



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL



# Tax Ditch Modernization Workgroup 2022 Progress

Sussex Conservation District's  
Tax Ditch Officer Breakfast



# Education and Outreach

- Hired a Communications & Outreach Specialist
- Tax Ditch Booths at Community Events
- Presentation at Delaware Association of Realtors Convention on tax ditches and rights-of-ways
- Recommendations for improving Real Estate Seller’s Disclosure Form
- Identifying and producing tax ditch officer resources and materials



“Onboarding” Manuals for Tax Ditch Officer positions

## TAX DITCH MODERNIZATION KEY THEMES

### EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Increased efforts are needed to educate the public about tax ditches and their function



### INCREASE FUNDING

Increased funding is needed to improve tax ditch design and maintain existing drainage functions while providing for a more sustainable future

### DESIGN CHANGES

Tax ditch systems need to be adaptable to changing land uses and environmental factors



### UPDATING DELAWARE LAW

Tax Ditch Law was created in the 1950s, as such, modernizations are needed in order for tax ditches to function effectively in today's society



# Increase Funding

- Secured Supplemental Funding for Tax Ditch maintenance

Tax Ditch Funding Sources provided through DNREC		
Funding Source	Allocation	Implementation
3921 Funds (State and County Matching Funds)	\$225,000	Distributed to Conservation Districts for Tax Ditch Cost Share Program implementation
Supplemental Funds	\$500,000	
Tax Ditch Allocation	\$900,000	Drainage Program staff and services

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# Increase Funding

Additional Funding Leveraged for “Non-Routine” Tax Ditch Activities

- Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D)
- Grant Opportunities
  - DNREC Nonpoint Source Program 319 Grant
  - Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant



Bucks Branch Tax Ditch Bank Stabilization Project utilizing soil lifts and live stakes.

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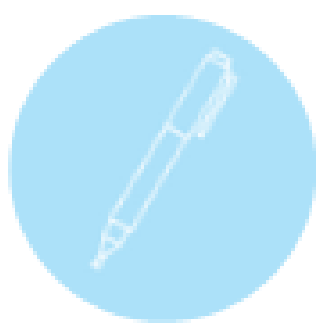
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# Design Changes

- Increased coordination with jurisdictional agencies
- Considering earlier stages in land development/project planning process where tax ditch review and comments are most effective
- Court Order Changes filed and recorded by DNREC Drainage Program



Development of a Tax Ditch Best Management Practice (BMP) Handbook

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# Updating Delaware Law

- Discussion with DOJ to consider reassessment of tax ditch assessments & associated processes

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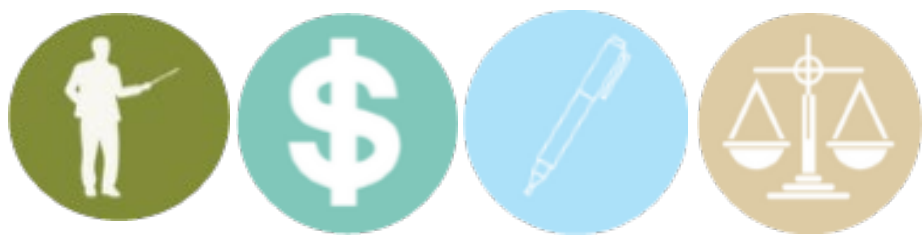
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# Tax Ditch Modernization Workgroup Report and Recordings

<https://dacdnet.org/tax-ditch-modernization/>



If you are interested in this full report and/or any resources on the Officer Resource Table and do not have access to the internet, please see Ivette Clayton after this event to sign up for a mailed copy.

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