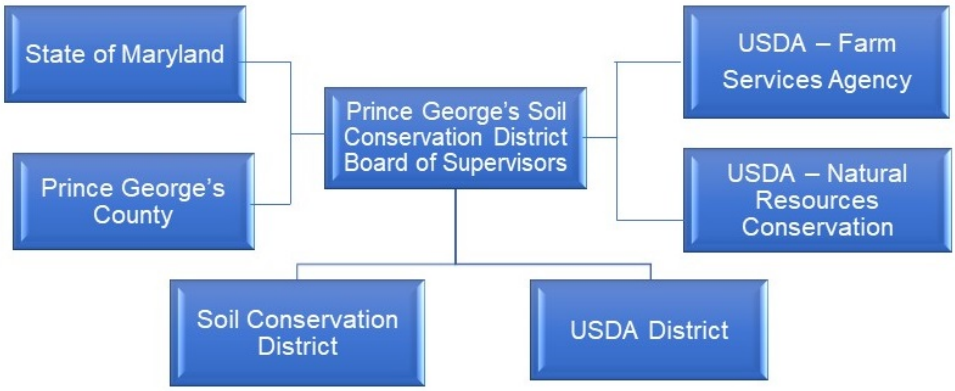
Soil Conservation District



MISSION AND SERVICES

The Soil Conservation District provides grading, erosion and sediment control services, agricultural landowner assistance and rural land preservation services to the citizens and residents of the County in order to protect the County's soil and water resources.

CORE SERVICES

- Provide technical review/approval for land grading, erosion and sediment control and small pond dam safety
- Provide agricultural landowner assistance services for soil and water conservation program implementation
- Administer rural land preservation programs
- Provide soil and water conservation technical services to urban agricultural operations
- Provide education and outreach to citizens and students through multiple soil and water conservation programs

FY 2025 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Continued to meet and exceed the Maryland Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) milestone goals for conservation planning and best management practice (BMP) implementation.
- Exceeded the outreach goals for the urban agriculture conservation program. Continued the development of a 12-acre incubator farm for aspiring urban ag producers in partnership with National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and ECO-City Farms.
- Maintained an average urban plan review time of five business days while continuing to partner with DOE and the Clean Water Partnership on Stormwater Management retrofit projects throughout the County. Designed flow charts for the development community to clarify and provide greater efficiency navigating District processes and phasing of grading, erosion and sediment control plans and forest harvest plans.
- Conducted two trainings and one competition for the local Envirothon, educating over 100 high school students on the importance of environmental stewardship.

- Preserved additional acres of agricultural land through the Historic Agricultural Resource Preservation Program (HARRP) and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) Rural Legacy programs totaling 79 farms and 7,371 acres (20% of the estimated eligible farmland that can be preserved).

STRATEGIC FOCUS AND INITIATIVES FOR FY 2026

The district's top priorities in FY 2026 are:

- Maintain the average turnaround time for urban land grading, mining, erosion/sediment control, dam safety and small pond plan reviews at or below five days by providing efficient technical assistance to customers.
- Increase the number of acres treated by best management practices (BMPs) on agricultural land by providing technical assistance to agricultural land owners on appropriate installation of those BMPs in order to mitigate water quality issues.
- Increase the acres of preserved agricultural land in the County through perpetual easements, directing development away from the rural tier, reducing the need for development related infrastructure funding to rural areas of the County and encouraging investment in active agricultural enterprises that enhance economic development in rural areas.
- Increase education and outreach of soil and water conservation to the citizens and students of Prince George's County.
- Increase technical assistance for the conservation of soil and water resources on urban agricultural operations in the County.

FY 2026 BUDGET SUMMARY

The FY 2026 approved budget for the Soil Conservation District is $0 and unchanged from the FY 2025 approved budget. The FY 2026 approved budget before recoveries is $2,337,500, an increase of $172,600 or 8.0% over the FY 2025 approved budget. The Soil Conservation District General Fund costs are 100% recovered from non-General Fund sources.

Expenditures by Fund Type

	FY 2024 Actual		FY 2025 Budget		FY 2025 Estimate		FY 2026 Approved	
Fund Types	Amount	% Total	Amount	% Total	Amount	% Total	Amount	% Total
General Fund	$—		$—		$—		$—	
Total	**$—**		**$—**		**$—**		**$—**	

Reconciliation from Prior Year

	Expenditures
FY 2025 Approved Budget	**$—**
Increase Cost: Compensation - Mandated Salary Requirements	$111,000
Increase Cost: Fringe Benefits — Increase in fringe benefit expenditures to support projected cost; the fringe benefit rate increases from 32.8% to 33.3%	45,400

Reconciliation from Prior Year *(continued)*

	Expenditures
Increase Cost: Technology Cost Allocation — Increase in OIT charges based on anticipated countywide costs for technology	16,200
Decrease Cost: Recovery Increase — Reflects anticipated compensation and fringe benefit expenditure adjustments as well as an increase in the technology cost allocation charge	(172,600)
FY 2026 Approved Budget	**$—**

STAFF AND BUDGET RESOURCES

Authorized Positions	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2025 Budget	FY 2026 Approved	Change FY25-FY26
General Fund				
Full Time - Civilian	16	16	16	0
Full Time - Sworn	0	0	0	0
Subtotal - FT	16	16	16	0
Part Time	0	0	0	0
Limited Term	0	0	0	0
TOTAL				
Full Time - Civilian	16	16	16	0
Full Time - Sworn	0	0	0	0
Subtotal - FT	16	16	16	0
Part Time	0	0	0	0
Limited Term	0	0	0	0

