

SPRING 2012

# PRINCE GEORGE'S SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT 2011

## MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN R. CALVERT STEUART

The State's Soil Conservation Districts remain at the forefront of the discussions to determine how, and if, agriculture can meet the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) allocations to be outlined in phase two of the Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP II) for the Chesapeake Bay. At our last Board of Directors meeting, MDA gave an overview of the 23 meetings held by each soil conservation district.

The process brought the most knowledgeable minds together - Farmers, Extension and Districts to consider what additional best management practices could be utilized or installed on farms to achieve load reductions to the Bay and in the model. To reach the agricultural goal by 2020, using existing resources, appears to be extremely difficult statewide and impossible in certain counties, especially those on the mid-shore. The promise to allow agriculture to share nutrient reduction among the agriculture sector on a five watershed basis at least gives some districts hope that the whole WIP process will not result in taking productive land out of agriculture.

The whole discussion reemphasizes the letter that MASCD sent to the Governor in January 2011, that if Maryland agriculture is to achieve its goals, the state must extend the deadline to 2025, the date required by EPA, and remove the Waste Water Treatment Plan growth allocation from agriculture's target number. Given these changes, the opportunity for Maryland farmers to achieve their goal becomes more reasonable. The other issue that was highlighted by the 23 meetings is the inaccuracy and adequacy of the Bay model to address small watershed and sector load allocations. The model must either be fixed or the State should rely on an alternative system such as USDA's Conservation Easement Assessment Program (CEAP) model, to monitor agricultural progress.

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**Urban Statistics**

BY LANCE GARDNER

<u>Soil Erosion and</u>		Acres Protected
<u>Sediment Control</u>	Plans	with BMPs
Residential Sites	182	15,516.9
Commercial Sites	95	4,535.2
Governmental Projects	144	2,224.8
Standard Plan Sites	12	15.0
Forest Harvest Sites	10	268.1
Mining and Fill Sites	6	689.8
Green Stamp Plans	38	-
Waiver Letters	21	-
Rough Grading Permits	20	2,041.7
Subdivision Plans	4	-
Pond Plans	81	-
Pond As-Builts	9	-
Exempt Pond Plans	40	-
<b>Total Plans</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>Acres 25,291.5</b>
<b>Total Number of Plan Reviews</b>		<b>1,339.0</b>
<b>Average Review Time in Days</b>		<b>2.4</b>

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**New School Construction Committee**

BY JAMES WHISONANT

The construction of a Prince George's County public school is a time sensitive and time driven project. A school construction committee has been formed consisting of representatives from key County review and permitting departments. Each playing a role in this process. This committee was

created to help expedite resolutions to any problems that might hinder a permit from being issued and prevent delays of the construction of any proposed schools.

A member of the District's urban staff has participated as a representative on the committee to assist in

resolving varying issues that may hinder the acquisition of a permit in regards to grading, erosion, sediment control, and dam safety. To date, the District has not encountered any issue that could not be handled in a timely and professional manner. Among the many schools on the committee's list of projects is

the new Avalon Elementary school. The Gazette newspaper reported in a November 30, 2011 article that construction of this new school will begin in January 2012. The District is pleased to support the progress of projects such as these that benefit the citizens of Prince George's County.

## Local Banks Yield High Interest

BY BRENDA SANFORD

The erosion of stream banks is a natural process of a flowing stream over time. However it becomes detrimental when accelerated by land development or lack of vegetation. Over time this will affect the integrity of uphill slopes.

The County has identified and submitted several sediment control plans for streams within the County that have critically eroded banks and slopes. At most sites, the slopes are at risk of failure or are currently failing. The restoration process employs several natural techniques to repair the stream banks along with mechanical stabilization for toe of slope

stabilization. Some of the methods used for stream restoration are: cross vanes (lines of stone placed at an angle to direct water to the center of the stream), step pools (rocks placed to form a pool and dissipate the water flow), root wads (trunks of roots placed for anchoring banks and providing aquatic habitat), live fascines (live branches bundled together and planted along stream banks), and imbricated rip rap (large rocks placed to form a wall and stabilize embankment soils).



