



August 27, 2018

District Grant Program in FY 2018  
Final Report

**Project Title:** District Grant Program FY2018

**Organization:** Worcester County Conservation District

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**Project Dates:**

Date Started: February 2, 2017 End Date: June 30, 2018

**Amount Received FY2018:** \$ 21,000

**Source(s) of Match:** Matches for this grant were provided through two sources- MACD and WCCD's Annual Seedling Sale. MACD provided a 25% payroll match for Conservation Planner Kate Gervais. The 2018 Seedling Sale generated \$13,377 in net proceeds. In-Kind donations from our Board of Supervisors, Associate Members and Partner Organizations provide an additional match for District Grant funds.

Budget Update

1. Funds spent to date- 21,000
2. Amount Invoiced for- 21,000
3. Amount Reimbursed- 14,175
4. Matching Funds Utilized-
  - a. 2018 Seedling Sale Net Proceeds - \$13,377
  - b. MACD (25% Conservation Planner's Salary)
  - c. Volunteers In-Kind Contributions-
    - i. District Supervisors and Associate Members- \$11,880
    - ii. Seedling Sale- Community volunteers and Board Members- \$6,270 (209 hours @ \$30/hour average)
    - iii. NRCS Facilities, Network Infrastructure and Support- \$7,200
    - iv. Partnering Organizations assisting with free workshop space and presentations- \$1,500

Deliverables and Grant Activities of Worcester County Conservation District (WCCD)

**By Lisa Trotto, Administrator-**

- Supervisor Susan Phinney and Administrator Lisa Trotto attended the NACD Region Capacity Building summit in Tarrytown, NY April 23-25<sup>th</sup>. This proved to be an invaluable experience meeting and learning from other Northeastern Conservation Districts about their structure, their funding, their programs and



best management practices. The group of five attendees from Mass. will work to stay in contact and incorporate this knowledge in an effort to build capacity within conservation districts across the state.

- The new WCCD Logo design (shown above) was completed and has been incorporated on the [www.worcesterconservation.org](http://www.worcesterconservation.org) website and will be in all future literature, signage and documents.
- The 2018 Seedling Sale was successful reaching 48 towns through 15 local paper advertisements and county-wide, through social media campaigns; 3 workshops were successfully attended during the sale, and 402 orders received. We had 37 volunteers who worked approximately 209 hours including all supervisors and associate members who helped prepare seedling stock and pack seedling orders. The total revenue received was \$43,570; and our net income was \$13,377. We look forward to the return of our Seedling Sale Coordinator Mackenzie May, who has agreed to return for another two-year term.
- WCCD has great involvement in the success of the 2018 Envirothon Program and Event:
  - WCCD Board Members and Employees volunteered at the 2018 ENV Event: Supervisor Scott Davis volunteered as Current Issue Judge; Supervisor Joe Smith assisted at the Forestry Station; Conservation Planner Kate Gervais assisted at the soils pit/station all day, then assisted with rounding up teams for photos and general clean up. Administrator Lisa Trotto oversaw the food tent.
  - Administrator Lisa Trotto also serves as ENV Steering Committee (voting member), assists throughout the year by attending regular meetings and is assigned responsibilities as needed. She seeks and coordinates food donations for breakfast and lunch on event day.
  - Joe Smith organized a meeting on June 26<sup>th</sup> focused on Envisioning the Future of the Massachusetts Envirothon program based on the SWOT model. Each attendee took away assignments to work on and bring to the next meeting scheduled on October 18<sup>th</sup>.
- The WCCD Annual June field trip was organized by District Conservationist Dan Lenthall and included three stops:
  - Douglas Orchard and Farm in Douglas whose owners have worked hard to re-vitalize an older orchard, added other crops, products and buildings with a focus on customer experience.
  - Chockalog Farm in Uxbridge who offers a variety of meat products and fresh vegetables to their CSA customers and incorporates several rows of fruit and nut trees into the pasture as a form of Silvio-pasture.
  - Fivefork Farms in Upton who specializes in cut flowers for the wholesale industry, retail farmer markets and operates a CSA.
- Interpretive signs (shown on right), were created and are being posted on fields throughout Worcester County using healthy soils practices as cover crops or no-till methods.
- Ten applications were received for the WCCD Annual Scholarship. Two recipients were chosen, and each were awarded a \$500 scholarship:
  - Jonathon Truscott of Webster, MA who plans to attend Lesley University and major in Earth and Environmental Science, and minor in Biology.
  - Elina Barrows of Upton, MA who plans to attend Worcester Polytechnic Institute and major in Chemistry and Bio Chemistry.





- The Administrator and the Board of Supervisors reviewed and signed the following NRCS contracts through June 2018:

<u>Town</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Project</u>
New Braintree	3	On Farm Energy
Northborough	3.5	On Farm Energy
Spencer	33.4	Conservation Activity Plan/Forest Management
Fiskdale	40	Forestland/Brush Management/Forest Stand Improvement
Royalston	8.6	Wildlife Habitat/Brush Management
Petersham	96	Wildlife Habitat
<u>Town</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Project</u>
New Braintree	282	Wildlife Habitat/Brush Management/Access Control
Charlton	14.6	Forestland/Brush Management
Warren	16.7	Soil Health/Cover Crop, Tillage, Crop Rotation
Brookfield	2.5	On Farm Energy
Hubbardston	77	Forestland
Dudley	20	Forestland/Stand Improvement
Charlton	0.7	High Tunnell
Rutland	960	Nutrient Management Plan
Barre	110	Soil Health/Cover Crop
Hardwick	69	Young Forest Initiatives for at risk species

**By Kate Gervais, Soil Conservationist –**

Kate continues to be the technical face of WCCD and welcomes the variety of requests that she gets for planning and technical assistance. She has satisfied nearly all the classroom requirements for NRCS Planner Certification, completing Economics for Conservation Planning this quarter. She will continue to take advantage of those opportunities as they arise and will also continue to fulfill the field portions of the certification process. Kate also



attended the well-known Maine Compost School (picture on left) and returned to Worcester County with an appreciation for the science of composting, as well as the mechanics of the process on a commercial scale. She is now working with Riverdale Mills in Northbridge, MA to develop a sturdy, well-functioning compost bin for effective small-scale composting. Additionally, she attended a day-long Grass ID workshop held by UNH Professional Development. Kate was able to put this to use almost immediately, as she was asked by a local producer to assist with the identification of their forage grasses.



Kate has also assisted WCCD's outreach and educational efforts:

- She was present at WCCD's annual seedling sale, offering customers assistance in choosing appropriate perennials and fruiting plants for their sites.
- She also monitored one of the soil pits at the Massachusetts Envirothon Event
- Kate conducted a Learn and Grow Workshop for Growing Places Inc, entitled Love Your Soil: Healthy Soils and Healthy Food. Kate continues to see incredible interest in soil health at a small scale. Growing Places has requested that Kate come back this fall to conduct further educational workshops.

Finally, Kate continues to develop farm conservation plans for interested landowners. She is currently working with a hay farmer who also maintains significant forestland; several grass-fed meat farmers with a vast range of experience and resources; a vegetable farmer with ongoing challenges with erosion; and a farm that needs to document a change in land use. Kate is gaining expertise that comes with experience and is embracing the unique tasks set forth in each planning opportunity.

**Delays or changes to the overall implementation schedule:**

The implementation of this grant program along with its goals and outreach have been achieved. Future plans include a Cover Crop/No-Till Conference scheduled for October 11<sup>th</sup> as a follow up last years No-Till Conference. WCCD will work with USDA/NRCS staff to offer a State-Wide Soils Evaluator's Conference in June 2019.