Positions By Classification	FY 2026		
	Full Time	Part Time	Limited Term
Administrative Aide	4	0	0
Administrative Assistant	1	0	0
Administrative Specialist	1	0	0
Engineer	7	0	0
Planner	3	0	0
TOTAL	**16**	**0**	**0**

Expenditures by Category - General Fund

Category	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Budget	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Approved	Change FY25-FY26 Amount ($)	Change FY25-FY26 Percent (%)
Compensation	$1,485,788	$1,535,400	$1,567,200	$1,646,400	$111,000	7.2%
Fringe Benefits	452,604	503,600	487,500	549,000	45,400	9.0%
Operating	120,198	125,900	125,900	142,100	16,200	12.9%
Capital Outlay	—	—	—	—	—	
SubTotal	**$2,058,590**	**$2,164,900**	**$2,180,600**	**$2,337,500**	**$172,600**	**8.0%**
Recoveries	(2,058,590)	(2,164,900)	(2,180,600)	(2,337,500)	(172,600)	8.0%
Total	**$—**	**$—**	**$—**	**$—**	**$—**	

In FY 2026, compensation expenditures increase 7.2% over the FY 2025 budget due to the annualization of FY 2025 and FY 2026 planned salary adjustments. Compensation costs include funding for 16 full time positions. Fringe benefit expenditures increase 9.0% over the FY 2025 budget to support projected cost and reflect an increase in the fringe benefit rate from 32.8% to 33.3%.

Operating expenditures increase 12.9% due to an increase in OIT charges based on anticipated countywide costs for technology. Funding is provided for printing and general office supplies costs.

Recoveries increase 8.0% over the FY 2025 budget to reflect an increase in overall expenditures. The General Fund cost of the Soil Conservation District is recovered from the Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund, which includes District and a State reimbursement for sediment control fees.

SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

Goal 1 — To provide urban land grading and erosion and sediment control planning services to the County's citizens and residents in order to protect the County's water quality and against averse impacts associated with sediment pollution.

Objective 1.1 — Maintain the average turnaround time for urban grading and sediment plan reviews at or below five business days.

FY 2030 Target	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected	Trend
5	5	5	5	5	⇔

Trend and Analysis

In order to improve the County's and State's water quality and dam safety program, the District reviews grading, erosion and sediment control plans. Reviewing these plans quickly, with a high degree of quality and accuracy, allows sediment control plans to be implemented in a timely manner. The average number of workdays required to review a plan submission is faster than the District's Board of Supervisor's maximum standard of 10 business days.

Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected
Impact (Outcome)					
Plans approved	410	399	380	500	500
Workdays required to review a plan	5	5	5	5	5

Goal 2 — To provide technical assistance to the County's citizens and residents in order to protect the County's water quality.

Objective 2.1 — Increase the number of acres treated by Best Management Practices (BMPs) on rural agricultural land.

FY 2030 Target	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected	Trend
4,100	5,864	4,993	4,100	4,100	↓

Trend and Analysis

A Best Management Practice (BMP) is an engineering or agronomic practice designed to reduce soil erosion, nutrients and/or improve water quality. The number of BMPs installed is due in large part to farmer participation in the Maryland State Cover Crop Program and support from this agency in providing technical assistance in the installation of other BMPs. The performance data is impacted by the weather as well as the farmer's ability to implement the State's Cover Crop Program. Total agricultural land mass is approximately 60,000 acres.

The number of acres treated by BMPs fluctuate annually, making any trend or projection challenging. Any new USDA Farm Bills may impact Federal Cost Share programs and reduce or increase BMP implementation; the agency will continue to monitor this activity. The national emphasis on soil health, as well as climate smart commodities, may increase the use of no-till and cover crops that will incorporate more acres with BMPs.

Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected
Workload, Demand and Production (Output)					
BMPs installed	236	217	228	200	200
Efficiency					
BMPs installed per employee	34	36	38	33	33
Impact (Outcome)					
Acres treated by BMPs	4,786	5,864	4,993	4,100	4,100

Objective 2.2 — Increase the number of soil conservation plans on urban agricultural land.

FY 2030 Target	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected	Trend
11	13	11	10	10	↓

Trend and Analysis

In order for the County's Urban Agricultural industry to flourish, there must be a sound and prudent use of the soil and water resources related to this land use. The District will develop soil conservation and water quality plans for these operations to address the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that focus on the reduction of soil erosion, efficient nutrient management, and improvement of water quality, while producing fresh food sources for the surrounding population.

Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected
Impact (Outcome)					
Urban ag producers receiving technical assistance	180	208	153	120	120
Soil conservation plans written	10	13	11	10	10

Goal 3 — To provide rural land preservation assistance services to citizens and residents in order to protect agricultural land in the County.

Objective 3.1 — Increase the preservation of acres of agricultural land in the County.

FY 2030 Target	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected	Trend
8,100	7,299	7,367	7,500	7,700	↑

Trend and Analysis

The Historic Agricultural Resource Preservation Program (HARPP) application process takes approximately two years, therefore, a property may not be purchased for several years spanning multiple fiscal budgets. The goal is to preserve

over 7,700 acres of privately owned agricultural land by the year 2027. Securing Federal, State, County and outside funds to purchase easements is critical for meeting long term program goals.

Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimated	FY 2026 Projected
Impact (Outcome)					
Protected agricultural acres countywide	7,129	7,299	7,367	7,500	7,700
Agricultural acres protected countywide	19%	20%	20%	20%	20%