

2017 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
- Charlotte DeMolay, Education Specialist
- 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 2017 Annual Report (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017). The report provides an overview of our programs as well as a summary of our accomplishments during the past year.

In FY17, a new initiative for the District was the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program. This program provided financial incentives to homeowners to install practices such as rainwater harvesting, conservation landscaping, and a host of other initiatives. These funds are provided through a grant from the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) Cost-Share Program continues to be a large component of District work. 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 implement BMPs specifically designed to improve water quality and prevent erosion.

The District, in partnership with Loudoun County, also offers cost-share funding for urban practices such as tree planting. 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.

I want to take this opportunity to publicly welcome our new Education Specialist, Charlotte DeMolay. Charlotte started with the District in May '17, and comes to us with an extensive background in environmental education. Since she joined us, she has been busy with classroom presentations, networking with the education community, and developed a newsletter to detail and promote District education programs. She is a wonderful addition to our LSWCD staff. If you would like to schedule a special program/activity for a class, or group, please call Charlotte for assistance.

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
Chairman

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS VIRGINIA AG BMP COST SHARE

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“Newly installed stream protection fence on a farm near Hillsboro”

- \$617,571.16 paid to local landowners in FY2017.
- 19 SL-6 practices installed with 57,969 feet of streambank protected and 77.5 acres of buffer created
- 2 WP-2 practices installed with 1900’ of streambank protected and 2.0 acres of buffer created.
- 5 CCI-SE-1 practices installed with 33,378’ of streambank protected.
- 17 SL-8B and SL-8H practices installing 686 acres of cover crops.



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.”



- \$29,791.22 paid to local landowners in FY2017.
- 2 SL-6 installed with 1,145’ feet of fencing on 1 acre.
- 1 WP-2 practice installed with 414 feet of fencing on .3 acre.
- 5 CCI-SE-1 installed on 23,135’ feet of fencing.

LAND USE TAX PROGRAM

The District writes conservation plans for those enrolled in the Land Use Tax program. As of June 30, 2017, 72,948 in Loudoun County land has Conservation Plans that are maintained for 2,407 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) The Willowsford Community has participated twice in riparian buffer planting projects, completing plantings in 2016 and 2017 (bottom right)

Chris Van Vlack, Urban/Ag Conservationist and Andrew Richardson from Willowsford Conservancy.

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 **\$3.45** for every dollar invested by the Loudoun County BOS in FY 2017.

“For every dollar invested by the Loudoun Board of Supervisors, \$3.45 is generated from other sources of income.”



Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District
30 Catoctin Circle, SE.,
Suite H
Leesburg, VA 20175
571-918-4530
www.lswcd.org

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, 2017, staff presented the Watershed Model for approximately 362 elementary school students at 12 Loudoun County elementary schools.
- Lunsford Middle School teacher used the watershed model for 24 presentations to 475 students.
- Staff presented 5 Rain Barrel workshops: 1 in Lovettsville and 4 in Leesburg.
- Staff assisted with 2 Riparian Workshop field trips held with Monroe Technology Center students.
- Staff judged the Wildlife Station at Envirothon.
- Staff participated in the following special events: “Hail to the Trail in Purcellville”, Unison Heritage Day, Geology Rocks program at Rust Library, Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival.
- Staff judged the Regional Science and Engineering Fair held at Riverside high School. Four Science Fair Awards, totaling \$400, were awarded to students for projects related to water quality, natural resource conservation and a “best project” award .
- Staff served on the Leesburg-Loudoun Arbor Day committee and the District sponsored the Annual Arbor Day celebration..
- \$2,853 in mini-grants were awarded to teachers at Freedom High School, Hillsboro Charter Academy, Banneker Elementary, Sugarland Elementary, Lovettsville Elementary, and Lucketts Elementary.
- The District locally awarded two \$500 scholarships to Woodgrove High school student, Alexis Zimmer-Chu, and Park View High School student, Valerie Knowles.
- Staff presented at the Healthy Lands for Healthy Horses Programs in cooperation with Virginia Tech/Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension Center and Northern Virginia SWCD
- Broad Run student, Elise Varblow was the recipient of the VASWCD Scholarship award in the amount of \$1,000.

