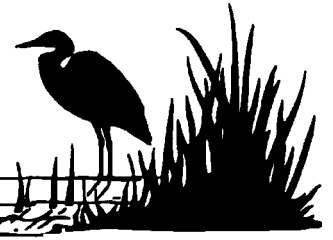


PARTNERSHIP PRESS

Maryland Conservation



Spring 2024 Volume 31 Issue 2

A MESSAGE FROM THE MASCD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JEN NELSON

Introducing Brad Gingras, MASCD's 2024 Keynote Speaker
Recognizing Generational Differences and Why That's Important
I came across an article recently titled "Zoomers will Overtake Boomers at Work Next Year", referring to the changing makeup of different generations in the workforce. "As of September 2023" says Emily Peck at Axiois, "Millennials make up the most of the full-time workforce with 49.5 million workers followed by Gen X at 42.8 million, Baby Boomers at 17.3 million and Gen Z at 17.1 million."

Why does this matter for the Conservation Partnership?
Each generation grows up with different influences and historical events that shape their behavior and what they value. This affects how people work, how they communicate and relate to each other. For conservation districts and partners to continue to be effective in our mission, we (like every other industry) need to be mindful that our potential employees and cooperators might have perspectives and expectations that differ from our own. As the numbers of Millennials and Gen Z increase among our team members and our cooperators, they are changing the way that we approach our work.

Recruitment & retention. What do potential employees prioritize when looking at a place to work? Salary and benefits? Flexibility and work-life balance? Making a difference? Diversity and inclusion? How well do our organizations align with these values?

Managing people. How do different generations relate to each other? Where do we make assumptions about "how the world works" that inhibit a common understanding and a shared set of expectations? Are we making the most of our respective strengths?

Outreach and communication. Different age groups tend to have different preferences for communication and receiving new information. By understanding those preferences, your district can be more effective in your outreach efforts, whatever your organizational capacity.

At MASCD's Annual Meeting (July 8-10 at the Hyatt in Cambridge), we're excited to be hosting Brad Gingras as the keynote speaker in our opening session and as part of the SSCC training session. Hailing from the woods of northern Wisconsin, Brad is a generational strategist, leadership trainer, advisor and executive job coach. He consistently follows and researches the evolution of the workforce and shares his perspectives in relevant, entertaining, and beneficial delivery. We're looking forward to hearing from Brad about how we can recognize our differences as tools in a toolbox, and how we can collaborate to do better work!

Learn more about Brad and hear clips from previous talks at superior-strategies.org/. Register for MASCD's Annual Meeting at mascd.net/2024-mascd-annual-meeting/

LEGISLATIVE END OF SESSION REPORT - BY MICHAEL COBURN AND MICHAEL MASON, PROVIDENCE STRATEGIES

This was a very productive session for MASCD as we monitored over 40 unique pieces of legislation. We introduced two bills pertaining to Soil Conservation Districts that passed: SB196 (HB1465) – Soil Conservation Districts - Small Ponds - Plan Review Fees; and HB1017, Boundary of the Frederick County Soil Conservation District - Alteration.

SB196, sponsored by Senator Gallion and carried in the House by Delegate Wims (HB1465), authorizes the soil conservation districts to recommend a fee system to a local governing body to cover the cost of the district's review of small pond plans, and establishes procedures for the development and enactment of a fee system.

Currently, Soil Conservation Districts utilize an engineer to review small pond designs, covering the costs associated with the reviews through revenue from sediment control review fees. The current fee structure is not sufficient for local governing bodies to adequately conduct their operations related to small ponds. The fee system created by this legislation generates additional revenue to cover costs, and allows for prompt review and approval of small ponds. The bill was amended to update the definition of "small pond" to a reservoir, dam, or waterway obstruction that is exempt from existing permitting requirements. SB196 as amended passed in the Senate unanimously, and passed in the House with a vote of 112-25.

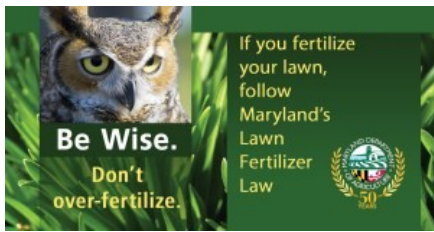
HB1017 – Boundary of the Frederick County Soil Conservation District - Alteration, sponsored by the Frederick County Delegation, consolidates the two soil conservation districts in Frederick County (the Catoctin Soil Conservation District and the Frederick Soil Conservation District) into one Frederick County Soil Conservation District with boundaries corresponding to the boundaries of Frederick County.

