

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
Wednesday, May 22, 2019
Pocahontas State Park
Chesterfield, Virginia**

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board convened at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 22, 2019 in the Swift Creek Dining Hall at Pocahontas State Park in Chesterfield, Virginia.

VIRGINIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard A. Street, Chair
Barry L. Marten, Vice Chair
Mario Albritton
Chuck Arnason
Gray Coyner
Charles Newton
Cindy Smith
Adam Wilson
Clyde Cristman, DCR Director, Ex Officio
John A. Bricker, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ex Officio
Dan Goerlich, VCE, Invitee

VIRGINIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Janette Kennedy

DCR STAFF PRESENT

Rochelle Altholz, Deputy Director for Administration
Isaac Sarver, Deputy Director for Boards and Constituent Services
David Bryan, Agricultural Incentives Program Manager
Anne Crosier, Enforcement and Compliance Manager
Leigh Estes, Grants Manager
Michael Fletcher, Board and Constituent Services Liaison
Kimberly Freiburger, Policy Analyst
Darryl M. Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation
Blair Gordon, Conservation District Coordinator
Wendy Howard-Cooper, Acting Director, Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management
Melissa Jackson, Budget Manager
Bernadette LeMasters, Virginia Management Fellow
Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator
Paul Kugelman, Office of the Attorney General

OTHERS PRESENT

Suzanne Brown, Loudoun SWCD
Sharon Connor, Hanover-Caroline, SWCD
Giannina Frantz, VASWCD
David Kriz, NRCS
Adrienne Kotula, Chesapeake Bay Commission

Tim Mitchell, City of Lynchburg
Ben Rowe, Virginia Farm Bureau
Kyle Shreve, Virginia Agribusiness Council

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

With eight (8) members of the Board present, a quorum was established.

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Street called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and asked for introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 24, 2019

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved for the approval of the April 24, 2019 meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board as submitted by staff. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Clyde Cristman, DCR Director*

Mr. Cristman welcomed Mr. Kugelman from the Office of the Attorney General. Mr. Kugelman was filling in for the position vacated by Mr. Gooch. That position has not yet been filled.

Mr. Cristman also noted the following:

- As reported at the April meeting the agency was accepting applications for the position of Director of the Dam Safety and Floodplain Management Division. The position closed on Friday, May 17, 2019. However, sufficient applications to begin the interview process were not received. The position will be reopened and will remain open until filled.
- Governor Northam released a draft of the Chesapeake Bay WIP III. Public comments will be received until June 7. The draft is posted on the DEQ website and information on how to submit comments is located on the Chesapeake Bay TMDL page.
- May 31 is National Dam Safety Awareness Day. The Governor will be issuing a proclamation. DCR will host an event at Pocahontas State Park. Staff will forward the invitation to Board members.

DAM SAFETY AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Division Report – Wendy Howard Cooper

Ms. Howard Cooper presented the following written report.

Priorities

- Ensure Emergency Action Plans and Inspection Reports for all high hazard dams are recorded in the Dam Safety Inventory System (DSIS).
- Bring dams of regulatory size with unknown hazard class under certificate.
- Bring dams with expired operation and maintenance certificates back under certificate.

- Review agricultural exempt dams of regulatory size with expired exemptions to make determinations about continued exemptions.
- Further promote flooding awareness and the need for flood insurance through various media.
- Respond to the requirements of the Governor's Executive Order 24.

