

# MG Greetings from Your Neighbors to the North

Joan Pope  
(MGACRA)



# 3-part presentation

## 1. US Army Engineers and its mission

Why me? Worked for USACE 40 years

1. Geologist in the Buffalo District,
2. Researcher in coastal processes/engineering Vicksburg MS (Waterways Experiment Station)
3. R&D Supervisor, Manager, and Technical Director
4. USACE HQers (DC) Associate Director of Civil Works R&D

## 2. Intro to Master Gardener Association Central Rappahannock Area (MGACRA) Projects

## 3. Water Steward Program and coordination with NNMG SEP



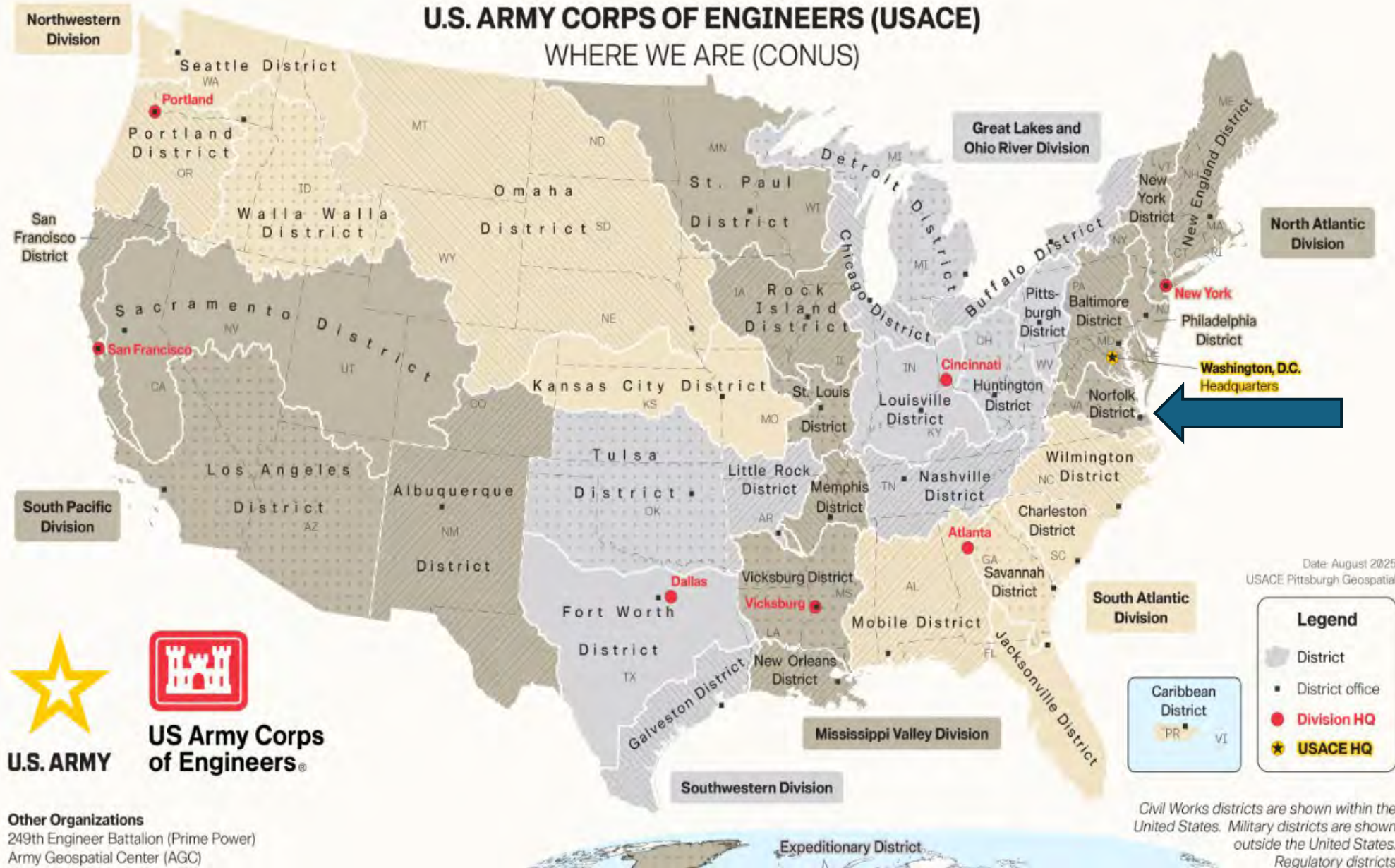
# US Army Engineers (USACE)