Cross vane focuses flow toward the stream's center



Stream bank failure scarp near Route 1, College Park

The Prince George's Soil Conservation District reviews and approves the sediment control plans for proposed stream restoration sites to inhibit erosion and enhance the local waterways.

## Updates

In an effort to better serve you, please provide your current email address to Prince George's Soil Conservation District either by calling 301-574-5162 X 3 or by emailing Theresa Davis at [Tmdavis@co.pg.md.us](mailto:Tmdavis@co.pg.md.us).



Our Annual Cooperators Dinner will be held Friday April 20, 2011 at the Baden Volunteer Fire Department Hall. For more information contact our office. Keep a look out for an invitation sometime in early to mid March.

## Construction Inspection and Certification Training 2011

BY SUPREET REKHI

A three day training was held at the District (PGSCD) on Construction Inspection and Certification by NRCS on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> 2011. It was heavily attended by urban and agricultural staff from various soil conservation districts. PGSCD urban reviewers Brenda Sanford, Gene Whitehead, and Supreet Rekhi took part in the training, as well as PGSCD agricultural staff Steve Darcey, Diana Lagunes, Eileen Beard, Joe Kontgias, Yates Clagett and intern Joe Gaetano. Ken Wolfe, Warren Johnson, Ann Baldwin and Gail Myers of NRCS led presentations on subjects such as Quality Assurance, Earthwork, Job Safety, Concrete, Timber Structures, Culverts and Bridges, to name a few. There were also opportunities for attendees to get hands-on experience with field exercises relating to compaction testing, concrete slump testing and soils texturing. This was a great opportunity for staff from different counties to obtain skills that can be applied while on job sites.

After Ken Wolfe and Warren Johnson presented information on quality assurance, earthwork and controlled fill, attendees performed proctor testing on soils with various moisture contents. This was done to illustrate the importance of obtaining an optimum moisture content and how moisture can impact a soil's compaction ability in the field. The first day of training ended with a thorough visual presentation by Gail Myers on job safety and pollution control for conservation practices.



PGSCD Staff performing a soil compaction test



Attendees pouring concrete into the slump cone.



Jim Brewer of NRCS discusses soil

Ann Baldwin of NRCS presented a detailed session on concrete and its placement on job sites. There was much emphasis on necessary factors that must be in place in order for concrete to be poured on a site. These factors were also illustrated in a field exercise where attendees had the opportunity to perform a slump test using mixed concrete and a slump cone. Jim Brewer of NRCS also put together an outdoor lab exercise where various soil types were laid out displaying unified and USDA classification. Guides for estimating soil texture were provided and attendees were able to observe and feel the samples in order to classify them.

The last day of training was spent learning about Timber Structures, Culverts and Bridges, as well as Rock and Gravel. Each topic was presented visually with hardware and rock samples passed around for observation.

## Summer Internship Program

The District's first summer intern program was very successful. Mr. Joe Gaetano, a college student, was chosen as the first participant in this program. While working with the District for the summer, he learned basic surveying, elementary design procedures and assisted with several construction project inspections. He has enrolled in Auto CAD, Arc GIS and geology this semester in college and expressed an interest in returning in the Summer of 2012.



## Mike Dunn - Prince George's Soil Conservation District's 2010 Conservation Farmer of the Year

### 2010 Farmer of the Year



Mike manages 300 acres of cropland and 100 acres of hay on 8 different farms. All farms are operated under approved soil conservation and water quality farm plans and nutrient management plans. BMPs include grassed waterways, ponds, wetland creation, cover crops, grade stabilization structures, no-till planting, composting facilities and field strip cropping.

A native of Prince George's County, Mike grew up on a farm along the Patuxent River. He was involved with 4-H and farming at a young age. He began actively farming in his teenage years. Mike became a cooperater with the District in the early 1990's. He has raised tobacco, grain, hay, sweet corn, pumpkins, vegetables and livestock.

