

Annual Report

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022



Funding Highlights

-We were awarded \$3.4m for a shoreline restoration project at NAS PAX River through the REPI Challenge!

-To support our yearly conservation easement monitoring requirements, we are looking at securing funding for internships or part-time seasonal employees.

-The National Assoc. of RC&D Councils is also working to secure enough funding for all participating Councils to have 2 interns.

-We continue to receive employment support grants to support NRCS: 3 full-time and 1 part-time employee are currently funded through '25.

Activities

- Strategic Plan '23-'28
- Project Updates
- Current & Future Partnerships
- Stewardship Efforts

Announcements

- Awards and Recognitions
- Outreach & Education
- Call to Action

Board & Staff

- Staff Messages
- Executive Director Letter
- Land Conservation Program Manager Report

What's Inside



Small but Significant

We have updated our brochure and will be creating more items for our social media, website, and print.



GET INVOLVED

If you would like to support SOMD RC&D in its effort to maintain **healthy ecosystems, enterprises, and communities**, please scan the QR code for ways to **donate**.



You can also **volunteer** with us as a consultant or **board member**. For more information, visit our website and fill out our contact form, call, or email us!



OUR VISION

"People and the environment in harmony in Southern Maryland."

OUR MISSION

"Working in partnership with community groups and organizations, Southern Maryland RC&D is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the region by enabling the people and promoting the wise use of our natural and economic resources."

HEALTHY

ECOSYSTEMS

We have completed projects that help restore our local forests, wetlands, fields and meadows. Projects include shoreline stabilizations, wetland creation, living shorelines, slope stabilizations, dam repairs, tree plantings, and invasive species removals. We work closely with Soil Conservation Districts and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). As a qualified land trust, we also sponsor many of the region's Rural Legacy Areas, holding conservation easements that protect forests and farms for future generations.

ENTERPRISES

We complete and promote projects that provide resources to our rural communities - farmer's markets, trails, and museums - and protect military operations at local bases. We believe sensible growth and economic opportunities can be complementary to preservation of our cultural heritage and our natural resources.

COMMUNITIES

We promote and provide support to projects that ensure clean air, clean water, and healthy lifestyles for our region. These projects restore or protect local ecosystems, resolve environmental safety issues, encourage farms to table, and address gaps in the availability of professional medical services for our rural communities.

Vision

People and the environment in harmony in Southern Maryland.

Guiding Principles

Healthy Ecosystems, Healthy Enterprises, and Healthy Communities



Mission

Working in partnership with community groups and organizations, Southern Maryland RC&D is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the region by enabling the people and promoting the wise use of our natural and economic resources.



Goals

1. Increase Community Presence
2. Provide Public Education
3. Increase Human Capital
4. Diversify Funding Sources
5. Define Our Goals & Mission and Work Within Them.



