Calvert Soil Conservation District



2021 & 2022

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Conservationists

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A N N U A L R P O R T

2021 & 2022



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ENGINEERING & PLANNING ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2021& 2022

_	<u>2021</u>	2022
County Landowners Assisted		228
New Cooperators	8	5
Conservation Plans Completed		C 6,103.6AC
atte	Marker Walter	
30		
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	BEST MANAGEMENT PR	ACTICES
2021	2022	
Conservation Cover8.0 AC	Conservation Cover	18.3 AC
Conservation Crop Rotation260.7 AC	Conservation Crop Rotation	514.5 AC
Residue and Tillage Management142.5 AC	Residue and Tillage Management	516.9 AC
Cover Crop 1,479.0 AC	Cover Crop	486.1 AC
Non Streamside Fence3,394.0 FT	Non-Streamside Fence	5,974 FT
Field Border 1.6 AC	Field Border	
Riparian Herbaceous Cover1.6 AC	Streamside Fence (35'+ Trees)	2,581 FT
Non-streamside Fence1,043.0 FT	Non-streamside Fence	5,974 FT
Forage Harvest Management102.3 AC	Forage Harvest Management	4.1 AC
Pasture & Hay Planting6.3 AC	Pasture & Hay Planting	3.5 AC
Prescribed Grazing149.9 AC	Nutrient Management	518.9 AC
Nutrient Management262.9 AC	Grade Stabilizations	
	High Tunnel	-
	Irrigation Pipeline	1,015 FT
	Watering Facility	10
	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	176 AC
	Prescribed Grazing	164.7 AC
1,446		14
water like	water 1888	

EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Site Plan Reviews (all types)	681	603
Commercial/Subdivision Plans Reviewed · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		39
Commercial Pre-construction Meetings••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••	26	22

Welcome District Manager & District Conservationists

Geoffrey Westbrook, District Manager



It has been quite a year settling in! The District has had a bit of turn over and gained a few new faces to our planning and design staff. Jamare'e Taylor came on as our new NRCS Soil Conservation Planner and Broderick Pascual has joined us as our new MDA Engineering Technician.

Previous District Manager Bill Clark spent 35 years building the District into the operation it is today. When I was brought on in 2009, I remember thinking, "I could be District Manager some day," and well here we are! I would like to take a moment to thank Bill for his hard work and dedication to the agricultural community of "Culvert County." I would also like to thank my fellow District Managers, the organizations and staff that support the work Soil Conservation Districts have done to support my first year.

In 2022, District Technicians Designed 41 BMPs, installed 21 of them, and have 13 more under construction. Our Planners have put 6,103.6 acres under farm plans, and 486.1 acres under cover crop. We are well on our way to meeting our WIP III goals. Our equipment rental program is running strong, we have recently added two new pieces through a grant from SMADC, a new post driver to replace our aging driver, and a new 7-foot pasture seeder to accommodate our growing livestock community. Finally, I would like to invite everyone in the Calvert Agricultural Community to come to the District and see just what we have to offer, you will not be disappointed.

Colleen Keifer, District Cosnervationist, 2021

In July 2021, I stepped in to fill the shoes of Susan Lamb as your new District Conservationist in Calvert County. It has been a pleasure returning to Calvert County and jumping back in working with all of our amazing District staff, board members and farmers.

In 2021 we contracted over \$48,000 in EQIP projects, and an additional \$46,000 in CSP projects. I look forward to our cooperators taking advantage of even more funding opportunities in the coming year. There are a lot of great cost share opportunities available right now for erosion control, increased grazing efficiency and wildlife improvements, in addition to new opportunities for private forest owners and managers. I look forward to working with you all in the new year to promote the best of conservation in Calvert County.



Mitch LeMuiex, District Conservationist, 2022

2022 was a year of transition for Calvert County, my predecessor Colleen Kiefer accepted a position as the Urban District Conservationist servicing Prince George's County, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore City. I started in Calvert in mid-May and wrapped up Colleen's record-breaking Programs sign up totaling over \$204,000. Currently I am the District Conservationist for Calvert and Anne Arundel Counties with over a decade of experience in Resource Conservation. I am looking forward to continuing the work Colleen started and hope to increase program participation in the coming years.



