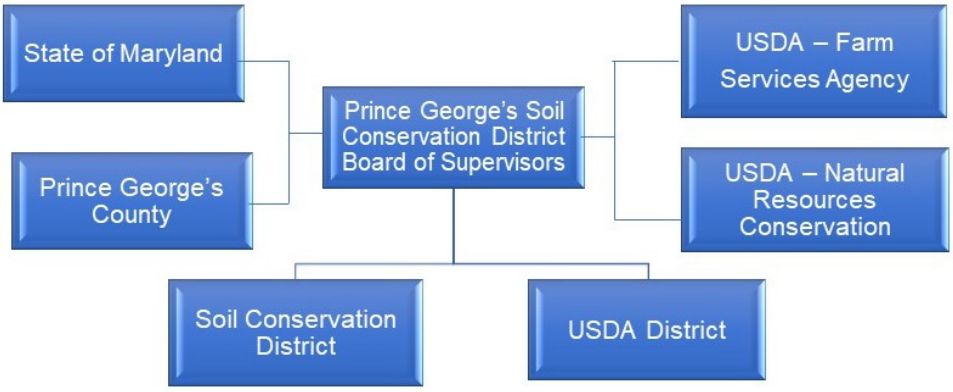
# Soil Conservation District




## MISSION AND SERVICES

The Soil Conservation District provides grading, erosion and sediment control services, agricultural landowner assistance and rural land preservation services to the citizens and residents of the County in order to protect the County's soil and water resources.

### CORE SERVICES

- Provide technical review/approval for land grading, erosion and sediment control and small pond dam safety
- Provide agricultural landowner assistance services for soil and water conservation program implementation
- Administer rural land preservation programs
- Provide soil and water conservation technical services to urban agricultural operations

### FY 2019 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Continued to meet or exceed the Maryland Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP II) milestone goals for conservation planning, Best Management Practices (BMPs) implementation and continued implementation of two soil health and carbon sequestration demonstration farms to educate farmers on the benefits of soil health practices.
- Developed an urban agriculture conservation program in concert with the County's urban agriculture tax credit program in order to provide technical assistance to the growing urban agriculture community.
- Maintained an average urban plan review time of less than five business days while continuing to partner with the Department of the Environment and the Clean Water Partnership on Stormwater Management retrofit projects throughout the County.
- Increased high school team participation for the local Envirothon competition awarding additional higher education scholarships for a total of $22,000 since 2013 and donated 150 recycle containers to four elementary schools.
- Preserved additional acres of agriculture land through the Historic Agriculture Resource Preservation Program (HARPP), Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation (MALPF) and Rural Legacy programs totaling over 6,100 acres.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AND INITIATIVES FOR FY 2020

The agency's top priorities in FY 2020 are:

- Maintain the average turnaround time for urban land grading, erosion and sediment control, dam safety and small pond plan reviews at or below five days by providing technical assistance to customers.
- Increase the number of acres treated by BMPs on agricultural land by providing technical assistance to agricultural land owners on appropriate installation of those BMPs in order to mitigate water quality issues.
- Increase the acres of preserved agricultural land in the County by preserving agricultural land through perpetual easements, possibly directing growth away from the rural tier and limiting the need for infrastructure funding to rural areas of the County.
- Increase education and outreach of soil and water conservation to the citizens of Prince George's County.
- Increase technical assistance for the conservation of soil and water resources on urban agricultural operations in the County.

# FY 2020 BUDGET SUMMARY

The FY 2020 approved budget for the Soil Conservation District is $0 and unchanged from the FY 2019 approved budget. The FY 2020 approved budget before recoveries is $1,679,600, an increase of $99,200 or 6.3% over the FY 2019 approved budget. The Soil Conservation District General Fund costs are 100% recovered from non-General Fund sources.