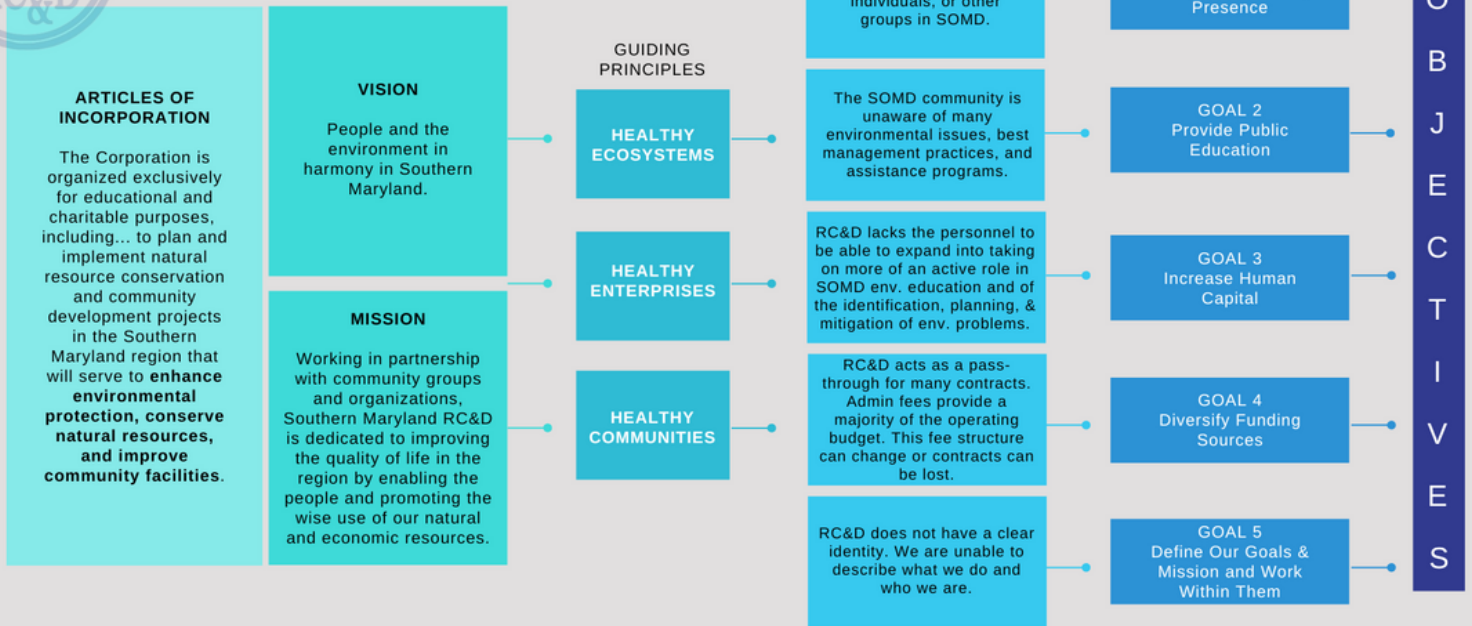
Activities



The goal of a Strategic Plan is to organize the efforts of an organization behind well-defined goals. We will be using this framework to develop projects and partnerships for the next five years. We will evaluate our progress yearly, and re-visit the Plan in 2028.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND RC&D

Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028



SOUTHERN MARYLAND RC&D

Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028

OBJECTIVES



Activities



Our Projects: The Barns at New Market & Three Notch Trail Extension

Construction on the farmer's market and the Three Notch Trail connector in northern St. Mary's County is complete! The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on April 4th, 2022. The market has been officially named "The Barns at New Market" and has been so popular on the weekends that RC&D has already been tasked with planning a parking lot expansion!



This project was a great ending to Cindy Greb's time as Executive Director of RC&D and marked the beginning of Allison Burnett stepping into the role.





the BARNs
at New Market

**29133 Thompson Corner Rd,
Charlotte Hall, MD 20659**

Monday	9am - 4pm
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	9am - 4pm
Thursday	Closed
Friday	9am - 4pm
Saturday	9am - 4pm
Sunday	Closed

The Three Notch Trail expansion is built to ADA standards and includes an overlook to a shallow wetland where you can try to spot wildlife or simply enjoy the view.

Plans for The Barns continue to evolve as the Community provides feedback to the County. They hope to see benches, water bottle filling stations, a pavilion, and interpretive signs at the location soon. The County is working to staff the value-added building so the hours and offerings can increase.

WM Davis, Inc. General Contractors were recognized for their work on The Barns at New Market with a 2022 "Excellence in Construction" award, sponsored by Associated Builders & Contractors.

RC&D was honored to be a part of this project. It was the culmination of a lot of hard work and dedication from multiple partners. We know The Barns will provide economic and cultural benefits to the entire Southern Maryland community.

Our Projects: Johnson Pond Dam Breach

St. Mary's County continues to work with RC&D to develop a plan to address the failing dam at Johnson Pond Lane in California, MD. The first plan to repair the dam and maintain future use of the pond was rejected by the County Commissioners and they requested a breach or removal design.

RC&D is working with representatives from the County and US Fish & Wildlife Service to determine if a dam removal for fish passage to the St. Mary's River would be a viable solution. If the site qualifies for National Fish Passage Program funding, RC&D will assist the County by writing a grant to cover at least 50% of project costs, from planning to permitting and construction.

Our Projects: REPI Challenge '22 NAS PAX River Shoreline Restoration

This project specifically addresses the stabilization and restoration of 4,870 LF of shoreline, which consists of six sub-reaches. In 2014, a survey and design for restoration were completed and all state and federal permits were acquired. Unfortunately, the Navy was unable to secure funding for construction and the permits expired. The previous work completed on this effort would normally allow the project team to expedite progress and construction; however, the increase in erosion and sea level rise that has occurred will require a new survey and design approach. This technical approach, separated into two distinct phases. RC&D, with the assistance of Coastline Design, P.C., Coastal Design & Construction, Inc., St. Mary's Soil Conservation District will complete Phases 1 and 2 of the larger Hog Point Living Shoreline and Coastal Resiliency Project. Phase 1 includes survey; original design adjustment/re-design; engineering; preparation of all required plans, specifications, and permit applications; and all work required to procure applicable permit approvals for all sub-reaches. Phase 2 includes construction/implementation of the approved and permitted updated design, all post-award services, inspections, and as-builts, resulting in 4,870 linear feet of restored shoreline. RC&D is the Cooperator under the Agreement and is the sole agent for the fiscal administration of the Agreement with the Navy.

