The Harford Resource

A Publication of the Harford Soil Conservation District

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UPCOMING EVENTS

October 9
Board of Supervisors Meeting

October 12
Churchville Heritage Festival

October 29
Concord Point Pond & Landscape Infiltration Ribbon Cutting

November 13
Board of Supervisors Meeting

December 11
Board of Supervisors Meeting

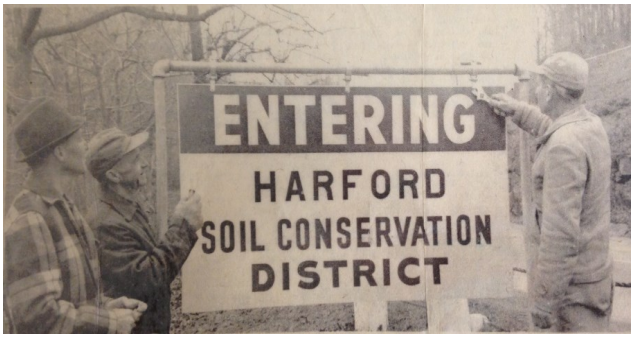
If you would like to:

- Receive a digital version of this newsletter or
- Would like to submit an article or
- Have an idea for an article...

Please contact the Editor, **Leslie Zink,** at leslie.zink@maryland.gov

The History of the Harford Soil Conservation District

On Sunday, September 8, 2019 the Harford Soil Conservation District celebrated it's 75th anniversary at Swan Harbor Farm in Havre de Grace, Maryland. The following is the history of our District as read by our Master of Ceremonies, Jeffrey St. Pierre, Assistant Program Director, WPOC Baltimore.



In April 1935 the U.S. Congress passed the Soil Conservation Act, which created the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) within the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and declared that the federal government bore permanent responsibility for reducing water and wind erosion of the nation's soils. The creation of the Soil Conservation Act was in direct response to the unprecedented damages caused by the Dust Bowl – damages to agricultural productivity, air quality, water quality, and ecologies across the United States of America. Severe drought coupled with agricultural production methods of the time were documented to have been the cause of the Dust Bowl phenomenon. Following the recommendations of Hugh Hammond Bennett, known as the Father of Conservation Farming, the local grassroots organization of Soil Conservation Districts were created. As of today, there are nearly 3,000 Soil Conservation District's across the United States and U.S. Territories.

Originally, as part of the Gunpowder Soil Conservation District, which was formed in 1939, the focus was on conservation efforts within the Gunpowder River watershed encompassing parts of both Harford and Baltimore Counties. Realizing the need for conservation outside of the watershed, it was decided in 1944 to create a District office to provide services to all landowners of Harford County. On September 6, 1944, the Harford Soil Conservation District (the District) received the Certificate of Organization from the State of Maryland. A new Board of Supervisors were appointed and locally-led voluntary conservation was available to all farmers within the county.

Jeffrey St. Pierre

The District is part of a partnership between state, federal, and local governments and is the local delivery system for the state's agricultural conservation programs to install best management practices (BMPs) on farms.

(Continued on Page 2)

The History of the Harford Soil Conservation District *continued...*

Board of Supervisors Meeting - December 9, 1968: (Left to Right) Charles Smith, C. Russell Galbreath, Samuel Foard, Jr., Worley N. Umbarger, and Henry Holloway.

Agronomic BMPs such as cropping rotations and nutrient management along with Engineered BMPs such as grassed waterways and waste storage structures are recommendations that the District has discussed with farmers for decades. The District coordinates assistance from all of the available sources to develop locally-driven solutions to natural resources concerns. The District staff coordinates the daily planning and technical assistance with the farmers on recommendations for conservation activities. Just as Hugh Hammond Bennett proposed in the 1930s, the personal on-farm interaction between the farmer and the District remains the most effective manner to implement conservation efforts. The District also reviews and approves urban erosion and sediment control plans; and provides educational outreach to students, farmers, developers and landowners on soil erosion and water quality improvement efforts.