### Expenditures by Fund Type

| | FY 2018 Actual | | FY 2019 Budget | | FY 2019 Estimate | | FY 2020 Approved | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fund Types | Amount | % Total | Amount | % Total | Amount | % Total | Amount | % Total |
| General Fund | $— | 0.0% | $— | 0.0% | $— | 0.0% | $— | 0.0% |
| **Total** | **$—** | **0.0%** | **$—** | **0.0%** | **$—** | **0.0%** | **$—** | **0.0%** |

### Reconciliation from Prior Year

| | Expenditures |
|---|---|
| **FY 2019 Approved Budget** | **$—** |
| **Increase Cost: Compensation - Mandated Salary Requirements** | $62,900 |
| **Increase Cost: Fringe Benefits** — Increase in costs due to a change in the fringe benefit rate from 30.9% to 31.2% and compensation adjustments | 23,000 |
| **Increase Cost: Operating - Office Automation Charge** — Increase in OIT charges to support anticipated costs for SAP maintenance and the countywide laptop refresh program | 13,300 |
| **Decrease Cost: Recoveries** — An increase in recoveries from the Storm Water Management Fund and Agricultural Land Transfer Tax to align with anticipated costs | (99,200) |
| **FY 2020 Approved Budget** | **$—** |

# STAFF AND BUDGET RESOURCES

| Authorized Positions | FY 2018 Budget | FY 2019 Budget | FY 2020 Approved | Change FY19-FY20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **General Fund** | | | | |
| Full Time - Civilian | 15 | 16 | 16 | 0 |
| Full Time - Sworn | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Subtotal - FT | 15 | 16 | 16 | 0 |
| Part Time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Limited Term | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | | | | |
| Full Time - Civilian | 15 | 16 | 16 | 0 |
| Full Time - Sworn | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Subtotal - FT | 15 | 16 | 16 | 0 |
| Part Time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Limited Term | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Positions By Classification | FY 2020 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Full Time | Part Time | Limited Term |
| Administrative Aide | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Administrative Assistant | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Administrative Specialist | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Engineer | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Planner | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | **16** | **0** | **0** |

## Expenditures by Category - General Fund

| Category | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Budget | FY 2019 Estimate | FY 2020 Approved | Change FY19-FY20 Amount ($) | Change FY19-FY20 Percent (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Compensation | $1,041,218 | $1,168,000 | $1,129,000 | $1,230,900 | $62,900 | 5.4% |
| Fringe Benefits | 310,352 | 361,000 | 334,000 | 384,000 | 23,000 | 6.4% |
| Operating | 13,916 | 51,400 | 51,400 | 64,700 | 13,300 | 25.9% |
| **SubTotal** | **$1,365,486** | **$1,580,400** | **$1,514,400** | **$1,679,600** | **$99,200** | **6.3%** |
| Recoveries | (1,365,486) | (1,580,400) | (1,514,400) | (1,679,600) | (99,200) | 6.3% |
| **Total** | **$—** | **$—** | **$—** | **$—** | **$—** | **0.0%** |

In FY 2020, compensation expenditures increase 5.4% over the FY 2019 budget due to the anticipated cost of living and merit adjustments. Compensation costs include funding for 16 full time positions. Fringe benefit expenditures increase 6.4% over the FY 2019 budget to reflect the change in the rate and compensation adjustments.

Operating expenditures increase 25.9% due to the increase in office automation charges to support anticipated countywide costs for SAP maintenance and computer refresh.

Recoveries increase 6.3% over the FY 2019 budget to reflect an increase in overall expenditures. The General Fund cost of the Soil Conservation District is recovered from the Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund, which includes District and State reimbursement for sediment control fees. In addition, the agency will recover $12,500 from the Agricultural Land Transfer Tax for the expenditures associated with the Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

# SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

**Goal 1** — To provide urban land grading and erosion and sediment control planning services to the County's citizens and residents in order to protect the County's water quality and against averse impacts associated with sediment pollution.

**Objective 1.1** — Maintain the average turn around time for urban grading and sediment plan reviews at or below five business days.

| FY 2024 Target | FY 2017 Actual | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Estimated | FY 2020 Projected | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.0 | 2.9 | 3.4 | 5.0 | 5.0 | ⇔ |

## Trend and Analysis

In order to improve the County's and State's water quality and dam safety program, the district reviews grading, erosion and sediment control plans. Reviewing these plans quickly with a high degree of quality and accuracy allows sediment control plans to be implemented in a timely manner. The average number of workdays required to review a plan is faster that the District's Board of Supervisors maximum standard of 10 business days.