Before HB1017, Frederick was the only county in Maryland with more than one Soil Conservation District. By consolidating the two districts in Frederick, conservation efforts in the county may operate more uniformly and efficiently. The bill included a minor technical amendment to replace "altering the boundary" of the existing district with "establishing" a new district. HB1017 as amended passed both chambers unanimously.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Mason at Mason@Providence.llc.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

PROTECT THE LOCAL WATERWAYS AND THE CHESAPEAKE BAY— FOLLOW MARYLAND’S LAWN FERTILIZER LAW



The Maryland Department of Agriculture is reminding homeowners and lawn care professionals to follow Maryland’s Lawn Fertilizer Law when caring for lawns this spring. The law, which has been in effect for more than a dozen years, aims to protect local waterways and

the Chesapeake Bay from excessive nutrients contained in fertilizer products applied to non-agricultural land, including golf courses, parks, recreation areas, athletic fields, businesses, and hundreds of thousands of urban and suburban lawns.

“Helping to restore the health of local streams and our Chesapeake Bay is a top priority at MDA,” said Maryland Agriculture Secretary Kevin Atticks. “Everyone—from farmers to lawn care professionals to homeowners—needs to do their part if we are to restore the health and vitality of our Chesapeake Bay.”

If you hire a lawn care professional to fertilize your lawn, be sure that they are certified by the department’s Turfgrass Nutrient Management Program or work under the supervision of a certified professional. The department’s website has a list of certified lawn care professionals. These individuals have been trained in proper fertilizer application techniques and bay-friendly fertilizer practices.

If you prefer to take care of your lawn yourself:

- Consider skipping the spring fertilizer, especially if your lawn is healthy. Fall is the best time to fertilize cool-season grasses like fescues and Kentucky bluegrass.
- Sharpen lawnmower blades in the spring to avoid tearing and weakening the grass.
- Mow the grass high to shade out weeds and conserve moisture. Three inches is an ideal height for most lawns.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn. They provide free fertilizer all season long.

If you decide to fertilize:

- Get your soil tested to see if your grass will benefit from additional nutrients or lime. The University of Maryland Extension has information on soil testing.
- Read and follow all label directions on the fertilizer bag.
- Follow the University of Maryland Extension’s lawn fertilizer schedule.
- Do not apply phosphorus (indicated by the middle number on the fertilizer bag) to lawns unless a soil test shows that it is needed.
- If fertilizer lands on sidewalks or driveways, sweep it back onto the grass or clean it up.
- Keep fertilizer applications 10 to 15 feet away from waterways.
- Do not apply fertilizer if heavy rain is predicted.
- Observe fertilizer blackout dates between November 16 and March 1.



LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD

The Leopold Conservation Award Program recognizes and celebrates extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation by agricultural landowners. Sand County Foundation, the national sponsor American Farmland Trust, and conservation partners across the U.S. present the prestigious honor, which consists of \$10,000 and a crystal award, in settings that showcase the landowners’ achievements among their peers.

The Leopold Conservation Award program widely shares the stories of these conservation-minded farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners to inspire countless other landowners to embrace opportunities to improve soil health, water resources and wildlife habitat on their working land. Finally, the program builds bridges between agriculture, government, environmental organizations, industry and academia to advance the cause of environmental improvement on private land. Watch this video to learn more about the Leopold Conservation Award.

Nominate yourself or another landowner. Award criteria are used by an independent panel of agricultural and conservation professionals in each state to evaluate each application for the Leopold Conservation Award. For more information, please visit <https://sandcountyfoundation.org/our-work/leopold-conservation-award>

Future Dates to Remember	
May 16	SSCC Meeting, Annapolis
June 20	SSCC Meeting, Annapolis
July 18	SSCC Meeting, Annapolis
Aug 1	Leopold Application Due
July 8-10	MASCD Annual Meeting, Hyatt Regency, Cambridge
Aug 15	SSCC Meeting, Annapolis
Sept 19	SSCC Meeting, Annapolis

ENVIROTHON

MARYLAND TEENS COMPETE IN FIRST ROUND OF ENVIROTHON COMPETITIONS

High school science students from across the state are heading outdoors to compete in the first round of qualifying heats leading up to the 2024 National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon, North America’s largest environmental education competition for high school teens. The Envirothon is a demanding outdoor natural resources competition for teens that are passionate about the outdoors and the environment. Students participating in the Maryland Envirothon have been studying the state’s natural resources since the beginning of the school year. As part of their extracurricular training, they identify and categorize living resources, perform soil surveys, estimate wood yield from trees, and solve other complex natural resource issues. Students are taught by soil scientists, wildlife specialists, foresters, and environmental engineers from local, state, and federal agencies and private environmental organizations.

