

PRINCE GEORGE'S SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

By R. CALVERT STEUART

District staff continues to provide outstanding services to the citizens of Prince George's County in four broad categories: Agricultural conservation, urban conservation, education and outreach and agricultural land preservation.

In 2014, the District received certification from the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation. We are one of only fourteen Maryland counties to hold that distinction. The certification allows us to retain a larger percentage of the agricultural transfer tax in Prince George's County to further land preservation programs.

The agricultural section met or exceeded Maryland's Watershed Implementation Plan II (WIP II) 2013 milestone goals. Planners and technicians actively conduct outreach to rural landowners in efforts to implement best management practices (BMPs) that will meet the overall WIP II goals. A top priority for 2015 is to identify and contact landowners with farms greater than 50 acres in size that do not have current soil conservation and water quality plans (SCWQP). The District currently has 720 SCWQPs on file.

Urban staff continues to provide proficient plan review while maintaining an average turnaround time of less than five business days per review. They are engaged with State and County agencies, engineering firms and developers in efforts to facilitate some of the County's top priority projects. The MGM Casino at National Harbor, the Key's energy power plant, Metro's Purple Line and the University of Maryland's regional medical hospital are only four of a multitude of "mega" projects that are vital to the County's economic development strategy.

In October, the District opened a satellite office in Largo, Maryland. The office is co-located in the County's Department of Permits, Inspection and Enforcement (DPIE) building. This move is a cooperative effort to facilitate the County Executive's vision for a more streamlined and user friendly permitting process. Along the technology front, District urban engineers will soon be reviewing plans electronically. Reviewers will be utilizing a system called Project Dox. Once fully online, engineering companies will have the ability to submit plans electronically.

Education and Outreach continue to be a priority. Whether it is providing leadership at the local and state Envirothon competitions, participating in a local Arbor Day event or serving as advisors to the Public Schools' Environmental Studies Academy, District staff stay involved. Our well trained and informed staff continues to provide blue ribbon service to the public. Since its inception in 1941, the District continues to be a leader in the field of natural resource conservation program implementation.

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PRINCE GEORGE'S SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

LARGO OFFICE

BY JULIE MILLER

The Prince George's Soil Conservation District satellite office is located in Largo within the County's Department of Permits, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE) building. Since opening in October 2014, there has been a steady increase in plan submissions. District staff at the Largo office provides citizens and design engineers with many of the same services available at District Headquarters in Upper Marlboro.



Pictured: District Manager, Steven E. Darcey, Engineers, Supreet Rekhi, Eugene Whitehead, and Office Manager, Rita Jones

BEAUTIFICATION AWARD

BY JULIE MILLER

On September 24, 2014, District staff attended The Prince George's County Beautification Awards Ceremony. This was the 44th Anniversary for the Beautification Committee and was held at the Newton White Mansion in Mitchellville. It was a lovely event and numerous awards were presented throughout the evening. The District was very pleased to accept an award for Superior Sustained Maintenance of the District office building.



Pictured: District staff working together on the new landscape along the front of the Headquarters building.

THE FUTURE OF URBAN PLAN REVIEW

BY SUPREET REKHI & EUGENE WHITEHEAD

Always looking for ways to better serve the development industry as well as the citizens of Prince George's County, the District has embarked upon a journey to modernize its Urban Sediment Control operations. Under the direction of District Engineer John Tarr, the District has taken steps that will allow for better collaboration with other agencies, take advantage of County resources and assist our general mandate to maintain public records.

Among these are the incorporation of Microsoft's Sharepoint platform into our urban plan review procedures, via an online plan review log and office calendar, along with centralized and readily available engineering resource documents and photos of site visits. The District has begun archiving electronic copies of approved sediment control plans as well. This all comes in advance of perhaps the most ambitious endeavor yet: e-plan review.

Urban staff has begun customizing and training with Avolve's ProjectDox e-plan review software. In the near future, erosion and sediment control plans, as well as related documents, will be submitted through an online application and submittal process closely mimicking the District's traditional and current workflow. However, plans will be reviewed and mark ups will be sent back to the applicants electronically. Using e-plan review processes supports the "green" initiative of reducing paper and printing costs.

EDUCATION

BY DEBBIE SANDLIN

The District and the Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) 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, was held on April 25, 2014. Led by Ms. Yolanda King-Davis (teacher on left) and Mr. Andrew Whitko (retired teacher on right), the winning team from



Oxon Hill High School represented Prince George's County at the state competition held at Camp Pecometh in Queen Anne's County, Maryland, June 18-19. Eighteen teams from across the state participated, and the top team earned the right to represent Maryland at the national competition. At this level, the top ten teams earn scholarships for higher education.

Each year we are challenged with reaching more students. In the past five years, the number of county schools has increased from eight to fourteen teams. The District is proud to support the Envirothon with staff time and sharing the cost of transportation with the Schmidt Center. Several past County Envirothon participants have chosen careers in the environmental field. The District's scholarship program has awarded \$7,000 to six students since the scholarship program began in 2013 with one of those being a two-year recipient. If you want more information on this program, or wish to participate or support this program, please contact our office at 301-574-5162 x3.

