

Meet Our New Chairman: Brian Riddle

In February of this year, Brian Riddle was elected as chair of the Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Mr. Riddle has been a member of the Board of Supervisors since 2017 and previously served as Treasurer before assuming his current position. He is the President of Homestead Gardens which has locations in Davidsonville and Severna Park. Mr. Riddle brings valuable skills and connections to the board including his horticultural knowledge, business expertise, policy development experience, and connections within the community.

“Maryland’s commitment to grow our agricultural industry has never been stronger and working with our dedicated team of experts to deploy the resources of this organization is very exciting,” Mr. Riddle said. “I am



honored to have the opportunity to lead AASCD into a bright future for our County’s agricultural community. I am committed to helping citizens learn about the excellent services we provide our county and finding new ways to support best practices and protect our soils.”

Mr. Riddle is supported in his role by other Supervisors and Associate Supervisors (see list to right). We currently have vacancies on the Board with an opening for associate members. Please contact Keli Kirby at (410) 571 - 6757, ext. 2324.

ANNE ARUNDEL SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Chair: Brian Riddle

Vice Chair: Steuart Pittman

Treasurer: Vaugh Foxwell

Secretary: Dave Meyers

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Gary Palmer, Member

Mike Superczynski, Associate

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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QUARTERLY DIRT

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SUMMER 2018 NEWSLETTER

IMPORTANT DATES

Fundamentals of Nutrient Management
May 29 to May 30, 2018
MDA, Annapolis

Maryland Envirothon
June 14 - 15, 2018
Garrett County 4H Camp

National Envirothon
July 24 - 29, 2018
Idaho State University

MASCD Annual Meeting
July 29 - 31, 2018
Hyatt Regency, Cambridge

Crops Research Twilight
August 8, 2018
CMREC, Upper Marlboro



Seventy five students from eight local high schools competed in the Anne Arundel County Envirothon on April 13, 2018



Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District

2662 Riva Road, Suite 150

Annapolis, MD 21401

Message From the District Manager

John Czajkowski

Maybe it is just my imagination or has anyone noticed how the seasons have been changing?

I am not talking about any change in temperature compared to 1,000 years ago. Unfortunately I have been around long enough to have my own sense of history. I am sensing a shift in the seasons.

I have noticed that summer is creeping into fall and fall into winter and so forth.

It seems to me that warmer temperatures are lasting into September and even October. Peek time for fall foliage use to be the second or third week in October.

It seems like you have to wait until

the fourth week in October to take that fall ride along Skyline Drive to see fall colors.

It is not really getting winter-coat-cold until December and we are not seeing the spring temperatures in early April like we use to. Sure we had some warm days but I am talking about when we start to get solid consistent temperatures.

Looking at the week worth of rain we just had during the week of May 14th, I would say April showers have crept into May. Are we going to have a cool start to June? I guess we will see soon enough.

But then it could be that nothing has changed, but me?

INSIDE THIS EDITION

- **South River High School Wins 2018 Envirothon**
- **Update Your Farm's Conservation Plan!**
- **Legislative Updates**
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- **Meet Our New Chairman: Brian Riddle**

ATTENTION:

Have you seen our new website yet? Visit aascd.org to access soil testing information, a calendar of events, and important information about agriculture and conservation.

And please follow us on facebook: [fb.me/annearundelsoilconservation](https://www.facebook.com/annearundelsoilconservation)

8 THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT ENVIROTHON

8. The Envirothon is North America's largest high school environmental competition!

7. More than a half-million students (grades 9 - 12) across the United States and Canada take part in the Envirothon, annually.

6. The Envirothon includes five hands-on stations which test students skills and knowledge in soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and a current environmental issue.

5. This year's current environmental issue, also known as the 5th Issue, is Western Rangeland and Pasture Management.

4. Students compete in the Envirothon in teams of up to five students.

3. Teams earn points for each station. The team with the highest number of points in each category is recognized and the team with the highest score overall wins the event.

2. Last year, Anne Arundel County had 15 teams compete from 8 different schools.

1. Another 75 students will compete again this year, representing 8 Anne Arundel County high schools!



South River High School Team 1 Placed First in the Anne Arundel County Envirothon

Envirothon: Supporting Youth, STEM Education, and the Environment

The Envirothon is one of our favorite events. But it's much more than a day out of the office for the staff and board members. Envirothon is an important tool that teaches students the importance of natural resources and opens a window for students to imagine future career opportunities.

