

# Video Training on Improving Water Quality Featuring Farmers and their Practices in the German Branch Watershed

## Section I

### General Information

1. Project Number: ENE96-22  
Grant Number (Maryland's account number): 01-4-33348  
Funding Period: Originally funded from September 30, 1996 through September 30, 1997; extended through October 31, 1998
2. Project Title: "Video Training on Improving Water Quality Featuring Farmers And their Practices in the German Branch Watershed".
3. Project Coordinators: Jim Hanson and Paul Gunther  
Maryland Cooperative Extension Service  
1202 Symons Hall  
University of Maryland  
College Park, Maryland 20742
4. ~~ANNUAL~~ <sup>Final</sup> Report
5. Date of Report: January 11, 1999
6. Reporting Period: From October 1, 1996 through October 31, 1998
7. Major Participants: Paul Gunther, County Extension Educator, Queen Anne's County, Maryland (co-coordinator of project)
8. Cooperators: 8 Queen Anne County farmers, soil conservation district, farm service agency, homeowner, and private industry.
9. Project Status: Received September 30, 1996 for one year; received permission To extend it for another year to October 31, 1998, no-cost extension
10. Statement of Expenditures: Attached

## **Section II**

### **Final Report**

#### **Objective**

The objective of this video was to increase the understanding of Extension agents and other agricultural professionals in working with farmers to establish a team within a watershed whose goals are to improve water quality. In addition, farmers talked about successful farming practices, which enhance the environment and improve profitability, that they have adopted on their farms.

#### **Abstract**

The German Branch Watershed, located in an agricultural region in Queen Anne's County on the Eastern Shore of Maryland is one of the largest sub-watersheds of the Tuckahoe Creek. The Tuckahoe flows into the Choptank River which subsequently meets the Chesapeake Bay. In November 1990, USDA announced the selection of the German Branch into the USDA Water Quality Program. The goal of USDA's five-year hydrologic unit (watershed) projects were to provide farmers and ranchers with the educational, technical and financial means to respond voluntarily to on-farm and off-site environmental concerns and related water quality requirements. Ninety-two percent of all operators within the watershed have participated since the beginning of the project.

The video has two principal goals. First, illustrate that community wide participation is necessary for successful projects. Second, to show (and teach) about best management practices that landowners adopt.

The completed video is 36 minutes long. In it, six farmers talk about best management practices that improve water quality (integrated pest management, nutrient management, pre-sidedress nitrogen test, cover crops, minimum tillage, manure management, dead broiler composting, bay-wise landscaping, and fish ladders. In addition, a homeowner in the watershed talks about changes in his landscaping practices, a district manager for the Queen Anne's County Soil Conservation District shares his agency's contributions, and a fertilizer company representative and crop consultant talk about their participation. The county Extension agent in Queen Anne's County and leader of the project narrates the video. Two farmers, five Extension faculty, and two Farm Service Agency representatives help illustrate best management practices through non-speaking roles.

### **Specific Project Results**

It is not apparent how the following requirements for a final report apply to a project centered on developing a video, however, the following describe our recent activities. In December 1998, we sponsored a dinner for participants and farmers in the watershed (approximately 60 people attended). The audience was very pleased with the results. They had numerous suggestions for people with whom we should share the video. These included the Governor, our ten tributary teams (state/citizen effort to clean up the bay), Farm Bureau, conservation districts, and Maryland Public Television. We are following up on those suggestions. In addition, the video will be shown during the "County Highlights Session" of the winter meeting for the Maryland Soil Conservation Districts.

We will be sending copies to the PDP Coordinators in the Northeast and providing copies to Extension faculty in Maryland. We will sell additional copies to those people who request it at cost (less than \$10).