Critical Statistics of the Dam Safety Program as of May 16, 2019

1. Total number of Dams Potentially Regulated by DCR – 2861
 - a. Regulated – 2034
 - b. To be determined – 827
2. DCR Regulated Dams – 2034 Dams
 - a. 313 High Hazard (15%)
 - b. 166 Significant Hazard (8%)
 - c. 263 Low Hazard (13%)
 - d. 1292 Unknown Hazard (64%)
3. Breakdown of Ownership category by Regulated Dams (2034 Dams)
 - a. 1058 Private Dam Ownership (Individual / HOA) – 52%
 - b. 163 Local Government Dam Ownership – 8%
 - c. 104 Soil and Water Conservation District Dam Ownership – 5%
 - d. 82 State Government Dam Ownership – 4%
 - e. 61 Public Utility Dam Ownership – 3%
 - f. 570 Unknown Dam Ownership – 28%
4. Certificate or Permit Status
 - a. Regular Operation and Maintenance Certificate or General Permit Issued and Current
 - i. Full compliance with dam safety regulations – 310 dams or 15%
 1. High Hazard – 136
 2. Significant Hazard – 63
 3. Low Hazard – 111
 4. Unknown Hazard – 0
 - b. Conditional Operation and Maintenance Certificate Issued and Current
 - i. Dam has deficiencies and owners working with DCR to come into compliance – 287 dams or 14%
 1. High – 103
 2. Significant – 65
 3. Low – 47
 4. Unknown Hazard – 72
 - c. Expired or No Operation and Maintenance Certificate
 - i. Dams are out of compliance – 1437 dams or 71%
 - ii. High – 74
 - iii. Significant – 38
 - iv. Low – 105
 - v. Unknown Hazard – 1220
5. Dams without determination of Regulatory Status or Hazard Classification – 827

Emergency Preparedness Event at VDEM Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – May 7, 2019

DCR Dam Safety and Floodplain Management participated in a preparedness exercise at the VDEM EOC on May 7, 2019. Virginia Emergency Support Team Exercise (VESTEX) is the annual exercise required by the Code of Virginia (§ 44-146.17:2. Annual statewide drill). This exercise included all Emergency Support Function (ESF), private sector, and non-governmental organization partners who have a role on the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST).

National Weather Service Hurricane Plane – Roanoke Airport May 8, 2019

DCR Dam Safety and Floodplain Management attended the 2019 East Coast Hurricane Awareness Tour featuring a U.S. Air Force Reserve WC-130J Hurricane Hunter and a NOAA Lockheed WP-3D Orion aircraft. Hundreds of elementary and middle school students toured the planes and stopped by the DCR booth the morning of May 8th where DCR provided materials on safe conduct around dams and how to react to a hurricane or flood threat. Several other Virginia agencies also participated including VDEM, the Department of Forestry, and VDOT along with many local agencies. New promotional materials on flood safety and dam safety were distributed. The planes were open to the general public that same afternoon and DCR had non-stop visitors. Messaging focused on the need for flood insurance even if you do not live in a flood zone and awareness that virtually every lake in Virginia has a dam and what to look for in a dam in your neighborhood to make sure it is safely maintained.

FEMA Sponsored E/L273 Training – May 13-16, 2019

The Floodplain team partnered with FEMA to host the new pilot course: E/L273: Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP. DCR Floodplain staff and FEMA staff from across the country were present to teach the course to 435 students representing Virginia, North Carolina, DCR, and private consultants. DCR is the first group in the country to get access to this updated training, and our feedback will be used to make edits to the new material that will eventually be taught across the country and at FEMA's Emergency Management Institute.

Dam Safety Awareness Day – May 31, 2019

For the first time ever, DCR will be hosting a Dam Safety Awareness Day event. Public tours of two state-owned dams at Pocahontas State Park are planned for May 31, starting at 1 p.m. The tours will be led by state dam safety engineers and cover the history and purpose of Beaver Lake and Swift Creek dams. In addition, DCR will have a flood model present to demonstrate a dam break and inundation event.

DCR anticipates sending out a press release very soon. Messaging will include the following:

- Dams can fail for a number of reasons, including overtopping caused by flooding, construction deficiencies or structural failure of materials used to make up the impoundment.
- Across the United States, aging dams are an issue. The Association of State Dam Safety Officials estimates that seven in 10 dams will be 50 years or older by 2025.
- The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation is charged with regulating more than 2,000 dams. A majority are privately owned, but ownership is unknown for 570 of those dams.
- State-regulated dams are classified as low, significant, or high hazard depending on size, location, and downstream development. Hazard class is unknown for 64% of those dams.
- 71% of state-regulated dams are not under a regulatory certificate, meaning they are out of compliance with state dam safety laws and regulations.