2021 DISTRICT STAFF UPDATES



Jennifer

Congratulations Ag Resource Conservation Specialist II Jennifer Carlson for accepting a new position with Maryland Department of Agriculture! Jennifer was previously a Conservation Planner with Calvert SCD for 1.5 years before accepting her new position in 2021. Her hard work has not gone unnoticed. Congratulations, Jennifer!

2021 INTERNS

Hello I'm Megan! I'm attending the University of Maryland majoring in Astronomy with a minor in Computer Science. I'm also doing an online animation school concurrently which I've really been enjoying. My goals for the future have changed a lot throughout high school and college but I'm currently hoping to go into animation. My hobbies include drawing and playing piano and I love nature. At the soil conservation district, I work in AutoCAD to create digital versions of plans to be formatted and printed. I also revise and update the plans with suggested changes. I have worked on plans for Flag Ponds and Ward Farm Park the most and I've also helped with gathering data on both land and water surveys. I've really enjoyed working here and I'm looking forward to coming back again this summer!





Michael

My name is Michael Deffinbaugh, and I had the privilege of working at the Calvert Soil Conservation District over summer 2021. During that time, I assisted Ryan

with his projects on a wetland creation, rip rap channel to reduce erosion, and many surveys on other projects. The two most memorable surveys were getting in the water at Flag Ponds Nature Park with the other interns or when Ryan and I did this huge muddy pit at the bottom of a cow field. When I'm not on summer break, I'm attending College Park, MD studying Environmental Science and Policy at the University of Maryland. This degree covers a vast array of potential career paths and interests however I'm specializing my focus on agriculture. With this I plan to begin my own farm one day working with animals in a way that is more climate focused. Working with Calvert SCD and NRCS is a valuable experience that I would recommend to anyone remotely interested in the environment, especially when it comes to development and/or agriculture.

August

Hello! My name is August Cox and use they/them pronouns. I am attending Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. I am an art education major with a minor in political science and

a passion in the earth and environment. Some of my hobbies include BMX, cyclocross, art, and participating in the environmental club on campus. While I have not worked at the conservation district for that long, I have already gone on two site visits in the freezing cold. I really enjoyed getting to work with farmers that have been in this county for years. In my future, I plan on being a teacher during the school year and working as a park ranger during the summer. I love to travel and cannot wait to see where this summer takes me with the Soil Conservation District.



2022 DISTRICT STAFF UPDATES



Jamare'e T.

Hi, my name is Jamare'e Taylor the new conservation planner in Calvert County Soil Conservation District. I started on June 6, 2022. I graduated from the illustrious University of Maryland Eastern Shore with a bachelor's degree in General Agriculture. I previously worked in the Kent County Field Office in Felton, DE. Some of my duties updated completed before coming to Maryland NRCS is update files with AGI FY22 forms, surveyed with soil technicians and met with producers to get signatures for 1199 & 1245 forms. I have did some spot-checks at dairy farms, orchard fields, poultry house practices, high tunnel systems, roof runoff, and irrigation drainage ditches as well. I worked on eligibility letters and modifications to applied practices in protracts. I am more than thrilled to jump into Maryland NRCS and learn more about Calvert County while creating new relationships with my coworkers, cooperators, and enjoying the great opportunities Calvert Soil Conservation District has in stored for me. On August 31, 2022 my daughter Milan was warmly welcomed into the world.



Broderick P.

My name is Broderick Pascual. I graduated with a B.A. from Seton Hall University. I have previously worked in Southern Maryland focusing on stormwater Management and erosion control. Since March 2022 I have been under the expert tutelage of the Calvert Soil Conservation District. In December 2022 I officially became a member of Calvert SCD. It has been truly a pleasure joining the Calvert SCD team. I look forward to creating strong relationships with staff, board members, and farmers in promoting soil improvements to create, maintain and promote the beauty of Calvert County.