Mike is also the President of Chesapeake Land Management. His company provides land management assistance to landowners on over 148 farms in Prince George's, Anne Arundel and Queen Anne's Counties. His company maintains nutrient management plans on over 10,000 acres of tillable land.

In 2006, Mike became the operator of Montpelier Farms in Upper Marlboro. Mike's vision is to educate the general public on farming issues, practices and highlight what Maryland farmers are doing to protect the Chesapeake Bay. Montpelier Farms has become a popular fall attraction in the area with a 10 acre corn maze as its centerpiece. The new agri-tourism venture hosted over 20,000 people in 2010.

## County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III Tours County Farms



Frank DeVille describes his family farm operation.

In cooperation with the University of Maryland Extension, the District hosted the County Executive and his staff on a conservation tour through the County's Rural Tier. The tour began with Montpelier Farms in Upper Marlboro where Mike Dunn, 2010 Conservation Farmer of the Year, showcased his agri-tourism operation as well as the numerous BMPs he has installed. The second tour stop was a former tobacco farm in Croom, now being developed into single family homes called Hollowtree Farms. District staff reviewed the approved sediment and erosion control plan showing the multiple erosion control practices installed during construction. The third stop was John Isabell Acres in Brandywine. Mr. Frank DeVille, a life-long county resident, highlighted his farm operation and pointed out the benefits of working with the District. Mr. DeVille will be the first county farmer to participate in the District's "Agricultural BMP Revolving Loan Fund". The final stop on the tour was the farm of Geoffrey and Sally Morrill. Their farm, P.A. Bowen Farm and Creamery in Aquasco, has been preserved through The Historic Agricultural Rural Preservation Program (HARPP). Their new dairy produces raw milk cheese.

"Prince George's County has over 62,000 acres of farmland. That is more than Anne Arundel, Howard, Calvert and Alleghany Counties. This land and the conservation of it is a critical part of our history and future development of the County. I want to thank the Soil Conservation District for their hard work to protect and promote one of our most vital resources, our land." - County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III.

"This is the first time in 30 years that the Prince George's County Executive himself has toured our farms to understand firsthand what we do and how we work with the farmers and development projects in the County. We greatly appreciate County Executive Baker and his Economic Development Team's time and attention to this critical part of the Prince George's County Economy." - David Bourdon, Executive Director, Prince George's Soil Conservation District.



Mike Dunn Explains Agri-tourism.

## Education By Debbie Sandlin



Oxon Hill High School won the 2011 County Envirothon

The District and the Prince George's County Public Schools co-sponsor the annual Prince George's County Envirothon. This high school level event combines "hands on" experiences, testing and teamwork on environmental issues. The local event, held annually at the William Schmidt Outdoor Education Center in Brandywine, Maryland, is scheduled for April 25, 2012. The winning team will represent Prince George's County at the state competition being held this year at St. James School, St. James, Maryland, June 20-21. Teams from across the state will participate, and the top team will advance to the national competition. Celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, the event will be held in the founding state of Pennsylvania at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, July 22-28. At this level, the top ten teams earn scholarships provided by the Canon Corporation. Each year we are challenged with reaching more students than in past years. If you wish to participate in this program, please contact our office at 301-574-5162 x3.

**Land Preservation**

BY JEANINE NUTTER

Prince George's County is unique in that the agricultural preservation programs are administered by the local Soil Conservation District and not by the county planning department. Agriculture is vital to Prince George's County as an industry as well as contributing to the County's character. The District is very honored to have had our first Rural Legacy Easement recorded in Prince George's County in 2011.