Over the past 75 years, the focus of the District has changed from solely soil erosion to include water quality improvements and protection of endangered species. The Clean Water Act of 1972 emphasized conservation efforts to protect runoff of sediment and nutrients to our streams and tributaries. An array of Best Management Practices were introduced during this period to assist with the streamside protection. No-till farming was an innovative planting method, along with contour and strip farming to reduce the amount of sediment runoff. The Endangered Species Act of 1973 was developed to protect threatened or endangered species of plants and animals along with the habitat in which they are found. The primary focus of the Endangered Species Act in Harford County is to protect or enhance the habitat for the Bog Turtle. Recommendations are documented within the conservation plan to provide controlled grazing and to minimize woodland management practices within the habitat areas of the bog turtles.

Technology in agriculture has exploded over the last 20 years and Harford farmers have embraced this movement. From grid sampling of cropland soils to full scale precision Ag equipment, technology has proven to assist farmers with conservation efforts, soil health and most importantly, the operations bottom line. By definition, precision agriculture is managing crop production inputs (seed, fertilizer, lime, pesticides, etc.) on a site-specific basis to increase profits, reduce waste and maintain environmental quality. A common example of this technology is automatic shut-off units for planting equipment. This GPS guided system eliminates overlapping the rows during the planting process which reduces the amount of fertilizer and seed the farmer has to purchase.

Harford County has a rich history of agriculture. The 1940 Census of Agriculture lists Harford County as having 2,269 farms covering 206,000 acres of land. Of those farms, 76% were dairy operations and Harford ranked 2nd in the State for gallons of milk produced with over 10 million gallons. Another sector of agriculture that put Harford County on the national stage was the canning industry. Between 1880-1959, there were approximately 700 local canneries. Harford County became famous for its canned tomatoes and corn, which were often processed directly on the farm. The canneries used local vegetables and had access to a large population within the corridor of Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington DC.

Photo courtesy of The Patch:

https://patch.com/maryland/aberdeen/the-wayback-machine-the-empire-begins

The decline of the canning industry has been related to the installation of Aberdeen Proving Ground, advancements in refrigeration and the improvements to transportation networks. It has been noted by the Harford County Historical Society that the last can of Harford County canned corn was shipped in 1999. Currently, there are less than 700 farms in Harford County covering over 74,000 acres. Today's operations range from thousands of acres to just a few acres and consist of commodity grain, produce, fruits, livestock, dairy products, wineries and breweries. A strong Buy Local campaign by Harford County advertises for the many value-added, niche marketing operations that provide direct retail sales to consumers.

The demographics of Harford County has changed over the last 75 years as well. With a population increase of nearly 219,000, the landscape of Harford County has expanded to include the construction of Interstate 95 in 1963 and the Development Envelope proposed in the late 1970s. The original goal of the Development Envelope was to concentrate development in a specific area of the county that was appropriately zoned and had adequate public facilities; and the resources to sustain a growing population. This area encompasses the I-95 and Route 24 corridors; and consists of 56,000 acres of the County. A growing population brought an increase of development to the County, which posed the need for places that people could live, work and learn.

The Harford Soil Conservation District had to adjust with the times by taking on the role of reviewing and approving the erosion and sediment control plans for all development sites within Harford County and the municipalities. As with all the agricultural BMPs, the primary focus is to minimize the discharge of sediment from development sites during construction. By the mid-1980s, the State of Maryland realized that not only was protecting the site during construction important, but managing rain events after the development was completed was crucial to the existing conditions of the streams and tributaries. This introduced the Storm Water Management regulations that allowed the District to work alongside State and County agencies to further protect the environment.

Our Board of Supervisors (Left to Right): David Doran, Frank Richardson, Lee McDaniel, Rick Holloway, Kim Lewis, Christen Sullivan, and Amy Crowl.

