

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



“Envisioning a clean, healthy region that preserves and conserves natural and community resources and uses resources for responsible/ sustainable economic development.”

Message From the **CHAIR**

I am excited about our new five-year Strategic Plan for the Capital RC&D Area Council. I'm excited because this plan is different. It focuses as much – or maybe more so – on communication and partnership building as it does on programs and projects. And that's important for an organization whose mission is to “network people, resources and projects to promote responsible use and conservation of our region's natural, community, and economic resources.”

If, five years from now, the community which we serve clearly knows and understands what Capital RC&D offers then I'll know we have succeeded.

If conservation and agricultural organizations, landowners, farmer and local food systems, policy leaders, and funders know that we are here to serve them by filling service niches (e.g., being a fiscal agent) or providing programs that meet a need in conservation or sustainable economic development, then I believe we will grow as a truly collaborative, regional organization. I encourage you to get to know us better.



In order, l to r; Courtney Accurti, Janet Pollard, Pat Devlin, John Bingham

Regards,
Pat Devlin, Capital RC&D Chair

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Vy Trinh (Cons. Dist. Rep.)
Fran Koch (Alt.)
Commissioner Randy Phiel (Alt.)
Carla Snyder (ML)

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Jeffrey King (Council Treasurer)

(ML) - Member-at-Large // (Comm. Rep.) - Commissioner Representative // (Alt.) - Alternate // (Cons. Dist. Rep.) - Conservation District Representative // *Names in bold are Chair Members

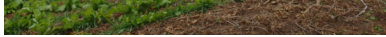
OUR VALUES

We are committed to improving local conservation leadership through partnerships and ideas from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. We strive to foster educational and economic opportunities while improving the quality of life within the regional communities we serve; we have a responsibility to conduct our projects in a fair, equitable and respectful manner.

Capital RC&D PROGRAMS



COVER CROP SURVEY



Cover crops create a host of benefits for both water quality and farm productivity, they reduce soil erosion and resulting nutrient and sediment pollution, and they also improve soil health and positively impact the next year's commercial crop. Data about the use of this farming practice is limited but is needed to support the estimation of sediment and nutrients leaving our farm fields. In 2015 the PA Dept. of Environmental Protection asked Capital RC&D to undertake an assessment of cover crop acreage in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Pennsylvania using the same transect survey routes and survey methods used by Capital RC&D to estimate high residue tillage.

By modifying the existing transect survey protocol, a pilot survey of cover cropping practices was trialed by Capital RC&D with the assistance of the Adams, Cumberland, Juniata, Huntingdon and Union county conservation districts and former NRCS State Agronomist, Joel Myers. Our initial evaluation of the method has shown that this transect survey method can provide a valid and reliable method for collecting cover crop information.

OUR MISSION

The Capital RC&D Area Council networks people, resources and projects to promote responsible use and conservation of our region's natural, community and economic resources.



NRCS PROGRAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Capital RC&D currently works with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide technical staff to NRCS offices. These remotely-stationed Capital RC&D staffers work with NRCS staff to support the implementation of best management practices on farms and natural land.

During 2015 Capital RC&D employed 21 different staff members who were stationed in 10 different NRCS offices. These employees provided a wide variety of assistance that ranged from crucial administrative and outreach functions, to technical support for wildlife conservation and best management practices. In providing the additional support to NRCS offices, these employees enable our region and state to optimize the benefits of Farm Bill programs.

Capital RC&D PROGRAMS

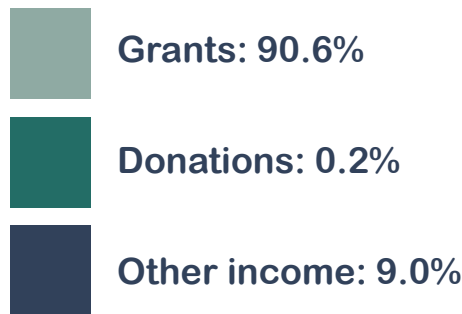
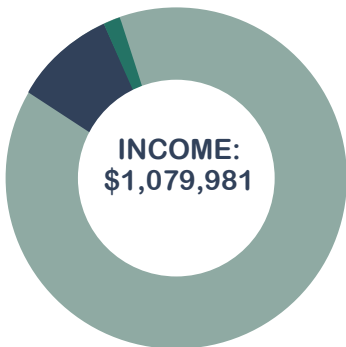


LIFE IN THE SOIL VIDEO SERIES

In 2014 and 2015, Capital RC&D staff examined soil samples using a compound microscope and recorded still and video images using a camera attachment. Nine short videos featuring the compiled images and highlighting various agricultural practices are accessible online by interested individuals as well as agency and organizational staff for soil health presentations. These videos are publicly available through the Capital RC&D YouTube channel and also accessible to agency and organizational staff for soil health presentations.

Additional information about these and other Capital RC&D projects can be found on the Capital RC&D website (www.capitalrcd.org/projects.php).

Financial SUMMARY



Expenditures by County	
COUNTY	TOTAL
Adams	21,897
Cumberland	74,589
Dauphin	17,709
Franklin	52,645
Lancaster	48,218
Lebanon	64,019
York	107,413
Statewide	687,162
TOTAL	\$ 1,073,653