Rural Legacy is a State funded program that invests in land preservation easements targeted to protect the most ecologically valuable properties that most directly impact the Chesapeake Bay. In Prince George's County, this area encompasses properties located nearest the Patuxent River. The Jenkins' property, located on Milltown Landing Road consisting of 136 acres, has been permanently preserved through this program. The preservation of this farm links together several hundred acres in the area that will never be developed. This land will be available for food and fiber production and maintain the scenic and cultural heritage of Prince George's County. By placing an easement on their property, it ensures it will remain a farm forever. Mr. Jenkins believes this easement "will preserve one of the last country roads in the County". With the success of programs like Rural Legacy, we may be able to save some of the other "rural roads" in the county for our citizens to enjoy.



1st Rural Legacy Easement Recorded in Prince George's County in 2011.



Shown to the left in the picture is Mr. Clifford Jenkins Property. It is a 136 acre parcel preserved in perpetuity through the Rural Legacy Program.

Program	Number of Easements Purchased	Preserved Acres	Number of Pending Applications	Acres Awaiting Preservation
HARPP	19	1,952	32	2,182
MALPF	13	1,210	4	333
Rural Legacy	1	135	1	260
Total	33	3,297	37	2,775

**Not a r e s e r v e d**

# PGSCD

## Rental Equipment Program

The Prince George's Soil Conservation District has the following equipment for rent by land owners/tenants in Prince George's County.

- **6' Great Plains No Till Drill**  
\$6.00/Acre and \$25.00/ Day
- **10' Great Plains No Till Drill**  
\$6.00/Acre and \$25.00/ Day
- **Lime spreader**  
\$6.00/Acre and \$25.00/ Day
- **Wheathart Post Pounder**  
\$100.00 1<sup>st</sup> Day and \$50.00/ Day each additional day
- **Aer-Way Pasture and Hayland Renovator**  
\$6.00/Acre and \$25.00/ Day
- **3 Point Hitch Vicon Pendulum Fertilizer spreader.**

**Contact Jim Cary**

**james.cary48@gmail.com**

**301-574-5162 x 3**





These drills are an excellent tool for seeding pastures, cover crops, hayland and soybeans.

**The farmer works the soil, The agriculturist works the farmer.**  
**- Eugene F. Ware**



Makes fencing pastures a breeze! Please get with Ag staff when renting this piece of equipment for an instructional video and hands on instructions.



For spreading lime on pastures and crop fields.

2012 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP)

Do you want to improve your farm operation?

Program Description

NRCS staff assists producers with the development of an EQIP plan of operation and contract. EQIP activities are then carried out according to that plan. EQIP contracts are generally one to three years up to a maximum term of 10 years. Practice installation will start during the first year of the contract.

Ten percent of all EQIP funds have been set aside to assist historically underserved clients. Landowners certify they belong to one of these groups. New and beginning, socially disadvantaged, and limited resource farmers can receive financial assistance payments up to 90 percent for installation of conservation practices.

**2012 application cutoff dates: February 3, March 30, & June 1. Prince George's farm operators are encouraged to contact the Conservation District.**

Resource Concerns	Description	Sample Practices
	Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative: Pilot project for farmers to establish high tunnels on existing cropland to increase the availability of locally-grown produce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Seasonal High Tunnel System</li> <li>-Critical Area Stabilization</li> <li>-Nutrient Management</li> </ul>
	Organic Farming Initiative Assistance to current certified organic producers and those transitioning to organic farming. Addresses soil, water, air, plant, animal and energy conservation concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Conservation Crop Rotations</li> <li>- Nutrient Management (Organic)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prescribed Grazing</li> </ul> </li> <li>-Residue &amp; Tillage Management                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seasonal High Tunnel</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Grazing Land Assistance to plan and implement rotational grazing systems, establish riparian buffers and apply nutrients more efficiently. For prescribed grazing payments, all components of the prescribed grazing plan must be in place and livestock managed according to the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pasture &amp; Hayland Planting</li> <li>-Access Control &amp; Fencing                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Prescribed Grazing</li> </ul> </li> <li>-Nutrient Management</li> <li>-Water Troughs &amp; Pipelines</li> <li>- Heavy Use Area Protection</li> </ul>
	Assistance to improve soil quality with crop rotations, cover crops, and high residue crop production, using no-till with erosion control practices. Payments may only be made to applicants who have not yet adopted the practice on fields that will be in the contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Conservation Crop Rotation</li> <li>-Residue &amp; Tillage Management                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cover Crop</li> <li>- Grassed Waterways</li> <li>- Filter Strip</li> <li>- Field Border</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Nutrient Management</li> </ul>



