultural Management Assistance program (AMA).

"High tunnels can extend the growing season for gardeners who already have a developed market for their crops" said Pam West of West Farm in Lewisburg, WV. "They take a time commitment, management, and planning. West Farm has four tunnels they use for tomatoes, strawberries and produce. Tomatoes planted in April may be harvested as early as late June. High tunnel strawberries may be planted in September and picked in late April."

On Dec 30, 2009, Barbara Broxterman met with Dr. Lewis Jett (WVU Extension) to discuss high tunnel system, design considerations and construction. WVU Extension constructed a high tunnel in Jane Lew in June, 2009. A seasonal high tunnel system (SHTS) may be used where existing specialty commodity crops are grown in open field conditions, and extension of the growing season is needed due to climate conditions.



High tunnels—also known as hoop houses—to increase the availability of locally grown produce in a conservation-friendly way. Made of ribs of plastic or metal pipe covered with a layer of plastic sheeting, high tunnels are easy to build, maintain and move.



High tunnels may be used to extend the growing season by providing protection for early or late season production.

High tunnels are different from greenhouses. Green Houses are heated and cooled (evaporative cooling), have high electric costs, high water use and are used year around.

To learn more about EQIP assistance for high tunnel projects, contact your local West Virginia NRCS office.

[< Back to February News and Views](#)



Search

West Virginia

GO

News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

PMC works with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Replace Trees and Enhances Cultural Diversity

The Appalachian Plant Materials Center (PMC) assisted the US Army Corps. of Engineers - Huntington District with restoration of native plants at the Marmet Locks and Dam Project. This project is located on the Kanawha River in West Virginia upstream of Charleston. The project included building a new lock chamber and approach channels at River Mile 67.7. All vegetation and habitats within the approximately 150 acre site was destroyed during the course of construction.

"Trees were harvested on site at a wooded tract at the north end of the project prior to construction. Small trees, some sprouts and cuttings were taken off site to a plant propagation center at Alderson, WV, where they grew and multiplied those plants for us during the seven years of construction," said Mike Keathley, Project Manager. Six native woody species were harvested. These species were: *Acer saccharinum*, silver maple; *Lindera benzoin*, spicebush; *Sambucus canadensis*, elderberry; *Asimina triloba*, pawpaw; *Sassafras albidum*, sassafras; and *Aesculus octandra*, yellow buckeye.

The original project design included the plan to preserve those native plants with the intent of reintroducing them to the site following construction. The objective was to maintain the cultural diversity of the site that existed prior to construction, including the types of species present.

"We wanted to include trees that were acclimated to that environment," Keathley said. "We've returned those plant materials to the site and through our partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have reintroduced that component of our total mitigation replanting for the site."

As a result of the effort, more than a thousand trees have already been put in place - some planted by the contractor that handled the construction, and some by Corps employees and workers with NRCS.

The National Plant Materials Program, a network of 26 Plant Materials Centers (PMC) located throughout the United States. The Appalachian Plant Materials Center (PMC), located in Alderson, West Virginia, serves the Appalachian Region. The Appalachian PMC is operated by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), in cooperation with the USDA-Agriculture Research Service, U.S. Forest Service and the Agriculture Experiment Stations of West Virginia University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, University of Tennessee, and the University of Kentucky.

For more information on the Marmet Locks and Dam Project, go to https://environment.usace.army.mil/corps_environment/

< [Back to February News and Views](#)

**Search**

West Virginia

**News**

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

▶ [Find a Service Center](#)

Soil Carbon Takes Center Stage

NRCS soil scientists are accustomed to natural puzzles. Determining soil patterns across the landscape and projecting them on a map is the ultimate natural puzzle according to Steve Carpenter, MLRA Regional Office Leader for Soil Survey Region 13 in Morgantown. This year, however, the Soil Survey Staff has a new challenge: calculating the amount of carbon stored in the nation's soils. "Basically, our goal first will be to create groupings of soils centered around our Benchmark soils concepts and land use that would be expected to respond in similar ways in terms of carbon dynamics and apply these to develop a scientifically-based and statistically valid baseline inventory of soil carbon stocks for the U.S. and we have until 2012 to do it", according to Carpenter. "I think it is pretty exciting to be able to do this for the Agency. It says a lot for NRCS in general and the Soil Survey Staff in particular. The products of this work will include: an estimate of soil carbon stocks based on existing soil survey data; an inventory of the distribution stratified by ecosystem type with known levels of statistical confidence; and a public soil carbon database for model validation and development. "We love it when people use our data" says Carpenter.



