



TALBOT SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

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NRCS Sets January 8 Deadline for Conservation Program Applications



Maryland farmers and forest landowners interested in treating natural resource concerns on their land have until January 8 to be considered for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Agricultural Management Assistance program (AMA) funding in fiscal year 2021.

Landowners should contact their local NRCS office at the USDA service center in their county to apply. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, please call ahead to determine the best way to meet with your NRCS conservationist based on local conditions.

EQIP is the primary program available to Maryland farmers and landowners for basic farm and forestland conservation work, with payments for over 110 conservation practices such as heavy use area protection, pasture management, grassed waterways, pest management, and forest stand improvement. Last year, Maryland producers were offered more than \$10 million in funds for EQIP practices. AMA offers high tunnels and water management systems.

The January 8 application deadline also includes EQIP initiatives such as Beginning Farmers, Organic, the National Water Quality Initiative, Working Lands for Wildlife, and Historically Underserved. All offer technical and financial assistance through EQIP.

For more information about conservation planning and programs contact Jack King or Laura Eddy at 410-822-1577 x 3.



The Talbot SCD office is still **CLOSED to the public and is appointment only until further notice.**

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS ISSUE:

- ◆ CONSERVATION DRAINAGE INCENTIVES, *PAGE 2*
- ◆ CONTINUING SOIL HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES, *PAGE 3*
- ◆ LEASING SPACE AT THE TALBOT AG. SERVICE CENTER, *PAGE 4*
- ◆ NEW STATE BUFFER PILOT PROGRAM ANNOUNCED, *PAGE 5*



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State Cost-Share Opportunities for Conservation Drainage

Conservation drainage practices help reduce the movement of sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus into surface waters from agricultural land that is artificially drained. Agricultural practices and components commonly used in Maryland include subsurface denitrifying bioreactors, saturated buffers, created wetlands, water control structures, underground outlets, and subsurface drains.

- ◇ **Subsurface Denitrifying Bioreactor**—A buried trench filled with a carbon source, usually wood chips, and installed at the edge of a field to remove nitrate nitrogen from subsurface agricultural drainage water.
- ◇ **Saturated Buffer** - A biological treatment system used to divert subsurface drainage water to a vegetated area for treatment.
- ◇ **Wetland Creation** - A wetland is constructed at the edge of a field to treat and filter drainage water on a site that was not previously a wetland. Wetlands remove sediment, nutrients, organic matter and other pollutants from subsurface ground-water associated with farming operations.
- ◇ **Water Control Structure** - Used in conjunction with the above practices or as a stand-alone practice to help prevent gully erosion, manage water to improve crop production, and reduce the movement of nitrates to downstream waters.
- ◇ **Subsurface Drain** - An underground pipe used to collect and convey subsurface drainage water to a buffer, wetland, or bioreactor.
- ◇ **Underground Outlet** - Tubing, tile or pipe installed to move surface water from a treatment practice to a designated outlet.



Denitrifying bioreactor | USDA-NRCS <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Contact one of our planners for more information at 410-822-1577 ext. 5.

What is a Soil Conservation & Water Quality Plan and why should I have one for my farm?

Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans (SCWQP) or Conservation Plans are a valuable tool for farmers and landowners to manage resources and improve profitability.

A conservation plan is a working document designed to fit each individual farmer's needs while protecting and conserving their soil and water resources.

A conservation plan folder contains:

- Aerial photo of the farm which includes property boundaries, topography, current and proposed BMPs, and possibly other resource items;
- A written record of the landowners decisions regarding cropping sequences, residue management, and nutrient management, with a plan for implementation and;
- A map showing soil types and boundaries along with descriptions and capability classes showing suitability for cropland, forestland, and wildlife habitat.

Conservation plans are not mandatory unless all or part of the farm falls within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, or you are applying for or currently participate in an agricultural land preservation program, or participate in any state or federal cost share programs.

If you are interested in developing a conservation plan for your farm, please contact one of the conservation planners to set up an on-farm visit. The planner will need to walk the farm and take notes on current farming practices and identify any resource issues which may need to be addressed. These plans are free and should be updated at least every 10 years.



Recently completed diversion with a grade stabilization structure

Presenting a New Lunch and Learn Series from the Million Acre Challenge: Soil Health...to Go!