With a growing population, the need for educational outreach pertaining to soil erosion and water quality matters for farmers, landowners, and students has been an area that the District found that they could assist with. Since 1991, the District has been the lead sponsor of the local Envirothon Competition, which is an environmental competition between students in High School covering 5 topics. The topics are soils, aquatics, wildlife, forestry and a rotating environmental category. Over the years, the Harford County team has represented the State of Maryland nine times at the National/International competition. Recently, the District's outreach program has expanded and revitalized our conservation message. With the mind set of using multiple methods of distribution such as email, social media and standard mail, the District has increased the number of people that have access to soil and water conservation information and activities. The quarterly newsletter (The Harford Resource), our website (HarfordSCD.org) and our Facebook page are new methods of interaction between the District and the general public. A new opportunity for the District in 2019 was providing the instruction to a group of Scouts to earn their Soil and Water Conservation merit badge. The District hopes to continue growing the partnership with the BSA and search for new opportunities to serve the educational needs of the County.

For the last 75 years, the Harford Soil Conservation District's primary goal has been and continues to be protecting and conserving the natural resources within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed through educational outreach and technical assistance.

Original Certificate of Organization
Harford Soil Conservation District
September 6, 1944

CERTIFICATE OF ORGANIZATION

State of Maryland

Department of State

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING:

WHEREAS, W. Lee Linkous, and Howard W. Turner, supervisors of the Harford Soil Conservation District, have presented to this office an application, in the form required by law, for a certificate of organization of the Harford Soil Conservation District; and

WHEREAS, the said application was accompanied by a statement, from the State Soil Conservation Committee, in the form required by law; and

WHEREAS, the name proposed for the said district is not identical with that of any other soil conservation district of this State, or so nearly similar as to lead to confusion or uncertainty; and

WHEREAS, the said application and statement have been made, filed and recorded in this office as required by law;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby certified that the Harford Soil Conservation District has been duly organized as a governmental subdivision of this State and a public body corporate and politic.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, these presents have been attested with the seal and signed by the Secretary of State of the State of Maryland, at Annapolis, Maryland, on the 6" day of September, 1944.

Secretary of State of the State of Maryland

(SEAL)

Meet Christen Sullivan... Associate Member, Board of Supervisors

Christen Sullivan is a Harford County native, raised in Bel Air and a graduate of Bel Air High School. She is a senior budget analyst for Harford County Government and has been with the County for over fifteen years. In her role she has the pleasure of working with all departments and agencies; and enjoys learning about the functions and important roles they have in keeping Harford County such a wonderful place to live.

She joined the HSCD Board of Supervisors in 2018 as an Associate. Her family has a personal passion for agriculture and natural resources, so joining the Board was the chance to explore and challenge herself to bring a new perspective the District.

Prior to starting a career in government, she initially went to college for Art History with a concentration in Egyptian Art and studied abroad at the University of Manchester in England. Christen is married to John, and they have three wonderful children between them – Ben, Ham and Olive, all of which have or continue to participate in the Harford County 4-H Program. Aside from her family, Christen is also slightly obsessed with exercise and yoga. She is a certified Bodypump instructor and teaches classes regularly for the Y.

Agricultural Conservation Leasing

Agricultural Conservation Leasing Guide

When it comes to leased farmland, it can be challenging for parties to implement conservation practices. Conservation practices tend to be less common on leased acres for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to, instability in the leasing relationship, poor communication between landowners and farmers, and a lack of knowledge of practices and funding opportunities. In an effort to address these factors, the Agriculture Law Education Initiative (ALEI) and the Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology, Inc. (Hughes Center) created the Agricultural Conservation Leasing Guide (available for download at umaglaw.org). Last winter, ALEI and the Hughes Center educated agricultural service providers, farmers and landowners, at statewide workshops, on how to use a lease to support on-farm conservation. The project was supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program under sub-award number ENE18-151.