David Kingsbury, Mike Jones, and Steve Carpenter review data on 640 different soils series in their search of common criteria for similar carbon stocks.

< [Back to February News and Views](#)



Search

West Virginia



News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

Bits and Pieces



Could chicken manure help curb climate change?

Two of the greatest challenges currently facing the poultry industry are the high cost of energy and environmental concerns surrounding the nutrient loading into the Chesapeake Bay watershed from poultry waste. A USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) recipient responded to the challenge by demonstrated that energy may be extracted from chicken litter to provide a bio-based heating system.

Coaltec Energy, USA Inc. installed a bio-based heating system on a poultry farm in Hardy County West Virginia. The system, using the poultry litter as fuel, heats the poultry houses and significantly reduces fuel costs for the farmer. The gasification process converts the poultry litter to mineral ash, reducing nutrient loading and the subsequent run-off into the Chesapeake Bay watershed tributaries. The operation also has a positive impact on the bird growth and health.

USA Today featured the West Virginia CIG grant:

http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/2010-02-10-cheap-carbon_N.htm?POE=click-refer

Read more about the CIG Grant at

<http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov/news/success/08success/litterCIG.html>

Rob Pate's Home Solar Panels

Rob Pate, Resource Soil Scientist in the South Area Office, installed home solar panels on poles that use a tracker to follow the sun. He was featured in a Register Herald article. Read the article at:

http://www.register-herald.com/homepage/local_story_359205500.html

http://www.register-herald.com/homepage/images_sizedimage_359205351/resources_photoview

Getting Paid for your Forest Carbon Credits.

Appalachian Carbon Partnership

Submitted by Rob Pate

The forests of Central Appalachia are important assets that provide clean air, water, recreation and wildlife habitat. With good management these forests can provide a reliable income to forest landowners while protecting the services that healthy forests provide to us all. The Appalachian Carbon Partnership was formed to help promote sustainable forest management in Central Appalachia.

<http://www.appalachiancarbonpartnership.org/about.asp>

Managed Forest Carbon Offsets

<http://www.maced.org/foi/carbon.htm>

West Virginia Managed Forest Carbon Offsets

<http://www.appalachiancarbonpartnership.org/westvirginia.asp>

West Virginia Enrollment Requirements

<http://www.appalachiancarbonpartnership.org/westvirginia-requirements.asp>

Seven Kentucky Landowners Get Paid \$65,000 for Managing their Forests (news release)

<http://www.maced.org/carbon-release-2009.htm>

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

[▲ Back to Top](#)

[West Virginia NRCS Home](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [NRCS](#) | [USDA](#)



Search

West Virginia



News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

▶ Find a Service Center

Useful Links

The WV *Save Our Streams Program* has a new website.

<http://www.dep.wv.gov/WWE/givehelp/sos/Pages/default.aspx>

Landcare Update

The National NRCS Publications and Forms Distribution Center-LANDCARE has the 2008 Farm Bill brochure, Conservation Practices and Programs for Your Land, and the eight individual inserts: Air Quality, Climate Change, Conservation Opportunities for Federally Recognized Tribes, Energy, Forestry and Agroforestry, Historically Underserved Individuals and Groups, Organic Farming and Specialty Crop Producers available for ordering.



[Conservation Practices and Programs for Your Land: 2008 Farm Bill](#)

The 2008 Farm Bill offers America's agricultural producers and nonindustrial private forest landowners more assistance than ever before to voluntarily conserve natural resources on our Nation's privately owned farm and ranch lands. Its provisions provide technical and financial assistance to help producers implement conservation practices that reduce erosion, protect our waters, improve fish and wildlife habitat, improve air quality, and conserve energy. [This guide](#) introduces the assistance available.

Visit our web site <http://landcare.nrcs.usda.gov/> to view these and other national publications and forms. You can order on-line at our web site, by e-mail landcare@usda.gov or by phone 1-888-LANDCARE.

Reservations for the National NRCS exhibits are filling quickly for the upcoming months. Please submit your requests as early as you can because it is "First come, First Served".

You can view available exhibits at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/exhibits/> You place a reservation for them by e-mail to landcare@usda.gov or by calling Chris Radley @ 515-289-0325 ext. 101.

