

Louise Lawrence, *Executive Secretary*
841-5863

Established in 1937, the State Soil Conservation Committee has organized twenty-four soil conservation districts covering the entire State except Baltimore City (Chapter 436, Acts of 1937). The Committee coordinates district work to apply scientifically sound and practical conservation measures ("best management practices") to Maryland lands. The goals are to retard soil erosion and nonpoint source pollution, conserve soil, and protect water quality. For each district, the Committee appoints four of the five persons who serve on a board of soil conservation supervisors.

The State Committee helps districts secure aid from State and federal agencies for soil and water conservation, and certain phases of related land use programs. Areas of concern include nonpoint source pollution, watershed protection and flood prevention, siltation of streams and reservoirs, shore erosion control, and highway erosion control. They also involve forest and woodland conservation and development, the protection and propagation of wildlife, development of public land areas, and urban sediment and erosion control.

The Committee has eleven members. Six serve ex officio. Five are soil conservation district supervisors appointed to four-year terms by the Secretary of Agriculture from recommendations made by the districts represented (Code Agriculture Article, secs. 8-101 through 8-501).

PROGRAM PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Louise Lawrence, *Supervisor*
841-5863

The Program Planning and Development Section supports the work of the State Soil Conservation Committee and the Office of Resource Conservation by planning, developing and coordinating policy, programs, and public information. The soil and water conservation work of the Office is coordinated with soil conservation districts, and agencies and organizations with related programs.

Under the Agricultural Water Management Program, the Section helps public drainage associations

maintain agricultural drainage projects. Interagency reviews of public drainage association plans for construction, reconstruction, operation and maintenance are conducted. Financial aid is made available to these associations through drainage maintenance cost-share agreements. The Section also coordinates and evaluates the Nutrient Management Program, which helps individual farmers plan nutrient management.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION OPERATIONS

Eugene Thompson, *Chief*
841-5896

The Resource Conservation Operations Section administers State resources that support soil and water conservation programs on agricultural land and provides guidance and assistance to twenty-four soil conservation districts. The Section gives financial support to soil conservation districts for conservation programs. The Section also provides technical assistance to farmers and landowners on best management practices to control nutrient soil erosion and agricultural nonpoint source pollution.

CONSERVATION GRANTS

F. Gould Charshee, *Supervisor*
841-5864

The Conservation Grants Section conducts the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program (MACS) and the State Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Established in 1983, the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program provides cost-share grants to individuals installing best management practices on agricultural land to reduce water pollution caused by nutrient and sediment erosion, animal wastes, or agricultural chemicals.

The State Conservation Reserve Program provides annual payments to landowners or operators for certain acreage taken out of agricultural production and planted in vegetative cover for a ten-year period. The Program began in 1988 as an incentive for enrolling in a similar federal program administered by the U.S. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

DEFUNCT DEPARTMENTAL AGENCIES

MEAT & POULTRY INSPECTION SECTION

Effective April 1, 1991, the Section's functions were assigned to the Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Hyattsville, MD.

SOIL CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATION

In 1989, reorganized and renamed as the Office of Resource Conservation.