- **~37,000 Employees plus contractors**
- Mostly civilian employees, a small number of military personnel, (senior officers assigned to or leading various offices).
- Chief of Engineers is a LT General (\*\*\*) nominated by the President and approved by congress
- **Mission:**
- Providing engineering and environmental services to the nation and customers worldwide. (Both Civil Works and Military)
- **Business Functions:**
- Planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining water resource and civil works projects. (Flood Management, Navigation, Environmental Restoration)
- Managing military construction for the Army and Air Force.
- Responding to national emergencies.
- Regulatory Program
- **Organization:**
- Headquarters in Washington, D.C
- 8 divisions, 41 districts worldwide (offices in the U.S., Asia, and Europe).

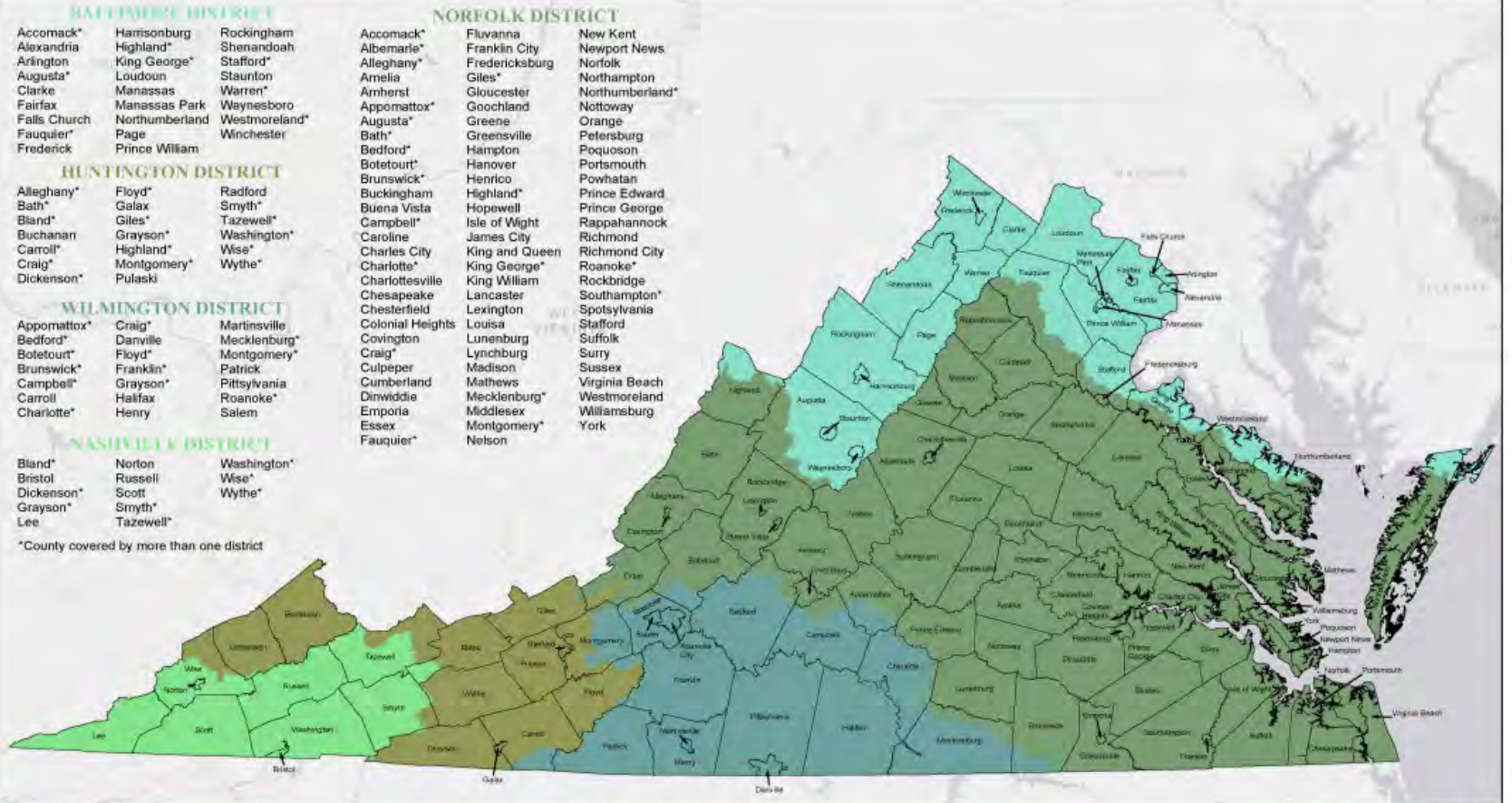


**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

# U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (USACE) WHERE WE ARE (CONUS)



# U.S. Army Corps of Engineers North Atlantic Division Civil Works Boundaries



## USACE Districts Responsible for Virginia Counties



0 20 40 Miles

File of Contact  
John Van Vleet  
John Van Vleet@usace.army.mil

Prepared by: Douglas Havelle  
Geographic Services Section  
Map File: Districts\_responsible\_VA\_Counties.mxd  
Map Date: 4/11/2015

# USACE in Virginia

- USACE Civil Works Program (flood risk management, navigation, environmental restoration, recreation, etc.) boundaries are based on river basins. There are five USACE District offices that manage the various water resources programs in Virginia: Baltimore, Huntington, Nashville, Norfolk, and Wilmington. The Norfolk District manages about 60 percent of the State's geography and 49 percent of the population.