Late AASCD Board of Supervisor member Herb Sachs was an enthusiastic supporter of the Envirothon. Last year, he told students, "Don't just consider environmental science as a major. In any of your studies, it is so important to look at what's going on in the environment. It's all connected."

There is a considerable amount of training and preparation that each team puts in before the Envirothon event. This year, we had about 75 students to compete from eight area high schools. A team from South River High School won again this year, continuing the schools long standing winning streak.

In addition to having the highest overall score, the South River team placed first in aquatics, and wildlife. A team from Broadneck High School placed first in forestry and soils. And an Annapolis High School team took first place in the fifth issue category. Learn more about our education efforts and see photos from past events at: aascd.org.

2018 5th Issue: Western Rangeland Management & Pasture Management

There are four core issues of focus for the Envirothon: soils/land use, aquatics, wildlife, and forestry. The "5th issue," focuses on a current environmental topic and changes from year to year.

The 2018 topic is Western Rangeland & Pasture Management. In Maryland, Pasture Management is an important issue as many local farmers have grazing livestock including cattle and horses.

Among the many learning objectives, students will better understand the current Best Management Practices (BMPs) for western rangelands and how they support livestock production, pest management, fire suppression, and wildlife habitat maintenance. In addition, students will learn about the importance of stakeholder communication in developing conservation strategies.

Legislative Update: Funding For Cost Share Programs Approved

Overall, the 2018 legislative session was a positive one for Maryland farmers. One of the major achievements for soil conservation was \$8 million in funding for the The Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program, which provides farmers with grants to cover up to 87.5 percent of the cost to install conservation measures known as best management practices on their farms to prevent soil erosion, manage nutrients and safeguard water quality in streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

Additionally, Maryland's 2019 budget includes full funding for the Maryland Agricultural Land

Preservation Foundation and \$2.5 million in for MARBIDCO's Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program (Next Gen Program), which is aimed at helping young and beginning farmers acquire farmland.

On the local level, the Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District has been active in shaping legislation impacting agritourism operations and working on issues involving the county's permitting process for agricultural buildings. Each May, we host Leadership Anne Arundel for the South County Agriculture Day which helps inform county leaders about agriculture, conservation, and the local economy.

District Supports Arundel Ag Projects & Programs

The Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District proudly supports projects and programs that protect natural resources and make a positive impact in the local community.

The District is currently supporting a barn rehabilitation project through Arundel Ag, the agricultural division of the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation. When complete, the barn will serve as an agricultural

education center and meeting space for the community.

The District also renewed its financial support for Arundel Ag's scrap tire program. Through this program, agribusiness owners may legally dispose of tires used in farming. A collection trailer is available at T&C Farm.

More information can be found at aaedc.org/agriculture.

Are You Due For an Update?

They say the days are long, but the years are short. Ten years can go by just like that and before you know it, your farm plan is expired!

We will be reaching out to farmers and landowners over the next several months to notify you if your Soil Conservation & Water Quality Plan is out of date or about to expire. It's important that we keep track of the Best Management Practices in Anne Arundel County and demonstrate the positive impact that farmers are making on the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

It's also important to update your Conservation Plan if you've had any major changes in your farm operation such as new ownership or if you've added new crops or livestock to your business operation. Our planners will come to your farm and review your existing conservation plan and discuss any changes that may need to be incorporated. We can also help you identify new opportunities and BMPs that can be added to your farm. Cost-share assistance is available for many practices through the Natural Resource Conservation Services and the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost Share Program. These grants can offset 50 to 87.5 percent of the cost to install eligible best management practices.

Don't wait until your Conservation Plan expires! Contact us to set up a time to review and update your plan. Contact Dave Scheler at (410) 919 - 2338 or dscheler@aascd.org or Shelley Hopkins at (410) 919 - 2323 or shopkins@aascd.org



Pictured at left:

Lisa Barge, Agricultural Marketing & Development Manager, Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, received a \$25,000 grant through the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) to fund the rehabilitation of a historic dairy barn.

The District signed a letter of support for this grant proposal and has pledged matching funds. These funds will be used to install and demonstrate Agricultural Best Management Practices.