

Hello to the members of the Non-Urban Stream Restoration EPEG. My name is Bill Tharpe. I am the Field Assessment Supervisor for the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) that oversees the verification program for the Department. Though I have only been with MDA since October 2019, the prior 25 years were spent at the Harford Soil Conservation District located in the northeast portion of Maryland. While working for the District, I performed duties as a Conservation Planner, Sediment & Erosion Control Reviewer, and the last 10 years were as District Manager. Under my leadership, we partnered with a local environmental restoration company in 2013 to create a grant-based stream and wetland restoration program to assist with the local Watershed Implementation Plan goals. This public-private partnership was new to our agricultural community but proved to be vital for establishing new contacts and projects. An additional benefit of the restoration program was limiting excess workload to the existing staff for planning and technical assistance. This restoration program became the model for multiple other Soil Conservation Districts to follow throughout Maryland.

On a personal note, I was raised in Harford County where my parents operated a dairy farm and the local feed mill. In 1994, our operation changed from dairy to raising beef as feeders and private sales of sides. Over the years, I have assisted my father with the beef operation by adding retail and restaurant sales to our business portfolio. I am a graduate of West Chester University (PA) with a degree in Geography and Planning. I have 2 sons, Benjamin and Jacob.