

sented (Code Agriculture Article, secs. 8-101 through 8-501).

SOIL CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATION

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The Soil Conservation Administration directs the Department's soil and water conservation program and works to control soil erosion and agricultural nonpoint source water pollution.

The Administration provides resources to the twenty-four soil conservation districts in the State. Financial assistance and State personnel are available to provide technical assistance to the agricultural community. By these programs, soil and water conservation plans are developed for agricultural landowners and farm operators, and agricultural "best management practices" are promoted.

Through the Water Quality Cost-Share Program, the Administration reduces water pollution caused by nutrient and sediment erosion, animal wastes, or agricultural chemicals. The Program provides financial assistance to individuals and landowners using agricultural "best management practices".

The Administration also conducts the Agricultural Water Management Program. To protect water quality, the Program oversees the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of agricultural drainage projects by public drainage associations. Financial aid is made available to these associations through drainage maintenance cost-share agreements.

FOREST PEST MANAGEMENT SECTION

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Known as the Gypsy Moth Control Section until 1987, the Forest Pest Management Section protects forests by stopping insect, particularly gypsy moth, infestation.

The gypsy moth is the most destructive forest pest of the eastern United States. It harms trees in wooded residential areas, parks, and recreation areas. Consequently, the moth is the subject of a State and a national quarantine program. This pest has been present in Maryland since 1971. Despite an active suppression program, the gypsy moth continues threatening unprotected trees. The cooperative local, State, and federal program to manage the moth is coordinated by the Annapolis office. Branch offices are located in Cheltenham, Cumberland, Mt. Airy, and Bel Air.

MOSQUITO CONTROL SECTION

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The Mosquito Control Section conducts a state-wide cooperatively funded program to provide mosquito control services. Branch offices are located in College Park, Salisbury, and Clements. Environmentally compatible temporary methods (adulticiding and larvaciding) and permanent methods (water management) are used to control mosquitoes. In addition to implementing control measures, the Section monitors the environmental impact of the program, develops effective control methods, and conducts epidemiological investigations of mosquito-borne diseases (Code Agriculture Article, secs. 5-401 through 5-405).

PESTICIDE REGULATION SECTION

Vacancy, *Chief*

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Formerly the Pesticide Applicators Law Section, the Pesticide Regulation Section received its new name in 1987. It regulates the use of pesticides in Maryland. The Section licenses businesses engaged in commercial application of pesticides; trains and certifies commercial and private pesticide applicators; and enforces the Pesticide Applicators Law and Regulations. The Section also provides technical advice on the use of pesticides.

The Chief serves as the State's authority on matters relating to pesticide use and application (Code Agriculture Article, secs. 5-201 through 5-211).

PLANT PROTECTION SECTION

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The Plant Protection Section administers programs relating to nursery inspection, plant protection and quarantine, integrated pest management, and nuisance bird control. The Section also oversees programs for forest pest management, certified plant production, inspection and registration of honey bee colonies, and implementation of the Interstate Pest Control Compact.

The Section serves as the State's authority on plant pests and agricultural quarantines, and provides liaison for the Department with other State and federal regulatory officials (Code Agriculture Article, secs. 5-301 through 5-313, 5-501 through 5-507, 5-701 through 5-716, 5-801 through 5-805).