



We work with the people who work the land.

2011 ANNUAL REPORT (July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011)

Return on Investment

The Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia funded by four revenue streams: federal, state and local governments, as well as the private sector. The federal government, through the USDA, provides a full time employee to the Loudoun SWCD at no expense to the locality. The state provides funding for operational expenses, technical assistance and cost share funds. The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors (BOS) has provided most of the District staff's salaries for over 40 years. The private sector provides funds through the purchase of rain barrels, tree seedlings, the Healthy Waters initiative, and their equity share of the Cost Share Program.

The directors of the Loudoun SWCD are appointed or elected volunteers. Their hundreds of hours of devoted public service are provided at no cost the taxpayers of Loudoun County. Few taxpayers look at local government expenditures as an investment with a tangible Return on Investment (ROI). However, if one were to total revenues assembled by the Loudoun SWCD and divide this amount by the level of County funding, the ROI is astonishing. In spite of drastic cuts in state funding for FY11, the District generated an ROI of \$3.25 for every dollar invested by the Loudoun County BOS.

District Conservation Programs

●Prepare conservation farm/land management plans for farmers and other land users to help them implement Ag BMPs designed to reduce non-point source pollution and improve water quality and meet requirements of Federal, State, and local government programs including:

State Programs

- VA Ag BMP Cost-Share & Tax Credit Program
(48 plans on 5,059 acres)

Local Programs

- Small Acreage Grazing Plans (under 5 acres)
- Ag and Forestal Districts Program
- Land Use Tax Valuation Program
- County building permits re: barns, sheds, etc.

Federal Programs available through the District

- Environmental Quality Incentive Program
- Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative
- Farm and Ranchland Protection Program
- Wetland Reserve Program

●Provide technical assistance to landowners/users re: natural resources conservation

●Administer VA Ag BMP Cost-Share Program to help reimburse farmers and land users for costs incurred in implementing BMPs designed to improve the quality and quantity of surface and ground water, control point source and nonpoint source pollution, and prevent erosion.

VA Ag BMP Cost-Share paid 2011: **\$291,667.69**, including carryover funds.

●Monitor activities and legislation affecting local agricultural and conservation issues VASWCD, NACD, federal, local, state government.

●Work with environmentally oriented groups and organizations to monitor streams, encourage good soil and water conservation habits and appreciation of the environment

Loudoun Environmental Stewardship Alliance

Earth Day at Loudoun Planning Committee

Arbor Day Planning Committee

Loudoun Watershed Watch

Regional Agriculture Working Group

Rural Economic Development Council

Outreach and Education

Loudoun County's diverse population and needs are reflected in Urban Conservation Awareness Programs.

- 14 Rain Barrel Workshops were conducted throughout Loudoun County
- In support of the County NPDES program, led Girl Scouts in a Storm Drain Marking Project at the Foxridge Subdivision in Leesburg.
- LSWCD staff provided a booth and educational materials about rain barrels for homeowners at the Leesburg Flower and Garden Show.
- Organizational support is provided to Loudoun Earth Day and Arbor Day celebrations
- Provide information to HOAs, civic groups, and individual homeowners regarding suburban homeowner's environmental concerns.
- Provide speakers for HOAs and other civic groups to address suburban homeowner's environmental concerns.
- Provide technical assistance to watershed committees and other environmental groups.
- Prepare and submit articles to local news media as needed. District information is now included on the District website, www.loudounsoilandwater.org and the District Facebook page.
- 21 conservation education classroom programs were delivered to 14 Loudoun elementary schools.
- 8 Earth Day Awards of \$100 each went to environmental science clubs at Briar Woods High School, Loudoun Valley High School, Stone Bridge High School, Farmwell Station Middle School, Sterling Middle School and Smart's Mill Middle School
- 2 Youth Conservation Camp Scholarships of \$300 each were awarded to students at Tuscarora High School and Loudoun Valley High School
- At 4-H Ag Field Day, students participated in a soil horizon activity, constructed soil tubes and enjoyed the Soil Tunnel.
- Educational materials are provided to teachers for special programs such as Soil and Water Stewardship week.