

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Talbot Soil Conservation District

28577 Marys Court, Suite 3, Easton, Maryland 21601

Phone 410-822-1577 x 3 | Web http://www.talbotscd.com

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<u>Front cover photo description:</u> A recently established grassed waterway with rock lined outlet from 2020, funded through the Maryland Agricultural Cost-Share Program (MACS).

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INTRODUCTION



ABOUT THE TALBOT SCD

Since the Talbot Soil Conservation District's inception in 1958 it has been the goal of the Board of Supervisors and staff to provide assistance to Talbot County farmers and landowners in addressing the conservation of soil, water and related natural resources of Talbot County. The District's formation provided a means to resolve concerns and problems as they relate to our natural resources through association with other private, county, state and federal agencies.

Agriculture remains the primary industry in Talbot County with 109,000 acres of the county's 178,650 total acres being farmed. Numerous rivers and creeks cut through the county creating six watersheds with over 600 miles of shoreline. The

diverse nature of Talbot County necessitates constant close scrutiny of agricultural bills, county and state regulations and ordinances in order to administer the wide range of services as they pertain to conservation of our soil, water and related natural resources.

The District also plays a role in the prevention of erosion and sediment delivery for construction development activity. The District reviews the sediment and erosion control plans required by state law for these activities to ensure that they are complete and adequate.

The District is unique among agencies in that it is a unit of government in itself. The District is governed by a board of appointed supervisors who set local priorities and policies. In its operation, the District works with its cooperators on a voluntary basis to solve natural resource problems and to apply conservation on the land.



Top: A sediment pond on a farm along Oxford Road, just outside of Easton, MD.

Bottom: A fall 2021 completed grassed waterway with grass emerging on a farm in Queen Anne, MD.

DISTRICT MISSION

To provide leadership and support to agriculture and the citizens of Talbot County by conducting regulatory, service, and educational activities that assure consumer confidence, protect the environment, and promote agriculture.

DISTRICT VISION

To achieve excellence in programs and in services that preserves and protects agricultural resources and the environment, promotes profitable agriculture and consumer confidence, and enhances the quality of life for all residents in Talbot County.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

In 2021, the Talbot SCD, through local partnerships between Talbot County, the Maryland Department of Agriculture and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, continued to provide technical and financial assistance to farmers and landowners throughout Talbot County. Even though the offices were closed for most of the year because of COVID-19, the SCD staff were still able to work



directly with our cooperators to install several much needed Best Management Practices on farmland. As we move forward into 2022, our office hopes to continue to provide the highest level of commitment and customer service to all of our farmers and landowners.

John Swaine III
Talbot SCD Chairman

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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 the district. Appointments are made by the following groups: Talbot County Government, Talbot County Farm Bureau, and the Talbot County Cooperative Extension. Two supervisors are appointed by the SSCC from among residents of Talbot County. Each term is five (5) years.

BOARD MEMBERS & ASSOCIATES

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



From L to R: John Swaine III, Lewis Smith, Sarah Everhart, Kyle Hutchison, Lemmie Swann, and Bill Foster.

FIELD STAFF

amaryland.gov	

Shawn D. Smith	District Manager	MDA	shawn.smith@maryland.gov
Dale L. Willson	Secretary	MDA	RETIRED
Jack L. King, Jr.	District Conservationist	NRCS	jack.king@usda.gov
Laura Eddy	Soil Conservationist	NRCS	laura.eddy@usda.gov
Kim Reynolds	Program Support Specialist	NRCS	kim.reynolds@usda.gov
Rocky Donovan	Agricultural Resource Conservation Specialist III	MDA	rocky.donovan@maryland.gov
Levin Schwaninger Jr.	Agricultural Resource Conservation Specialist III	MDA	levin.schwaninger@maryland.gov
Steve Spielman	Agricultural Resource Conservation Specialist III	MDA	steve.spielman@maryland.gov
D. Scott Nordhoff	Agricultural Resource Conservation Specialist II	MDA	scott.nordhoff@maryland.gov
Julianna Burns	Agricultural Resource Conservation Specialist I	MDA	julianna.burns1@maryland.gov
Brandon Zinter	Soil Conservation Associate III	MDA	brandon.zinter@maryland.gov
Ray Geist	Soil Conservation Associate II	MDA	raymond.geist@maryland.gov
Nathan Hoffman	Soil Conservation Associate II	MDA	nathan.hoffman@maryland.gov
Brandon Dudrow	Soil Conservation Associate II	SCD	brandon.dudrow@maryland.gov
Patrick Titus	Soil Conservation Technician	NRCS	patrick.titus@usda.gov
Annie Rossi-Gill	Soil Scientist	NRCS	ann.rossigill@usda.gov
James Brewer	Soil Scientist	NRCS	james.brewer@usda.gov

