



Capital RC&D



Supporting Pennsylvania's Heartland!

2014 Capital RC&D Annual Report

Capital Resource Conservation & Development
(RC&D) Area Council, Inc.

"Healthy communities in harmony with the environment"

A Message From the Chair



When I was first introduced to Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Councils during the 1980s, it took some time to fully understand what RC&D Councils were all about. At that time, there was no Capital RC&D Area Council (we weren't born until 2002), but Pennsylvania's RC&D Councils were actively doing what I believe RC&D Councils do best -- collaborating with local leaders to conserve a region's natural resources and promote rural economic development.

What struck me then and now is the ability of RC&D Councils to collectively pool resources to get things done. In 2014, the Capital RC&D Area Council continued to prove its capacity as a nonprofit organization that can deliver results. For instance:

- The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) added several new activities and projects to the list of technical assistance and outreach projects managed by Capital.
- The PA Department of Environmental Protection expanded Capital's survey of tillage practices in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- NRCS provided funding to develop novel marketing messages so that consumers would better understand on-farm conservation practices.
- Capital created a new *Guide to Internships and Employment for Pennsylvania Farms: An Overview of Legal Considerations*, the first of its kind to help employers navigate the do's and don'ts of farm employment.
- Capital served as a fiscal sponsor for four projects -- we provided administrative support for grants held on behalf of grassroots conservation projects that needed a "nonprofit" home, ensuring that reports and project goals are completed and acceptable to funders.

As you learn more about Capital's accomplishments through this report, you will see that Capital RC&D Area Council is uniquely positioned to blend private enterprise and government assistance for natural resource conservation. Our highly professional staff continue to build Capital's reputation as an organization that efficiently and successfully carries out projects to fulfill its mission.

There are many challenges ahead but also countless opportunities to serve our seven-county region. As Council Chair, I look forward to working with staff, Council members and community partners during 2015 to update a five-year strategic plan that will further strengthen our organization. Stay tuned.

Regards,

Pat Devlin
Capital RC&D Chair

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Please visit our website at www.capitalrcd.org for more information, to volunteer or donate.

“Healthy communities in harmony with the natural environment.”

-Vision Statement

“The Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council, Inc. is a seven county, non-profit organization that networks people, resources and projects to promote responsible use and conservation of our region’s natural, community and economic resources.”

-Mission Statement

“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 and activities in a fair, equitable and respectful manner.”

-Value Statement



The Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council’s Partnership with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

- Nationally, the RC&D program is a unique combination of private enterprise and government assistance that encourages the blending of natural resource conservation with local economic and social values. Started in 1962, the program is designed to link federal, county and local agencies with community members. Despite changes in financial support, NRCS continues as a strong partner with Capital RC&D. The program continues to create links with NRCS to provide support for conservation and community development.
- The RC&D program is designed to respond to the needs of communities through regional Councils. Council members represent county governments, conservation districts, business interests, non-profits and other community-based organizations. Council members bring a diverse cross-section of skills and interests to the table. Throughout the country, there are more than one-hundred active RC&D Councils working within their communities to further locally-led conservation and development. In Pennsylvania, nine Councils serve their regions and collaborate as members of the Pennsylvania RC&D Council.
- The Capital RC&D Council brings a variety of perspectives to developing and implementing the organization’s plan of work. It also provides an important network for linking resources and programs that support Capital RC&D’s vision and mission.

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*“Every day, Capital RC&D facilitates NRCS’ mission to “help people, help the land.” At the grassroots level, Capital RC&D is instrumental in assisting the Agency to secure conservation easements on farms, restore wetlands, provide sustainable grazing recommendations, and install conservation management and engineering practices on farmland. Capital RC&D’s flexibility to collaborate on a wide variety of projects goes unmatched—making it one of Pennsylvania’s premier conservation partners to get conservation done across PA’s diverse landscape.”*

*-Denise Coleman, State Conservationist  
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service*

# Capital RC&D Project Highlights

## Pasture Soil Health Project

In partnership with PA-NRCS and both National and Pennsylvania Grazing Lands Coalition (GLC), Capital RC&D embarked on a three year Conservation Innovation Grant project entitled, *Employing Short-Term Adaptive Management Strategies to Improve Pasture Soil Health and Climate Change Resilience on Prescribed Grazing Operations*. The project purpose is to examine soil health and pasture resilience in relation to four focus areas: multi-species forages, riparian area flash grazing, invasive species control



and soil organic matter improvement.

