



***Kent Conservation District  
2021  
Annual Report***

*The Kent Conservation District's mission is to put each acre of land to the use for which it is best suited and to economically develop and improve our environment to its highest potential according to sound planning and conservation practices.*

## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Robert A. Killen  
*Chairman*

Edwin J. Alexander  
*Vice-Chairman*

Bruce Snow  
*Treasurer*

Jake Jones  
*Secretary*

Terry Pepper  
*Levy Court Representative*

Mike Brown  
*Appointed Member*

Mike Twining  
*Appointed Member*

Matthew Webber  
*Appointed Member*

Barbara M. Reed  
*Associate Member*

Frederick T. Mott  
*Associate Member*



## **PROGRAM CONTACTS**

### Administration

Timothy Riley  
*District Coordinator*

Gayle Wills  
*Accountant*

Alisa Carrow Bentley  
*Administrative Coordinator*

### Nutrient Management

Kerin Hume  
*Conservationist*

Peggy Lowman  
*Conservationist*

### Sediment & Stormwater

Jared C. Adkins, P.E.  
*Program Manager*

### Tax Ditch/Drainage Assistance

Gene Vanderwende  
*Field Coordinator*

## **USDA**

### **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Bianca Soto-Gomez  
*District Conservationist*

Justin Ford  
*Conservationist*

Tabitha Edwards  
*Conservationist*

Jacob Urian  
*Conservationist*

James Dick  
*Program Assistant*

## What is the District? What does the District do?

Kent Conservation District (KCD) is a governmental subdivision of the State of Delaware authorized by state legislation in Title 7 of the Delaware Code, Chapter 39 and responsible for conservation work within Kent County. There is a conservation district in each county in Delaware. KCD functions to focus attention on land, water and related resource problems; to develop programs to solve the problems; to enlist and coordinate help from public and private sources to accomplish the District goals; and to increase awareness of the relationship between human activities and the natural environment around us. It is the Board of Supervisors' responsibility to plan and direct the District programs, to coordinate the help of other governmental agencies, to assign priority to requests for conservation technical assistance from private landowners, and to serve as a community clearinghouse for information services. The KCD Board meets monthly and all meetings are open to the public.



Much of the Districts' effectiveness is due to their ability to work with local, state, and federal agencies to solve local environmental problems. KCD enters into agreements (memorandums of understanding) with cooperating agencies and organizations that outline the obligations of each party and the assistance available. KCD operations are supported by federal, state and local governments and private individuals. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) both provide technical leadership to KCD. Additional cooperating agencies include: the University of Delaware's Cooperative Extension Service, the USDA Farm Service Agency, the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA), and the First State Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D).

KCD receives an annual allocation from the State of Delaware administered through DNREC, which is used to cost-share with landowners for environmentally sound improvements of their land. This funding also provides a portion for personnel and administrative costs to run the program. KCD also receives funding from the State of Delaware and Kent County to address the needs of the tax ditch systems within Kent County. Additional funding is received through special conservation grants and equipment rental.

Employees within KCD provide technical, administrative, and clerical support to district programs. At times, Earth Team Volunteers assist with carrying out the District's conservation programs. KCD works directly with farmers, landowners, and municipalities on the following types of challenges: water quality protection; stormwater management; aquifer protection; land use planning; erosion and sediment control on land undergoing development, farmland, critical areas and public lands; flooding problems; wetlands protection; soil survey information; and sustainable agriculture.

### State and National Associations

Delaware's conservation district supervisors have a statewide organization known as the Delaware Association of Conservation Districts (DACD). DACD, a voluntary, non-profit alliance, provides a forum for discussion and coordination among the districts as they work to ensure the wise use and treatment of our State's natural resources. The 3,000 conservation districts across the nation belong to NACD, the National Association of Conservation Districts. NACD's primary goal is the conservation, orderly development, and judicious use of the nation's resources.



Both of these organizations make the effort of conservation districts more effective by providing a vehicle through which conservation districts can band together to promote their causes at the state and national levels. Each year District board members, the District Coordinator and the Administrative Coordinator attend the NACD annual meeting and the NACD Northeast regional meeting to partake in educational sessions, hear updates from national partners, and to network with other district professionals from across the nation.

The 2021 annual meeting, themed "NACD's 75th Anniversary: Diamonds Out of the Dust" was held virtually due to COVID19; while the Northeast regional meeting was held in Portsmouth, New Hampshire from October 31, 2021 — November 3, 2021.