MDA & USDA-NRCS STAFF

(Above, left to right)
Jennifer Carlson, MDA
Angella Hunter, MDA
Mitchell LeMuiex, UDSA-NRCS
Taylor Quinn, MDA
Eileen Beard, MDA
Broderick Pascual, MDA



CALVERT COUNTY GOVERNMENT STAFF

Geoff Westbrook, District Manager (front)
(Back, left to right)
Rebecca Willis, Administrative Aide,
Ryan St Laurent, E&S Specialist,
Ron Babcock, E&S Specialist,
Ashley Brown, District Secretary



2021 ENVIROTHON



A Virtual County & State Combined Competition











Addison Fortenberry

Ana Reinhardt

Eleanor Cole

Sophia Skolnick

Sasha Barley

The Envirothon is an environmentally-based problem solving competition for high school students. Teams are made up of 5 students who work together to study Maryland's natural resources over the course of the school year. All topics are very hands-on and include practical skills. The trainings are taught by experts in each field. Calvert SCD donates annually to Calvert Environmental Trust for Youth (CETY) to support the Envirothon competition.

Because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 Calvert County Envirothon was cancelled. For the 2021 season, educators rallied and were able to successfully host an entirely virtual 2021 Calvert County Envirothon competition.

This year (2021), ALL Maryland teams who wished to participate were invited to compete in the Maryland State Envirothon. Two teams from Calvert County participated: Northern High School and Calvert High School.

The virtual competition was held April 26-29, 2021, where 51 teams competed for the Maryland State Envirothon title. The students competed in four resource categories: aquatics, forestry, soils, and wildlife.

At the virtual Awards Ceremony on May 6, the highest scoring team from Calvert County was Northern High School with a score of 331.32.

Northern High and Calvert High placed 8th and 12th respectfully in the state. Calvert scored 324.73; to say the competition is tight is an understatement!

Congratulations Northern High School for claiming the **2021 County Envirothon title & and placing 8th in Maryland!**

2022 ENVIROTHON

30th Anniversary



The Envirothon is an environmentally-based problem solving competition for high school students. Teams are made up of 5 students who work together to study Maryland's natural resources over the course of the school year. All topics are very hands-on and include practical skills and trainings are taught by experts in each field.

The competition was held live(!!) on April 20, 2022 at King's Landing Park in Huntingtown. The students competed in four resource categories: aquatic resources, forestry management, soil conservation, and wildlife management.

A tie was reached between Northern and Calvert High School team (316 out of 400). The teams competed in a tie breaker activity involving run-off. In the end, Calvert High School claimed the victory with the overall high score. Huntingtown won the high score in aquatics, Calvert won the high score in soils, and Northern won the high score in wildlife.

The Calvert High School team represented Calvert County at the University of Maryland Clarksville Research Farm on June 22, 2022 for the Maryland State Envirothon. The team placed 13th overall.

The Envirothon is sponsored by the Calvert County Soil Conservation District, Calvert Forestry Board, Calvert County Natural Resource Division, Morgan State University Estuarine Research Center, American Chestnut Land Trust, and the CHESPAX program of Calvert County Public Schools.

Congratulations to Calvert High School for claiming the Calvert County Envirothon 2022 title!

Congratulations Calvert High School!!

Plantings at ACLT, Holly Hill Farm







POLLINATOR & CRITICAL AREA BUFFER

Holly Hill Farm, like many farms in Calvert County, deal regularly with gully erosion, with gullies forming just on the field edge in the woods. To help prevent cuts on smaller gullies as well as increase pollinator habitat, ACLT worked with Soil Conservation District to develop a planting design that met both these needs.

This buffer included a planting of densely seeded native grasses to capture and slow sheet flow off the adjacent crop fields, in addition a larger buffer of native pollinator species specifically designed to support Monarch butterfly habitat.

This planting has been installed in stages over the past 3 years and has been seeded with help of the District's Equipment Rental Program's six-foot no-till drill.

This project was funded through the USDA-NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

(Pictured left: Geoff Westbrook, District Manager, operates the John Deere and no-till drill from the District's equipment rental program to plant a buffer seeding at ACLT's Holly Hill Farm.)

SCD EQUIPMENT RENTAL PRGROAM

CALVERT SCD EQUIPMENT RENTAL PROGRAM

Did you know Calvert SCD has over a dozen pieces of commonly-used farm/ag equipment available for rental in Calvert County?