## River Basins



Baltimore District – Potomac

Huntington District – Big Sandy, Kanawha

Nashville District – Upper Tennessee, French Broad-Holston



Norfolk District – Albemarle-Chowan, Atlantic Coastal, Chesapeake Bay, James, Rappahannock, York

Wilmington District – Roanoke, Upper Pee Dee



Norfolk District Regulatory Program (wetlands/permitting) covers the entire State.

- Norfolk District Military Program covers the entire State, except for certain areas bordering Washington, D.C.



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

# National USACE Initiatives/Programs of Interest

- Regulatory/Permits
- Regional Sediment Management (RSM)
- Beneficial Uses of Dredged Material (BUDM)
- Engineering with Nature (EWN)



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

# USACE Regulatory Program (Permits)

- Norfolk District is responsible for all Virginia Regulatory actions
- One Online Joint Permit Application (JPA) used by USACE, Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and Local Wetlands Boards (LWB)
- Permits required for proposed activities involving water, wetlands, and dune/beach resources, including water supply and water withdrawals projects



Norfolk District  
803 Front Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-201-7500  
[E-mail](#)

[cenao-pa@usace.army.mil](mailto:cenao-pa@usace.army.mil)

# Regional Sediment Management Program

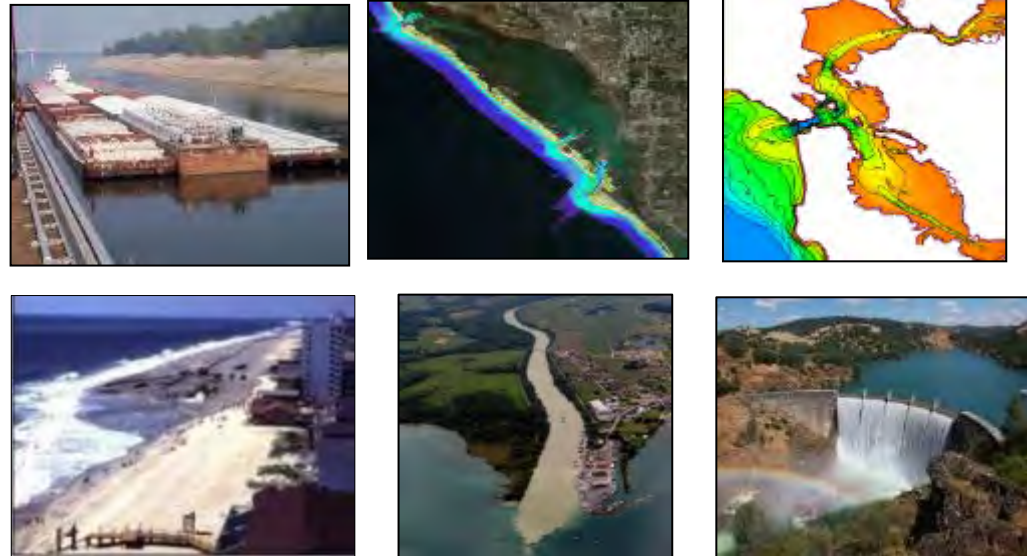


- **Regional Sediment Management (RSM)**

- A systems approach using best management practices for more efficient and effective use of sediments in coastal, estuarine, and inland environments for healthier and more resilient systems.
- **SEDIMENT IS A LIMITED RESOURCE!!**