Soil Health...to Go! is a new program occurring every second Wednesday through June, 2021, and will be focusing on soil health management practices for grain farms. The Million Acre Challenge is a farmer-driven collaborative working in the Chesapeake region to elevate farmers' voices and connect them with tools and resources to explore agricultural practices that promote soil and ecosystem health while increasing farm profitability and resilience. The goal is to achieve one million agricultural acres in Maryland using these healthy soil practices by 2030. The use of soil health science, economics, education, and incentives are employed to achieve that mission.



Contact Jack King or Laura Eddy to register for the event at 410-822-1577 x 5.

Stay tuned for more upcoming farmer-to-farmer soil health events!

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

GREAT LOCATION AT THE TALBOT AGRICULTURAL SERVICE CENTER
IN THE TALBOT COMMERCE PARK OFF OF GLEBE ROAD IN EASTON, MD



LEASE PRICE

\$10 / sq. ft.

Premier Office Spaces—2 Suites Currently Available

Suite 5—1,575 sq. ft. AND Suite 6—1,826 sq. ft.



Rent Features:

- ◆ ALL UTILITIES (EXCEPT TELEPHONE AND INTERNET)
- ◆ GRASS CUTTING & LANDSCAPING
- ◆ SNOW REMOVAL
- ◆ DAILY CLEANING

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL SHAWN
443-746-4308 OR EMAIL
shawn.smith@maryland.gov**

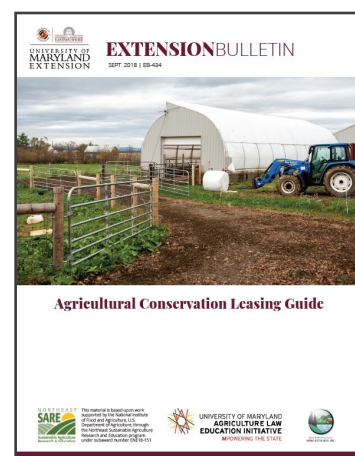
CURRENT TENANTS

Talbot Soil Conservation District USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service USDA—Farm Service Agency
Maryland Department of Agriculture University of Maryland Extension

Agricultural Conservation Leasing Guide

If you are landowner who leases your land to a farmer you should download the free **Agricultural Conservation Leasing Guide** developed by the University of Maryland Agricultural Law Education Initiative (ALEI) and the Hughes Center. This guide is meant to help farmers and landowners use leases as a tool to not only protect their business interests but to also implement stewardship planning and conservation practices on leased land.

For more information and to download the guide, visit <https://agresearch.umd.edu/agroecol/educationoutreach/agricultural-conservation-leasing>.



New Conservation Buffer Initiative Set to Launch in January

PLANT THE BUFFER THAT WORKS FOR YOU

The Maryland Department of Agriculture will launch a new pilot program in January that offers attractive incentive payments, easy sign-up and more management options for farmers who want to plant streamside buffers on their farms to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Maryland's new pilot Conservation Buffer Initiative provides funding and free technical assistance for forest buffers planted next to waterways, grass buffers planted next to waterways or field ditches, and streamside access control areas adjacent to pastures.

If you are interested in this program or would like to learn more, contact Shawn Smith or Steve Spielman or visit https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/conservation-buffer-initiative.aspx



Talbot SCD Board of Supervisors

About the Board

The Talbot SCD Board of Supervisors provides overall supervision and sets policy assuring that the district performs tasks required by law and memorandums of understanding. Supervisors are appointed to represent farming, forestry, wildlife, suburban/urban interests, and other natural resource interests in a district.

Appointments are made by the following groups, which each term five (5) years:

- Talbot County Government
- Talbot County Farm Bureau
- Talbot County Cooperative Extension
- Two supervisors are appointed by the SSCC from among residents of Talbot County.

Supervisors

- John Swaine III, Chairman (County Appointee)
- Lewis Smith, Vice Chairman (At-large)
- Kyle Hutchison, Treasurer (At-large)
- Lemmie Swann, Member (UMD Extension)
- Sarah Everhart (Farm Bureau)
- Shannon Dill (Extension Service), Secretary
- Billy Foster, Associate
- Raymond Harrison III, Associate
- Norman Fike, Honorary Member



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CONNECT WITH US

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