

**CONSERVATION GRANTS PROGRAM** | *Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report*



**AMPLIFYING OUR IMPACT**  
*For a Healthy Chesapeake Bay*



# Our Fiscal Year 2025 *Investments in Conservation*

**\$32.7M**  
Cover Crop and  
Cover Crop  
Plus Grants  
497,378 Acres Planted



**\$7.6M**  
MACS  
Cost-Share Grants  
317 Conservation  
Projects Installed



**\$2.1M**  
Manure  
Transport Grants  
370,410 Tons of  
Manure Transported



**\$485k**  
Manure  
Injection Grants  
56 Projects Funded



**\$376k**  
Conservation  
Buffer Initiative  
25 Projects Funded



**\$274k**  
Conservation  
Reserve  
Enhancement  
Program (CREP)  
18 Projects Funded



**\$220k**  
Bonus Payments  
for CREP  
Enrollment/  
Reenrollment  
1,804 Acres Planted



**\$151k**  
Small Farm  
and Urban  
Agriculture  
32 Projects Funded



# AMPLIFYING OUR IMPACT...

## *Our Largest Cover Crop Planting Yet*



### Message from Secretary Atticks

Fiscal Year 2025 marked a significant milestone for our Cover Crop Program. Building on strong momentum from the previous year, Maryland farmers planted 497,378 acres of cover crops—our largest statewide planting yet—supported by \$32.7 million in state cost-share funding. The planting helped us exceed our Chesapeake Bay goal for this highly valued practice, while keeping an estimated 3.4 million pounds of nitrogen and nearly 4,000 pounds of phosphorus out of the Bay and its tributaries.

Providing farmers with the financial resources they need to put conservation practices on the land doesn't just protect water quality; it improves the health and productivity of the natural resources they depend on to grow our food. Investing in conservation supports sustainable agriculture, benefiting both the environment and the economy.

Beyond cover crops, the Conservation Grants Program provided farmers with additional funds to install a range of conservation projects on their farms to control soil erosion,

reduce nutrient runoff, manage manure resources, and improve local stream health. Many of these projects provided additional benefits for soil health, climate, wildlife, and the economy.

Our long-standing MACS program continued to be a trusted resource for farmers, awarding \$7.6 million for 317 conservation projects. With help from MACS, Maryland exceeded Bay milestone goals for highly valued practices, including off-stream watering facilities, waste storage, and wetland restoration projects.

Participation in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and MDA's Conservation Buffer Initiative remained strong. These programs support farmers who voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive cropland near streams from production and instead plant trees, shrubs, and grasses to protect water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. It's great to see how these programs are helping Maryland reach its goal to plant 5 million native trees by 2031.

Our Manure Transport Program also had another successful year,

providing \$2.1 million to move 370,410 tons of manure away from areas with high soil phosphorus levels. Poultry companies contributed an additional \$662,188 in matching funds to transport poultry manure, demonstrating a strong commitment to shared stewardship and significantly strengthening this important partnership.

This kind of progress reflects the strength of the department's broader conservation efforts across the state. Our success has not gone unnoticed. The Chesapeake Bay Program's new Agricultural Advisory Committee will give farmers an even stronger voice in restoration decisions as Maryland and the other Bay states enter a new phase of planning.

Please read on to learn more about our Fiscal Year 2025 accomplishments as we continue to amplify our impact for a healthy Chesapeake Bay.

Kevin Atticks, D.C.D.  
Maryland Agriculture Secretary

## Amplifying Chesapeake Bay Progress

Maryland farmers use our grants to install highly valued best management practices (BMPs) outlined in Maryland’s Chesapeake Bay restoration plan.

In Fiscal Year 2025, MDA-funded conservation projects installed on Maryland farms prevented an estimated 3.6 million pounds of nitrogen, 43,869 pounds of phosphorus, and 13,071 tons of soil from entering Maryland waterways. The state’s 23 soil conservation districts provide free planning and technical support to install these projects.