- **RSM Goals**

- Keep sediments in the system
- Mimic natural sediment processes
- Manage unwanted sedimentation
- Environmental enhancement
- Maintain & protect infrastructure



- **RSM Program**

- R&D funds demonstrations across ERDC, Districts, Divisions to advance RSM principles

# Beneficial Use of Dredged Material

“Beneficial use” is using dredged sediment to achieve additional benefits beyond its removal from a channel/waterway, including other economic, environmental or social benefits.

USACE has practiced BU

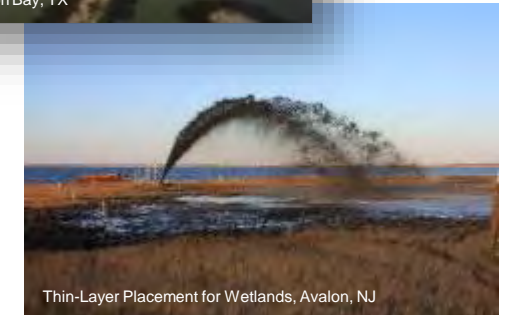
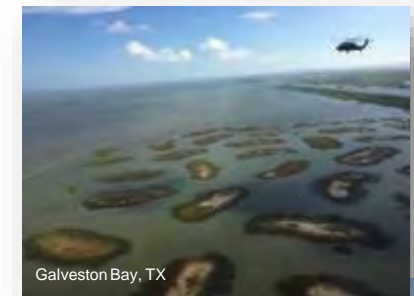
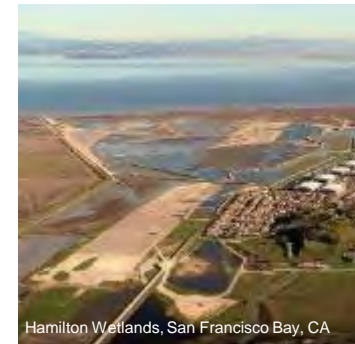
- ~30% of dredged material beneficially used over last 20 years (60 out of 200 mcy/yr)
- >1.5 billion cy used in beach construction over last 100 years
  - 50,000 acres of wetlands created in south Louisiana since 1970s

BU supports:

- Climate change adaptation
- Habitat for fish and wildlife
  - Tribal equities, Threatened and Endangered Species
- Enhance resilience of communities

BU challenges:

- Budget constraints
- Federal Standard interpretation
- State policies/regulations
- Advancing the ‘technology’



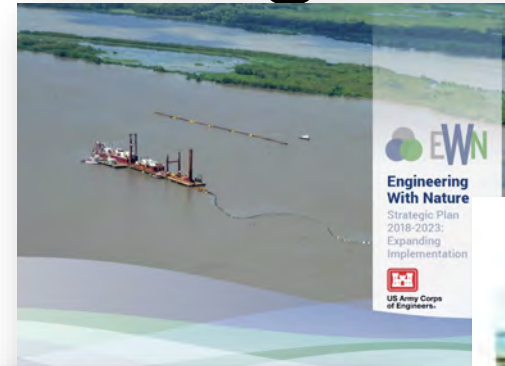
# Engineering With Nature<sup>®</sup> Program



*...aligning natural and engineering processes to efficiently and sustainably deliver economic, environmental and social benefits.*

## Key Elements:

- Science and engineering that produces operational efficiencies
- Using natural process to maximum benefit
- Broaden and extend the benefits provided by projects
- Science-based collaborative processes to organize and focus interests, stakeholders, and partners



[www.engineeringwithnature.org](http://www.engineeringwithnature.org)

# Master Gardener Association Central Rappahannock Area (MGACRA)



- Stafford, King George, Spotsylvania, and Caroline & Fredericksburg
- 113 Members
  - President: Susan Gingrich
  - VP: Margene Sims
  - Secretary: Shannon Wagner
  - Treasurer: Tina Will
- Standing Committees (Membership, Finance, Education, etc) and Project Leads
- VCE Leadership –Stafford Office
  - Agent – Grace Kunkel
  - Hort Tech/MG coordinator- Samatha Ragon
  - New MG classes in person taught fall/winter