## Tax Ditch and Drainage Assistance

The District employs a field coordinator whose main responsibility is to assist with the tax ditch program in Kent County. DNREC's Division of Watershed Stewardship provides assistance in tax ditch planning and organization. There are 75 tax ditch systems in the county, totaling 708 miles of channel. The District's field coordinator responded to 147 requests for assistance on the tax ditches. The requests for assistance concerned mowing (359 miles), pipe sizing (108 pipes installed on 19 ditches), flooding, ditch bank erosion, weed wiping (37 miles on 6 ditches), seeding, tax ditch maintenance, tax ditch construction, beaver control, and requests to stake, grade and survey ditches (48,760 feet were staked and graded on 12 ditches), etc. The District's field coordinator did not attend any annual meetings of the 38 tax ditch associations due to COVID19.

### Matching Funds for Drainage Projects

To maximize the efforts of providing a beneficial drainage system for county residents, the Kent County Levy Court and the State of Delaware provided the District with a total of \$150,000 to be used for the construction of new tax and public ditches and the maintenance of existing tax ditches. These funds were used in conjunction with tax ditch funds to perform the necessary work. After the work was completed, the projects were inspected by the District's field coordinator before any matching funds were released.

During 2021, the 3921 funds were used as follows:

Tax Ditch Dipout (61,285 feet)	\$ 33,645
Tax Ditch Pipe Installation (108 pipes)	\$ 26,050
Tax Ditch Mowing (359 miles)	\$ 53,850
Weed Wiper Bar (37 miles)	\$ 7,400
Technical & Administrative Assistance	\$ 87,300
Brought Forward to FY-21	\$ 30,208
Total	\$238,845



*Drainage project.*



*Drainage project.*

At times the District is called upon to assist landowners with their drainage concerns that do not fall under the Sediment & Stormwater or Tax Ditch programs. These requests for assistance concern flooding problems, ditches that need cleaning out, erosion problems, etc. The District's field coordinator handled 152 requests for drainage assistance (tile drainage—14,500 ft.; open drainage—46,255 ft.) during 2021.

## Financial Assistance

The State of Delaware, and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agencies provided technical and financial assistance through cost-sharing programs to cooperating landowners for the installation of conservation practices. Cost-sharing through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enabled the District to continue work toward the reduction of non-point source pollution (NPS). Additional funding from the State of Delaware and Kent County Levy Court also allowed the district to continue a community drainage and resource development

### Conservation Cost Share Program

The General Assembly provided \$510,000 in cost share funds, which were utilized by different cooperating landowners. Projects implemented emphasized water quality, water management, and erosion/sediment control. Funds were allocated for the practices below:

Cover Crops	32,668 Acres
Open Ditching	46,255 Feet
Tile Drainage	4,500 Feet
Large Animal Mortality	\$54,150 Dollars

The District's Conservationists completed a total of 61 annual inspections of previously installed practices to ensure the practices are continuing to work properly and do not need any maintenance. This number does not include drainage projects.

### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Landowner site visits continued, but initial contacts and follow up was done virtually. There were no in-person educational, networking, or promotional events held during this time.

NRCS, FSA and the CREP coordinator worked to develop and implement a process for completing the 4 required Status Reviews needed during the life of a CREP contract. The CREP coordinator worked with NRCS to implement a plan to manage the newly released Forest Management Incentive (FMI) program.

During sign-up, 15 contracts were renewed, and 1 new contract was enrolled representing a total of 240.27 acres. Of the 15 contracts that were renewed 8 were from Kent County representing 164 acres, 2 were from New Castle County representing 16.92 acres, and 5 were from Sussex County representing 54.46. The 1 new enrollment was in New Castle County representing 4.89 acres. The 8 contracts were in the Delaware Bay watershed, 7 contracts were in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and 1 contract was in the Inland Bay watershed. The State of Delaware paid \$93,024.85 to landowners for CREP practices during the 2021 year

There were 64.3 acres of CREP that did not re-enroll; 3 from Kent County, 1 from New Castle County and 2 from Sussex County.



