



We work with the people who work the land.

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

(July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015)

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 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 brought in to Loudoun County by the Loudoun SWCD and divide this amount by the level of County funding, the ROI is astonishing. The District generated an ROI of **\$2.74** for every dollar invested by the Loudoun County BOS in 2015.

District Conservation Programs

- Provide technical assistance to landowners/users re: natural resources conservation and protecting the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
- Monitor activities and legislation affecting local agricultural and conservation issues including Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD), National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), federal, local, state government.
- 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 non-point source pollution, and prevent erosion.

Federal Programs available through the District

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

State Programs available through the District

VA Ag BMP Cost-Share & Tax Credit Program: \$451,414.78 paid to local landowners.

- Fencing and Watering practices installed for 20 property owners.
- 40,473 feet of fencing installed, 19,475 feet of fencing maintained.
- Harvestable cover crops with 490.8 acres protected and Permanent Vegetative Cover on 101.5 acres.
- 22 acres under Integrated Pest Management.

Local Programs available in partnership with Loudoun County

- Loudoun County funded (75%) cost share: \$17,042.75 has been paid in FY 2015
- All of the \$58,000 allocated by Loudoun County in 2012 has been utilized with approximately \$5,400 in projects pending.
- Land Use Tax Valuation Program - Conservation Plans data maintained for approximately 1600 property owners in Loudoun County in FY 2015.

Loudoun SWCD works locally 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)
Building & Development's Environmental Review Team (ERT)
Chesapeake Bay TMDL WIP Technical Advisory Committee
Potomac Council and the Potomac Watershed Roundtable
Regional Agricultural Working Group
Rural Economic Development Committee (REDC)
Water Review Technical Advisory Committee (WRTAC)
Loudoun Environmental Stewardship Alliance (LESA)
Upper Broad Run Watershed Project
Chair of VASWCD Marketing/Public Relations 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. This year's theme was "Local Heroes! Your Hardworking Pollinators". There were 8,072 materials requested from 13 elementary and middle schools.
- Staff provided conservation presentations for approximately 366 elementary school students.
- Staff participated in the LESA Earth Day at Loudoun event.
- Staff participated at Area II Envirothon Competition, April 22, 2015 at the Fauquier Education Farm in Warrenton and judged at Virginia's Dominion Envirothon State Competition, May 17-18, 2015 at Longwood University.
- \$400 was awarded to a Loudoun County camper to attend Youth Conservation Camp at Virginia Tech.
- 3 Mini Grants were awarded to Park View High School, Seneca Ridge Middle School and Frances Hazel Reid Elementary School.

- A \$500 scholarship was awarded to Loudoun VASWCD Scholarship contestant, Hailee Goolsby.
- \$300 was awarded to Loudoun County Regional Science Fair winners.

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

- 6 acres of riparian buffers were planted in Non-Agricultural areas in partnership with Loudoun County
- 8 Rain Barrel Workshops were held in Lovettsville, Purcellville and Leesburg.
- \$50 was provided in awards for Family Stream Day.
- Organizational support is provided to Loudoun Earth Day and Arbor Day celebrations.
- Technical assistance was provided to watershed committees and other environmental groups.

The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors supports the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation through an annual grant and provides administrative assistance provided by the Department of Financial Services, Division of Payroll and Benefits, to administer payroll and benefit matters.

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

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.