# MGACRA Programs/Projects

- Annual Seed Swap (last Saturday in Jan)
- Spring Symposium (April)
- Pollinator Week kickoff Workshop (w/ Central Rap Library)-Jun
- Flower Show (w/ Central Rap Library)-Aug
- Support to state and county fairs, earth days, etc
- Coordinating MG booth at VA State Fair this year
- Plant clinics
- Native and Demonstration Gardens
- Plant Sales (Natives, Bulbs)
- Website <https://www.mgacra.org/>



# Annual Seed Swap

- Bigger every year
- 2025 (9<sup>th</sup> year)
  - 450 customers
  - 13 NGOs (Community Partners)
  - 20 Contributing Sponsors
  - Lecture on Natives
  - Mini sessions on composting, mulch, seeds starting
- Seed, book, garden supply swaps
- Information tables
- Children activities




Presented by  
Master Gardeners Association of the Central  
Rappahannock Area

**Saturday, February 1, 2025**  
**From 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM**  
Inclement weather: 2/8/25

**New, larger venue!**  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints  
**20 Boscobel Road**  
**Fredericksburg, VA**

Free and Open to All

Visit [www.mgacra.org](http://www.mgacra.org)  
for additional information!



**Event Schedule**

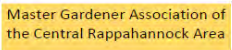


Speakers: Laura and John Westermeier  
“Kick the Invasive Exotic Gardening  
Habit with Great Native Plant  
Alternatives”  
9:30am & 11:00am

3 Different Mini-Sessions to choose from:  
**Composting and Vermicomposting**  
**The Basics of Mulch**  
**Seed Starting 101**  
930am, 1030am, 1130am, & 1230pm

**Event Activities Available All Day**

Seed Swap\*  
Children’s Activities  
Trade Tables for garden related items  
Community Partners  
And so much more!

\*Seeds added hourly throughout the event



Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnis, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.



# Spring Symposium

- Saturday in Early April
- Gari Melcher Home and Studio
- 4 presentations by esteemed gardening experts
- Annual Theme: 2025- “Your Beautiful and Resilient Garden”
- Includes continental breakfast and lunch
- ~100 attendees
- \$



The Extension Master Gardeners of the Central Rappahannock Area Presents  
the 13th Annual Living in the Garden Symposium

## *Your Beautiful and Resilient Garden*

Saturday, April 5, 2025      Gari Melcher's Home & Studio, Falmouth, VA

Join us for a day sharing knowledge and strategies to create and nurture gardens which are both visually stunning as well as adaptable to the obstacles of often unpredictable environmental factors and diverse ecosystems for today's modern living. Our speakers will share their expertise and provide numerous examples for us to grow together - beautifully!



**Featured Speaker**  
Bryce Lane - acclaimed horticulturist, prior NC State University instructor, award-winning public television host and podcaster.



**Featured Speaker**  
Cole Burrell - renowned garden designer, award-winning author, photographer and ecologist.



Continental breakfast, buffet lunch and afternoon snacks included

**PAYMENT BY MAIL:** \$65 MCACRA members/\$75 non-members

**PAYMENT ONLINE (ADD \$3 processing fee):** \$68 MCACRA members/\$78 non-members

**By mail:** complete registration form, include check and mail to:  
MGACRA Spring Symposium, 1015 Hillcrest Terrace, Fredericksburg, VA 22405

**Online:** via PayPal (includes processing fee) at [mgacra.org](https://mgacra.org) under the 2025 Spring Symposium tab.

*\* Payment is non-refundable \**



Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, ethnicity or national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or military status, or any other basis protected by law. If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Samantha Ragon, Stafford VCE office at (540-658-8000/TDD\*) during business hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. \*TDD number is (800) 838-1120.

# Pollinator workshop and Flower show (Jun/Aug)



Located at the Fredericksburg Library  
in the Theater Room

1201 Caroline Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

The flower Show is hosted by the Central Rappahannock Master Gardeners  
and the Fredericksburg Library.

