

Natural Resources Conservation Service

# Delaware Partnership Guide



This partnership guide provides a summary of available technical and financial resources by our core conservation partners. It is designed to help field staff quickly identify additional assistance to share with agricultural customers with the ultimate goal of getting more conservation on the ground.

Conservation partnership resources include the following: Kent Conservation District, New Castle Conservation District, Sussex Conservation District, Delaware Department of Agriculture, Delaware Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and the Resource Conservation & Development Council.

## DELAWARE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP RESOURCES AT-A-GLANCE

### DDA

Delaware Department of Agriculture

#### CONTACT

**Website:** <https://agriculture.delaware.gov/>

**Phone:** Main - (302) 698-4500

- Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Program, 302-698-4530
- Delaware Forest Service, 302-698-4550
- Nutrient Relocation Program, 302-698-4556

**General Assistance Offered:** Financial assistance available for easement preservation, forestry practices, nutrient relocation, and major/minor flooding and drainage projects. The agricultural lands preservation and the nutrient relocation programs are available year round.

**Summary:** The Department of Agriculture strives to sustain and promote the viability of food, fiber, and agricultural industries in Delaware through quality services that protect and enhance the environment, health, and welfare of the general public.

### DNREC

Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

#### CONTACT

**Website:** <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/watershed-stewardship/nps/>

**Phone:** Nonpoint Source Program, 302-608-5472

**General Assistance Offered:** Financial assistance is offered through low-interest loans and grants to eligible individuals to promote water quality projects and reduce nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. The loan programs for poultry and dairy producers can be used for manure storage/management, dead bird composters, and front-end loaders. Loan amounts vary from \$1,000 to \$100,000; the 319 grant is eligible for producers but is extremely limited in scope.

**Note:** See loan/grant details on page 4.

**Summary:** DNREC envisions a Delaware that offers a healthy environment where people embrace a commitment to the protection, enhancement, and enjoyment of the environment in their daily lives.

Voluntary conservation works.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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Helping People Help the Land

[de.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://de.nrcs.usda.gov/)

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### KCD

Kent Conservation District

#### CONTACT

**Website:** <http://kentcd.org/>

**Phone:** (302) 608-5370

**General Assistance Offered:** Technical and financial assistance is available for best management practices including water management, animal and agricultural waste management systems, water quality practices, and erosion and sediment control practices.

KCD also offers special programs for cover crops and animal mortality management. KCD coordinates with tax ditch organizations located in Kent County to provide technical and financial assistance for maintenance and other tax ditch needs.

Technical assistance is also available for sediment and stormwater concerns and offers direct assistance to Homeowner's Associations tasked with maintaining stormwater facilities.

**Timelines:** KCD accepts applications for cost-share assistance on all KCD approved Agricultural and Urban BMP's year-round, except for cover crops. The Cover Crop cost-share sign-up period is announced each year, and typically runs July-August. Tax Ditch matching funds assistance is also announced directly to the Tax Ditch Associations; whom you should contact directly if your tax ditch needs attention.

**Summary:** The Kent Conservation District provides technical and financial assistance to landowners to implement BMPs to improve or enhance water quality and other natural resource concerns. The cost-share rates range from 50% to 90%, depending on the practice.

### NCCD

New Castle Conservation District

#### CONTACT

**Website:** <https://www.newcastlecd.org/>

**Phone:** (302) 365-8970

**General Assistance Offered:** Financial assistance is available for water quality, water management and erosion control practices. NCCD also offers a separate program for cover crops and has a cost-share program for urban agriculture. Equipment rentals are available for no-till drills and seeders.

NCCD coordinates with tax ditch organizations located in New Castle County to provide technical and financial assistance for maintenance and other tax ditch needs.

NCCD offers extensive conservation assistance in many aspects of urban and suburban water quality, water management and erosion control issues.

**Timelines:** Applications are accepted year-round for NCCD's conservation cost-share program. Sign-up periods for NCCD's cover crop program are typically announced in July.

**Summary:** The New Castle Conservation District provides technical and financial assistance to landowners to implement conservation practices to improve or enhance water quality and other natural resource concerns. The cost-share rates range from 30% to 75%, depending on the practice.



