



We work with the people who work the land.

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

(July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013)

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, 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 FY12, the District generated an ROI of **\$3.19** for every dollar invested by the Loudoun County BOS.

District Conservation Programs

Conservation farm/land management plans for farmers and other land users 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

- 10 livestock watering sites with 12,219 feet of fencing
- Stream Exclusion on 16 sites with 84,421 feet of streambank protected
- Cover crops with 1490.4 acres protected

Local Programs

- \$63,000 was paid in Non-Agricultural tree planting on nine acres.
- Loudoun County funded (75%) cost share: \$ 5,589.21 has been paid in FY 2013
- Streamside Fencing on 2 sites with 737 feet of fencing installed
- Stream Exclusion on 3 sites with 3,135 feet of streambank protected
- Loudoun County funded (15%) cost share: \$14,711.49 has been paid in FY 2013.

- Land Use Tax Valuation Program - Conservation Plans written for approximately 908 acres in Loudoun County in FY 2013.

LSWCD hosted the Healthy Waters Foundation kickoff meeting on November 29, 2012. Eighteen landowners currently owning 51% of the thirty-nine miles of Potomac shoreline in Loudoun County have indicated an interest in being partners with Healthy Waters.

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

- Technical assistance is provided 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 2013: **\$362,520.82**, including carryover funds.
- Monitor activities and legislation affecting local agricultural and conservation issues including 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:

Ag and Forestal District Committee (ADAC)
B&D's Environmental Review Team (ERT)
Potomac Council and the Potomac Watershed Roundtable
Regional Agricultural Working Group
Rural Economic Development Committee (REDC)
REDC Policy Development Committee
Water Review Technical Advisory Committee (WRTAC)
Loudoun Environmental Stewardship Alliance (LESA)
Upper Broad Run Watershed Committee
Watershed Implementation Plan Technical Advisory Committee

Education and Outreach

Contributions to Loudoun County Schools - Educational materials are provided free of charge to teachers for special programs such as Soil and Water Stewardship week.

- 7 Earth Day Recognitions totaling \$700 were given to Broad Run High School, Creighton's Corner Elementary, Farmwell Station Middle School Science Club, Farmwell Station Nature Club, Loudoun County High School FBLA, Sterling Middle School R.R. and SSC, Sterling Middle School Nature Club.
- 6 mini grant proposals, totaling \$3,000, were awarded to the following schools: Potowmack, Mill Run, and Creightons Corner elementary, Smart's Mill Middle School and Tuscarora High School.
- Soil & Water Stewardship Week materials were provided free of charge to fifteen elementary and two middle schools in Loudoun County.
- Staff provided conservation presentations for approximately 1000 students around the county.

- At 4-H Ag Field Day, students participated in a soil horizon activity, enjoyed the Soil Tunnel and learned about Loudoun County geology.
- Science Fair Awards/Judging

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

- \$300 was provided in awards for Family Stream Day.
- Seven Rain Barrel Workshops were held in Purcellville, Lucketts, Lovettsville and Leesburg.
- Two workshops and a five acre riparian buffer planting were done with 6th grade students, Goose Creek Association, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, two farms and various agency partners.
- Organizational support is provided to Loudoun Earth Day and Arbor Day celebrations.
- Technical assistance was provided to watershed committees and other environmental groups.

Articles to local news media are prepared and submitted as needed. District information is now included on the District website, www.loudounsoilandwater.org and the District Facebook page.