The chart shows practices funded by our conservation grants that help Maryland meet its nutrient and sediment reduction goals. Agriculture has already met more than half of its goals, and work is ongoing to meet the rest.



### CHESAPEAKE BAY CLEAN-UP PROGRESS THROUGH JULY 2025\*

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE	2026 GOAL (2025-2026 MILESTONE)	2025 PROGRESS	PERCENT TOWARDS MILESTONE
Cover Crops (traditional)	478,391 acres	497,378 acres (includes Cover Crop and Cover Crop Plus acres)	104%
Manure Transport (wet tons) Alternative Use or Out of Watershed	97,366 tons	65,624 tons	67%
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE	2025 GOAL (2025-2026 MILESTONE)	2025 PROGRESS	PERCENT TOWARDS MILESTONE
Exclusion Fencing (acres of buffers)	1,867 acres	1,523 acres	82%
Grass Buffers	43,706 acres	41,953 acres	96%
Off-Stream Watering Without Fencing	12,730 acres	66,769 acres	525%
Retirement of Highly Erodible Land	33,171 acres	35,833 acres	108%
Streamside Forest Buffers	20,274 acres	22,833 acres	113%
Waste Storage Structures (livestock)**	99,654 animal units	121,735 animal units	122%
Waste Storage Structures (poultry)**	1,616,618 animal units	1,961,638 animal units	121%
Wetland Restoration	13,620 acres	20,612 acres	151%

\*In some instances, progress includes practices installed with funds from both MDA and USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service.

\*\*One animal unit = 1,000 lbs. of live animal weight

## BY THE NUMBERS: Our Fiscal Year 2025 Funding Summary

The Conservation Grants Program awarded \$43.7 million in cost-share grants to Maryland farmers in Fiscal Year 2025. Farmers used our grants to install 2,464 conservation projects on their farms to control soil erosion, reduce nutrient runoff, and protect local water quality. Many of these projects provided additional soil health, climate, wildlife, and economic benefits.

Our grants cover up to 100% of eligible costs for more than 40 best management practices (BMPs). Funding is provided by general obligation bonds, the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, and the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund.

CONSERVATION GRANTS PROGRAM SUMMARY   FISCAL YEAR 2025		
MACS PROGRAM	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	FUNDS
Total Approved from State Funds	319	\$11,528,019
<b>Completed Projects</b>		
CREP Projects with State Funds	18	\$ 274,316
All Other Projects with State Funds	284	\$ 7,050,326
With Federal Funds	15	\$ 293,039
<b>Total Capital Projects Completed</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>\$ 7,617,681</b>
<b>MARYLAND COVER CROP PROGRAM</b>		
Traditional Cover Crop	1,329	\$32,198,666
Cover Crop Plus	22	\$ 545,266
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,351</b>	<b>\$32,743,932</b>
<b>MANURE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM</b>		
Manure Transport*	484	\$ 2,114,132
Manure Injection	56	\$ 484,789
<b>Total</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>\$ 2,598,921</b>
<b>ECOSYSTEM INCENTIVES PROGRAM</b>		
CREP Incentive Payments	199	\$ 219,728
Conservation Buffer Initiative	25	\$ 375,746
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>\$ 595,474</b>
<b>SMALL FARM AND URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM</b>		
Small Acreage Cover Crop Program	24	\$ 22,709
Water and Power Infrastructure Program	8	\$ 128,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>\$ 151,409</b>
<b>Total Projects Completed</b>	<b>2,464</b>	<b>\$43,707,417</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS</b>	<b>NITROGEN</b>	<b>PHOSPHORUS</b>
Estimated Pounds of Nutrients Removed by Capital Projects	151,078	39,890
Estimated Pounds of Nutrients Removed by Cover Crops	3,431,909	3,979
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,582,987</b>	<b>43,869</b>
	<b>TONS OF SOIL</b>	<b>ACRES OF LAND</b>
Tons of Soil Saved Per Year	<b>13,071</b>	<b>2,125</b>
<b>MANURE MANAGED DAILY WITH ANIMAL WASTE STORAGE STRUCTURES</b>	<b>TONS OF MANURE</b>	<b>ANIMAL UNITS</b>
Poultry Manure Managed Daily	63	5,673
Dairy Manure Managed Daily	69	1,811
Beef Manure Managed Daily	205	4,042
Other Animal Manure Managed Daily	13	476
<b>Total Animal Manure Managed Daily</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>12,002</b>
*Does not include poultry company matching funds (\$662,188)		