**PRINCE GEORGE'S SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS**  
**January 1-December 31, 2011**

PLANNING ACTIVITIES		CONSERVATION APPLICATION	
New Cooperator	(10) 407 ac	Farmers Applying BMPs	109 ea
New Farm Plans	(28) 2112 ac	BMPs Installed on Farms	206 ea
Revised Farm Plans	(32) 4147 ac	Acres Receiving Treatment	5267 ac
Total Plans	(60) 6259 ac	Estimated Tons of Soil Saved	3360 tons

**BMP Funding Sources**

FUNDING SOURCE	BMPS INSTALLED
MACS Capital Projects ( 4 Agreements)	15
MACS Cover Crop (27 Farmers)	2987 ac on 79 tracts
USDA-EQIP ( 7 Contracts)	10
USDA-CBWI ( 1 Contract)	1
Private funding	101
<b>TOTAL BMPs Applied</b>	<b>206</b>

**Equipment Rental Program**

EQUIPMENT TYPE	FARMERS	ACRES
No-till Drill (10')	9	241
No-till Drill (6')	12	152
No-till Corn Planter	2	50
Pasture Aerator	2	50
5 ton Lime Spreader	6	57
Post Pounder (acres fenced)	5	20

**Best Management Practices Applied**

PRACTICE	AMT APPLIED	PRACTICE	AMT APPLIED
Winter Cover Crop	2987 ac	Critical Area Stabilization	4 ac
Heavy Use Area Protection	0.2 ac	Filter Strips	3.5 ac
Nutrient Management*	500 ac	Prescribed Grazing	35 ac
Pasture/Hay Land Planting	170 ac	Field Border	1600 ft
Diversion	360 ft	Forest Stand Improvement	598 ac
Conservation Crop Rotation	428 ac	Forage Management	107ac
No Till	361.5 ac	Underground Outlet	1359 lf
Grassed Waterway	0.3 ac	Ponds	2 ea
Fence	20795 ft	Voluntary Stream Fencing	2651 ft
Conservation cover	26 ac	Structure for Water Control	4 ea
Pipeline	1075 lf	Access Road	6200 lf
Roof Runoff Management	3 ea	Watering Facility	4 ea

- Includes 20 acres of Comprehensive Nutrient Management.

**MDA 2011-2012 Cover Crop Program:** 27 farmers fall certified 2987 acres on 79 tracts of land.

**MACS Cost Share Activities:** 4 contracts for 15 BMPs totaling \$36,033.30; 1645 tons of soil saved

**Federal Program Payouts:** CREP - 47 payments for \$45,122; DCP - 137 payments for \$66,984  
 EQIP - payments for \$11,202.47; CBWI - payments for \$1184.60; CSP - payments for \$470.00.

## DISTRICT STAFF

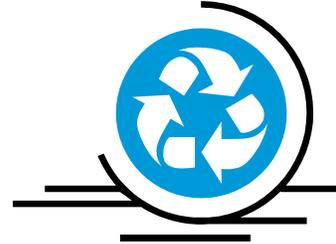
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Look for our new Website coming in the summer of 2012; [www.pgscd.org](http://www.pgscd.org)

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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In an effort to conserve paper, our future annual report and newsletters will be distributed electronically. Please provide your updated email address to our office by calling 301-574-5162 X 3 or emailing [tmdavis@pg.co.md.us](mailto:tmdavis@pg.co.md.us). On behalf of the District, thank you for assisting us with our conservation efforts.

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