During the first year of the project, six grazers from around the state were chosen to serve as grazing “Champions.” Each of these grazers successfully incorporates one or more of the focus areas into their livestock operation. These champions will host workshops and offer guidance to other grazers, in addition to allowing Capital RC&D to measure and document soil and pasture quality over time. Case study video production

at each champion farm will record the farm’s practices and resulting impact on soil, pasture, and the farm’s bottom line. The first videos in the series are viewable online at [www.capitalrcd.org/viewproject/grassroots/](http://www.capitalrcd.org/viewproject/grassroots/).

Three dairies within the Capital RC&D footprint are among the grazing champions and will host future on-farm pasture walks and other events. Information about these events will appear on the Capital RC&D website when planning is finalized.

TOP: Tom Ulrich (Washington Co.) and J.B. Harrold (USDA-NRCS) with cows on pasture over formerly strip mined acreage.

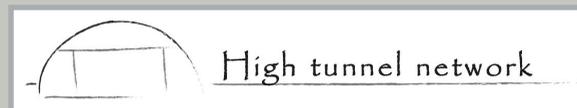
BOTTOM LEFT: Justin Geisinger’s (Franklin Co.) flash grazed riparian buffer.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Matt Bomgardner (Lebanon Co.), Dan Helwig (USDA-NRCS), and David Golden conducting pasture tests.



## High Tunnel Support

The High Tunnel Network is a free online resource created by Capital RC&D in 2014 to enable agricultural producers using high tunnel technology to engage with other growers and educators about important and timely topics. The resource is an online forum where individuals can post questions, share answers or ideas, and review a variety of high tunnel specific resource material.



The forum also provides a vehicle to promote local or statewide workshops and webinars. Interested individuals can register to become part of the forum at [www.hightunnelnetwork.org](http://www.hightunnelnetwork.org)

## Local Food Initiative



Local food initiatives like the USDA's *Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food* campaign encourage consumers to learn about the farms and methods used for growing food, but technical language and the use of acronyms are a barrier to communicating the importance and value of conservation or management practices to the public. In late 2013, Capital RC&D contracted with a communications firm, Water Words that Work, to create a branded communications campaign that producers can incorporate into an existing marketing plan to effectively share information about and built interest in on-farm conservation practices.

The program now entitled, *The Growing Green Series*, explains the importance of five common on-farm conservation practices including conservation tillage, integrated pest management, conservation buffers, cover crops and prescribed grazing. A network of copywriters developed consumer-friendly, written descriptions and practice names for review by a 50 member test panel. The effort generated five practice-specific consumer materials tested for maximum comprehension and consumer appeal.

Producers using these practices can download the campaign materials via the Capital RC&D website and easily integrate them into existing marketing plans by adding a logo, farm specific details, and photos into the Microsoft Word based handout. Campaign promotion and support will continue through 2015.

## Additional Capital RC&D Initiatives

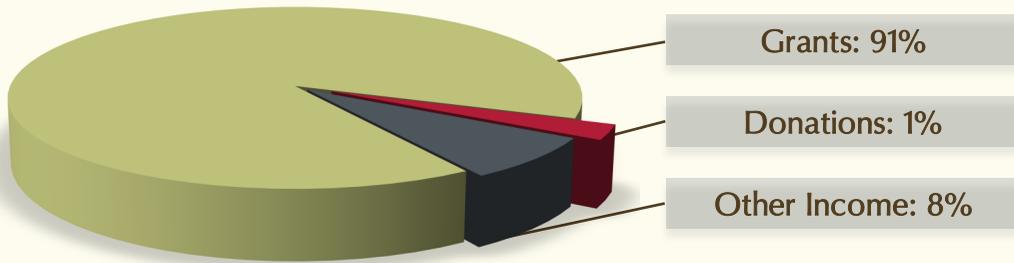
- CREP Riparian Buffer Maintenance Project
- CREP Technical Assistance
- No-till and Soil Health Technical Support
- Technical Assistance in NRCS Field Offices
- Administrative Support for the Cumberland Conservation Collaborative, the LEAF Project, and Sweet Meriam's Farm Preschool Program

