

CONSERVATION education

Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District

May 2021

Welcome to the Conservation Education Newsletter from the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District. This quarterly publication will keep you up to date on conservation education news from our District.

2021 Student Environmental Action Showcase (SEAS) Goes Virtual

The 2021 Loudoun Student Environmental Action Showcase combined the talents of K—12 students and community partners to promote environmental stewardship in Loudoun County. The virtual event took place on YouTube and social media platforms during SEAS Week: April 19 – 25, 2021, and was co-hosted by the Loudoun Environmental Education Alliance (LEEA) and the Northwest Virginia Regional GREENetwork. Visit www.youtube.com/channel/UC_y4SX5k18zt3mVn_OOWuLg/videos to watch!



Loudoun's Academies of Loudoun and Lightridge High School ROCK the ENVIROTHON Competition

We are excited to announce that both the Academies of Loudoun and Lightridge High School competed in the Dominion Energy Envirothon event. These dedicated students and coaches persevered through this year's atypical event format. Despite the challenges faced with everything being online, both the Academies of Loudoun and Lightridge placed in the top three of many events!

CONGRATULATIONS to AOL TEAM members Maria McDonald (Team Captain), Stephen Lee, Madhuri Sosale, Shruthika Sundar and Brett Wilson! Under the guidance of Coach Lori Stone, these students scored in the top three of MULTIPLE Natural Resource testing categories, including FIRST PLACE in Wildlife, SECOND place in the Special Topic category, and THIRD place in BOTH Forestry and Soils. INCREDIBLE!

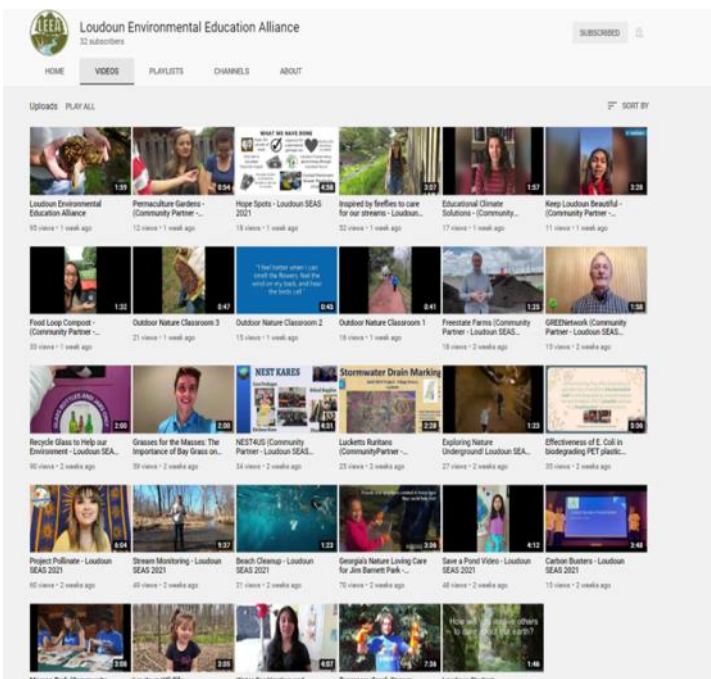
But wait! There is more....**the team from Lightridge, which included Pooja Adelli (Team Captain), Raashid Husain, Ayati Joshi, Yash Nayak, Scarlett Schuhart and Rishab Vontela, under the guidance of Coach Dawn Buskey, also scored in the top three of MULTIPLE Natural Resource testing categories, including an amazing SECOND place in their Oral Presentation, and THIRD place in Aquatics.**

CONGRATULATIONS to you all! We appreciate your exceptional effort in

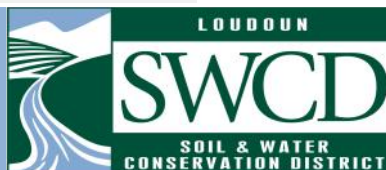
learning about the natural world and know you are making a difference.

Envirothon will be an in-person event next

school year—if you are interested in learning more about Envirothon or want to form a team, please contact jennifer.venable@lswcd.org. or go to our [Envirothon website](#).



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Congratulations to our LCP's Regional Science & Engineering Fair Award winners!

The 39th Annual Loudoun County Regional Science and Engineering Fair (RSEF) was held virtually on March 18—25. There were many amazing projects presented at the virtual fair, and Loudoun Soil and Water was excited to award the following:

Jack Brown Award: This award is for the best project related to conservation/environmental concerns judged by staff to be “best of fair”.

CONGRATULATIONS Felix Carlson and Hamdy Eifiky of ROCKRIDGE HS for winning this award with their project, “The Effect of Endomycorrhizal Fungi and Various Soil Types on Soil Erosion Control”.