**Tuesday:** Enter your flowers(s) along with a vase/jar for each flower(s) between 10am and 5pm.  
We have a Youth & Adult category.

**Wednesday:** Check back to see if you won a ribbon. We encourage visitors to visit the beautiful  
display of flowers and the exhibits. Pick-up of ribbons and flowers after 4pm.

This year we have added "**Show Us Your Pollinator Patch**". This is a photo project.  
For details on how to enter, visit [www.facebook.com/Shape/g/1A4alx4DQ3/](https://www.facebook.com/Shape/g/1A4alx4DQ3/).



Information and updates on the following websites:  
[www.mgacra.org](http://www.mgacra.org)  
[www.LibraryPoint.org](http://www.LibraryPoint.org)



# Plant Clinics and Gardens and Tours

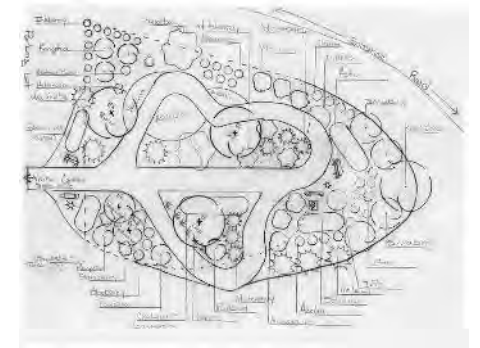
- Clinics @
  - King George Farmers Market
  - Multiple Library Branches
  - Spotsylvania Farmers Market
  - Cossey Park
  - Ebenezer (Methodist Church) Acre Garden



# Native and Demonstration Gardens

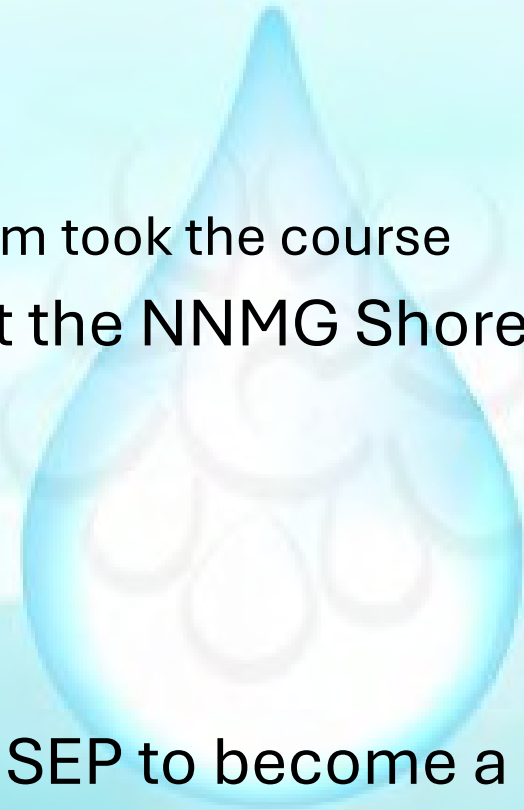
- Cossey Park (Fredericksburg) Botanical Trees and Shrubs
- Hugh Mercer Apothecary Shop Garden (Fredericksburg)
- Cedell Brooks\* Native plant Demo (King George)
- Widewater State Park (native) (Stafford)
- Chatham Historical Garden (Stafford)

\*Cedell Brooks Park located at  
11259 Henry Griffin Rd, King George



# EMG Water Steward Course

- Course and Certification for MG to apply stewardship practices for water quality and quantity management
- In 2024 taught by EMG as online course
  - 9 NNMG involved in the SEP took the course
  - 1 MGACRA involved in the “Smart Green Lawn” program took the course
- Group project developed to expand/adapt/import the NNMG Shoreline Advisory Program to the MGACRA area
  - Joint proposal
  - Site visit
  - Shared presentations
  - Information exchanges
- Vision Matured to combine and expand SGL and SEP to become a soil and water stewardship public advisory program.



# VCE “Smart Green Lawn” Program

## Healthy Lawns Require:

Primary: *Top Soil and Water Management*

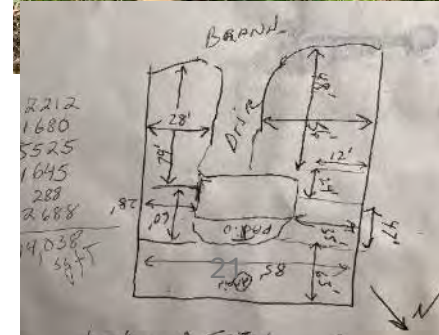
Secondary: weeds, lime, sunlight, pest control, lawn care practices, fertilizer, grass seed blend, etc.