QUALITY OF LIFE AWARD

Congratulations to our Senior Urban Engineer Brenda Sanford on receiving the annual Maryland National Building Industry Association's (MNBIA) Quality of Life Award. She was chosen by members of the association from both government agencies and the private sector for continued service to the development community. The award was presented at the MNBIA sponsored breakfast at the Greenbelt Marriott in March 2014.



Pictured: County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III; PGSCD Senior Engineer Brenda Sanford; County Council Chair Mel Franklin and Vice President Ken Dunn, Soltez Consultants

2013 COOPERATOR OF THE YEAR

BY STEVEN DARCEY

WOODBOROUGH FARM

Woodborough Farm, owned by Phil and Linda Hutton, is located in the heart of Aquasco, Maryland. Mr. O.D. Hutton, Phil's grandfather, purchased the farm in 1966. Like most farms in Southern Maryland, cropland was devoted to tobacco production. In 1980 Phil and Linda moved to the farm and started the transition from tobacco to horses. They began working with the Soil Conservation District to address existing erosion issues. After 15 years of specialized equine breeding of Quarter horses and Standardbreds, they began breeding and raising Black Angus beef. Today Phil and Linda are on the cutting edge of the breeding industry. They are specifically breeding cows that have genetic traits for marbling and tenderness. They direct market their quality beef from Woodborough Farm.

The farm is mostly in pasture and hay with a few acres devoted to grain production. Most of the soils are classified as highly erodible and require a high level of conservation to maintain productivity. Best management practices (BMP) installed on the farm have improved water quality through reduced soil erosion and made the operation more efficient. Pastures are rotationally grazed with strategically located automatic watering facilities that service multiple pastures. Interior fencing is used to break up the pastures and facilitate a rotational grazing system. Rotating the cows through these smaller pastures stimulates vigorous grass growth and extends the grazing period well into the early winter months. Rotational grazing forces livestock to more thoroughly consume forage in the field including tender weeds and less desirable grasses that would normally be passed over in a non-rotational grazing scenario. The system also encourages a more uniform distribution of manure throughout the field. The entire system works efficiently and reduces expenses associated with commercial fertilizer and chemicals.

Parts of the farm have been retired from crop and livestock production and planted to riparian forest buffers through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Approximately eight (8) acres of highly erodible cropland were planted to trees and grasses to enhance wildlife habitat and filter runoff. A grassed waterway was constructed in a severely eroded drainage way and now conveys storm water runoff to a safe outlet with no erosion.

The Hutton's are a great example of conservation farmers. They have adapted to a changing farm economy and are succeeding with a farm that not only invested in conservation but is practical and productive. This is why Woodborough Farm has been named 2013 Cooperator of the year.



PGSCD PARTICIPATES IN THE MDE DELEGATION REVIEW

BY EUGENE WHITEHEAD

While there have been many recent changes in the Urban Sediment and Erosion Control Program, one constant that remains is our commitment to supporting the County during its bi-annual MDE Delegation review. For example, in recent years, this has included joint training sessions in which DPIE inspectors and District engineers explored the intricacies of installing and deploying best management practices on construction sites. In December 2014, District staff accompanied inspectors from both the County and State on two separate occasions visiting a variety of active commercial and residential sites, throughout



Prince George's County. MDE reviews each county program in Maryland and determines whether to continue delegating the responsibility for sediment and erosion control implementation to local jurisdictions. The District's role was to explain aspects of grading, erosion and sediment control plan design while MDE inspectors offered critique and assessments of our joint efforts. In some instances, site conditions in the field may require a minor adjustment to plans in order for sediment controls to function properly. During these visits, plan reviewers are afforded invaluable insights into the workings of a given site. Lessons learned at these sites can help us to better anticipate potential problems and greatly increase the successful implementation of the plans we approve.



In our common goal to control sediment-laden runoff, it is paramount that the District and County inspectors maintain good working relationships. The MDE delegation review highlights the collaborative nature of our endeavors and provides an opportunity for us to improve. Likewise, it offers our program the chance to reassure MDE that we remain steadfast in our role in protecting natural resources. The better we do our job, the further we minimize the impact of development on our waterways.

PGSCD PARTICIPATES IN THE TOYS FOR TOTS DRIVE

BY TERRY HAMPTON

Toys for Tots is a fundraising foundation that originated from the U. S. Marine Corps. The goal of this foundation is to deliver, through a new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them into becoming responsible, productive, and patriotic citizens. The District is pleased to celebrate the second year of participation in this worth while cause.