Smithsonian Magazine Article

Submitted by Rob Pate

Buckhannon, West Virginia: The Perfect Birthplace

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/Buckhannon-West-Virginia-The-Perfect-Birthplace.html>

Organic Fact Sheet



The following document requires [Adobe Acrobat](#).
[Conservation Opportunities for Organic Farmers and those Transitioning to Organic Farming Fact Sheet](#) (168 KB).

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

[▲ Back to Top](#)

[West Virginia NRCS Home](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [NRCS](#) | [USDA](#)

**Search**

West Virginia

**News**

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

West Virginia's Civil Rights

Getting More Involved in Civil Rights and Outreach

Submitted by Debbie Chase, CRAC, State Office Member-at-large

As NRCS employees, we *all* have responsibility for Civil Rights and Outreach—that is, each of us is charged with providing the best service to our customers without discrimination, and with helping to retain a highly skilled and diverse workforce.

The following suggestions for Outreach/Civil Rights activities were excerpted and adapted, with permission, from the publication “Achieving Your Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights Performance Element: Think Outreach!” by Lisa Hokholt, State Outreach Specialist, NRCS-California. To see the entire original document, go to the NRCS Outreach SharePoint site, <https://nrsc.sc.egov.usda.gov/programs/rcdod/Outreach/default.aspx>.

This list is intended to help you develop your own ideas that will work best for you in the context of your work unit and job responsibilities. Discuss your ideas with your supervisor to insure that your efforts fit within his or her expectations of your performance. Document your activities so that you can add them to your accomplishments at the end of the fiscal year.

- Prepare a population demographic characterization of your service area and share it with co-workers.
- Set up an office resource library that contains Outreach and/or Civil Rights references. Share selected items at staff meetings to promote awareness.
- Contact local elected officials to promote their better understanding of NRCS services, community benefits, etc., and ask them to help “unlock” doors to non-traditional client groups (they may have community or cultural contacts that they’re willing to use to help you).
- Share custom products (PowerPoints, fact sheets, news releases, workshop announcements, translated materials, etc.) with colleagues in other offices, SEPMs, and the Assistant State Conservationist for Outreach/Civil Rights.
- Take on a self-development challenge: i.e., learn a new language that can be applied to assist NRCS customers, or learn more about a group’s culture and ways to build trust. (Note: Sixteen NRCS-WV employees recently signed up to study Spanish-Latin American through the Rosetta Stone program on their own time.)
- Recruit an Earth Team Volunteer to help achieve outreach successes.
- Submit a story, with photos, about your staff’s cultural diversity celebration or Special Emphasis Program awareness training for publication in *News and Views*.
- Work with Special Emphasis Program Managers to learn how they might help you begin new or improved working relationships with selected client groups.
- Place articles in local trade publications and membership organization newsletters.
- Find a way to provide services to at least one new client that is a beginning, limited resource, or otherwise non-conventional agricultural producer.
- Refer clients to West Virginia AgrAbility.
- Include Civil Rights and Outreach in all project and program work plans. Keep them front and center; make them a top priority.

February is Black History Month

It started as Black History Week in 1926 because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly

influenced the Black population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. Later on in 1976, as the nation reached its bicentennial, the week was expanded into an entire month. See <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/bhm1.html> for more information on Black History.



The need for economic development has been a central element of black life. After centuries of unrequited toil as slaves, African Americans gained their freedom and found themselves in the struggle to make a living. Pushing against the odds, African Americans became landowners, skilled workers, small businessmen and women, professionals, and ministers.

Association for the Study of African American Life and History
http://www.asalh.org/files/2010_Executive_Summary.doc

[Marvin Kerr](#) is the Black Emphasis Program Manager

Meet Two New Members of the NRCS-WV Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC)

Submitted by Debbie Chase, CRAC, State Office Member-at-large



Jared Beard

Veterans Emphasis Program Manager

Jared Beard, Veterans Emphasis Program Manager, was born and grew up in Morgantown, and received a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Protection from West Virginia University in 1997.

Jared's NRCS career includes stints as soil survey project member at Frederick, Maryland from 1999 to 2001; soil survey project leader for Jefferson County, West Virginia, out of the Martinsburg soil survey office from 2001 to 2004; and Area Resource Soil Scientist at Moorefield since 2004. As Area Resource Soil Scientist, he provides technical soil services for 15 NRCS field offices.