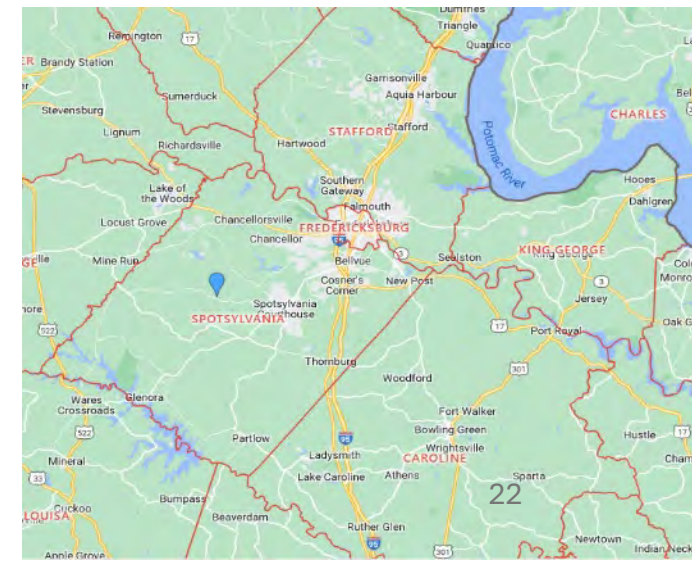
# VCE SGL Program

1. Homeowner sends request for assistance and \$40 (includes soil test) to VCE
2. VCE assigns a MG volunteer to conduct an evaluation
3. MG contacts Homeowner (introduce, explain the process and schedule). May also line up an assistant.
4. MG does their homework (location, property size, sequential aerals)
5. Site visit includes: pre and out brief with homeowner, soil corers and samples, measurements of lawn sections, photos and observations.
6. Post visit assessment: prepare composite soil sample, label photos, and submit report with observations and recommendations to VCE agent
7. VCE agent sends homeowner a report including soil analysis and appropriate amounts and schedule for any soil enhancements.



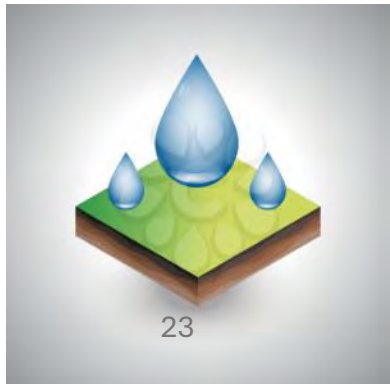
# Joint NNMG and MGACRA Project

- Import concepts from NNMG SEP to the MGACRA region
- MGACRA region includes shorelines of Potomac River, Rappahannock River and Lake Anna, plus multiple watershed creeks and wetlands.
- MGACRA version builds on SGL and SEP
- Developing a Sediment and Water Stewardship Public Assistance Program (**SWAG**) in MGACRA region



# Why SWAG in MGACRA area?

- Original purpose of SGL was for water quality improvements to reduce run off and inappropriate use of fertilizer and herbicides
- As MGs we should be promoting wise soil and water stewardship practices rather than simply turf cover development
- Land development pressure is extensive throughout the area including commercial, public, and private lands
- Supports Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)
- Supports Virginia code 28.2 Living shorelines; development of general permit; guidance



# SWAG goals

- Bring the expertise of MGs to the conversation of land and water stewardship
- Reduce non-point source pollution, bank and land erosion
- Improving practices for conservation of both water and sediment
- Advise homeowners in resolving concerns through stewardship-based practices
- Promote vegetative buffer zones for both erosion control and limiting overland drainage
- Promote Nature-based (aka “Living”) solutions
- Coordinate with other conservation-oriented NGOs and government organizations



# Next Steps

- Assemble training materials
- ID potential MGACRA team members
- Joint MGACRA & NNMG training and demonstration at Widewater State Park
- Program adaptation by VCE office
- Develop forms and procedures
- Further training of MGACRA team members
- Pilot projects
- Advertising and implementation



Thank you!!

Questions?

Recommendations?