*Stream crossings create a strong surface that allows farmers to move animals and equipment over a stream without hurting the streambed or the banks.*

## CONSERVATION SNAPSHOT: Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program

MACS is our longest running and most widely recognized conservation grant program. Authorized by the Maryland General Assembly in 1982, MACS has helped thousands of Maryland farmers install agricultural best management practices (BMPs) on their farms to control soil erosion, manage nutrients, and handle animal manure. Today, MACS funds 40 types of BMPs, with up to 100% cost-share available for certain high-priority conservation practices.

In Fiscal Year 2025, MACS awarded just over \$7.6 million in cost-share grants to Maryland farmers. The funding supported 317 conservation projects that included multiple BMPs.

The top five practices installed during the year include 137 grassed waterways to control erosion; 108 lined waterways and outlets to protect areas that cannot be stabilized by permanent vegetation; 70 underground outlets and 57 subsurface drains to support conservation drainage practices; and 58 heavy use projects to stabilize areas frequently used by animals or farm equipment. Please see the center spread for a complete list of best management practices installed using MACS funds in Fiscal Year 2025.

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT SUMMARY FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS   FISCAL YEAR 2025		
DISTRICT	COMPLETED PROJECTS	MACS PAYMENT
Allegany	10	\$ 176,684
Anne Arundel	4	\$ 45,874
Baltimore County	17	\$ 259,322
Calvert	0	\$ —
Caroline	14	\$ 644,677
Carroll	85	\$ 1,761,513
Cecil	11	\$ 189,761
Charles	4	\$ 25,234
Dorchester	5	\$ 116,382
Frederick County	38	\$ 1,698,994
Garrett	4	\$ 53,114
Harford	13	\$ 294,851
Howard	9	\$ 173,154
Kent	28	\$ 622,273
Montgomery	1	\$ 8,268
Prince George's	2	\$ 85,368
Queen Anne's	46	\$ 795,943
Somerset	0	\$ —
St. Mary's	6	\$ 217,398
Talbot	13	\$ 367,605
Washington County	3	\$ 16,875
Wicomico	3	\$ 52,211
Worcester	1	\$ 12,180
<b>Total</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>\$7,617,681</b>



# Completed MACS Cost-Shared Practices by Soil Conservation District

PRACTICE	ALLEGANY	AMNE ARUNDEL	BALTIMORE COUNTY	CALVERT	CAROLINE	CARROLL	CECIL	CHARLES	DORCHESTER	FREDERICK COUNTY	GARRETT	HARFORD
Animal Mortality Facility					1							
Conservation Cover								3		1		
Contour Farming			1									
Contour Orchard												
Critical Area Planting		3	3		3	2		1		18		1
Denitrifying Bioreactor												
Diversion	1				1	1		1		1		2
Fence	6	1	4			12	1			5	4	3
Field Border												
Filter Strip												
Grade Stabilization Structure					1		3	1		1		2
Grassed Waterway			11		3	50	6		1	17		5
Heavy Use Area Protection	7	3	1		2	12	1		2	12		3
Hedgerow Planting										1		
Lined Waterway or Outlet	2		6		5	33	8			19		7
Pasture and Hay Planting						3						
Riparian Forest Buffer						3				1		
Riparian Herbaceous Cover					2				1			
Roof Runoff Structure	2				1	4	2			7		4
Roofs and Covers	2				1	3	1			7		2
Saturated Buffers												
Sediment Basin												
Sediment Control Pond												
Spring Development			1			1				2		
Stream Crossing			1			4				2		
Strip Cropping, Contour												
Strip Cropping, Field												
Structure for Water Control	1				5							
Subsurface Drain			2		5	26	1			16		1
Terrace System												
Tree/Shrub Establishment						1						
Underground Outlet	3		2		5	27	2			19	1	5
Vegetated Treatment Area												
Waste Storage Facility	2	1			2	1	1			6		2
Waste Treatment Lagoon												
Waste Treatment Strip												
Water Well	3					2	1				1	
Watering Facility	6		3			7	1			3	1	1
Wetland Creation												
Wetland Restoration					2				1			
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>38</b>