- Post Pounder
 - Seeders
- No-till Drills
- Turbo-till Drill
 - Hay Balers
- Litter Spreader
 - Grain Vac
 - Weed Wiper
- John Deere Tractor with no-till or roto-till attachment

Contact Ashley Brown at 410-535-1521, ext. 3 or <u>Ashley.Brown@calvertcountymd.gov</u> for more information!

Equipment is reserved on a first come, first served basis. Call for availability. Cost covers machine maintenance only.











2021 EVENTS



Calvert County Historical Society

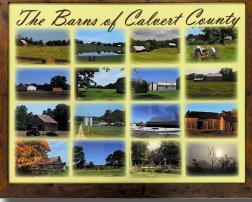
To collect, preserve, research, and share the history of Calvert County.



BARNS OF CALVERT COUNTY ART SHOW



Calvert SCD District Manager
Bill Clark entered several
photographs in the Calvert
County Historical Society's
Annual Barn Art Show.
His artwork was admired by
all!





SOUTHERN MARYLAND HOSTS 2021 ANNUAL MASCD SUMMER MEETING



The Southern Maryland Soil Conservation Districts came together to host a three-day conference in Cambridge, MD in August 2021. This was the first meeting held live since the beginning of the pandemic. The conference is hosted biannually-annually by Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD) and offers a variety of topics. This year's theme and topic was "Meeting Conservation Challenges Head-On".

Calvert SCD, namely Rebecca and Ashley, hosted the Hospitality Suite for conference goers and welcomed all guests with smiles. The suite was stocked with snacks, breakfast items, refreshments, and Thompson's Catering provided crab balls and shrimp!

ITS ALL IN THE SOIL!



Organic Layer

Topsoil

Subsoil

Parent Material

Bedrock

Here at the Soil Conservation District, soil is obviously the name of the game. From considerations for conservation planning to suitability for design work, knowing what is going on beneath the surface is critical to getting the job done.

With the excellent resources of the Maryland NRCS, the soil science team was able to get us the answers! Our regional soil scientist, Jason Martin, makes regular visits to the county to do soil investigations as requested by our planners and technicians. This usually involves taking several 6 foot soil borings at each site to verify soil conditions and to determine any

limiting factors that may impact operations or designs. Additionally, they will take a soil sample to be sent for testing and make notes about the site including topography and drainage. They will write a report detailing his findings and outlining any recommendations based on their results and expertise.

In addition to these duties, this team also works building and servicing GIS tools that our office uses to access Lidar data and make Highly Erodible Land determinations for cropland in the county. We are grateful to have such a dedicated team of support staff who are always willing to get their hands dirty, literally!









NRCS Regional Soil Scientist, Jason Martin, analyzes soil borings with district staff for an upcoming pond design project.

Saving the Shoreline, One Oyster at a Time

By Ryan St Laurent



In the 1970's, my Great Grandparents purchased a property overlooking the Chesapeake Bay in the Ranch Estates. With cash and grit, they slowly built their dream home over the next decade. Their grandkids spent the summers tonging for oysters, crabbing and fishing. There was a house between their dream home and the 100 foot cliffs. Today, that house is no longer there, and my Great Grandparents house will fall over the cliffs in the next 20 years.



The average shoreline erosion around the Chesapeake Bay is six inches per year. In Calvert County, we can lose 10 feet in one major storm event. Nowhere in the bay is the water deeper, closer to the shoreline. Our shorelines are being hammered by the Main Stem of the Chesapeake.

We have less than 1% of the oyster population today as compared to the early 1800's. Oysters used to be so plentiful that the explorer John Smith recorded shipwrecks on reefs that stuck out of the water during low tide. Giant 3D structures all over the bay provided habitat, food, filtration and economic opportunity. Efforts since the 1990's to rejuvenate the oyster population have been a struggle. Today the focus is largely on protected oyster sanctuaries, regulations on harvest, and Aquaculture.



