

# Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District Conservation Poster Contest Rules for All Categories



Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD) accepts eligible poster contest entries from students in Fairfax County, Arlington County, and the incorporated cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church. The contest is open to public school students, private school students, homeschool students, girl scout/boy scout troops, etc. **Poster Contest entries to NVSWCD are due by June 30, 2025.**

Up to one winner will be selected in each category. Local winners receive recognition and a prize from NVSWCD. Winning posters will be forwarded to the state-level competition at the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Any Scout who creates a poster and submits it to their local SWCD for judging can earn the VASWCD Poster Contest Patch. When submitting a poster to earn the Poster Contest Patch, be sure to check the box on the entry form. Please note that poster patches are distributed in December each year.

Posters may be submitted physically or digitally. Physical submissions should be mailed to:

**Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District  
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 905, Fairfax, VA 22035**

Digital submissions may be emailed to [ConservationDistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:ConservationDistrict@fairfaxcounty.gov). Digital submissions must be scanned and sent as a PDF file. When photographing or scanning your poster for submission, be sure that the entire poster is clear and visible (with good lighting), the image is appropriately cropped, and the photo accurately reflects the original poster. Unclear photos of the poster will not be accepted.

**Poster Contest entries to NVSWCD are due by June 30, 2025.**

## Hand Drawn Poster Contest Guidelines

The Hand Drawn Poster Category of the 2025 Conservation Poster Contest is open to students in grades K-12. The grade divisions for this category are K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12.

### Contest Rules

- Size: The poster size must be at least 8.5” by 11” or larger. We highly recommend larger poster sizes to fit all your creative ideas!
- Any media may be used, including paint, crayon, colored pencil, charcoal, stickers, paper, or other materials.
- 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 2025 Stewardship theme “Home is Where the Habitat Is” must be included on the front side of each poster submission to be eligible for the national poster contest.
- Although younger students will most likely receive help in planning from parents or teachers, each student is encouraged to do their own work.

### Poster Evaluations

Conservation Poster Contest entries are reviewed based on the following criteria:

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

## Digital Poster Contest Guidelines

The Digital Poster Category of the 2025 Conservation Poster Contest is open to students in grades 7-12. The grade divisions for this category are 7-9 and 10-12.

*Please note: The use of AI (artificial intelligence) in digital poster creation is prohibited. Generative AI relies almost entirely on other people's work when outputting results, often without the original creator's approval, and it goes against the spirit of the competition to use AI generated elements in your poster. Using AI generated elements in your poster may lead to disqualification.*

### Contest Rules

- Size: The poster size must be at least 8.5” by 11” or larger. We highly recommend larger poster sizes to fit all your creative ideas!
- The posters must be a digital design and can be created in any platform used for digital projects such as Canva, PicMonkey, Google Slides, Photoshop, InDesign, etc.
- Digital posters must be original work and not include any copyrighted, trademarked or branded marks, images or phrases besides the NACD 2025 themed logo. Using AI generated elements in your poster is prohibited.
- All posters must be created by an individual student, rather than a team of students.
- The 2025 Stewardship theme “Home is Where the Habitat Is” must be included on the front side of each poster submission to be eligible for the national poster contest.

### Poster Evaluations

Conservation Poster Contest entries are reviewed based on the following criteria:

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

## Additional Assist Poster Contest Guidelines

The Additional Assist Poster Category of the 2025 Conservation Poster Contest is open to students in grades K-12 who require additional assistance with completing a poster for the contest. The grade divisions for this category are K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12.

### Contest Rules

- Size: The poster size must be at least 8.5” by 11” or larger. We highly recommend larger poster sizes to fit all your creative ideas!
- Any media may be used, including paint, crayon, colored pencil, charcoal, stickers, paper, or other materials.
- 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 2025 Stewardship theme “Home is Where the Habitat Is” must be included on the front side of each poster submission to be eligible for the national poster contest.

### Inclusive Contest Additions

- Students that participate in this contest are permitted to have an adult assist them in the creation of their posters, making it an inclusive and accessible contest for all.
- While it is understood that some students may benefit from assistance, each student is encouraged to actively participate in creating their poster. We celebrate the diverse abilities and talents of all participants in this inclusive contest, and we value the unique contributions of every student. Entries that prominently feature the handwriting and coloring of the student will be especially appreciated, as they reflect the individuality and creativity of each participant, with or without additional assistance.

### Poster Evaluations

Conservation Poster Contest entries are reviewed based on the following criteria:

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

## Braille Poster Contest Guidelines

The Braille Poster Category of the 2025 Conservation Poster Contest is open to students in grades K-12 who are blind or have low vision. This contest provides an inclusive platform for students to express their creativity and conservation messages through Braille and tactile elements. The grade divisions for this category are K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12.

*Please note: this contest is open only to K-12 students who are blind or have low vision and require Braille or tactile assistance to participate.*

Participants can create Braille posters in one of two ways:

1. Using their imagination and drawing and then adding Braille labeling using a Braille embosser or similar tools.
2. Using a Braille (a Braille typewriter) to create Braille elements, and then adding color or additional drawings

### Contest Rules

- Size: The poster size must be at least 8.5” by 11” or larger. We highly recommend larger poster sizes to fit all your creative ideas!
- Any media may be used for tactile elements, including Braille, raised textures, and other materials.
- 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 2025 Stewardship theme “Home is Where the Habitat Is” must be included on the front side of each poster submission to be eligible for the national poster contest.

### Braille Contest Additions

- Students that participate in this contest are permitted to have an adult assist them in the creation of their posters, particularly in the Braille labeling process, making it an inclusive and accessible contest for all.
- While it is understood that some students may benefit from assistance, each student is encouraged to actively participate in creating their poster. We celebrate the diverse abilities and talents of all participants in this inclusive contest, and we value the unique contributions of every student.

### Poster Evaluations

Conservation Poster Contest entries are reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Conservation message (50%) (Poster uses correct theme)
- Originality (20%)
- Universal appeal (30%)