# ct | Fiscal Year 2025

ORD	HOWARD	KENT	MONTGOMERY	PRINCE GEORGE'S	QUEEN ANNE'S	SOMERSET	ST. MARY'S	TALBOT	WASHINGTON COUNTY	WILCOMICO	WORCESTER	TOTAL FY2025	TOTAL FY1984-2025	CUMULATIVE TOTAL
												1	1,061	1,062
		2										6	749	755
												1	47	48
												0	2	2
	3			1			5	1				41	1,015	1,056
								1				1	2	3
					2		1	4				14	575	589
	6			1	5		1		2			51	1,537	1,588
			1									1	37	38
												0	23	23
		2		1	8		4	5				28	2,024	2,052
	1	21			15		1	6				137	5,633	5,770
	3				6			1	3	2		58	1,318	1,376
		1										2	1	3
	1	1		1	14		4	7				108	680	788
												3	22	25
												4	1,603	1,607
		1			4							8	251	259
					3							23	896	919
	1				2							19	91	110
												0	1	1
												0	51	51
	1											1	1,128	1,129
												4	1,226	1,230
					1							8	567	575
												0	61	61
												0	72	72
	1				2			1				10	69	79
	1				2		1	2				57	102	159
												0	92	92
		2										3	6	9
	2				4							70	108	178
												0	1,693	1,693
	1				3					1	1	21	2,442	2,463
												0	15	15
												0	45	45
					1							8	213	221
	1				5				1			29	2,243	2,272
												0	2	2
		1			2							6	92	98
<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>27,795</b>	<b>28,518</b>

## CONSERVATION SNAPSHOT: Maryland's Cover Crop Program

The 2024-2025 cover crop planting was the largest in our program's history, with 493,226 acres planted statewide. This remarkable conservation effort by Maryland farmers prevented an estimated 3,403,256 pounds of phosphorus and 3,946 pounds of nitrogen from entering the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

MDA provides grants to farmers who plant cold-hardy cover crops, such as cereal grains and legumes, in the fall to capture and recycle nutrients from the previous summer crop. Farmers can apply for these grants during a three-week enrollment period beginning in mid-June.

Fall-planted cover crops are not grown for profit. They offer other significant water quality, soil health, and climate benefits. Grants help farmers cover seed, labor, and equipment costs to plant fall cover crops. Funding for the Cover Crop Program comes from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund and the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund.

2024-2025 COVER CROP PROGRAM			
COUNTY	CONTRACTS	SPRING CERTIFIED ACRES	PAYMENT
Allegany	5	158	\$ 12,581
Anne Arundel	14	4,086	\$ 263,537
Baltimore County	33	11,163	\$ 776,227
Calvert	13	2,252	\$ 135,766
Caroline	107	36,757	\$ 2,427,567
Carroll	100	31,049	\$ 2,063,704
Cecil	82	22,172	\$ 1,443,386
Charles	30	6,887	\$ 453,661
Dorchester	82	36,872	\$ 2,541,385
Frederick County	159	35,386	\$ 2,066,787
Garrett	21	1,806	\$ 136,720
Harford	57	13,315	\$ 993,843
Howard	12	3,774	\$ 261,825
Kent	98	60,172	\$ 3,937,896
Montgomery	27	13,874	\$ 626,906
Prince George's	14	3,461	\$ 287,807
Queen Anne's	119	68,262	\$ 4,506,387
St Mary's	52	8,640	\$ 512,847
Somerset	34	13,923	\$ 849,269
Talbot	72	42,526	\$ 2,756,512
Washington County	58	13,140	\$ 853,229
Wicomico	72	24,755	\$ 1,708,620
Worcester	61	38,796	\$ 2,582,204
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,322</b>	<b>493,226</b>	<b>\$32,198,666</b>