Leslie W. King Award: This award is for the best project related to natural resources conservation, and this year it goes to **Brooke Barker of WOODGROVE HS** for her project, “The Correlation of Microfibers on Lumbricidae Casting Production and Edaphic Factors”. **CONGRATULATIONS BROOKE!**

James M. Rowley Award: This award is given for the best project related to water quality. This year’s winner was **Namita Sajai of ROCKRIDGE HS** for her project, “Lagrangian Modeling of Abundance and Hydrodynamics of Microplastic Transport in the Surface Waters of the Northwest Potomac River”. **CONGRATULATIONS Namita!**

Meet Lexi Howard, Youth Conservation Leadership Institute (YCLI) dynamo!



Despite many events and programs being canceled this school year, Lexi Howard, a senior at Heritage High School, accomplished incredible outreach with her multifaceted YCLI project, “Project Pollinate”. Lexi, described as “hard working, persistent and bold”, blazed a path to accomplish her plan for community outreach. She did not hesitate to reach out to many important organizations in Loudoun to help her achieve her mission, including Loudoun County Government, Loudoun County School Board, the Leesburg Mayor, Loudoun County Public School administration and teachers, Loudoun County Public Library, her own community HOA, privately owned Landscaping Nurseries, and many local parks! Her efforts to educate others on the importance of pollinators included creating this logo, posters, handouts, stickers, signage, free seed packets, QR codes, education tabling events, native plant stickering, a comprehensive website and three amazing educational videos. Her artistry and graphic design skills made all of these efforts amazingly beautiful. She also volunteered with multiple restoration efforts at Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Studies, Banshee Reeks and Confluence Park. In addition, for all of these events, she organized an army of student volunteers to help. Through all of this, she kept a never ending supply of enthusiasm and positivity—something we all needed with our challenging year! Visit her website here: <https://sites.google.com/view/project-pollinate/home?authuser=0>.



She was also interviewed by the Loudoun Times: www.loudountimes.com/news/leesburg-teen-s-project-pollinate-seeks-to-educate-on-environmental-issues. Learn more about [YCLI](#).



The 2021 Conservation Poster Contest, “Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities”, has been extended!

All Loudoun County public, private and homeschooled students grades K—12 are encouraged to enter. This year’s theme is “Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities”. Trees are vital to our lives! Educate and inspire your community by supporting forest conservation with your own unique creation. **Entries due by July 1, 2021.** Participating in our poster contest helps increase awareness about the value of trees and encourages our community to work together to protect our natural resources. Visit our website for an entry form and details: www.loudounsoilandwater.com/education/swsw-poster-contest



2021 Conservation Poster Contest
Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities
Celebrate Soil and Water Stewardship Week April 25 - May 2, 2021

HEALTHY FORESTS
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

What if we had no trees?!? Trees provide:

- * Oxygen
- * Carbon absorption
- * Soil stabilization
- * Food
- * Wildlife Habitat
- * Natural playground
- * Pollution Filtering
- * Water Cycle Regulation
- * Beauty
- * Positive mental health benefits
- * Paper, Medicine, building materials, and much more!

Trees are vital to our lives! Educate and inspire your community by supporting forest conservation with your own unique creation. **Entries due by July 1st, 2021.** This contest is open to all Loudoun County public, private and homeschooled students in grades K—12.

CONTEST RULES

- Any media may be used, including paint, crayon, colored pencil, charcoal, stickers, paper, or other materials.
- Posters must be hand drawn but can be any size. Originals or digital entries (photographs or scanned copies of the hand drawn posters) can be submitted.
- All posters must be created by an individual student, rather than a team of students. Entry must be contestant's original creation and may not be traced from photographs or other artists' published works.
- The 2021 Stewardship theme "Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities" **must** be included on the front side of each poster submission to be eligible for the national poster contest.
- Each entry **must** be submitted with an entry form to be eligible for judging. The form **must** be completed and signed by a parent or guardian. Please visit our website to download an entry form: www.loudounsoilandwater.com/education/swsw-poster-contest
- Although younger students will most likely receive help in planning from parents or teachers, NACD encourages each student to do their own work. (Note: Entries with student handwriting and coloring will score better than those designed, drawn, and colored by adult assistance.)
- Only the local contest sponsor (Loudoun SWCD) can submit entries to the state, and only the state sponsor (VASWCD) can submit for the national contest.

POSTER EVALUATION

- Conservation message (50 percent) (Poster uses correct theme)
- Visual effectiveness (30 percent)
- Originality (10 percent)
- Universal appeal (10 percent)

PRIZES

Local awards and recognition will be given. Local winners in each category will be sent to the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District's state competition. State winners will be eligible for NACD's National Poster Contest and prizes. **Entries may be emailed to jennifer.venable@lswcd.org, mailed to the LSWCD office or sent via County Mail Stop 95.**

ENTRIES DUE July 1st, 2021



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