FAREWELL TO OUR DISTRICT SECRETARY

After 36 years and 3 months of service to the Talbot Soil Conservation District, our longtime District secretary Dale Willson retired on June 30, 2021. Having started in 1985, Dale worked with 3 District Managers, 3 District Conservationists, 16 Board Members and hundreds of Erosion & Sediment Control applicants. Not



From L to R: Lewis Smith, Kyle Hutchison, Dale Willson, and John Swaine III, at Dale's retirement party.

only did she handle most of the financials, she helped manage the District's Erosion & Sediment Control program.

On May 19th, 2021, the SCD held a retirement party to celebrate Dale and her service to the citizens of Talbot County.



Dale, back in early 1990's at the old office on Bay Street.

CONSERVATION ON THE LAND

In 2021, Talbot SCD staff and cooperators were able to install several best management practices financed through federal and state cost-share programs despite dealing with COVID-19, a worldwide pandemic.

MACS COVER CROP PROGRAM

- Processed 86 applications
- Certified 36,808.8 acres out of possible 81,000 eligible acres of cropland

MACS MANURE TRANSPORT **PROGRAM**

The Maryland Department of Agriculture was able to provide a limited amount of funding to assist farmers in transporting poultry and dairy manure from fields with high phosphorous levels to those with lower phosphorous levels. With the Districts assistance, two farmers transported 14,700 gallons of liquid manure and 484.2 tons of poultry manure.



An agricultural field of no-till planted cover crop wheat into corn stubble. Photo taken in Wittman, Maryland.

MACS CAPITAL COST-SHARED PROJECTS

Talbot SCD planners and technicians worked with nine (9) cooperators to install fourteen (14) conservation projects funded through the Maryland Agricultural Cost-Share Program (MACS). Conservation projects ranged from grassed waterways with rock lined outlets to wetland restoration co-funded through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Each of these projects consisted of at least one Best Management Practice (BMP), while most involved two or three practices. Combined cost-share reimbursement through both USDA and MDA programs totaled \$169,867.00 that went to Talbot County farmers and landowners.



A birds-eye view of a large "Y" shaped grassed waterway with rock inlets and outlets cost-shared through the Maryland Agricultural Cost-Share Program (MACS).



To keep up with all of our projects, follow us on Instagram.com/TalbotSCD



USDA FARM BILL PROGRAM

NRCS accepted a total of 27 applications during the 2021 funding year. This includes 2 Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) applications, 1 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) application, and 24 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applications. These applications collected for the 2021 funding cycle resulted in 13 new conservation contracts, including 1 in AMA and 12 in EQIP. These contracts give rise to 25 different farm bill practices planned or installed:

- ♦ Brush Management 18.8 acres
- Early Successional Habitat Development / Management – 35.1 acres
- ♦ Roof Runoff Structure 668 feet
- ♦ Underground Outlet 2,179 feet
- ♦ Lighting System Improvement 94 units
- ♦ Herbaceous Weed Control 85.9 acres
- ♦ Fence 5,238 feet
- ♦ Pasture and Hay Planting 22.9 acres
- ◆ Livestock Pipeline 3,488 feet
- ♦ Pumping Plant 2 units
- ♦ Heavy Use Area Protection 9,130 square feet
- ◆ Animal Trails and Walkways 1,350 feet
- ♦ Watering Facility 12 units
- ♦ Manure Transfer (pipeline) 250 feet
- ♦ Water Well 1 unit
- ♦ Conservation Cover 24.1 acres
- ♦ Hedgerow Planting 8,908 feet
- Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats – 21.1 acres
- ♦ Waste Storage Facility 3 units
- Critical Area Planting 0.1 acres
- ♦ Roofs and Covers 3,145 square feet
- ♦ Pasture and Hay Planting 21.6 acres
- ♦ Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management 3.2 acres
- ♦ Upland Wildlife Habitat Management 1 acre
- Prescribed Grazing 22.9 acres