*Cover Crop Project.*

### Environmental Quality Incentive Program

Funding provided through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is used for implementing water quality practices. The following practices were implemented during 2021:

Animal Mortality Facility	1	Each
Dead Bird Composters	0	Each
Waste Storage Facility	3	Each
Fencing	3,730	Feet
Poultry Heavy Use Area Protection	29	Each
Irrigation Sprinkler Systems	0	Acres
Irrigation Water Management	0	Acres
Nutrient Management	0	Acres
Pest Management	0	Acres
Waste Storage Facilities	3	Each



*Heavy Use Area Protection*

## *Sediment & Stormwater Program*

The Kent Conservation District has been the delegated agency in Kent County for the Delaware Sediment and Stormwater (S&S) Program since its inception in July 1991. The District is responsible for plan review and approval, construction inspection, and maintenance inspection for all construction projects within the County. The Stormwater staff included the program manager, one plan reviewer, two engineering inspectors, one drainage planner and one urban conservationist. During the year the staff performed the following:

- Performed 122 detailed sediment and stormwater reviews
- Approved 43 projects
- Reviewed 97 minor subdivisions plans
- Reviewed 48 plans for the City of Dover, City of Milford, and Kent County Development Advisory Committees (DAC)
- Issued 1,288 Residential Standard Plans; 19 Non-residential Standard Plans
- Completed 596 project inspections, 1,274 residential inspections, 215 maintenance inspections and 106 temporary approvals
- Completed 5 Stormwater Maintenance District Assessments, completed 2 Stormwater Maintenance District projects and brought the total number of communities to 43.

### Outreach and Education

Program staff gave presentations to home owner's and civic associations during 2021 to educate property owners on the purpose of stormwater ponds, proper maintenance procedures and the Stormwater Maintenance District Program.

As part of its educational outreach, the Stormwater Program presented the Freddie the Fish program to school aged children to educate them on how their daily activities can affect a watershed.



## *Nutrient Management Program*

The District, in cooperation with the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension Service, again offered pre-sidedress soil nitrate tests (PSNT) to all interested corn growers in Kent County. Use of this test can result in economic savings and reduce the chance of groundwater contamination by nitrates. A total of 6 samples were tested covering 228 acres. The District's conservationists also worked with cooperators in testing manure; completing tests for 8 poultry manure samples, 1 horse manure samples and 1 beef manure samples. The conservationists also completed 17 comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMP) and nutrient management plans (NMP) covering 444 acres.

KCD provided cost-share for producers to plant cover crop. A total of 32,668 acres (11,532 were located in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed) were planted and inspected by the Conservationists. Also, the RCPP Program had 2 poultry composters for Beginning Farmers.

## Education Initiatives & Awards

### Outreach Efforts

District staff participated in the following outreach activities in our continuing effort to promote environmental awareness: sponsored the NACD conservation poster contest and presented the “Freddy the Fish” environmental program at the Sussex Academy Elementary School in Georgetown.



### Delaware Envirothon

The District again planned to support the Envirothon, a problem-solving, natural resource education program for high school students. The competitive nature of the program motivates students to expand their knowledge of natural resources and realize their responsibility as stewards of our natural resources. The students answer written questions and conduct hands-on investigations of environmental issues in six categories: air quality, aquatic ecology, forestry, soils/land use, wildlife, and the current issue that changes each year. The 2021 event was held virtually, due to the COVID19 pandemic, with 10 teams participating; the winning team was Charter School of Wilmington—Team C.

### Governors Conservation Awards

The Annual Governor’s Conservation Awards were presented to the winners from Delaware’s three counties via recorded video.

The award for agricultural conservation was presented to John and Linda Brown. The Brown’s were recognized for installation of an eco drum, solar panels and being the first organic poultry farmer in Kent County.

The award for urban conservation was presented to PV 1024 LLC and Becker Morgan Group, Inc. for its use of a submerged gravel wetland facility at the Kenton Dollar General.

### Conservation Poster Contest

The District sponsored the annual Conservation Poster Contest again and provided awards to winners from Kent County for the “Healthy Forests Healthy Communities” themed contest.

First, second and third place winners each received a prize valued at \$50, \$25, and \$15, respectively.



## *KCD Annual Barn Dance Fundraiser—Delaware Envirothon*

Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the Kent Conservation District's Annual Barn Dance Fundraiser for the Delaware Envirothon was not held in 2021.

***The next Delaware Envirothon fundraiser will be held when the safety of our participants can be met based on the COVID19 pandemic guidelines.***



302-608-5370

[www.kentcd.org](http://www.kentcd.org)

302-736-7920 Fax

**Kent Conservation District  
1679 S. DuPont Highway  
Dover, DE 19901**

**All District programs are available on a nondiscriminatory basis.**