The Leasing Guide is a tool for both non-operating landowners and farmers. The first step in this process for most leasing parties is to contemplate and communicate their goals for the farming operation. The Leasing Guide contains communication strategies and tools to help parties take these vital first steps. For landowners who are unfamiliar with agriculture and/or on-farm conservation practices, the Leasing Guide contains an explanation of how the term of a lease can impact conservation, resource information for agricultural service providers, and descriptions of commonly used conservation practices. There are also considerations and sample lease language for conservation practices, useful for both landowners and farmers, within the Leasing Guide.

According to Sarah Everhart, Managing Director, ALEI, University of Maryland Carey Law School:
"We have tried to make it as easy as possible for folks to use a lease to both protect themselves and support the use of best management practices on the farm. We heard from many farmers that the maintenance of best management practices can be an unwelcome and often uncompensated addition to a farmer's workload, so we included numerous ways to use lease language to equitably allocate responsibilities related to these practices."

In addition, there are many agricultural service providers (Land Trust professionals, University of Maryland Extension, NRCS, Soil Conservation District staff, etc.) who are knowledgeable about this valuable resource. ALEI and Hughes Center are available to offer technical support and educational resources (leasing resources are available for download on the Hughes Center website (go.umd.edu/conservationleasing)). Anyone with questions about this project can contact Sarah Everhart, 410-458-2475, severhart@law.umaryland.edu.

Here's the link to the page that contains a link to download the Ag Conservation Leasing Guide:
http://umaglaw.org/publications-library/agricultural-conservation-leasing-guide/.

Our very own Board member, Dave Doran, and his son Mike were featured in a recent article by the Delmarva Farmer about their participation in the new ***Harford County Farm Finder,*** which promotes our local Farms. The Harford County Farm Finder is an interactive map that can be accessed online. There is also a mobile application. You can find the full article here: *Online Map Serves as Key for Harford Marketers*

To participate in the ***Harford County Farm Finder*** project, a completed Application and signed Consent form are required. Forms are available to print at www.harfordscd.org, can be picked up at the Harford County Agricultural Center, or you may contact Leslie Zink at (410) 638-4828, ext. 5229 to receive a copy of the forms by email.

2019 - 2020 COVER CROP PROGRAM *Fall Certification*

All cover crops must be planted by November 5, 2019 and certified with the soil conservation district by **November 13, 2019** to qualify for payment.

For more information on the 2019 - 2020 Cover Crop Program visit: https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/cover_crop.aspx

Call ahead to insure District staff are available to assist you at (410) 638 - 4828.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU

2020 Farm Trucking Forum

SHA State Highway Administration

These events are hosted by the Maryland Farm Bureau. Representatives from the State Highway Administration, Maryland State Police, and Maryland Vehicle Administration will be on hand to answer questions.

- Updated Farm Trucking Manuals will be available.
- Discuss the issues facing farmers on rural roads and state highways.
- Hear firsthand how the latest trucking rules and regulations can affect your business.
- Have a question about IRP's, permits, tags, and weight limits?

MARYLAND STATE POLICE

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION
Solutions in your community

MVA Motor Vehicle Administration

Friday, March 20, 2020

9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Chesapeake College
Todd Performing Arts Center
1000 College Circle
Wye Mills, MD 21679

Donuts and Coffee will be served.

For more information, contact Maryland Farm Bureau at **(410) 922-3426**

Farmers and Landowners Urged to Manage Spotted Lanternfly

By Andrew Kness, Agriculture Agent, University of Maryland

Figure 1. Adult spotted lanternfly life stages. Image: L. Barringer, PA Dept. of Agriculture.

With the recent confirmation of live, adult spotted lanternflies (SLF, Figure 1) in Harford County, Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) urges farmers and landowners to be on the lookout for this invasive insect and take proper management action and precaution.

The spotted lanternfly is native to Asia and was first discovered in the United States in Berks County, PA in 2014. Despite quarantine efforts in Pennsylvania, it has spread to Delaware, New Jersey, Virginia, and Maryland. This insect has the potential to become both a nuisance pest and an agricultural pest.