BMP SPOTLIGHT



Talbot County, MD has more tidal shoreline than any county in the United States, with over 600 miles total. All of this water brings plenty of aesthetic beauty, recreation, and wildlife habitat, but can also pose challenges to



landowners in the area. This was the case in 2019, when Della Andrew and her tenant, Mark Anders, came to the Talbot SCD in search of assistance with a stream crossing project. The only point of access to one of the crop fields on the property was over Williams Creek, a tributary of the Choptank River. Mr. Anders had been using an old crumbling bridge to get to the field, but this point of access was becoming more dangerous each year. It was imperative that the old bridge be removed to prevent an accident, but it was also important that field access remained open. In addition to the dangerous access point, the embankment on either side of the creek was steep and often times muddy, making it difficult to traverse with farm equipment. To keep this field in production, the producer needed a safe and reliable way to access this field with his equipment.

The project was cost shared through Local Work Group in 2020, and was completed in the summer of 2021. The project consisted of a ford crossing with a 90 foot access road on one side of the crossing, and a 40 foot access road on the other side. Since the footprint of this project would be within the stream, collaboration with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) was needed. A Regional Letter of Authorization was submitted to MDE and approved, granting a General Waterway Construction Permit. The ford crossing and access roads allow for a stable pathway for equipment to drive over without impeding stream flow. Ms. Andrew and Mr. Anders are both very happy with the project results, and can safely travel over the stream.

CONSERVATION PRACTICES INSTALLED THROUGH



412—Grassed Waterway 468—Rock Lined Outlet

(Queen Anne, MD)

This long grassed waterway empties into a rock lined outlet which can handle up to 132 cubic feet of water per second. The entire project consists of two waterways, which treat two separate watersheds totaling 156 acres of farmland.

657—Wetland Restoration

(Wittman, MD)

On this property two wetlands were constructed totaling up to 4 acres in the Choptank watershed. The wetlands consist of 2.4 acres of wetland pool and 1.6 acres of an upland grassed buffer, which further reduces runoff.



657—Wetland Restoration

(St. Michaels, MD)

This wetland restoration project was completed on a former agricultural field where the soils were "hydric," which means that the area, prior to farming, had historically been a wetland. The restoration consisted of 1 acre of wetland and buffer.



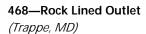
OUT THE YEAR





561—Heavy Use Area Protection (Bozman, MD)

Situated on the Harris Creek, this project focused on reducing the environmental impact of livestock. A heavy use area pad was constructed to reduce land disturbance in high trafficked area while also reducing overall runoff. This farm has a variety of sheep including Teeswater and Icelandic, which number around 20 animals.



This project consisted of two separate grassed waterways to reduce erosion and runoff from a farm field into roadside ditches. Combined, the waterways treat over 23 acres of watershed and have eliminated 23 tons of soil loss per year from the two sites.

412—Grassed Waterway 410—Grade Stabilization Structure

(Trappe, MD)

This project was a repair to an existing grassed waterway treating over 14 acres which had failed. The repair consisted of a 163 ft. repair to the downstream portion of the grassed waterway, with a replacement tile well and 175 ft. of new tile line to connect to the new tile well.



AGRICULTURAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ANNUAL CONSFRVATION TOUR

The Talbot SCD is pleased to recognize the 2020 Cooperators of the Year Awards to both the Shortall and Beaven families. During our annual conservation tour in October, staff, local officials, and board members visited the Beaven Farm along Kingston Landing Road to witness the 2020 Cooperator of the Year presentation.

Local COVID-19 restrictions delayed the presentation by over a year.

Throughout the morning the group visited several farms, showcasing recently constructed Best Management Practices (BMP) within the Tuckahoe River watershed. The highlighted BMPs consisted of grassed waterways, grade stabilization structures, rock

Kyle Hutchison, farmer and Talbot SCD Treasurer, talking about the benefits of conservation practices on leased land.

lined outlets, wetland restorations, livestock pipeline, fencing, waterers and heavy use area pads. These projects



Our 2020 Cooperators of the Year—from L to R: Ben Beaven, Mark Beaven and Andy Beaven.

were cost-shared through the Maryland Agricultural Cost-Share Program (MACS) and the USDA-NRCS farm bill conservation programs.

