

Land Preservation

Maryland is rapidly being developed, and once forested and open spaces are quickly being transformed into housing developments and shopping centers. Several agencies in Maryland have a goal of preserving farmland, forests, and open spaces. Some of these agencies are listed and described below.

Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Program; Cecil County Purchase of Development Rights Program; Transfer of Development Rights Program: The goal is to preserve enough agricultural land to use as a base for food and fiber for current and future residents of Maryland. 410-996-5220; 200 Chesapeake Blvd., Elkton, MD 2192; http://www.ccgov.org/dept_ecdev/business_agriculture4.cfm

Cecil Land Trust: This non-profit organization preserves farmlands, woodlands, natural habitats, and historic and rural communities in Cecil County. 135 Main Street, Elkton, MD 21921; <http://www.cecilandtrust.org/>

Cecil Soil Conservation District: The Cecil SCD works with Federal, State, and County programs and organizations to provide technical and financial assistance in Cecil County for the installment and maintenance of conservation practices. A landowner's participation in most agricultural land preservation programs requires the implementation of a Soil and Water Quality Conservation Plan. Such plans include practices aimed to reduce erosion, improve water quality, improve wildlife habitat, an improved agricultural, nutrient, and livestock management. The District works with U. S. Department of Agriculture and Maryland Department of Agriculture to provide cost-share assistance in conservation practices. 410-398-4411 ext. 3; <http://www.cecilscd.com>

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy: Through strategic land conservation and sound land use planning, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy aims to sustain the Eastern Shore's rich landscapes. 410-827-9756; P.O. Box 169, Queenstown, MD 21658; <http://www.eslc.org/index.php>

Maryland Environmental Trust: Created in 1967 by the General Assembly, the Maryland Environmental Trust preserves open land, such as farmland and forests. The MET uses voluntary conservation easements to preserve the land. 410-514-7900; 100 Community Place 1st Floor, Crownsville, MD 21032; <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/met/contactus.html>

Rural Legacy Program: Through grants, the Rural Legacy Program aims to preserve cultural and natural resource lands. There are two Rural Legacy Areas in Cecil County, Fair Hill Legacy Area and Agricultural Security Corridor Sassafra Focus Area. <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/land/rurallegacy/index.asp>

What is the Cecil Soil Conservation District?

The mission of the Cecil Soil Conservation District is to provide information, technical assistance, and education in conserving the county's natural resources. The District plays a critical role in preventing soil loss and promoting water quality to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

When the District was established on June 26, 1945, agriculture was the dominant land use in Cecil County, as it was in most of America. Today, Soil and Water Quality Conservation Plans are developed for individual farms that inventory natural resources, list soil erosion and water quality problems, and identify practices that would help solve pollution problems and improve soil, water, and air quality. This facilitates the requirements for the Critical Area law, agricultural preservation participants, and USDA Program compliance.

Cecil Soil Conservation District was organized under the laws of the State of Maryland and is a separate legal subdivision of the State. The District includes all of Cecil County and is governed by a Board of Supervisors. The District is responsible for natural resource conservation programs in Cecil County.

Each year the Cecil Soil Conservation District sponsors and coordinates the Cecil County Envirothon. The Envirothon is a series of environmental competitions in which teams of high school students solve real-life, interactive environmental problems in a natural setting. The students compete in five topics: Wildlife, Forestry, Soils, Aquatics, and a current environmental issue. Cecil schools compete every May to earn a place in the Maryland competition. The State winners advance to the International Canon Envirothon Competition. To learn more about the Envirothon or to view competition results visit <http://cecilsd.com/edu.htm>.

The District reviews and approves erosion and sediment control plans that developers, by law, must submit in order to obtain a grading permit from the County. Activities requiring a plan include clearing, grading, forest harvest, and other soil disturbances. Practices outlined on the plan work to minimize the disturbed soil flowing from a site and decrease sediment's impact on our waterways or environmentally sensitive areas.

For more than half a century, the District has worked to encourage landowners to see themselves as stewards of the land, with a responsibility to pass their property on to future generations in a better state than when the land was received. Please visit <http://cecilsd.com> for more information on natural resource education and programs including camps, scholarships, competitions and conservation information for all ages.