*The Capital RC&D is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.*

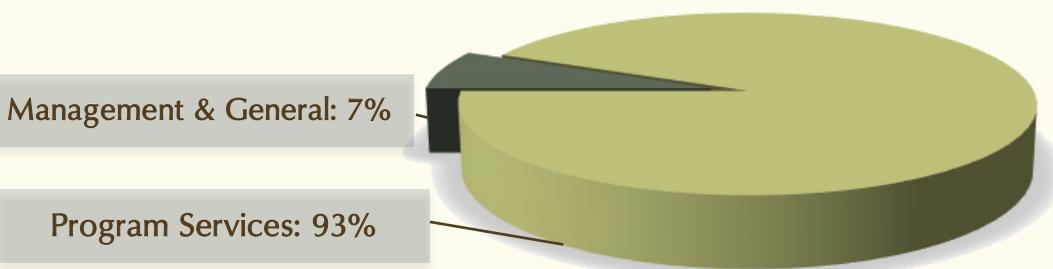
## Community Development

# Financial Statement

**Income**  
2014 Total: \$1,167,013



**Expenses**  
2014 Total: \$1,161,006



## Expenditures by County

| COUNTY       | TOTAL               |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Adams        | \$ 44,122           |
| Cumberland   | 148,668             |
| Dauphin      | 44,490              |
| Franklin     | 73,103              |
| Lancaster    | 75,732              |
| Lebanon      | 113,216             |
| York         | 112,218             |
| Statewide    | 549,456             |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>\$ 1,161,006</b> |



## Volunteers and the Community

The success of RC&D initiatives depends not only on financial success but on the support and participation of volunteers in the community. With their new energy, ideas and perspectives - volunteers contribute the necessary "person-power" behind our activities and provide vital links to community organizations and partner groups. The Council relies on our communities for project guidance and by listening to the input of our volunteers, we are able to focus on the issues and concerns that are most important to our region.

# 2014 Board Members

## Adams County

- **Kelly Koch**  
Adams Co. Planning & Development  
(Commissioner Rep.)
- **Vy Trinh**  
Adams Co. Conservation District  
(Conservation District Rep.)
- **Fran Koch**  
Community Volunteer  
(Member-at-Large, Apr-Sept)
- **Nick Colonna**  
Adams Co. Planning & Development  
(Alternate)
- **Commissioner Randy Phiel**  
Adams Co. Commissioner's Office  
(Alternate)
- **Barry Towers**  
Community Volunteer  
(Member-at-Large, Oct-Mar)  
\*RC&D Vice Chair, Oct-Mar

## Cumberland County

- **Frank Meehan**  
Community Volunteer  
(Commissioner Rep.)
- **Kim Falvey**  
Cumberland Co. Conservation District  
(Conservation District Rep.)
- **Courtney Accurti**  
PA State Association of Boroughs  
\*RC&D Secretary  
(Member-at-Large)
- **Carl Goshorn**  
Cumberland Co. Conservation District  
(Alternate)

## Dauphin County

- **Skip Memmi**  
Dauphin Co. Economic Development  
Corporation  
(Commissioner Rep.)
- **Lisa Lauver**  
Dauphin Co. Conservation District  
(Conservation District Rep.)