## Performance Measures

| Measure Name | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Actual | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Estimated | FY 2020 Projected |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Resources (Input)** | | | | | |
| Number of certified staff reviewing plans | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| **Workload, Demand and Production (Output)** | | | | | |
| Number of plans reviewed | 1,736 | 1,802 | 1,960 | 1,600 | 1,600 |
| Number of training sessions provided to internal and external customers | 20 | 20 | 17 | 15 | 15 |
| **Efficiency** | | | | | |
| Average number of plans reviewed per employee | 261.5 | 300.0 | 392.0 | 229.0 | 229.0 |
| **Impact (Outcome)** | | | | | |
| Number of approved plans in compliance with State of Maryland regulations | 499 | 516 | 607 | 500 | 500 |
| Average number of workdays required to review a plan | 2.5 | 2.9 | 3.4 | 5.0 | 5.0 |

**Goal 2** — To provide agricultural assistance services to the County's citizens and residents in order to protect the County's water quality.

**Objective 2.1** — Increase the number of acres treated by Best Management Practices (BMPs) on agricultural land.

| FY 2024 Target | FY 2017 Actual | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Estimated | FY 2020 Projected | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4,100 | 4,553 | 6,657 | 4,100 | 4,100 | ⇔ |

## Trend and Analysis

A BMP is an engineering or agronomic practice designed to reduce soil erosion, nutrients and/or improve water quality. The number of BMPs installed is due in large part to farmer participation in the Maryland State Cover Crop Program and support from this agency in providing technical assistance in the installation of other BMPs. The performance data is impacted by the weather as well as the farmer's ability to implement the State's cover crop program. Total agricultural land mass is approximately 60,000 acres.

The new USDA Farm Bill may impact Federal Cost Share programs and reduce BMP implementation; the agency will continue to monitor this activity. The national emphasis on soil health may increase the use of no-till and cover crops that will incorporate more acres with BMPs.

## Performance Measures

| Measure Name | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Actual | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Estimated | FY 2020 Projected |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Resources (Input)** | | | | | |
| Number of County, state, and federal staff developing plans and implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| **Workload, Demand and Production (Output)** | | | | | |
| Number of BMPs installed | 230 | 158 | 186 | 200 | 200 |
| Number of state and federal cost share contracts processed | 117 | 75 | 140 | 80 | 80 |
| **Efficiency** | | | | | |
| Average number of BMPs installed per employee | 57.5 | 39.5 | 37.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| **Impact (Outcome)** | | | | | |
| Number of acres treated by BMPs | 5,061 | 4,553 | 6,657 | 4,100 | 4,100 |

**Goal 3** — To provide rural land preservation assistance services to citizens and residents in order to protect agricultural land in the County.

**Objective 3.1** — Increase the preservation of acres of agricultural land in the County.

| FY 2024 Target | FY 2017 Actual | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Estimated | FY 2020 Projected | Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9,000 | 5,603 | 6,161 | 6,400 | 7,100 | ↑ |

## Trend and Analysis

The Historic Agricultural Resource Preservation Program (HARPP) application process takes approximately two years, therefore, a property may not be purchased for several years spanning multiple fiscal budgets. The goal is to preserve over 10,000 acres of privately owned agricultural land by 2027. Securing federal, state, County and outside funds to purchase easements is critical for meeting long term program goals.

## Performance Measures

| Measure Name | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Actual | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Estimated | FY 2020 Projected |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Resources (Input)** | | | | | |
| Number of staff supporting enrollment of land into preservation programs | 2 | 2 | 1.5 | 1 | 1 |
| **Workload, Demand and Production (Output)** | | | | | |
| Number of applications processed for the various agricultural preservation programs | 6 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 5 |
| Number of new agricultural acres approved for the program, pending purchase | 456 | 362 | 53 | 500 | 500 |
| Number of acres purchased in the County for easement/preservation | 566 | 198 | 558 | 600 | 500 |
| Number of newsletters, produced and public meetings attended | 45 | 37 | 45 | 30 | 30 |
| **Efficiency** | | | | | |
| Average number of applications processed per staff member | 2.0 | 4.5 | 6.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| **Quality** | | | | | |
| Maintain state certification through Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| **Impact (Outcome)** | | | | | |
| Number of protected acres countywide | 5,375 | 5,603 | 6,161 | 6,400 | 7,100 |
| Percentage of all agricultural acres protected Countywide | 15% | 15% | 17% | 17% | 19% |