The Shortall family, which consists of Henry and Shirley Shortall and their son Mickey, operate a 211.3 acre cash grain farm outside of Easton. In the fall of 2019, after waiting patiently for assistance, they were able to establish a grassed waterway with a lined outlet which addressed massive amounts of sediment from leaving the farm. They also have other land enrolled as grassed buffers through the Conservation Reserve Program.

Brothers Mark and Andy Beaven recently acquired their family farm when their father, William "Bill" Beaven, passed away in 2019. The farm is located just outside of Easton along the Kingston corridor. In the fall of 2019, they were able to restore

a wetland and installed grassed waterways which addressed massive

amounts of sediment from leaving the farm. They enrolled the land into the Conservation Reserve Program. Their father was a pioneer in the no-till field who worked for many years for the Soil Conservation Service, and also served as a member on the Talbot SCD Board of Supervisors from 1980 to 2005.



Brandon Zinter, Soil Conservation Associate, discusses some challenges when designing BMPs, specifically soil types and uneven topography.



CONSERVATION PLANNING REPORT

Including Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) plans.

Total Plans	Total Acres Planned	# of Cooperators Served
92 (Increase of 43%)	16,902.0 (Increase of 32%)	53

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES REPORT

Complete report of all federal and state cost-shared best management practices installed during calendar year 2021.

Practice Code	Practice Name	Amount
102	Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan	1 No.
327	Conservation Cover	1.1 Ac.
390	Riparian Herbaceous Cover	14.2 Ac.
410	Grade Stabilization Structure	1 No.
412	Grassed Waterway	1.5 Ac.
468	Lined Outlet	339 Ft.
516	Livestock Pipeline	1,665 Ft.
561	Heavy Use Area	0.12 Ac.
587	Structure for Water Control	2 No.
606	Subsurface Drain	5,164 Ft.
612	Tree/shrub Establishment	2 Ac.
614	Watering Facility	3 No.
578	Stream Crossing	1 No.
657	Wetland Restoration	5.6 Ac.
	Cooperators Served	18

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM REPORT

Report includes, but not limited to, Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390), Conservation Cover (327), Tree/Shrub Establishment (612), Riparian Forested Buffer (391), Shallow Water Area (646) and Wetland Restoration (657).

New Acres Installed	Re-Enrolled Acres	# of Cooperators Served
24.8	154.1	21

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

NEWSLETTERS

Quarterly district newsletters were sent to over 250 cooperators and landowners in Talbot County, which highlighted USDA Farm Bill programs, general conservation planning, outreach materials, new cost-share programs, as well as staff and board of supervisors' information. Newsletters were also available online.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SOILS PROGRAM

Each fall, Talbot SCD staff visit with second grade students at Chapel District Elementary School and introduce them to soils and basic soil formation concepts. After the quick lesson, the students then complete the always fun "Soil Profile" M&M tube activity.

The "Soil Profile" consist of colored M&M's which were used to represent soil horizons, such as topsoil, sub soil and parent material. The students enjoyed the lesson and activity, and staff plan on visiting the same students in the spring to go outside and conduct a soils investigation.

The Talbot SCD is very thankful to the Talbot County Public Schools for partnering on this project.



Top: A second grade student builds his M&M "soil" profile.

Bottom: Students learning through touch and smell about different types of agricultural soils.

MASCD COLORING CONTEST

The Talbot Soil Conservation District, in partnership with the St. Mary's Soil Conservation District, was pleased to provide a coloring contest to students K-5 in Talbot County. Several students from Chapel District Elementary School, White Marsh Elementary School and Saints Peter & Paul Elementary schools participated in this event.

Class A - Kindergarten & 1st Grades

1st Place - Ella L. - SSPP

2nd Place - Jonathan F. - SSPP

3rd Place - Rebecca R. - SSPP

Class B - 2nd & 3rd Grades

1st Place - Aurora D. - SSPP

2nd Place - Gunnar D. - White Marsh

3rd Place - Raegan C. - SSPP







LAND STEWARDSHIP POSTER CONTEST

For 30 years the Talbot Soil Conservation District has sponsored the Land Stewardship Poster Contest. Each year Talbot SCD provides poster board and a theme to public and private schools in Talbot County. The 2021 theme was *Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities*.