In 2005, Jared was leader of the Soils Team for the NRCS Conservation Boot Camp at Shepherdstown. The Conservation Boot Camp is a training course for employees with two years or less experience with NRCS, on the comprehensive conservation planning process. Jared served a four-month detail in Maine as a soil survey project member in 2006. In 2008, he was the lead in the field testing of a local soil interpretation developed for the disposal of potential catastrophic losses incurred by West Virginia poultry farmers and led a subsequent training session on the interpretation for potential users. He is a member of the West Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists (WVAPSS).

Jared brings nine years of service in the West Virginia Army National Guard to his new role as Veterans Emphasis Program Manager.



Carrie Crislip

CRAC West Area Member-at-large

Carrie Crislip, the CRAC West Area Member-at-large, was born in Winchester, Virginia and grew up in Petersburg, West Virginia. She received an Associate of Arts degree in Agriculture—Pre-Veterinary Medicine at Potomac State in May 2002 and a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal and Veterinary Sciences at West Virginia University in December 2002. In May 2004 Carrie earned her Master's in Agriculture, Forestry, and Consumer Sciences at WVU.

She worked as a conservation aid, starting in May 2002, at the Moorefield NRCS Field Office, and was employed through the Student Career Education Program (SCEP) in May 2003, also at Moorefield. In May 2004, she started as a soil conservationist at Parkersburg. Following Larry Sturm's retirement, she was transferred to the Ripley Field Office, where she currently works. Carrie, husband Jason, and son Wyatt, born January 7th, live in Ravenswood, West Virginia. (Jason works for NRCS in Pomeroy, Ohio.) Carrie says she enjoys living and working in Jackson County.

Carrie is a Certified Nutrient Management Planner and has a Conservation Planner Certification. She is the Volunteer Committee West Area representative.

Carrie previously served details to other field offices—Glenville and Spencer—for Farm Bill Program assistance. She also served a 30-day detail to Springfield, Ohio to assist with CSP. "An interesting tidbit: Jason and I were fortunate enough to work together on this detail. We were together 24 hours per day for 30 days and lived to tell about it! It was a good experience working with my husband and I would do it again if given the opportunity."

Carrie adds that right now she is enjoying her time at home with "our wonderful baby boy! Being a mother is the greatest!" She and Jason also have an Australian Shepherd named Mattie. Carrie loves spending time with Jason hunting turkey and deer, and watching sports and is a WVU Mountaineers fan.

Regarding serving as a member of the CRAC, Carrie says: "I am here in a supportive role to assist those in my area as well as throughout the state should they have any concerns pertaining to their Civil Rights. This is an educational experience for me."

The CRAC serves as an advisor to the State Conservationist and makes recommendations regarding policies, practices, and procedures, as they affect civil rights. Committee members serving as Special Emphasis Program Managers (SEPMs) assist with and conduct program outreach activities by working with underserved customers (internal and external) to create an awareness and understanding of all programs, benefits, and services available to them through NRCS and USDA. They assist with recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention.

For contact information on these and other CRAC members, see the NRCS-WV CRAC website, <http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov/about/civilRights/civil.html>.

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

**Search**

West Virginia

**News**

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

Earth Team

Earth Team Volunteers Help with Conservation Effort

NRCS works with landowners on a voluntary basis to achieve conservation on private property. This approach works well, but sometimes results in a random approach that may not serve to fully protect an entire stream reach or watershed, for example. Through cooperation with the West Virginia Conservation Agency (WVCA), NRCS field staff targeted Bear's Hell Run in the Lost River watershed in Hardy County, West Virginia. This allowed for a comprehensive approach to establishing a riparian buffer along the entire stretch of the stream. In addition to promoting the known benefits of established riparian buffers, the two agencies were interested in utilizing landowners and civic organizations as a catalyst to encourage their reluctant neighbors to install buffers.

Although NRCS provides technical assistance to any landowner, the majority of the agency's workload in rural Hardy County is with farmers. However, there is still a need to work with non-agricultural landowners to conserve and improve natural resources on their properties. Therefore, partnering with other agencies was imperative in that technical recommendations would be more likely to be put on the ground if cost-share was available.

After contacting several landowners, staff was able to successfully develop a Conservation Plan for Mr. John Madsen, who had an interest in promoting trout habitat on his property. One of the major impediments to proper habitat was a lack of shade for the stream. NRCS foresters and conservationists worked to develop a riparian forest buffer planting plan that would provide shade and a source of woody debris to improve trout habitat, while also helping to protect the eroding stream bank. WV Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) and Trout Unlimited (TU) were onsite to provide recommendations to the landowner for improving instream habitat components.