Our Projects: Piney Point Shoreline

RC&D contracted with Coastline Design P.C. and St. Mary's SCD to provide the site assessment, survey, and Geotech investigation, develop recommendations in the form of a draft report, and produce a final shoreline assessment report acceptable to the County that included a plan with existing site conditions and recommended stabilization measures. The plan assessed historical shoreline change, the site setting, and how the processes of erosion and accretion have impacted Piney Point Embayment and developed strategies for long-term shoreline stabilization and protection for the Piney Point Lighthouse and Museum. The County accepted the plan, and the Joint Permit Application was submitted in September.

Our Projects: NRCS Support Grant

RC&D continues to provide administrative services to hire and conduct employment administration for four (4) positions across service regions to assist NRCS offices with program implementation across Eastern Maryland, Western Maryland, and Southern Maryland. Positions are full-time, three-year appointments and one part-time appointment with annual extensions available.

Activities



Project Summary

RC&D completed over **\$2,319,909.00** in construction and restoration projects. Projections for next year look to be close to \$4m. Most of the funds passed through RC&D to sub-cooperators and partners. RC&D reported surplus earnings, through direct charges and administrative fees, of **\$89,525** for FY22. These funds went directly back into supporting the mission of RC&D and we will be hiring an additional part-time employee to assist with the Land Conservation Program.

Our partnership grants with NRCS and with DNR through the Rural Legacy Program continue to provide crucial funding availability for RC&D. Further information on the contribution of the Rural Legacy Program can be found in the Land Conservation Program Manager Report.

Our Partners

We have worked with numerous partners on projects throughout Southern Maryland and beyond.



Stewardship Efforts

- **Staff volunteered at parks and public lands in Southern Maryland to help pull invasive plant species from the grounds.** Invasives threaten the health and resiliency of a habitat by decreasing biodiversity. Invasives out-compete native species, becoming the only plant/animal in the area. With no other species to fulfill ecological roles, ecosystem services are degraded or lost, which causes harm to the environment, and/or the economy, and/or human health.
- Staff is working with Nature Centers and county Recreation and Parks departments to develop an invasive plant partnership that will provide outdoor education to 9th grade science students and provide invasive species management assistance to Park Managers.



Announcements



Call to Action

As we attempt to expand our reach in the Southern Maryland community, we need more skills, knowledge, and perspectives for RC&D.

Whether through more involvement from current Staff and Board members by taking on committees, learning a new skill, or researching partnerships. Or by recruiting new faces and new voices to RC&D through volunteer activities, tabling events, and Board member recruitment.

Our involvement with the Rural Legacy Program and establishment as a qualified land trust means we are responsible for monitoring and holding these conservation easements in perpetuity. We must have a succession plan in place for RC&D to carry out its responsibilities to the community throughout Staff and Board turnover.

Outreach, Recruitment, Training, and Succession Planning will be hot topics of conversation this coming year!



Outreach & Education

RC&D Scholarship

Southern Maryland RC&D and the Maryland Forestry Board Foundation continue to partner to make available two scholarships for full or part time Maryland resident students. A couple of requirements for the \$500 scholarships is to maintain an undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or at least a graduate level GPA of 3.0 and be a US citizen. One award is restricted to students residing in Southern Maryland and the other is for a Maryland resident. For more information see Maryland Forestry Foundation ~ MD Association of Forest Conservancy District Boards (marylandforestryboards.org)

Science Fairs

Each year (with the exception of 2021 & 2022 due to Covid) the Southern Maryland RC&D participates in the local County Science Fairs. We have Board members from Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's judge the projects in their respective counties. We give awards to four students from each county.



Awards & Recognitions

Donors

We would like to thank our donors who have donated funds to the RC&D program as well as to the Barns at New Market!!



Board & Staff



Staff Messages

Dear RC&D Board of Directors, colleagues, and friends:

Thank you for allowing me the honor and privilege of serving as your executive director for over six years, and for the opportunity to work on such important natural resource and community projects.

Thank you, particularly to the Board for believing in our team and allowing us to take chances and diversify our efforts, our programs, and our partners - which ultimately strengthened our RC&D as a whole.

RC&D's Board, staff, and partners are all key to its success. I encourage you to continue to nurture your long-standing and vital partnerships, as well as explore new ones. Although I am not serving in the executive director position any longer, I will always be available to help RC&D in any way I can.

I wish you all well and many more years of success!!

Warmest regards,
Cindy Greb



June 2022 marked my 30th year with Southern Maryland RC&D. It has been a wonderful experience. I have learned a lot by working with different people and organizations during that time. I have been able to help the Executive Directors and Board members start and complete many projects throughout the Southern Maryland Area. I have enjoyed the new partnerships that come with each new Director and the expertise that they bring to the organization. I look forward to new projects getting started and any assistance I can give to get them completed.