Image 1 (above)

There is one area of focus that has not been tried, Oyster Reef for the purpose of Shoreline Protection. All around the world reef structures attenuate wave energy so that the energy of the currents, tides and waves are dissipated before reaching the shoreline. In Tahiti, a wave called Teahupo'o (Image 1) is among the largest in the world. It breaks at a specific spot consistently because of a reef. This wave can reach up to 23' high and is known as the "heaviest" wave on earth. But by the time it reaches the sandy shoreline, the waves are as large as the bay ripples on a normal day. Reefs work.

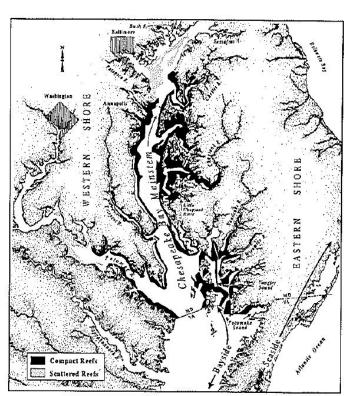


Image 2 (above)

Oyster reefs can serve the same purpose. In fact, Calvert County's shoreline used to be protected by a long 3D reef (Image 2)! Not only that, but research has shown, if built correctly, a 3-Dimensional reef of 1 acre, 1 foot off the bay bottom will grow to be a self-sustaining reef.

Calvert Soil Conservation District is pursuing partnerships with Hatchery's, researchers, local schools and nonprofits to build back the historic reef that protected Calvert County's shorelines from erosion. We have 33 miles of shoreline to protect, and we can do it. Our goal is to build oyster reefs 1 acre at a time, monitor them and have partners produce scientific papers showing how effective Oyster reefs can be to stabilize a shoreline. Our shorelines.

If you or someone you know is interested in helping us build oyster reefs, please reach out to the District. It will take a team!



Board of Supervisors' Updates



Gilbert E. Chaney *July 14, 1933 ~ February 25, 2022*

Beloved, respected and active Calvert Soil Conservation Board Supervisor of more than 20 years, Gilbert Chaney, of Dunkirk, passed away on Friday, February 25, 2022 at 88 years young.

His joyful spirit uplifted all those around him and the loss is felt throughout Calvert County and the Ag community. Our condolences are with his family and we are grateful for his service to Calvert County agriculture.

Benson Tiralla, a Calvert SCD Associate Supervisor since 2013, was appointed by the Calvert County Board of Commissioners as a supervisor on the Calvert SCD Board of Supervisors in 2022, following the passing of Gilbert Chaney.

He and his wide Jamie raise cattle and sheep on the their farm in Adelina. Welcome, Benson!



Benson H. Tiralla

WARD FARM PARK STORMWATER REPAIR PROJECT

The District was contacted by the Calvert County Department of Parks and Recreation for an erosion problem. At Ward Farm Park in Dunkirk, the berm along Hall Creek was being eroded from the stream flow and beavers had plugged up a culvert pipe which caused the wetland to overtop the berm and cause a breach. The berm that separated the creek from the wetland needed to be restored. The District field-surveyed the problem areas and designed a solution. The design was to build a gabion basket wall along the edge of the stream and construct a block paver outfall so the wetlands could flow back into Creek. The outfall was designed for easy maintenance to keep clear from the beavers trying to dam it up. You know beavers, all they want to do is to dam things up! The construction began in November 2022 and was completed in January 2023.

Pictured left: Ron Babcock monitoring construction; pictured middle & right: construction of the gabion basket installation at Ward Farm Park, Dunkirk, MD.



2021 DISTRICT HAPPENINGS





Welcome Back, MDA!

After working remotely for 15 months, MDA employees were approved by Governor Hogan to return to the office full-time beginning July 1, 2021. The office, however, still operates on an appointment-only basis and requires masks for visitors. Please call-ahead before arrival.





County Transitions to a Fully Digital Permitting Process

Over the course of the pandemic, many Calvert County Government employees transitioned to teleworking. While public offices were closed, the county retired the paper permit process and implemented a new, fully electronic and paperless permit process. For questions about the paperless permits, contact Geoff Westbrook at Geoffrey.Westbrook@calvertcountymd.gov, or visit www.calvertcountymd.gov.