Seventy FFA students signed up as Earth Team volunteers and planted over 300 trees and shrubs (in the rain!) to create a two acre riparian forest buffer. Other partners, Baker Run Conservation Society, WVCA, WV Division of Forestry and WV Department of Agriculture participated in helping the students learn about the importance of buffers, proper tree planting techniques, etc.

Mr. Madsen is a non-agricultural landowner who has an interest in sustainable development. The planting will be aesthetically pleasing, illustrate his commitment to conservation to the community, reduce stream bank erosion, and will provide better fish habitat on his property.

The project provided a learning and team-building experience for students and community members. Conservation education is important in creating the next generation of citizens who care about our natural resources. Mr. Madsen is very pleased with the outcome and hopes to encourage his neighbors to install buffers on their own properties, which will improve water quality and create wildlife habitat in the area.

Contact:

Christi Ross Hicks, Soil Conservationist
 304-530-2825, Extension 105
Christi.Hicks@wv.usda.gov

Moorefield Service Center
 223 North Main Street
 Moorefield, WV 26836
 Phone: (304) 530-2825, Fax: (304) 530-2086



More than 70 FFA middle/high school students worked to plant over 300 trees along Bear's Hell Run in Hardy County, WV.



The two acre riparian forest buffer will provide shade and a source of woody debris to improve trout habitat, while also helping to protect the eroding stream bank.

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

Search

West Virginia

GO

News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

Meet . . .**Matt Finck**

AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer
 WesMonTy RC&D

I am originally from Charlotte, NC. I studied American History and Sustainable Development at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. There my passion for the outdoors was transformed into a passion for agriculture, particularly local agriculture and the community culture it engenders. I joined AmeriCorps because I believe in the power of local food to make positive differences in alleviating poverty. My position with the WesMonTy RC&D involves three aspects.

The first is a partnership with the Heart and Hand Community Garden Market in Philippi, WV to help administer and implement a grant facilitating the market's transition to year-round operations. The Community Garden Market is a wonderful example of how local foods can be made affordable and available to an entire community.

The second aspect of my work involves administering a USDA-AMS grant that supports marketing and advertising of local farmers markets in the Wes-Mon-Ty RC&D area. An important aspect of this grant is the marketing of fresh and local fruits and vegetables in regional public schools.

Finally, all AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers work in capacity building—increasing the abilities of local organizations to do the important and necessary work in their communities. It has been a life changing experience working in Philippi, volunteering my time to make a difference and working with environmental, agricultural and conservation fields that I am passionate about.

Meet **Jared Beard** and **Carrie Crislip**, New Members of the NRCS-WV Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC). Go to [West Virginia's Civil Rights](#) in this issue.

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

Search

West Virginia

GO

News

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

Personnel Updates

(Submitted by Karen Fitchett, HR Specialist, as of January 15, 2010)

Name	Action	Location
Louis Aspey	Temporary Promotion	State Office
Sam Ware	Temporary Promotion	Parkersburg AO
Greg Kist	Detail	State Office
Dave Bauerbach	Promotion	Sistersville FO
Greg Stone	Detail	State Office
Pam Yost	Temporary Promotion	State Office
Jude Jardine	Reassignment	Parkersburg FO
Jerry Brackenrich	Temporary Promotion	Beckley AO
Chuck Thornhill	Retirement	Elkins FO



HR Minute

Submitted by Diana Bokoch

In the November "News and Views" we reported that the National Defense Authorization Act was signed and that we would provide additional information on unused sick leave to be used as service credit in the computation of benefits under FERS. This service credit is not for establishing title to an annuity or in the computation of average salary. Sick leave will be used in the computations in the same manner it is used in CSRS computations. Effective October 28, 2009, individuals separating with title to an immediate annuity or who die leaving a survivor eligible for a survivor annuity will be entitled to credit for 50 percent of their unused sick leave. Effective for separations and deaths occurring on or after January 1, 2014, 100 percent of the unused sick leave will be available. The provisions apply to unused sick leave to the individual's credit under a formal leave system and for which the employee has not received payment.

2009 W-2

Employees should have received their 2009 W-2's.

For those who have not received a W-2 in the mail, you will need to print the W-2 through EPP (Employee Personal Page). If needed, you can get a new password by clicking on "forgot my password". If you used this site previously, you can click on "eAuth Login" and this will allow you to use your eAuth user ID and password. As a reminder, any tax changes may be processed through NFC's EPP site.

Contact HR if you have any problems.

