

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

Photo credit: Jenell Eck McHenry



Delmarva Land and Litter Collaborative (DLLC) facilitates conversations around issues at the intersection of chicken and grain farming, clean water, and thriving ecosystems on the Delmarva Peninsula. Our members represent chicken companies, farmers, regulatory agencies, academia, and conservation groups. They participate in DLLC to build cross-sector relationships, identify science-based solutions, and guide decisions that achieve our shared goals.

Since our inception in 2015, DLLC has focused on poultry litter management and transport in support of ecosystem restoration. These efforts included developing [model poultry litter transportation program attributes](#) and an online app, [litr](#), that connects poultry litter sources with those who need this organic, slow-release fertilizer source.

Over the last year, DLLC has expanded our efforts to examine approaches that can reduce nutrient loads across our watersheds and engage producers in conservation programs. Our [2023-2025 Strategic Roadmap](#) provides additional information about our goals and objectives.

DLLC 2023-2025 PRIORITIES

1. Expand communication to support meaningful cross-sectoral dialogue.
2. Promote a whole-system watershed approach on Delmarva that supports and recognizes practices on agricultural lands.
3. Explore and support emerging conservation strategies and practices that increase nutrient management on agricultural land.
4. Understand emerging market-based opportunities and how they can directly benefit farmers.
5. Expand the diversity and sustainability of DLLC.

LEADERSHIP

In October 2023, the DLLC Steering Committee elected new members to the [Executive Committee](#). Holly Porter of Delmarva Chicken Association became Chair and Alan Girard of Chesapeake Bay Foundation became Vice Chair. Nancy Nunn from the Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology and Josh Hastings of Forever Maryland were reelected. Danielle Bauer Farace representing DE and MD Soybean Boards, Steve Kline from Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, and David Baird of Sussex Conservation District joined the Committee.

DLLC's leadership spans the diversity of interests within DLLC's mission. We work to ensure a balance of agriculture and environmental interests, and invite any individual, organization, business, agency, or institution that embraces the Delmarva Land and Litter Collaborative vision, mission, and operating procedures to join us.

WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH TO RESTORATION

The Whole Systems Approach Workgroup was formed this year to look beyond the scope of implementing practices on individual farms to addressing landscape-level watershed restoration needs. DLLC explored various approaches to targeting and prioritizing restoration opportunities on Delmarva that will provide the best opportunities for farmers. In addition, DLLC explored best practices for engaging farmers, coordinating conservation project implementation, and streamlining project funding.



SUPPORTING FARMER AND CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS

Engaging directly with farmers is the best way to deliver conservation on Delmarva. DLLC members shared experiences engaging with farmers, identifying what our farmer members want to know, and working with our industry members to engage farmers at events and meetings. DLLC has been particularly successful in supporting partnerships between agricultural production and conservation representatives. This includes our work in engaging farmers in meaningful dialogue and obtaining funding for agricultural conservation.

POLICY

- Held annual Policy Roundtable to discuss policies related to DLLC’s mission.
- Submitted DLLC membership [Farm Bill priorities](#) to Congress.
- Met with and provided priorities to Governor Moore’s Transition Team.
- Engaged with Congressman Andy Harris’ office.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- Tabled at the June 2023 Delmarva Chicken Association’s Booster BBQ.
- Presented at the AIM for Climate Summit.
- Presented to the Mid-Atlantic meeting of Land Grant University Leadership.
- Presented at the Maryland Conservation Conference.
- Held 2nd Annual Delmarva Ag Conservation Funding Forum.
- Held Wisconsin’s Producer-led Watershed Protection Program [webinar](#).
- Held Rapid Stream Delisting Strategies [webinar](#).
- Released quarterly [Newsletters](#) highlighting DLLC and partner projects.



DLLC’S FOCUS FOR 2024

- Continue to strengthen regional conservation and agriculture partnerships to bring meaningful results for conservation and water quality on Delmarva.
- Work directly with farmers and large landowners to identify best initiatives to address water quality improvements on Delmarva.
- Create a new StoryMap, building on our successful [Exploring Chicken Farming on Delmarva](#) site.

DLLC offers a place to understand the issues at the cross-section of thriving agriculture and healthy ecosystems. Our members work on these issues from different angles and then come together to identify where we can find successful solutions. If you are a decision-maker, a practitioner, or community member who is interested in successful on-the-ground strategies, please read about [our work](#), [the issues](#) and [follow us](#).