*The 2024-2025 cover crop planting was our largest planting yet.*



*CREP plantings are making our streams cleaner.*

**CONSERVATION SNAPSHOT:  
Maryland’s Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**

This federal-state partnership program pays farmers and landowners attractive annual rental payments to take environmentally sensitive farmland out of production for 10-15 years and install conservation practices to protect streams and create wildlife habitat. Participating farmers get free help and financial support through MACS to plant stream protection practices, create wetlands, protect land that is prone to erosion, or create wildlife habitat. Now in its 28th year, Maryland’s CREP was the first program of its kind in the nation.

In Fiscal Year 2025:

- MACS funded 18 CREP projects for a total investment of \$274,316.
- CREP forest buffers supported Maryland’s efforts to plant 5 million trees by 2031 to provide environmental and health benefits.

CREP PROJECTS COMPLETED BY DISTRICT   FISCAL YEAR 2025		
DISTRICT	COMPLETED PROJECTS	MACS PAYMENT
Caroline	1	\$ 28,089
Carroll	3	\$ 26,120
Charles	2	\$ 3,387
Dorchester	2	\$ 69,503
Kent	5	\$ 68,575
Queen Anne's	5	\$ 78,642
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>\$274,316</b>



## CONSERVATION SNAPSHOT: Manure Management Program

Managing manure resources responsibly benefits water quality, soil health, and crop productivity. This program helps farmers comply with Maryland's nutrient management requirements and take advantage of innovative technology to maximize nutrient efficiency, conserve nutrients and reduce pollution when spreading manure on crop fields.

### Manure Transport Grants

These grants are used to help farmers haul manure away from livestock and poultry farms with high soil phosphorus levels. Farms or businesses receiving the manure must have acceptable soil phosphorus levels and a current nutrient management plan to

qualify for reimbursement. This program is authorized by the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998. In Fiscal Year 2025:

- \$2,114,132 in grants were awarded to transport 370,410 tons of manure to approved farms and businesses.
- Livestock manure (dairy, beef, equine, and swine) comprised 70% of the manure transported.
- Poultry litter accounted for 30% of the total tons transported.
- Just over half of the poultry manure was hauled to alternative uses facilities.
- The remainder was applied to crops as a fertilizer on eligible fields.

- Delmarva poultry companies contributed \$662,188 in matching funds to transport poultry manure.

### Manure Injection Grants

Cost-share grants of up to \$45 an acre are offered to help farmers hire custom operators or lease specialized equipment to inject liquid manure below the soil surface. The practice helps prevent nutrient runoff, reduces odors and greenhouse gas emissions, and preserves beneficial surface residue. In Fiscal Year 2025, 56 contracts totaling \$484,789 in cost-share grants were awarded to offset operating costs associated with this practice.

*Managing manure resources responsibly benefits water quality, soil health, and crop productivity.*



### MANURE TRANSPORT PROGRAM PAYMENT SUMMARY

FISCAL YEAR	ACTUAL TONS TRANSPORTED	MACS PAYMENT	POULTRY COMPANIES COST-SHARE PAYMENT*	TOTAL FUNDS ISSUED
FY1999	1,896	\$ 17,992	\$ 17,992	\$ 35,984
FY2000	13,366	\$ 111,464	\$ 111,464	\$ 222,928
FY2001	20,477	\$ 195,559	\$ 195,559	\$ 391,118
FY2002	47,481	\$ 434,610	\$ 420,395	\$ 855,005
FY2003	28,556	\$ 233,444	\$ 229,645	\$ 463,089
FY2004	40,755	\$ 295,356	\$ 285,806	\$ 581,162
FY2005	36,329	\$ 239,196	\$ 200,113	\$ 439,309
FY2006	69,009	\$ 380,694	\$ 293,728	\$ 674,422
FY2007	99,297	\$ 490,011	\$ 356,955	\$ 846,966
FY2008	99,817	\$ 520,357	\$ 370,985	\$ 891,342
FY2009	119,892	\$ 663,177	\$ 504,024	\$ 1,167,201
FY2010	80,899	\$ 469,398	\$ 402,846	\$ 872,244
FY2011	61,150	\$ 354,011	\$ 294,383	\$ 648,394
FY2012	35,554	\$ 297,587	\$ 283,951	\$ 581,538
FY2013	52,481	\$ 377,007	\$ 339,252	\$ 716,259
FY2014	118,995	\$ 608,259	\$ 419,929	\$ 1,028,188
FY2015	167,237	\$ 851,304	\$ 409,548	\$ 1,260,852
FY2016	213,151	\$ 954,300	\$ 447,882	\$ 1,402,182
FY2017	241,941	\$ 1,174,690	\$ 453,038	\$ 1,627,728
FY2018	249,421	\$ 1,020,910	\$ 453,876	\$ 1,474,786
FY2019	249,840	\$ 1,074,079	\$ 373,875	\$ 1,447,954
FY2020	309,374	\$ 1,382,822	\$ 455,681	\$ 1,838,503
FY2021	377,215	\$ 1,889,179	\$ 602,791	\$ 2,491,970
FY2022	402,926	\$ 2,580,681	\$ 682,431	\$ 3,263,112
FY2023	358,840	\$ 2,046,206	\$ 682,500	\$ 2,728,706
FY2024	363,865	\$ 1,924,681	\$ 671,468	\$ 2,596,149
FY2025	370,410	\$ 2,114,132	\$ 662,188	\$ 2,776,320
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,230,174</b>	<b>\$22,701,106</b>	<b>\$10,622,305</b>	<b>\$33,323,411</b>

\*Dairy, beef and other livestock became eligible for cost-share grants in Fiscal Year 2002. These producers do not receive matching funds from poultry companies.



*The Conservation Buffer Initiative funded 25 projects in Fiscal Year 2025.*

## CONSERVATION SNAPSHOT: Ecosystems Incentive Program

This program offers farmers a menu of conservation incentives that promote clean water, healthy soil and climate solutions.

### CREP Incentive Payment

Farmers enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program receive a one-time signing bonus to take environmentally sensitive land out of production for 10 to 15 years and plant conservation practices that protect soil, water, and wildlife. This bonus is in addition to their annual rental payments. During the year, 199 landowners were awarded \$219,728 in incentive payments for 1,804 enrolled acres.

### Conservation Buffer Initiative

Like CREP, this program provides attractive incentive payments to farmers who install streamside buffers to enhance local water quality. However, the Conservation Buffer Initiative offers extra benefits that CREP does not provide. These include options for field ditch buffers, greater flexibility in site management, and shorter contract terms. In Fiscal Year 2025, the Conservation Buffer Initiative awarded \$375,746 in grants to install 25 projects.

### Cover Crop Plus

This program pays higher incentives for enhanced cover crop practices to promote greater biodiversity and improved soil health. Enrolled farmers agree to grow cover crop mixes on the same field for three consecutive years, maintain a living root system, and manage the cover crop for maximum benefits. In Fiscal Year 2025, the program funded 22 projects on 4,153 acres of land for an investment of \$545,266.

ECOSYSTEM INCENTIVES PROGRAM	
CREP INCENTIVE PAYMENT	
Number of Projects	199
Number Acres Enrolled	1,804
<b>Total Payments Made</b>	<b>\$219,728</b>
CONSERVATION BUFFER INITIATIVE	
Number of Contracts	25
<b>Total Payments Made</b>	<b>\$375,746</b>
COVER CROP PLUS	
Number of Contracts	22
Number of Acres Enrolled	4,153
<b>Total Payments Made</b>	<b>\$545,266</b>
LOW INTEREST LOANS	
Number of Participants	1
<b>Loan Amount</b>	<b>\$196,000</b>

### Low Interest Loans

Low Interest Loans for Agricultural Conservation (LILAC) are offered to help farmers install best management practices on their farms, purchase conservation equipment, and adopt new technologies to protect natural resources. These loans are guaranteed by the Maryland Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund. In Fiscal Year 2025, one application for \$196,000 was approved.

### Conservation Equipment Tax Break

The Maryland Income Tax Subtraction Modification for Conservation Equipment helps farmers offset costs to buy certain types of conservation equipment to control soil erosion, manage nutrients, and protect local water quality. The incentive allows farmers to subtract eligible equipment purchases from taxable income on Maryland individual and corporate tax returns. In Fiscal Year 2025, 83 farmers took advantage of the tax subtraction.

## CONSERVATION SNAPSHOT: Small Farm and Urban Agriculture Program

This program supports small-scale farming operations in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Its aim is to help these small-scale growers improve the natural resources that support community access to healthy, fresh, locally grown food.

### Small Acreage Cover Crop Grants

These grants are for urban and small-scale producers who want to improve the health of their soil and reduce erosion and runoff. Individual growers, organized for-profit agricultural businesses, and non-profit organizations can receive up to \$1,500 annually to plant cover crops on less than 10 acres. In Fiscal Year 2025, the program funded 24 cover projects on 120 acres for a total investment of \$22,709.

### Water and Power Infrastructure Program

This program reimburses urban farms and community gardens for the purchase and installation of critical utility equipment, including water meters, irrigation lines, and electrical connections. Grants cover up to 87.5% of eligible costs and are available year-round to qualifying operations in urban designated zip codes. In Fiscal Year 2025, the program funded eight projects for a total investment of \$128,700.



*During the year, the program funded 8 infrastructure projects for a total investment of \$128,700.*

## Soil Conservation Districts Deliver Our Conservation Grants to Farmers

Maryland's 23 soil conservation districts—with technical guidance from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service—help farmers choose the right best management practices for their operations, supervise their installation or construction, and develop maintenance plans to keep them in good working order. District staff help farmers calculate costs to install practices and apply for other state and federal grant and loan programs. Best management practices are usually installed as part of a farm's overall Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan. These plans are developed for farmers free of charge by soil conservation district technical staff.

MARYLAND'S SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS		
Allegany	301-777-1747, ext. 3	alleganyscd.com
Anne Arundel	410-571-6757	aacounty.org/soil-conservation-district
Baltimore County	410-527-5920, ext. 3	bcsd.org
Calvert	410-535-1521, ext. 3	calvertsoil.org
Caroline	410-479-1202, ext. 3	
Carroll	410-848-8200, ext. 3	carrollsoil.com
Cecil	410-398-4411, ext. 3	cecilsd.com
Charles	301-638-3028	charlesscd.com
Dorchester	410-228-5640, ext. 3	dorchesterscd.org
Frederick County	301-383-8782	fcscd.com
Garrett	301-501-5886	garrettscd.org
Harford	410-638-4828	harfordscd.org
Howard	410-313-0680	howardscd.org
Kent	410-778-5150, ext. 3	kentsoilandwaterconservationdistrict.org
Montgomery	301-590-2855	montgomeryscd.org
Prince George's	301-574-5162, ext. 3	pgscd.org
Queen Anne's	410-758-3136, ext. 3	qac.org/1668/Soil-Conservation
St. Mary's	301-475-8402, ext. 3	stmarysscd.com
Somerset	410-621-9310	
Talbot	410-822-1577, ext. 5	talbotscd.com
Washington County	301-797-6821, ext. 3	conservationplace.com
Wicomico	410-546-4777, ext. 3	wicomicoscd.org
Worcester	410-632-5439, ext. 3	worscd.org



### Maryland Department of Agriculture

*Office of Resource Conservation*

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