

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN...

Directors

- James Christian, Chairman
- James Wylie, Vice Chairman
- John Flannery, Treasurer
- Marina Schumacher, Director
- James Hilleary, Director

Associate Directors

- Robin Bartok
- Gary Hornbaker
- Terri Higgins
- Peter Rush

LSWCD Staff

- Suzanne Brown, District Operations Manager
- Kris Dennen, Program Assistant
- Jay Frankenfield, Conservation Specialist II
- Peter Holden, District Financial Officer
- Pat McIlvaine, Conservation Specialist III
- Chris Van Vlack, Urban/Ag Specialist

On behalf of the Directors and staff of the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District, I am pleased to present our 2016 Annual Report (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016). The report provides an overview of our programs as well as a summary of our accomplishments during the past year.

One of our most important programs in 2016 was the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) Cost-Share Program. Although only part of a much larger cooperative effort of local, state, and federal agencies to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, the program does much to help agricultural operators and landowners to implement BMPs specifically designed to improve water quality and keep the soil on the land.

The District, in partnership with Loudoun County, also offers cost-share funding for urban practices such as tree planting and non-agricultural cost share for rain gardens, impervious surface removal, large scale rainwater harvesting and more. In addition, the county funds the District's small acreage and horse farm cost share program for farms not eligible for the state Ag BMP Program.

Educational outreach including our rain barrel workshops, classroom presentations, field trips, and mini-grants to educators is always a very important part of the District's mission. If, after reading our report, you find that you would like to schedule a special program/activity for a class, a group, or even a neighborhood, please call our office for assistance.

I want to take this opportunity to publicly welcome our new Directors, John Flannery (Lovettsville) and Marina Schumacher (Sterling). Each was elected in the November 2015 general election to a four year term of office which began January 1, 2016. They join incumbent Directors James Wylie and James Hilleary.

In closing, I wish to thank the County of Loudoun, Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, the Virginia Assoc. of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, USDA-Natural Resources Cons. Service, VA. Coop. Extension Service, Virginia Dept. of Forestry, and the many individuals who worked with us during the past year. By working together, we have the best opportunity to achieve a cleaner, healthier environment for all.

Sincerely,
James B. Christian

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS VIRGINIA AG BMP COST SHARE

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“A large section of Goose Creek was fenced on this property totaling almost 7000 feet of fence, 1700 feet of pipeline and 4 watering troughs.”

- \$725,750.63 paid to local land owners in FY2016.
- 19 SL-6 practices installed with 68,001 feet of fencing and 1098.8 acres benefitted.
- 1 SL-1 practice installed with 17.5 acres benefitted.
- 2 SL-8H practices installed with 167.2 acres benefitted.
- 21 CCI-SE-1 practices installed with 73,071 feet of fencing and 690 acres benefitted.
- 1 WQ-10 practice installed with 17 acres benefitted.



LOUDOUN COUNTY COST SHARE PROGRAM

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“The County funded cost share program fills a gap in state and federal programs by providing funds for stream protection fence, and water systems on properties under 5 acres or not earning income from their farming operation.”



- \$20,925.24 paid to local landowners in FY2016.
- 7 CCI-SE-1 practices installed with 14,635 feet of fencing.
- 1 SL-6 practice installed with 895 feet of fencing.

LAND USE TAX PROGRAM

The District writes conservation plans for those enrolled in the Land Use Tax program. 59,334 acres of Loudoun County land has Conservation Plans that are maintained for 1,603 Loudoun County landowners. The District also writes farm plans required for residents building barns and other agricultural structures as well as those looking to enter an Ag and Forestal District. The District farm plans give basic rule of thumb management techniques and can help direct landowners to other resources available to the agricultural community in Loudoun.

URBAN CONSERVATION COUNTY RIPARIAN BUFFER PLANTING PROGRAM



Six acres of riparian buffers were planted on non agriculture properties. In 2016, four projects were completed making up the six acres. Eligible sites are either HOA's, businesses, or private landowners who are not eligible for cost share through the Virginia Ag BMP Program.

Participants agree to file a declaration of restriction protecting the planting on their deed, and receive up to \$7000.00 an acre to install trees and deer protection. HOAs and landowners in both eastern and western Loudoun have participated over the four years of the program . In 2017, the program will be joined by additional urban cost share opportunities through the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program.



“Featured here (top left) are a 1.5 acre bare root seedling planting in Belle Terra subdivision in Ashburn in 2016. Also featured (bottom rights) is a .5 acre planting from 2015 pictured at the time of its one year inspection in Countryside in Sterling.”

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District (LSWCD) 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 from the state by the Loudoun SWCD and divide this amount by the level of County funding, the ROI is astonishing. This generated an ROI of **\$3.00** for every dollar invested by the Loudoun County BOS in 2016.

“For every dollar invested by the Loudoun Board of Supervisors, \$3.49 is generated from other sources of income.”



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The LSWCD website, is maintained to inform and educate the public about District activities. District activities are also publicized on the District Facebook page. Visit www.lswcd.org.

The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors supports the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District through an annual grant and provides administrative assistance 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.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

RAIN BARRELS, CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS, AND MORE

- As of June 30, 2016, staff presented the Watershed Model for approximately 350 elementary school students at 8 Loudoun County elementary schools.
- Staff presented 6 Rain Barrel workshops: 1 in Purcellville, 1 in Lovettsville and 4 in Leesburg.



- Staff showcased the Soil Tunnel exhibit at the Piedmont Environmental Council event at Mill Run Elementary School's Outdoor Classroom.
- Staff assisted with Summer Camp at Monroe Technology Center and presented a Water Quality program to students.
- Staff judged the Wildlife Station at Envirothon.

- Four Science Fair Awards, totaling \$400, were awarded to students for projects related to water quality, natural resource conservation and a "best project" award were awarded to students during the Regional Science Fair at Tuscarora High School.



- Staff served on the Leesburg-Loudoun Arbor Day committee and participated in the Annual Arbor Day celebration.

- The District sponsored the Annual Arbor Day Poster Contest.



- Staff assisted the Hanover-Caroline SWCD with MWEE field days in April.
- \$2000 in mini-grants were awarded to students at Eagle Ridge Middle School, Frederick Douglas Elementary, Frances Hazel Reid Elementary, and Tuscarora High School.