Vehicle Upgrade

The Maryland Department of Agriculture approved a new vehicle for MDA employees at Calvert SCD. The 2020 Silverado is a welcome upgrade from the existing 1996 MDA State truck!











Future Office

The Calvert County Administration Building located at 150 Main Street, Prince Frederick, was demolished in the Fall. The County plans to erect a larger building by 2024. The new building will be the future home for all Calvert County departments including, for the first time ever - *us!*





R.I.P. Fax Machine

2021 saw the retirement of not only District Manager Bill Clark, but also the fax machine. Moving forward, Calvert SCD will rely on greener options for document sharing such as email and other secure portals.











2022 DISTRICT HAPPENINGS



Covid-19 Update

The Calvert SCD office has officially reopened to the public. Wearing a mask is optional and social distancing as been relaxed. Appointments are no longer necessary to enter the office; however, we encourage calling ahead in case the person you seek is teleworking. Telework has become increasingly common across many ag agencies including Calvert Soil Conservation, Maryland Department of Agriculture, USDA-NRCS, and University of Maryland Extension.









Annual Dinner to Return 2023

The District will host and honor (finally!) the 2019 Cooperator of the Year James and Jennifer Dowell at the 2023 Annual Cooperators Dinner in March 2023. This is the District's first dinner held since 2019. 2023 also marks the 75th Anniversary of Calvert SCD! As always, first come, first served!









Ron "iRon" Babcock, Calvert County Erosion & Sediment Control Specialist, will be retiring in 2023 with 33 years of loyal and dedicated service! We will miss you and your infinite trivia!







Introducing Cover Crop Plus+

Cover Crop Plus+ is a new pilot financial incentive program for soil health farmers launched in 2022. Cover Crop Plus+ offers higher incentive payments and more perks for farmers who plant cover crops to improve soil health. The program is offered by the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Conservation Grants Program.









Calvert SCD will soon be purchasing a new post pounder and 72" seeder upon grant approval from SMADC! Thank you, SMADC. More information on rentals will be available soon for these machines.

















CALVERT SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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CALVERT SCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Thomas D. Briscoe, St. Leonard *Chairman*

Walter L. Wells, Prince Frederick *Vice Chairman*

David A. Cox, Prince Frederick *Treasurer*

Leonard R. Ogden, Prince Frederick *Supervisor*

Benson H. Tiralla, Prince Frederick *Supervisor*

Phillip H. Jones, Sr., Huntingtown Associate Supervisor

J.R. Cosgrove, St. Leonard *Associate Supervisor*

Charles L. Wells, Prince Frederick *Associate Supervisor*

Charlie R. Cox, Prince Frederick *Associate Supervisor*

All district programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap. Calvert Soil Conservation District's Annual Report is published regularly to provide information to the land user.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

ASSISTING STAFF

Geoffrey S. Westbrook *District Manager*

Colleen Kiefer (2021)
District Conservationist USDA-NRCS

Mitchell LeMuiex (current)
District Conservationist, USDA-NRCS

Rebecca S. Willis *Administrative Aide*

Ashley E. Brown District Secretary

Ronald M. Babcock Erosion and Sediment Control Specialist

Ryan K. St Laurent Erosion and Sediment Control Specialist

Broderick Pascual MDA Conservation Engineering Technician

Angella D. Hunter MDA Agriculture Conservation Planner Specialist III

Jennifer D. Carlson MDA Agriculture Conservation Planner Specialist II

Jamare'e Taylor USDA-NRCS Soil Conservationist

COOPERATING AGENCIES

Calvert County

Calvert County Commissioners
Planning and Zoning
Department of Public Works
Economic Development
Inspections and Permits
Calvert Marine Museum
Natural Resources
Parks & Recreation
Southern Maryland Resource Conservation
and Development Board

State of Maryland

Maryland Department of Agriculture Maryland Department of the Environment MD Department of Natural Resources MD Forest, Parks & Wildlife Service State Soil Conservation Committee UMD Cooperative Extension

United States Government

USDA Farm Service Agency USDA Rural Development USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Protection Agency

Others

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission MD Association of Soil Conservation Districts Maryland Farm Bureau National Association of Conservation Districts

> Front cover: Thomas Briscoe, Calvert SCD Chairman