Q&A

Below are some recently asked questions (various topics); thought you might want to know!

QUESTION: How do I make sure that my supervisor is correct in AgLearn and that my personal information is correct?

ANSWER: After you log on, click on "Personal" then "Profile"; after you make any changes, make sure that you click on the "Apply Changes" button.

QUESTION: When do we need to complete a SF-182 in AgLearn?

ANSWER: Only when there is a registration fee or tuition cost. NEDC training does not have a cost, so you do not need to submit SF-182 for NEDC training or any local free training or conferences.

QUESTION: Do all employees have to get prior approval for outside employment?

ANSWER: No, only employees who are required to file a financial disclosure report (OGE Form 278 or OGE Form 450) are required to get prior approval of outside employment. How long have you held your outside employment? If the answer is "prior to March 24, 2000 and nothing has changed" you do not have to go through the approval process. Employees who have been approved and have a significant change in the nature of the outside employment or position, should submit a revised request.

QUESTION: How long do I have to file an informal grievance?

ANSWER: Within 15 calendar days after the act or the date that you became aware of the act. This can be orally or in writing, but it is the employee's responsibility to identify the matter of concern, the corrective action sought, and clearly identify that he or she is initiating the grievance process.

QUESTION: How do I stay out of trouble?

ANSWER: Read "Employee Responsibilities and Conduct", Dept Reg 4070-735-001. This regulation explains prohibited activities, PII, use of government computers and vehicles, reporting misconduct, basic leave and attendance rules, and other topics that all employees should be aware of. You'll find it on the West Virginia Sharepoint: <https://nracs.sc.egov.usda.gov/east/wv/default.aspx>, then click on "Human Resources".

Favorite quote: *The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.* - Albert Einstein

Phone Directory

An updated phone directory is available at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/employeeDirectory/app?agency=nracs&state=wv>

Contact information may be found by searching on the employee name, city, all employees in the state, or by Service Center.

If your phone number or contact information is missing or incorrect, go to <https://icams.usda.gov/> (password required) and update your personal information.

[< Back to February News and Views](#)

**Search**

West Virginia

**News**

- ▶ National NRCS News
- ▶ News Releases
- ▶ Success Stories 2003
- ▶ Success Stories 2004
- ▶ Success Stories 2005
- ▶ Success Stories 2006
- ▶ Success Stories 2007
- ▶ Success Stories 2008
- ▶ Success Stories 2009

- ▶ Find a Service Center

Quick Tip

Cell phone etiquette: 10 dos and don'ts

About 72% of Americans agree that users' worst cell phone habit is having loud conversations in public, according to a recent national poll by market research group Synovate. Almost seven out of 10 (68%) said they observe poor cell phone etiquette at least once every day. The decibel level is rising. So are transgressions and intrusions — and car accidents. At any given time, about 3% of people driving are simultaneously talking on their mobiles, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which translates into millions of distracted drivers. Unnecessary mobile talk is increasingly fatal, even when carried on hands-free, according to the latest studies. Perhaps it's time to turn serious about mobile manners. Virtually everyone can turn on the vibrate option, depend on voice-mail messages or head for a secluded area before pressing "send."

1. Never take a personal mobile call during a business meeting. This includes interviews and meetings with co-workers or subordinates.
2. Maintain at least a 10-foot zone from anyone while talking.
3. Never talk in elevators, libraries, museums, restaurants, cemeteries, theaters, dentist or doctor waiting rooms, places of worship, auditoriums or other enclosed public spaces, such as hospital emergency rooms or buses. And don't have any emotional conversations in public — ever.
4. Don't use loud and annoying ring tones that destroy concentration and eardrums. Grow up!
5. Never "multi-task" by making calls while shopping, banking, waiting in line or conducting other personal business.
6. Keep all cellular congress brief and to the point.
7. Use an earpiece in high-traffic or noisy locations. That lets you hear the amplification, or how loud you sound at the other end, so you can modulate your voice.
8. Tell callers when you're talking on a mobile, so they can anticipate distractions or disconnections.
9. Demand "quiet zones" and "phone-free areas" at work and in public venues, like the quiet cars on the Amtrak Metroliner.
10. Inform everyone in your mobile address book that you've just adopted the new rules for mobile manners. Ask them to do likewise. Please.

Source: <http://www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/resources/technology/communications/cell-phone-etiquette-10-dos-and-donts.aspx#Cellphoneetiquettetodosanddnts>

[< Back to February News and Views](#)