Denitra Brawner, Administrative Associate

Executive Director Letter

Hello Partners, Board Members, and Friends,

Cindy Greb was an integral part of building the legacy of Southern Maryland RC&D. She worked diligently to develop innovative partnerships and fought hard to have RC&D represented well within the community. She leveraged her contacts and experience to create opportunities for growth. Cindy left behind a healthy, thriving organization. I am thankful to be given the opportunity to step into the role of Executive Director as she moves on to pursue a new position with St. Mary's College of Maryland, where she will undoubtedly leave her mark as well.

I was not born in Southern Maryland. We chose this area as our new home after bouncing around as a military family for thirteen years. We have grown to love it and have called Charles County home for over 10 years now. I appreciate the opportunity to serve Southern Maryland. I have explored the natural landscapes and vibrant communities of all four counties we serve: Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's. I have worked, shopped, and played in each county and have my favorite spots that I frequently visit across the Southern Maryland region. We have put roots down and raised our 3 boys here.

I have a grand vision for RC&D's future. I feel our guiding principles to promote Healthy Communities, Healthy Enterprises, and Healthy Ecosystems are an amazing starting point for the work we wish to pursue. I see RC&D assisting Southern Maryland with their Parks, their Communities, their Schools, and their Landscapes. I want to keep growing our reach and our presence across the area by strengthening our partnerships with local governments and departments, fellow non-profits, businesses that share our vision for "people and the environment in harmony in Southern Maryland", and private citizens. We live in a unique and beautiful space where natural and cultural histories combine. I believe our collective voice is made up of perspectives that each add value to our community. I see RC&D as a mechanism to hear those perspectives, hear the wants and needs of the people, and provide solutions. I am so excited to get started!

Sincerely,
Allison Burnett



Hiking the trails at Maxwell Hall Park in Charles County

Land Conservation Program Manager Report

FY22 was a very busy and exciting time for RC&D's Land Conservation Program. We continued to utilize Maryland's Rural Legacy Program to purchase conservation easements in St. Mary's and Calvert counties. We settled seven (7) easements, using matching funding from St. Mary's County and/or the Navy's REPI Program for the majority of them. The easements, valued at over \$3.3M, protected 661 acres of land. This brings RC&D's current holdings to 26 easements totaling 2,750 acres.

RC&D also applied for expansions of the Mattapan, Calvert Creeks, and North Calvert Rural Legacy Areas, along with FY23 grant funding. All three expansions were approved and RC&D was awarded almost \$3M in funding from the state. When combined with remaining grant funds from previous fiscal years, RC&D has a total of approximately \$5M of state funding available. These funds will be leveraged with County and REPI funding whenever possible.

Finally, RC&D continued to assist Charles County with its Rural Legacy easements. RC&D is processing four (4) easements there, which the County will hold and be responsible for monitoring.

Thank you to all the Board members that have assisted with easement monitoring! As we continue to grow our Land Conservation Program, your help will become even more critical. Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns about the program.

-Caroline King



The Carroll family's beautiful waterfront farm in St. Mary's County, on which RC&D holds a conservation easement



Settlement of easement on the Yoe property in Calvert County, now owned by American Chestnut Land Trust and soon to be open to the public

Board & Staff



Current Board Members

James Bardsley

Sponsor: RC&D Appointed (Caroline County)

Bobby Cooper

Sponsor: St. Mary's Soil Conservation District

John Czajkowski

Sponsor: Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District

Jennifer David

Sponsor: Tri-County Council

Luis Dieguez

Sponsor: Charles Soil Conservation District

Kerry Dull

Sponsor: Calvert County Commissioners

Stephen Lehrter

Sponsor: RC&D Appointed (Charles)

Ryan St. Laurent

Sponsor: RC&D Appointed (Calvert)

Randy Sweeney

Sponsor: RC&D Appointed (Charles)

Tim Wells

Sponsor: Charles County Commissioners

Geoff Westbrook

Sponsor: Calvert Soil Conservation District

Patrick Woodburn

Sponsor: RC&D Appointed (St. Mary's)

Tommy Wright

Sponsor: RC&D Appointed (St. Mary's)

Chair – Patricia Pinnell

Sponsor: St. Mary's County Forestry Board

Vice Chair – Olga Walter

Sponsor: RC&D Board Appointed (Charles County)

Secretary/Treasurer – Bruce Young

Sponsor: RC&D Appointed (St. Mary's County)

Come and be a part of a great organization!!!!
Southern Maryland RC&D is looking to fill vacancies on our Board. We currently have vacancies for the following:

- Anne Arundel Forest Conservancy Board
- Calvert Forest Conservancy Board
- Charles Forest Conservancy Board
- Student Board Members
 - Anne Arundel
 - Calvert
 - Charles
 - St. Mary's

RC&D prefers that you reside in the county you wish to serve for. Members serve on the board for three years with the exception of student board members. Student members serve two-year terms. We prefer they be high school juniors. We also have five Board Appointee positions open for Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles & St. Mary's counties. If you are interested, please contact the office at 240-577-6413.