Figure 2. Tree-of-heaven (Ailanthus altissima) Image: Richard Webb, Bugwood.org.

Spotted lanternflies are true bugs (belonging to the family Hemiptera), meaning that they have piercing-sucking mouthparts (similar to a hollow needle) in which they use to feed, sucking sugars and carbohydrates from the xylem and phloem of plants. Heavy feeding by these insects can weaken the plant and cause it to become susceptible to winter injury, other insects, and diseases. Spotted lanternfly will feed on a wide range of plants, but prefer tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*); another invasive species native to Asia (Figure 2). Hosts that are of concern for agriculture include grapes, hops, apples, stone fruits, and several ornamentals. You may want to consider eradicating tree-of-heaven from your property, then scout and manage for SLF if infestations occur. However, be sure you properly identify tree of heaven; there are other trees that look similar, including sumac and black walnut. Kill individual SLFs as you see them and report them to MDA. Adults can swarm in large numbers, so a more practical approach may be needed if large swarms occur. Several insecticides will kill adults and immatures, but since this is a new pest, there are no products labelled specifically for use against spotted lanternfly. Neem oil and insecticidal soaps can be effective, especially on immature stages. Penn State has been researching SLF management with insecticides, as well as tree wraps, banding, and trap crops. Adult SLFs can fly and move in to previously treated areas, so repeated control measures may need to be taken throughout the season.

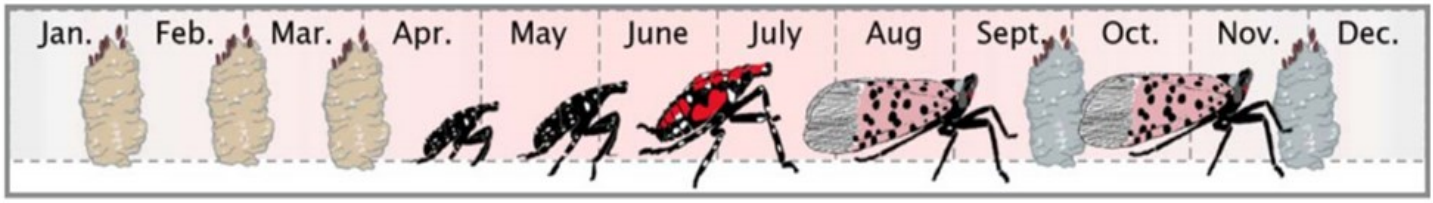


Figure 3. Spotted lanternfly life cycle. Nymphs appear in April and develop through midsummer, when they begin to molt into adults. Adults will lay egg masses throughout fall, and will die by the start of winter. Egg masses will last through winter and hatch the following spring. Figure credit: Peter Coffey, University of Maryland Extension Brief.

Spotted lanternfly goes through several immature stages (called instars, Figure 3). During instars 1-3 (occurring from late April—mid July) SLF are small, wingless, black insects with white spots. During the 4th instar (July—September), they are about ½" long, wingless, and develop bright orange patches in addition to the black and white pattern. The adult stage occurs mid-to-late summer into the first frost and are large (1" long) with wings. The forewing is grey with black spots and gray tips; the hind wings have patches of red and black separated by a white band (Figure 1). The abdomen is yellow with broad black bands. In fall, adults mate and females lay eggs. Egg masses are deposited onto hard surfaces such as trees, stone, outdoor furniture, vehicles, and other structures (Figure 4). Scout for these egg masses and destroy them by smearing them with a hard object (credit card, pocket knife, etc.).

Figure 4. Spotted lanternfly egg masses on tree-of-heaven. Image: L. Barringer, PA Dept. of Agriculture.

For more information concerning SLF management, contact the University of Maryland Extension.

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Find Us on the Web at **www.harfordscd.org**

HARFORD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
EST. 1944

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

1944 ● ➤ 2019