Flood Awareness/Flood Insurance Efforts

DCR issued a press release for Hurricane Awareness during May 2019. Virginians were urged to know their flood risk and get flood insurance in time for hurricane season. Citizens were encouraged to visit www.dcr.virginia.gov/floodawareness for information and links to resources such as Virginia Flood Risk Information System and the National Flood Insurance Program.

A flood awareness radio campaign is being conducted during the month of May 2019 in areas including and west of Roanoke to reach citizens who traditionally do not receive this messaging, are less likely to be insured and have greater difficulty recovering from flooding. Additional messaging is planned in August or September at the height of hurricane season.

Approximately \$30,000 in grant funds approved by the Board in the 2018 grant round for a flood prevention and protection project with HRPDC is being used to fund a comprehensive media campaign in the Hampton Roads Region.

DCR floodplain staff will attend the National Flood Conference, June 2-5, in Washington, DC, to discuss the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and other issues related to this important line of business. Attendees will include flood insurance professionals and stakeholders and cover topics related to mapping, bridging the gaps in flood insurance coverage, changes to the NFIP and more.

Approval of Projects Funded by the Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund – Wendy Howard Cooper

Ms. Howard Cooper presented the recommendations for the approval of project funding for the Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund.

She gave the following summary:

Application Deadline – Competitive Recommendations to the VSWCB Awards Effective	March 29, 2019, 4:00 p.m. May 22, 2019 July 1, 2019
Total Number of Applications Received	51
Total All Projects Cost per Applications	5,194,824.76
Total Amount Requested from the Fund	1,209,636.37
Total Funding Available from the Fund	1,000,000.00
Total Requests Exceeding Available Funds	(209,636.37)
Number of Dam Safety Projects	47
Total Amount Requested for Dam Safety	818,963.74
Number of Floodplain Projects	4
Total Amount Requested for Floodplains	390,672.63

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved the following:

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approves the forty (40) grant applications, with an approval amount of \$568,615.13, as recommended by the Department. Approval of these grants is conditioned on the following:

1. All grants are made on a reimbursement basis and will be governed by a Grant Agreement developed in consultation with the Virginia Resources Authority. All applicants will be given a period of 90 days to enter into a Grant Agreement following the agreement being sent. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (Department) is authorized to further extend this date in its discretion and following the consultation with VRA.
2. All grant agreements will require that projects be completed within 12 months of the date of the execution of the Agreement. Upon receipt of a written request for a project extension with a specified completion date by the Grantee to the Department with a copy to VRA, the Department is authorized to consider such request and may amend the terms of the Agreement and allow a specified extension upon the Department's and the Authority's written approval. Extension requests must be received by the Department not later than 90 days prior to the expiration of the original agreement or grant fund are subject to rescission at the Department's discretion. No extensions shall exceed an additional year without specific Board approval.
3. In the event that any of the above applicants fail to execute a Grant Agreement with VRA within 90 days of such an Agreement being sent to the applicant, the Department, in consultation with VRA, is authorized to rescind those grant funds and allocate in subsequent grant rounds.
4. Special Grant Funds in the amount of \$5,000,000 for College Lake Dam in the City of Lynchburg will be disbursed by VRA after the funds are received by the Department and transferred to VRA pursuant to the Chapter 854 of the 2019 Acts of Assembly, Item 362.0.2 and other application and Agreement terms have been satisfied.
5. Special Grant Funds in the amount of \$100,000 for Cherrystone and Roaring Fork Dams in Pittsylvania County will be disbursed by VRA after the funds are received by the Department and transferred to VRA pursuant to the Chapter 854 of the 2019 Acts of Assembly, Item 362.0.1 and other application and Agreement terms have been satisfied.

The Department is authorized to communicate this approval to the Virginia Resources Authority (VRA) so that VRA's review of applications may proceed. The Department is also authorized to take any action necessary to proceed with the closing and administration of grants subsequent to VRA's approval of the application.

Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Notice of Intended Regulatory Action for Impounding Structure Regulations – Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator

Ms. Watlington advised that at the December meeting the Board approved the responses to the comments received during the periodic review of the Impounding Structure Regulations (4VAC50-20).

She advised that staff was now asking for approval to being a regulatory action to consider amendments to address the following:

- i. Roadways on or below an impounding structure for hazard potential classifications;
- ii. The incremental damage analysis process;
- iii. Gate requirements;
- iv. The requirements for agricultural exempt dams;
- v. Requiring the use of temporal curves to determine the probable maximum precipitation; and
- vi. The development of a realistic and achievable process for certain impounding structures to achieve regulatory compliance, while maintaining public safety.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Newton moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the submission of a Notice of Intended Regulatory Action for the Impounding Structure Regulations (4VAC50-20) as it was presented by the Department. The Board directs the Department to submit the NOIRA in accordance with the Administrative Process Act, Executive Order 14 (2018, Amended), and all other applicable policies and procedures. Ms. Smith seconded and the motion carried.

Enforcement Action Updates – Anne Crosier, Enforcement and Compliance Manager

Ms. Crosier shared updates regarding the enforcement action on the following dams:

- Ivy Hill Lake Dam (Liberty University), a high hazard dam in Forest
- Kalnasy Dam, a high hazard dam in Loudoun County
- Jordan's Point Dam, a run-of-the-river dam in Rockbridge County

Ivy Hill Lake Dam

This dam is owned by Liberty University and the lake had been used for the rowing team. About \$1,000,000 in repairs were needed. Initially the University was unwilling to make the needed improvements and proposed transferring the ownership to the property owners in the Ivy Hill community.

DCR worked with Liberty University and the community to find a path forward that was acceptable to both the university and the property owners but the situation reached an impasse in early 2014.

Ms. Crosier noted:

- DCR held a public meeting with the property owners.
- The Probable Maximum Precipitation Study was conducted and the results were adopted by the Board.
- Initial negotiations between the property owners and the University failed.
- Costly litigation resulted in a finding by the Bedford Circuit court that the property owners were not responsible for the costs of the dam's upgrade and repair.

- The property was sold to Runk and Pratt to build a golf course and senior living center. Runk and Pratt will repay the University for the costs of repairs over twenty years through an interest-free loan not to exceed \$1,000,000.
- The University completed construction of the upgrades and repairs on the dam pursuant to a final approved plan and scheduled and submitted the as-built.
- The dam is now in full compliance with program requirements.
- The newly upgraded and repaired Ivy Hill Golf Club Dam is being transferred to the new dam owner, Runk & Pratt, L.L.C., with a regular Operation and Maintenance Certificate issued to the new owner.

Jordan's Point Dam

Jordan's Point Dam is a run-of-the-river, or low head, dam that was constructed in the Maury River streambed around 1900. The dam is owned by the City of Lexington and creates an impoundment of deep, slow-moving water upstream that is used for swimming, fishing, and boating.

A 2007 report on the dam's condition indicated that there were numerous seeps, cracks, and voids in the dam and concluded the dam is unsafe. Estimated costs to repair the dam are approximately \$3,000,000. The dam endangers public safety. An eventual failure will impact the surrounding park and historic resources and will create a hazard for swimmers.

Ms. Crosier noted:

- In 2017, the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) offered to remove the dam at no cost to the City. City Council approved this in June 2017.
- In June 2018, American Dams, Inc., a nonprofit group, came forward with a proposal to purchase the dam and to preserve it. City Council moved to postpone the vote on the transfer until their July 2018 meeting.
- American Dams was advised that the Virginia Dam Safety Act requires that prior to conveying ownership of a dam; the owner must notify the DCR Director of the transfer in accordance with requirements set out in the Virginia Impounding Structure Regulations.
- American Dams asserted that the cost to repair the dam was too high and filed an appeal to FEMA to stop the removal of the dam. This effort was not successful.
- