

Approved Nov 20, 2025

**State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC)  
October 16, 2025 (Hybrid)  
St. Mary's Conservation District, Leonardtown, MD  
Minutes**

Van Funk, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:33 AM

The minutes of September 2025 meeting were approved. (Feldt/Freeman)

**SSCC ADMIN**

Appointments

<b>District</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Appointed</b>	<b>Motion/Second</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
Cecil	Farm Bureau	Alice Crothers	Posey/Feldt	8/17/30
Talbot	At-Large	Kyle M. Hutchinson	Freeman/Posey	7/03/30
Worcester	Farm Bureau	Valeria Nasir	Swaine/Flickinger	8/10/30

- Nov 20 meeting @ MDA Headquarters (hybrid)
- Dec 18 All-Day 2026 Workplan meeting @ MD Farm Bureau (Davidsonville, MD) In-person only
- 25AF DRAFT PERMIT (General Discharge Permit for Animal Feeding Operations, NPDES # MDG01, State Discharge Permit 25AF) and other documents have been posted to MDE's [AFO webpage](#).

**Quick Review:**

Supervisor Survey and SSCC Appointment Process

Loretta Collins, SSCC Executive Secretary, provided highlights from a survey sent to supervisors over the summer and discussed the need for training for all District Supervisors. Almost half of current supervisors are in their first term. Loretta also discussed modifications to the supervisor appointment process. The SSCC is now meeting in closed session, following guidance of the MD Open Meetings Act, to discuss supervisor applications. Appointments will be made in open session at a later meeting. A new supervisor application will be rolled out in 2026.

**Resource and Conservation Development (RC&D)**

Guest Speaker: Allison Burnett, Executive Director, Southern MD RC&D

**Summary:** Allison discussed the role of RC&Ds in conservation efforts in Maryland and three recent projects in Southern MD.

**Select Q&A:**

Q: What is the average length of service of RC&D employees? A: *It depends. Guaranteed employment for one year (annual contracts). Technical assistance funding comes through NRCS. The Southern MD RC&D permanent staff is four. Supported through administrative fees*

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from projects. Some counties provide some support (about 45% of admin salaries). Always a challenge to ensure funding.

Q: What is the normal funding course across the country? A: It really depends from one place to another. Work with Western MD to strategize. Not allowed to lobby for state funding, but such funding would be helpful.

Q: What is the role of the national organization? A: The active national organization is a more recent development. They have trainings and meetings and there is a Northeast association of RC&D councils that Southern and Western MD are involved in.

Q[to SCDs]: What is the advantage of RC&D for Districts? A: SCD can provide technical assistance and RC&D makes connections, helps develop projects, and find funding. It works well in both directions.

### **Spotlight on Southern MD**

Bobby Cooper, St. Mary's Board Chair, discussed his history in St. Mary's County as a farmer and employee in county government eventually rising to highway manager. Discussed the success of the equipment rental program in the District. Challenges include limited staffing resulting in delays in plan review. Enjoys the Board and engaging with people. Has connections across the county that are helpful to getting things done.

### **MEMBER REPORTS**

#### **MD Department of Agriculture – Hans Schmidt:**

- Thanks to St. Mary's for hosting
- MOU btw MDA and MDE (SSCC is a signatory) related to water pollution discharge on-farm. The agreement has not been updated in many years. MDE has made edits and provided early last year. It is now a top priority.
- Expecting a new attorney at MDA focused on Resource Conservation. Interviews have occurred. Attorney general has final say. Should be on-staff in the next month.
- MASCD Annual Meeting: some issues came up. Staff meeting followed up. Grants program will present at MASCD meeting on Oct 28 on policy changes.
- MACS reversions: capital budget hearing 3 weeks ago where reversions were questioned. MDA will be working with SCD staff to understand the reasons for reversions.

*Q: Was the \$5 million reversion last year a decrease from previous year? A: Yes, but bond process for funding makes picture complicated.*

- LEEF program: putting together a closed meeting with farmers to explain and get further feedback.

#### **MD. Department of Natural Resources – Rob Feldt:**

- DNR wide meeting on Sept 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Many service awards and acknowledgment of those who took VSP.
  - Francis Smith received DNR employee of the year. Works with Chesapeake Bay restoration projects.

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**MD. Department of Environment – Greg Sandj:**

- MDE has updated stormwater design manual and submitted new regulations for stormwater
  - 3 meeting coming up to explain (Oct 22, 28, Nov 13)
- Exelon agreement on Conowingo Dam. About \$332 million. Going to dredging, mussel restoration and action restoration in watershed
- Ending of current Chesapeake Bay Agreement (details still unknown)
  - Looking at new model in 3 years, new processes, new end date 2040.
  - MD looking pretty good for targets on N, P, and sediments.

**University of Maryland Extension – Hayden Schug:**

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources will hold the 7th Annual AGNR Cornerstone Event on Thursday, October 23 at The Adele H. Stamp Student Union—Center for Campus Life. The keynote speaker will be Sanjay K. Rai, secretary of the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The event is free and open to the public. Please register at <https://agnr.umd.edu/form/cornerstone-2025/>.

The annual UME Statewide Extension Advisory Council meeting will be held October 16 at CMREC-Clarksville.

The 2025 Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference will take place November 10 at the Graduate Hotel in Annapolis. The major topics are From Crops to Kilowatts: Growing with Maryland's Energy Demands, Maryland's New Heat Illness Prevention Standard, Addressing Local Food Security through Farmer-Centered Community Partnership Networks, From Fields to Courtrooms: Ag Law Shifts in 2025 and Beyond, Effectiveness of Economic Incentives to Enhance Riparian Buffer Adoption and Environmental Benefits in Maryland, and Unpacking Federal Agriculture Appropriations and Budgetary Decisions on USDA Grant Programs. Register at <https://go.umd.edu/aleiconf25registration>.

University of Maryland Extension's request to use carry-forward funding for FY 2026 was approved. This limited funding enables UME to extend SNAP-Ed employee contracts beyond October 1, ensuring a proper closeout of the program and its employees.

Dr. Sung-Jin Lee has joined UME as assistant director and program leader for Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS). She earned her M.S. (2006) and Ph.D. (2010) in Housing from the Department of Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management at Virginia Tech University where she also completed a Graduate Gerontology Certificate. In 2010, Dr. Lee began work in the Department of FCS at North Carolina A&T State University, where she advanced from assistant professor of Housing Research to full professor before joining UME.

Caroline County Extension conducted its first Agriculture Awareness Day for eighth graders at the Caroline County 4-H Park on October 1. Frederick County Extension hosted the Ag Olympics program for youth on October 4 and 5 in Frederick. Throughout October, Montgomery County Extension will conduct Close Encounters with Agriculture for fourth graders.

The current UME AgFS openings are:

*AgFS Extension*

- AgFS county educator, Frederick County: Initial interviews will take place October 17 and 21.

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- AgFS county educator, Prince George's County: Funding is being secured for the position.
- AgFS county educator, Talbot County: The position has posted at [https://umd.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/UMCP/details/Agent-Associate--Agriculture-and-Food-Systems\\_JR102426?q=talbot](https://umd.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/UMCP/details/Agent-Associate--Agriculture-and-Food-Systems_JR102426?q=talbot). The best consideration date is October 24, 2025.
- LEAD Maryland agent associate: The job announcement has been submitted to University Human Resources for review.

#### *Agricultural Nutrient Management Program*

- Program director and faculty specialist: The position description will be revised and reposted in early spring.
- Nutrient management advisor positions in Baltimore, Harford, and Montgomery Counties: Candidates are being reviewed by the hiring committee and interviews are being scheduled.

#### Award

Chuck Schuster received the Landscape Contractors Association MD-DC-VA (LCA) Industry Partnership Award. This award honors an LCA member company or individual industry partner whose collaboration and commitment have meaningfully advanced the landscape profession. This award recognizes exceptional service and support that elevate industry standards and contribute to long-term success in the region.

#### **Natural Resources Conservation Service- Brian Brookhart:**

- NRCS shut down except for a few essential employees, mainly area engineers and direct supervisors in order to be available and monitor projects under construction before shutdown to be sure they have support to the finish line. Also high hazard dam inspections on-going with MDE. On-call for emergency situations.

**Farm Services Agency:** No Report

#### **MASCD – John Swaine:**

- **MASCD's next Board of Directors** Meeting will be held on October 28 at MDA in Annapolis. Board members are encouraged to attend in person, and a virtual option is available. Topics for discussion include MASCD's Committees, MACS program updates, Delmarva Chicken Association's Conservation Cost-Share Program and plans for our upcoming Winter and 2026 Annual Meetings.
- While the Federal Shutdown has put a pause on our Bay Friendly Farming grant from NFWF, however we do have other funds available to cover the costs of the program. Please keep sending interested farmers our way, as we're coming into a good season to do outreach and perform farm evaluations and get people certified! MASCD hasn't received any notifications to stop work on any of our other federally-funded grants or agreements.

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#### Grants and Funding

- Our NFWF grant to support the Maryland Bay-Friendly Farming Program is paused again, this time due to the federal shutdown. We still have some funds available to support the program through other sources, and are still seeking farmers for

certification! Please help us spread the word to good candidates, including those farmers who were certified through FSCAP. Contact Chelsea at Chelsea.Gebbia@resourcesmartllc.com for more information, or fill out an application online at [https://bayfriendlyfarms.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/MD-BFF-Program-Sign-Up-Application\\_fillable.pdf](https://bayfriendlyfarms.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/MD-BFF-Program-Sign-Up-Application_fillable.pdf)

- **NFWF Tax Ditch Grant**- Funds are available through the grant to fund wetland restoration projects, floodplain reconnection, two stage ditches, riparian buffers and other water quality practices. This month, we received approval to extend the project through April 2027.

<b>NFWF Tax Ditch Grant Funding Status</b>	Total Budget	Remaining Funds
<b>Implementation Funds</b> for projects in Chesapeake Tax Ditch Watersheds	\$750,000	\$494,000
<b>Incentive Funds</b> for Tax Ditch Organizations	\$75,000	\$50,000

#### Other Items

- **District Managers Roundtable Topic: Supervising Employees Remotely**- Our next DM Roundtable discussion will be held on October 20. Bryan Peterson from Associated Employers will use the first half of the meeting to present and discuss effective management of remote employees. Others are welcome to join- let Jen know if you'd like to be added to the list.
- **NACD Northeast Region Meeting** was held September 21-25 in East Syracuse, NY. The NYACD did a wonderful job offering a full agenda with great information and lots of networking opportunities. I came away with great ideas to apply to our own conference in 2026!

#### **Mark your calendars for the 2026 NACD Northeast Region Meeting in Wilmington, DE, August 24-27, 2026.**

- **Association of Conservation Executive Directors' Meeting** was held October 6-9 in Sheridan, WY. This meeting is always a good opportunity to share ideas on things that are working in our states, as well as troubleshoot where we have common challenges. I gave a presentation about Time Management & Productivity. In the Northeast Region alone, four of the state association executive directors are new in their positions.

#### Upcoming Events & Deadlines

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>
<i>October 28, 2025</i>	MASCD BOD Meeting, MDA Headquarters
<i>November 12-14</i>	NFWF Chesapeake Ag Networking Forum, Hershey, PA
<i>February 9-10, 2026</i>	MASCD Winter Meeting, Westin Annapolis
<i>February 15-19, 2026</i>	NACD Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX
<i>March 24, 2026</i>	MASCD BOD Meeting, Location TBD

#### **Ag Commission- Gordon Kretser:**

- Provided demonstration on how to find planting specifications for proposed solar projects on PSC website: <https://www.psc.state.md.us/>. Works on Watershed

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Strategies Committee were one focus is the vegetation and habitats that should or could be maintained on solar projects. The PSC website has info that can help with E&S plan review. With the case number, one can look up licensing agreements, including seeding establishment. Often times, E&S plans are submitted to SCDs with vegetative conditions suited to 2011 E&S manual, rather than PSC conditions.

**Area 1 (Western) – Diane Flickinger:**

Washington County:

1. Cover Crop Certification – Producer’s Reporting.
2. MDE has obtained a grant and is working with WCSCD to study watershed concerns within Antietam Creek.
3. Our Keedysville Stream Restoration Project is to begin in the next few weeks.
4. Our District will be advertising for an Urban Planner position, October 20-31, 2025 via Indeed and on our website at [www.conservationplace.com](http://www.conservationplace.com)

Frederick County:

1. The Frederick County Soil Conservation District Annual Cooperators Banquet will be held on Wednesday, November 19, at the New Midway Volunteer Fire Company in New Midway, MD. The doors open at 6:30 pm. with the meal at 7 pm. The Program and Cooperator Awards begin at 7:45 pm. For more information contact the Frederick County SCD.

**Area 2 (Southern) - Amy Posey:**

Anne Arundel

- Hosting Southern MD dinner next Thursday Oct 23 at Homestead Gardens.

Calvert

- Organizing Envirothon training days
- Pursuing two oyster restoration shoreline projects
- Completing move to new county admin building

Charles

- 1<sup>st</sup> Envirothon training yesterday
- New NACD grant-funded planner starting Monday the 20<sup>th</sup>
- New District Engineer starts on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>
- Applying for several grants incl technical asst through the Chesapeake Bay Trust for a demonstration project on SCD grounds, a DNR grant, and a MASCD endowment for Envirothon
- Acoustic project starting next week to improve meeting space
- Manure spreader to be added to rental equipment program

St. Mary’s

- Farm to school program at 3 elementary schools
- Will be at St. Mary’s STEM festival
- Selling turbo drill. Contact the office for details.

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**Area 3 (Upper Shore) – Steve Freeman:**

Queen Anne's

- Updated manure spreader with scales (bolt-on kit) and updated daily rental rate. It has been very successful.
- Cooperator Dinner was successful: Chris Rhoades was cooperator of the year.
- SCD office is locked due to shutdown.

**Area 4 (Central) – Van Funk:**

*Baltimore County SCD*

- The District attended the Baltimore County Agricultural Advisory Committee quarterly meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The District is updating the employee handbook.
- Staff are working on annual MACS status reviews.
- Staff are busy continuing to work on planning and bmp designs.

*Cecil SCD*

- On Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> Cecil and Harford Counties hosted the Maryland Agricultural Commission's 2025 Fall Tour. The tour visited several farms/sites and highlighted the diversity of agriculture in the two counties. Discussions revolved around some of the struggles and issues that agriculture face and potential solutions.

*Harford SCD*

- On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, Harford SCD staff coordinated and helped lead the Harford County Envirothon Steering committee meeting. October 10<sup>th</sup>, Harford SCD staff helped lead the Harford County Envirothon Fall Workshop at the Rocks State Park.
- During the week of October 5<sup>th</sup>, Harford SCD sent out our October 2025 newsletter.
- On October 8<sup>th</sup>, Harford SCD and Cecil SCD participated in the MD Ag Commission's Cecil/Harford Ag tour event. The event was well attended.
- Harford SCD and MDA staff have begun receiving our 2025-2026 Cover Crop "fall certification" reporting by our cooperators.
- On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Harford SCD will be hosting its annual Cooperator's Dinner at the Level Volunteer Fire Hall. Although the RSVP deadline has concluded, we are still accepting RSVP replies.

*Howard SCD*

- No Report

*Montgomery SCD*

- No Report

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**Area 5 (Lower Shore) – Anne-Meredith Webster:**

Worcester:

- MDA Staff are navigating the closed shared USDA office due to a federal government shutdown since 10/01. Utilizing front entrance drop-boxes and outside meetings with customers.
- WO Continuing to provide PDA MOU funding on ditch repairs, mowing, and maintenance completed: \$45,835 paid to-date.
- WO has various SEC solar projects approved and on-going as well. Pollinator seeding requirements per Public Service Commission permits vs 2011 MD Standards and Specs recently came up; further guidance is needed.
- Outreach: met virtually with Statewide Awardees on the DNR Whole Watershed initial funding and project introductions. Talbot, Washington and Baltimore SCDs also included.
- Could we seek support from SSCC on MACS providing a percentage-rate for State cost-share on the DCA Vegetative Buffers as well? We have been waiting, and waiting for that with no success. I understand Jason Keppler is working towards a solution and has been for the last several weeks now, but we have customers and DCA asking why we are unable to move forward.

Wicomico:

Staff is receiving Fall Certifications for cover crop. Some No-Land NMPs being updated. We are dealing with reviews on solar projects as well, trying to get clarification on acceptable permanent seeding recommendations for pollinator planting with native grasses for MDE.

Somerset:

1. Certifying fall planted cover crop.
2. Reviewing the 25 CAFO permit.
3. Erosion and sediment control review has been busy. A lot of different projects are being built including several solar sites.
4. Working with poultry producers who want to install vegetative buffers on their operations.

Dorchester:

- Dorchester SCD has advertised County Soil Technician position. Information is on Dorchester County website.
- Three new solar projects are in planning stages.
- Dorchester SCD Review of Accounts was completed.
- Staff following information on new CAFO permit.

The meeting was adjourned to closed session at 11:35 AM (Posey/Swaine).

**SUMMARY OF CLOSED SESSION HELD ON October 16, 2025**

**1. Statement of the time, place, and purpose of the closed session:**

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Time of closed session: 11:35 AM

Place (location) of closed session: St. Mary's Soil Conservation District, Leonardtown, MD

Purpose of the closed session: Discuss applications submitted for Soil Conservation District Supervisor Positions

**2. Record of the vote of each member as to closing the session:**

Names of members voting aye: Motion: Posey Second : Swaine

Members opposed: NONE

Members abstaining: NONE

**3. Statutory authority to close session:**

This meeting was closed under the following provisions of General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b):

**4. Topic #1: § 3-305(b) ( x )**

*"To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"*

***Listing of each topic actually discussed, persons present, and each action taken in the session:***

<b>Topic description</b>	<b>Persons present for discussion</b>	<b>Action Taken/Each Recorded Vote</b>
#1: Baltimore County SCD Supervisor Applications	In-Person: Posey, Funk, Schmidt, Feldt, Sandi, Swaine Virtual: Flickinger, Kretser, Webster	Discussion of application materials- no vote
#2: Carroll SCD Supervisor Applications	In-Person: Posey, Funk, Schmidt, Feldt, Sandi, Swaine Virtual: Flickinger, Kretser, Webster	Discussion of application materials- no vote
#3: Garrett SCD Supervisor Applications	In-Person: Posey, Funk, Schmidt, Feldt, Sandi, Swaine Virtual: Flickinger, Kretser, Webster	Discussion of application materials- no vote
#4: Harford SCD Supervisor Applications	In-Person: Posey, Funk, Schmidt, Feldt, Sandi, Swaine Virtual: Flickinger, Kretser, Webster	Discussion of application materials- no vote

The meeting was adjourned from closed session at 12:15 PM (Feldt/Posey).

Respectfully Submitted,



Loretta Collins, Executive Secretary

**Attendance (Open Meeting): Oct 16, 2025**

\*in-person

<b>SSCC Member</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Area 1- Western	Diane Flickinger	X	
Area 2- Southern	Amy Posey	X*	
Area 3 - Upper Shore	Steve Freeman	X*	
Area 4 - Central	Van Funk (Chair)	X*	
Area 5 - Lower Shore	Anne-Meredith Webster	X	
MDA	Hans Schmidt	X*	
DNR	Rob Feldt	X	
MDE	Greg Sandi	X*	
UMD	<del>Darren Jarboe</del> (Hayden Schug, proxy)	X*	
MASCD President	John Swaine	X*	
Ag Commission	Gordon Kretser	X	
USDA-NRCS (non-voting)	<del>Suzy Daubert</del> (Brian Brookhart (essential employee- fed govt shutdown))	X*	
FSA (non-voting)	George Turner		X

<b>Organization /Office</b>	<b>Attendee(s)</b>	<b>Organization /Office</b>	<b>Attendee(s)</b>
Allegany SCD		Howard SCD	David Plummer
Anne Arundel SCD	David Scheler*	Kent SCD	
Baltimore County SCD		Montgomery SCD	
Calvert SCD	Jason Leavitt*, Benson Tiralla*, Jack Hines*,	Prince George's SCD	
Caroline SCD		Queen Anne's SCD	
Carroll SCD		Somerset SCD	Mark Carey
Cecil SCD	Chris Brown	St. Mary's SCD	Bruce Young*, Haley Carter*, Bobby Cooper*, Carl Dyson*, Darrell Goode*
Charles SCD	Donnie Gilroy*	Talbot SCD	
Dorchester SCD		Washington County SCD	Dee Price
Frederick County SCD	Heather Hutchinson	Wicomico SCD	Rick Glasgow
Garrett SCD		Worcester SCD	Chelsea Tyson
Harford SCD			

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MDA (HQ)	Loretta Collins*, Byron Petrauskas*	MDA	Adam Lyon* (Southern MD)
MASCD	Jen Nelson*	NRCS	
Office of Attorney General		Southern MD RC&D	Allison Burnett*