- **Eric Naguski**  
Dauphin Co. Conservation District  
(Member-at-Large)
- **James Szymborski**  
Dauphin Co. Conservation District  
(Alternate)

## Franklin County

- **Commissioner David S. Keller**  
Franklin Co. Commissioner's Office  
(Commissioner Rep.)
- **David Stoner**  
Franklin Co. Conservation District  
(Conservation District Rep.)
- **Janet Pollard**  
Franklin Co. Visitors Bureau  
\*RC&D Exec. Committee  
Member-at-Large  
(Member-at-Large)
- **George Hurd**  
Franklin Co. Cooperative Extension  
(Alternate)
- **Commissioner Robert Ziobrowski**  
Franklin Co. Commissioner's Office  
(Alternate)

## Lancaster County

- **Donald McNutt**  
Lancaster Co. Conservation District  
(Commissioner Rep.)
- **Sallie Gregory**  
Lancaster Co. Conservation District  
(Conservation District Rep.)
- **John Bingham**  
Community Volunteer  
\*RC&D Vice-Chair, Apr-Sept  
(Member-at-Large)
- **Kent Gardner**  
West Hempfield Township  
(Alternate)
- **Jill Whitcomb**  
Lancaster Co. Conservation District  
(Alternate)

## Lebanon County

- **Commissioner Bill Ames**  
Lebanon Co. Commissioner's Office  
(Commissioner Rep.)
- **Jared Boger**  
PA Assoc. of Conservation Districts  
(Conservation District Rep.)
- **Stephanie Harmon**  
Lebanon Co. Conservation District  
(Member-at-Large)
- **Robert Sentz**  
Lebanon Co. Planning Department  
(Alternate)

## York County

- **Nedette Otterbein**  
Horn Farm Center  
(Commissioner Rep.)
- **Julie Flinchbaugh**  
Flinchbaugh's Orchard and Market  
(Conservation District Rep.)
- **Pat Devlin**  
Community Volunteer  
\*RC&D Chair  
(Member-at-Large)
- **Dru Peters**  
Sunnyside Farm  
(Alternate)

## Advisory Member

- **Jeffrey King**  
Community Volunteer  
\*RC&D Treasurer

NOTE: Council meetings take place bi-monthly on the third Friday, beginning in January, and are always open to the public. Please contact the council office for specific meeting information.



## Project Impact Testimonials

*"As a result of the collaboration between Capital RC&D and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the riparian buffer maintenance program provided an opportunity for landowners to receive technical assistance and education that they may not have received otherwise. Because of this, buffer success was improved leading to the buffers functioning properly and improving water quality for future generations."*

-Kristen Kitchen  
Restoration Specialist, Chesapeake Bay Foundation



*"Here in York County we have been in desperate need of additional staff to assist with our Ag program planning and technical assistance workload. Capital RC&D has provided resources for two staff positions to help us meet the growing list of requests. The RC&D staff work in concert with the existing District and USDA, NRCS staff strengthening our efforts and the partnership in the York County Field Office."*

-Mark Kimmel  
District Manager, York Co. Conservation District

*"Capital RC&D has furthered the success of CREP by providing resources in the way of printed educational materials for participants, on site workshops and 'boots on the ground' for landowner assistance in the field. FSA in Franklin County greatly appreciates the cooperation and collaboration with Capital RC&D."*

-Sharon B. Weigle  
County Executive Director  
Franklin/Fulton County, USDA-Farm Service Agency

*"Tillage roadside surveys or transects conducted through Capital RC&D over the past seven years have been very instrumental in reflecting what is really happening out there on cropland. These transects have been thorough and have provided conservation districts, resource agencies and the private sector with information, both on the effectiveness of current conservation programs, and the program direction needed to address the most serious soil & water resource related problems. From these surveys we have learned that tillage and the removal of crop residues without using cover crops has a serious impact on soil health, productivity and impairment of our soil and water resources."*

-Joel C. Myers  
Soil Health, No-Till & Cover Crop Consultant and No-Till Farmer in Centre County

## RC&D Councils in Pennsylvania

Capital: (717) 241-4361

Community Partnerships: (717) 248-4901

Endless Mountains: (570) 265-2717

Headwaters: (814) 503-8654

Penn's Corner: (724) 857-1043

Penn Soil: (814) 726-1441

Pocono Northeast: (570) 234-3577

Southeastern PA\*: (610) 892-9484

Southern Alleghenies\*: (814) 472-2120

*\*Housed within the Conservation District Office*

For more information, please visit [www.parc.d.org](http://www.parc.d.org)

*Serving Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon and York Counties.*