The competition includes a special environmental issue that changes from year to year. This year’s environmental issue is Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future. Teams compete by applying their knowledge and problem-solving skills in these natural resource areas. The county team with the highest score wins the local or regional competition and advances to the Maryland Envirothon, scheduled for June 11-13, 2024 at Mount St. Mary’s College. The winner of the Maryland Envirothon will go on to represent the state later this summer at the North American competition in Geneva, New York where more than 500 teenagers will compete for scholarships and prizes. The Envirothon is sponsored by Maryland’s Soil Conservation Districts and the State Soil Conservation Committee and supported by other state and federal programs. For the dates and contact information for upcoming county Envirothon competitions, https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/counties/2024Envirothon_LocalCompetitions-F.pdf

NRCS IS NOW ACCEPTING RCPP PROJECT PROPOSALS

NRCS recently announced the FY2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). NRCS will award up to \$1.5 billion through this funding opportunity. Potential partners are invited to propose RCPP projects where NRCS and partners co-invest in impactful and innovative solutions to on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns. There are two separate funding opportunities available: RCPP Classic and RCPP Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA). RCPP Classic projects are implemented using NRCS contracts and easements with producers, landowners, and communities in collaboration with project partners. Through RCPP AFA, the lead partner works directly with agricultural producers to support the development of innovative conservation approaches that would not otherwise be available under RCPP Classic.

RCPP Classic Notice of Funding Opportunity 0001354: <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/353379>

RCPP AFA Notice of Funding Opportunity 0001355: <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/353380>

Individual farmers/landowners are not eligible partners for this funding opportunity. Eligible entity partners may include: a conservation district, an agricultural or silvicultural producer association or other group of producers, state or unit of local government, an Indian tribe, a farmer cooperative, a water or irrigation district or other organization with specific water delivery authority to agricultural producers, a municipal water or wastewater treatment entity, an institution of higher education, those with an established history of working cooperatively with producers on agricultural land to address local conservation priorities or critical watershed scale natural resource issues. NRCS encourages proposals led by historically underserved entities.

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NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

DATES	CLASS DESCRIPTION
August 2, 2024	<p><u>2024 Maryland Nutrient Management Certification Examination</u> This exam is for farmers and consultants who want to write nutrient management plans for others. There is a \$50 non-refundable certification fee, however, government personnel are exempt with a Government Sales and Use Tax Exempt certificate.</p>
Ongoing	<p><u>University of Maryland Extension Event Calendar</u> Scroll through the calendar or search by topic for upcoming training events. To request course credit hours for your upcoming event please email us at nmpceu.mda@maryland.gov</p>
Webinars (Available Anytime)	<p><u>Learn and Earn CEUs Online</u> The University of Maryland and other institutions provide excellent nutrient management webinars. Even if you cannot attend a session "live," you might be able to earn CEUs at a later date.</p>

For registration information - https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/nutrient_management_training_program.aspx

NRCS NEW HIRES...

Logan Arendale, Management Analyst, State Office
Peggy Lowman, Natural Resource Specialist, Kent County
Ashley McAvoy, Natural Resource Specialist, Baltimore County
Andrew Zimmerman, Area Program Specialist, Frederick County
Bernadette Acker, State GIS Coordinator, State Office
Slater Hafer, Forester, Western MD
Heydsha Cordero, Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships, State Office
Noah Jack, RC&D Forestry Technician, Allegany
John Grose, RC&D Program Support Specialist, Garrett County
Trinadee Jenkins, RC&D CREP Planner, Harford County
Madelyn Haines, RC&D Grazing Specialist, Harford County
Jeremy Stevens, RC&D Forester, Baltimore County
Maria Drake, RC&D Monitoring Biologist, Worcester County
Rachel Becker, RC&D Program Support Specialist, Worcester and Somerset Counties
Chase Kolstrom, RC&D Forester, Southern MD
Maria Drake, RC&D Biologist, Eastern Shore
Casie Curry, RC&D Soil Conservation Technician, Anne Arundel and Calvert Counties
Amaya Remmel, RC&D Soil Conservation Technician, Anne Arundel and Calvert Counties
Vern Crocker, RC&D Soil Conservation Technician, Prince Georges, DC, and Baltimore City
Shana Burke, RC&D Soil Conservation Technician, Prince Georges, DC, and Baltimore City
Anna Hutchison, RC&D Soil Conservation Technician, Caroline and Talbot Counties
Richard Shepard II, RC&D Soil Conservation Technician, Caroline and Talbot Counties
John Knowles-Kellett, RC&D Program Support Specialist, Prince Georges County
Adam Gabor, RC&D CREP Planner, Upper Eastern Shore
Erin Kibelstis, RC&D CREP Planner, Lower Eastern Shore

NRCS BIDS FAREWELL TO...