K-1st Grades - No submissions

2nd-3rd Grades

1st Place - Ava C. (Saints Peter & Paul) 2nd Place - Tripp N. (Saints Peter & Paul) 3rd Place - Sydney G. (Saints Peter & Paul)

4th-6th Grades - No submissions

7th-9th Grades

1st Place - Matthew G. (St. Michaels High) 2nd Place - Mia M. (Saints Peter & Paul) 3rd Place - Danielle S. (Saints Peter & Paul)

10th-12th Grades

1st Place - Bradley D. (St. Michaels High) 2nd Place - Carleigh R. (St. Michaels High) 3rd Place - Julie I. (St. Michaels High)



10th—12th Grade 1st Place Winner Bradley D from St. Michaels High

ROY R. SCOTT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



Brandon Dudrow receiving the 2021 Roy R. Scott Memorial Scholarship from chairman John Swaine III

The Talbot SCD Board of Supervisors is pleased to congratulate our 2021 Roy R. Scott Memorial Scholarship recipient Brandon Dudrow, seen here with our chairman, John Swaine III. Started in 2021, the Talbot SCD provides an annual scholarship to a local student who pursues a careers in the agricultural engineering and/or science fields.

The Talbot SCD offers a scholarship opportunity each year for a graduating senior or current college student pursuing a degree focused on agricultural or civil engineering, or an agricultural related program specifically addressing natural resources and/or conservation.

Students submit an application to the Talbot SCD. The award recipient will receive \$1,000.00 to use towards their education. Applicants must be a resident of Talbot County and have a high school or college GPA of 3.0 or better.

EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

In order to protect the natural resources of the State, the Maryland General Assembly set forth in the Maryland Annotated Code of Regulations (COMAR), Environment Article, Subtitle 1. Sediment Control, Sec. 4-101 that the Secretary of the Environment, in consultation with the Secretary of Natural Resources adopt criteria and procedures for the counties and soil conservation districts to implement soil erosion control plans.

The outcome of that charge resulted in the development and adoption of the Maryland Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control. This document is overseen by the Maryland Department of the Environment in association with the



Natural Resources Conservation Service and State Soil Conservation Committee. The Foreword of the Standards and Specifications states in a general overview the what, when, how, and where of erosion control.

It states:

At the onset, it is necessary to establish the fact that soil erosion and sediment control are only the overall management of stormwater during and after site development. As the original ground cover of a site is disturbed and removed, the runoff characteristics are modified. Velocities of flow are increased and the total runoff volume is also increased. Limited management of runoff during the construction phase is provided by sediment control practices. Runoff control after the site development is accomplished by means of permanent stormwater management practices such as infiltration trenches or ponds. The practices contained in these standards and specifications are designed to provide a protective transition from initial site disturbance until implementation of permanent stabilization and stormwater management facilities. The practices described herein are minimum requirements. Local concerns may require practices that are more restrictive than these minimum standards.



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PLANS **SUBMITTED**



149

COOPERATING AGENCIES & GROUPS



Local

- **Talbot County Commissioners**
- Talbot County Planning & Zoning Office
- Talbot County Department of **Public Works**
- **Talbot County Roads Department**
- Talbot County Parks & Recreation
- Critical Area Committee

State

- State Soil Conservation Committee
- Dept. of Agriculture (MDA)
- University of Maryland Extension
- Forest, Parks & Wildlife Services
- Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Dept. of the Environment (MDE)

Federal

- **Natural Resources Conservation** Service (NRCS)
- Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Fish & Wildlife Service (USFW)
- **Army Corps of Engineers**

Others

- Maryland Association of Soil **Conservation Districts**
- National Association of Soil Conservation Districts
- Soil Conservation Society of America
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- **Envision the Choptank**
- **ShoreRivers**

NACD Technical Assistance Support

For the fourth consecutive year, the Talbot SCD received grant funding from the National Association of Conservation Districts to fund two technicians who focused on designing and implementing USDA Farm Bill projects throughout Talbot County. For full grant reports, visit http:// www.nacdnet.org/echnicalassistance-grants/.



L to R: Nathan Hoffman and Ray Geist, both hired through NACD Technical Assistance funds.

The Talbot SCD is a proud member of the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts









TALBOT SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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