District Staff with officers from the Prince George's County Police Department's Special Operations Division

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BY DIANA LAGUNES

PLANNING ACTIVITIES	CONSERVATION APPLICATION
New Cooperators (3) 82 ac	Farmers Applying BMPs 73 ea
New Farm Plans (26) 865 ac	BMPs Installed on Farms 120 ea
Revised Farm Plans (27) 1300 ac	Acres Receiving Treatment 2017 ac
Total Plans (53) 2165 ac	Estimated Tons of Soil Saved 1130 tons

FUNDING SOURCE	BMPS INSTALLED
MACS Capital Projects (4 Agreements)	4
MACS Cover Crop (28 Farmers)	2510 ac
USDA-EQIP (2 Contracts)	2
USDA-CBWI (3 Contracts)	3
USDA-CSP (contracts)	0
Farmer/ landowner funded	83
TOTAL BMPs Applied	120

EQUIPMENT TYPE	FARMERS	ACRES
No-till Drill (10')	8	427
No-till Drill (6')	18	187
Pasture Aerator	0	0
5 ton Lime Spreader	3	120
Post Pounder (acres fenced)	4	80 (2500)
Manure Spreader	1	25
Sub-soiler	0	0
Vicon Fertilizer Spreader	1	18

PRACTICE	AMT APPLIED	PRACTICE	AMT APPLIED
Winter Cover Crop	2510 ac	Conservation Cover	14 ac
Heavy Use Area Protection	1.1 ac	Grade Stabilization Structure	2 ea
Nutrient Management	102 ac	Pipeline	3112 lf
Pasture/Hay Land Planting	31.7 ac	Roof Runoff Management	1 ea
Waste recycling (manure application)	8.5 ac	Forage Management	10.0 ac
Conservation Crop Rotation	225 ac	Upland wildlife habitat	9.3 ac
Residue & Tillage Management	823 ac	Ponds (rebuild)	1 ea
Stream Crossing	2 ea	Watering Facility	7 ea
Fence	9544 ft		
Brush Management	4.8 ac		
Prescribed grazing	58 ac		

Total tons of soil saved: 1,130 tons of soil saved

MDA 2014-2015 Cover Crop Program: 28 farmers fall certified 2510 acres for \$62,750.00

MACS Cost Share Program: 4 agreements for 4 BMPs totaling \$48,691.00

MACS Applications Submitted: 8 applications for 8 BMPs

LAND PRESERVATION

BY JEANINE NUTTER

As of December 31, 2014, a total of 47 properties for approximately 4,511 acres have been permanently preserved under the District's administration. At this time, approximately 19 properties totaling 1,658 acres have applied to sell easements. Of those 19 properties, 7 properties totaling 827 acres have received offers and expect to settle this year. The District received a second one million dollar grant from the Rural Legacy Program to purchase several conservation easements located in the Patuxent River area. Continuing to purchase easements near the Patuxent River will not only preserve farmland, it will also help protect the Chesapeake Bay. The District will continue to apply for grant funding so that these precious resources can be preserved. We continue to seek out landowners interested in applying to these programs. Please contact Jeanine Nutter, Program Administrator for details at 301-574-5162 ext. 3.

Program	Number of Easements Preserved	Preserved Acres	Number of Pending Applications	Acres Awaiting Preservation
HARPP	29	2,834	12	831
MALPF	17	1,542	2	192
Rural Legacy	1	135	4	461
Total	47	4,511	15	1,484

NEW FACES OF THE DISTRICT

BY LAURA SUTPHIN



Our newest Ag Planner, Wade Hampton (left), comes to us with a background in Horticulture and Biology. Wade most recently worked at the Architect of the Capitol in DC as a Horticulturist. He has many local ties including his position as Partner and Vineyard Manager at Robin Hill Farm and Prince George's County Farm Bureau District 9 Representative.

Mr. Phil Hutton (right) was appointed by the Prince George's Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors on August 4, 2014, as an Associate Supervisor. Mr. Hutton is a lifelong Prince George's County resident. He and his wife Linda own and operate Woodborough Farms in Aquasco, MD. Phil is retired from EPA where he worked as a scientist in pesticides and water quality for 32 years. He is a member of numerous farm organizations including the local Farm Bureau, National Cattleman's Association, American Angus Association and Maryland Cattleman's Association. Mr. Hutton's passion for production agriculture coupled with soil and water quality concerns and his many years of experience in federal policy will be a tremendous asset to the District.



DISTRICT STAFF

Steven E. Darcey, District Manager
Joseph Haamid, NRCS District Conservationist
John Tarr, District Engineer
Brenda Sanford, Senior Urban Engineer
Supreet Rekhi, Urban Engineer
Kebede Shihamit, Urban Engineer
Eugene Whitehead, Urban Engineer
Julie Miller, Urban Engineer
Robert “Yates” Clagett Jr., Conservation Engineer
Wade Hampton, District Planner
Jeanine Nutter, District Planner/
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Joseph Kontgias, MDA Soil Conservation Associate

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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James Edelen, Vice Chairman
Raymond Watson, Treasurer
James “Pete” Parreco, Supervisor
Reverend Robert Slade, Supervisor
Phil Hutton, Associate Supervisor



“From every conceivable angle—economic, social, cultural, public health, national defense—conservation of natural resources is an objective on which all should agree.” -Hugh Hammond Bennett, The Hugh Bennett Lectures

Prince George’s Soil Conservation District

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