Leon Tillman, Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, accepted a new position with NRCS's national Programs division.
Jennifer Richardson, Farm Bill Program Manager, accepted a new position with NRCS in Delaware.

NRCS TEMPORARY CHANGES...

Sherri Degraphenreed, Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, State Office.
Jackie Byars, Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Operations-Southern MD and Eastern Shore, State Office.
Kendrick Flowers, Acting Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, State Office.
Eugene Jones, Acting District Conservationist, Dorchester and Wicomico Counties, State Office.

PLANNER CERTIFICATION UPDATES...

The conservation planner certification process provides a consistent structure for supporting the technical competence of employees to perform conservation planning. Planner certification helps to ensure quality conservation treatment to address resource concerns, land-user objectives, and the wise use of technical and financial resources.

NRCS conservation planning policy, GM-180, Part 409, provides the framework for a planner to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. It is the agency standard for establishing an employee's allowable scope of work in providing planning assistance.

Working through the certification process will help conservation planners to recognize that they are working in a complex natural system and decisions made about one area or concern may have impacts on other parts of the same operation and offsite as well.

Congratulations to the following conservation professionals who recently achieved a new level of planner certification:

Level 1 Certification

- Julie Devers
- Erin Baker
- Reid Boden
- Kara Neilson
- Jillian Woods
- Miranda Rounds
- William Gindleberger
- Robin Hanway
- Cherish Warner
- Ivan Tokash
- Malik Baker-Gore
- Fiona Koye
- William Rawlings

Level 3 Certification

- Nina Lee
- Sean McCandless
- Kaylie Seabrease

NRCS IS NOW ACCEPTING RCPP PROJECT PROPOSALS

(Continued from page 3)

Applications are due by July 2, 2024.

NRCS will host an RCPP Applicant Outreach Webinar on May 30, 2024 from 2pm to 4pm EDT.

This webinar will provide general information for applicants submitting proposals followed by a question-and-answer section. Registration is required.

Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/226deb51-0b57-43b1-b340-95e535238713@ed5b36e7-01ee-4ebc-867e-c03cfa0d4697NRCS>

Need a Pasture Makeover?



Get Free Help from your local soil conservation district.

- Overgrazed pastures
- Mud and manure
- Stream fencing

LEARN MORE: mda.maryland.gov/HOW



MASCD ASSOCIATION MANUAL ONLINE

The Association Manual has evolved over many years and contains several sections which have been prepared to describe our formation, our history, our current operating guidelines and by-laws, and our future expectations in the form of our policy.

Supervisors and award winners, since the formation of the association, are recognized and the past presidents describe the activities that occurred under their leadership.

The manual has been designed so it can be updated as new leaders take the reins and as MASCD recognizes the contributions of other individuals in the soil conservation movement in Maryland.

Please visit <http://mascd.net/about/> to learn more.

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[Chapter 7a](#) (1935-1985 History)

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[Chapter 7c](#) (1966-2015 History)

[Chapter 8](#) (Supervisor's Handbook)



Harry Rieck, MASCD President, along with District Supervisors from seven Eastern Shore Districts greet Waters S. Davis, Jr., President, NACD, at the Salisbury airport, August 23, 1954.

P Maryland Conservation **PARTNERSHIP PRESS**



The Partnership Press is a quarterly newsletter published for and about the members of Maryland's Conservation Partnership: MD Department of Agriculture, MD Association of Soil Conservation Districts, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, Maryland Cooperative Extension, and the State Soil Conservation Committee.

The deadline for articles is January 30, April 30, July 30 and October 30. Please direct comments or questions to the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts at 202-353-9733.

The members of the Conservation Partnership prohibit discrimination in their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call 1-800-245-6340 (voice) or (202) 720-5964 (TDD). Agencies in the Maryland Conservation Partnership are equal employment opportunity employers.