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### SCD

Sussex Conservation District

#### CONTACT

**Website:** <https://www.sussexconservation.org/>

**Phone:** Agriculture: 302-856-3990 ext. 3

Stormwater/Heavy Equipment, 302-856-2105

**General Assistance Offered:** SCD provides technical and financial assistance to prepare, protect and preserve natural resources in Sussex County. The agriculture program assists producers and landowners with conservation planning, soil health education and cost-share including cover crops, tax ditch maintenance and USDA conservation programs. As the delegated authority for Delaware Sediment and Stormwater Regulations, the stormwater program provides plan review, construction inspection, maintenance inspection, outreach, education and technical assistance. From private land management, restoration work and tax ditch maintenance, the equipment program, which serves Kent and Sussex County, designs and constructs environmentally friendly conservation practices.

**Timelines:** Sign up for cover crop and tax ditch cost-share begins mid-June; funding caps are determined in August. All other funding requests are accepted year-round.

**Summary:** Since 1944, SCD has served Sussex County by providing technical guidance and financial assistance to enhance, maintain, protect, and improve land and water resources.

### RC&D

First State Resource Conservation & Development Council

#### CONTACT

**Phone:** 302-365-8979

**E-mail:** [rick.mickowski@delaware.gov](mailto:rick.mickowski@delaware.gov)

**Grant Website:** <https://delawaretrees.com/about-us/partners/>

**General Assistance Offered:** First State RC&D Council offers a mini-grant program that is focused on land management and conservation, water management and community development.

Targeted areas for mini-grants include:

- Urban farm and community/school garden initiatives
- Invasive Species Management
- Establishing or improving community recreational areas
- Establishing pollinator habitat
- Installation of rain gardens

The maximum amount of each grant is \$500. Individuals are eligible to apply.

**Timelines:** Mini-grant applications are accepted throughout the year and are reviewed on a quarterly basis.

**Summary:** The First State RC&D provides leadership, initiative, technical support, and direction in developing and carrying out a plan to assist individuals and communities in the conservation and enhancement of their human and natural resources. The vision of First State RC&D is “prosperous diverse communities effectively developing and conserving the human and natural resources of the First State RC&D Area.”



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Details & Explanations

#### DNREC

The **Clean Water Act Section 319 Grant** is available to address nonpoint source pollution (NPS). Information specific to the NPS Section 319 grant can be found on DNREC's website. (See page 1.) Grant award amounts fluctuate annually. Total grant awards, over recent history, have been approximately \$1.1 - \$1.2 million. Grants run a federal fiscal year cycle and are five years in length for each grant award. The Section 319 grant can only fund BMP projects within watersheds with EPA approved watershed implementation plans (<https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/watershed-stewardship/assessment/plans-and-strategies/>). Each December, a request for proposals (RFP) is released to solicit eligible organizations for BMP projects. Submitted proposals are evaluated by a ranking committee to determine eligibility requirements and evaluate whether the proposed projects align well with the goals of the NPS Program. **Note: While the grant is open to individuals, none have been selected to date. Grant is limited to demonstration projects.**

#### DNREC

The **Poultry Loan Program** helps poultry farmers implement best management practices on their farms to reduce the potential for pollution from their farming operations. This program is managed jointly by the DNREC's Environmental Finance, Division of Watershed Stewardship, and the state's Conservation Districts. Financing is available at an interest rate of 3 percent, for 1 to 7 years, with a minimum loan of \$1,000 and a maximum loan of \$60,000. Loans for equipment (manure spreaders, front-end loaders or bucket attachments) must be repaid within five (5) five years and require a lien to be entered with the Delaware Secretary of State. Producer must pay 10% of the total costs when not receiving cost-share.

### MORE...

Details & Explanations

#### DNREC

The **Dairy Loan Program** helps dairy farmers implement best management practices on their farms to reduce the potential for pollution from their farming operations. This program is managed jointly by DNREC Environmental Finance, the Division of Watershed Stewardship, and the state's Conservation Districts. The interest rate on each loan shall be 3%. The term of the loan can extend from one (1) year to seven (7) for loans of \$5,000 to \$60,000 and from one (1) to a maximum of ten (10) years for loans greater than \$60,000. The maximum loan amount shall not exceed \$100,000. The minimum loan is \$5,000. Loans for equipment cannot exceed \$60,000 and must be repaid within five (5) years and require a Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) Lien to be filed with the Delaware Secretary of State. Any producer applying **ONLY** for an equipment loan must have a waste management plan that meets USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service standards and specifications. If producer is not applying for any state and/or federal cost-share, then producer must pay 10% of the total bill(s) to a contractor or contractors and send proof of payment to the DNREC by means of canceled checks or paid receipts.