Fair Hill Nature Center

Maryland's Department of Natural Resources purchased nearly 5,700 acres from the heirs of William DuPont, Jr. in 1975, creating the Fair Hill Natural Resource Management Area. Fair Hill Nature Center opened on Earth Day in 1990. The Fair Hill Environmental Foundation, Inc. is a private, non-profit, natural history, and environmental learning center serving students and adults. The goal of the Fair Hill Nature Center is to promote responsible stewardship of the land through the appreciation and understanding of our environment.

Fair Hill Nature Center has partnered with Cecil Soil Conservation District to provide an outdoor nature school to elementary school students in the county. The primary goal of the outdoor school is to raise awareness among children and adults about the relationships that occur in nature and the interdependence of the environment, our health, the economy, and culture. Over the past 15 years the nature school has provided environmental education to 8,000 children per year.

The Fair Hill Nature Center's vision for the future is a regional community where people protect, respect, and preserve the natural environment and its natural resources. Partnering with the Fair Hill Nature Center is one of the many steps that Cecil SCD has taken to ensure that this vision of the future becomes a reality.

Visit The Fair Hill Nature Center today at <http://www.fairhillnature.org>.



The Fair Hill Nature Center as seen from the Cecil SCD- sponsored created wetland.

Environmental Reference Guide

Cecil County Government
200 Chesapeake Blvd.
Elkton, MD 21921
<http://www.ccgov.org>

Cecil County Government Departments

Commissioners Office 410-996-5201
Economic Development Agriculture Office
410-996-5350
Emergency Services 410-996-5350
Environmental Health 410-996-5160
Health Department 410-996-5550
Land Records 410-996-5103
Permits and Inspections 410-996-5235
Planning and Zoning 410-996-5220
Public Works 410-996-5259
 Development Services
 410-996-5265
 Engineering and Construction
 410-996-5268
 Roads Division 410-996-6270
 Solid Waste Division
 410-996-6275
 Water and Wastewater Division
 410-996-6260
 Weed Control 410-287-4638

Cecil County Farm Bureau
20 Peach Rd.
Elkton, MD 21921
410-398-3228 or 410-392-4226

Cecil Soil Conservation District
105 Chesapeake Blvd. Suite B-3
Elkton, MD 21921
410-398-4411, ext. 3
<http://www.cecilscd.com>

Center for Watershed Protection
8390 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Ellicott City, MD 21043
410-461-8323
<http://www.cwp.org>

Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Phillip Merrill Environmental Center
6 Herndon Ave.
Annapolis, MD 21403
410-268-8816
<http://www.cbf.org>

Chesapeake Bay Trust
60 West Street, Suite 405
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-974-2941
<http://www.cbtrust.org>

Elk Creeks Watershed Association
P.O. Box 111
Oxford, PA 19363
610-998-9900
<http://www.elkwatershed.org>

Fair Hill Nature Center
630 Tawes Dr.
Elkton, MD 21921
410-398-4909
<http://www.fairhillnature.org>

Maryland Cooperative Extension
200 Chesapeake Blvd., Suite 1500
Elkton, MD 21921
410-996-5280
<http://extension.umd.edu/local/Cecil>

Maryland Department of Agriculture
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

From My Backyard to Our Bay

MD Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21230
410-537-3000
<http://www.mde.state.md.us>

MD Department of Natural Resources Forest
Service (County Office)
Black Hill Ranger Station
130 McKinney Town Rd.
North East, MD 21901
410-287-5777

MD Department of Natural Resources
580 Taylor Ave.
Tawes State Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
1-877-620-8267
<http://www.dnr.state.md.us>

National Wildlife Federation
11100 Wildlife Center Drive
Reston, VA 20190
1-800-822-9919
<http://www.nwf.org>

Octoraro Watershed Association
517 Pine Grove Rd
Nottingham, PA 19362
717-539-2132
<http://www.theowa.org>

Sassafras River Association
P.O. Box 333
Georgetown, MD 21930
410 648-6994
<http://www.sassafrasriver.org>

USDA-Natural Resource
Conservation Service
339 Busch's Frontage Rd., Suite 301
Annapolis, MD 21409
410-398-4411 ext. 3 (local)
or 410-757-0861
<http://www.md.nrcs.usda.gov>

*All websites listed in the green reference boxes or as image credits were used as sources to compile this booklet.

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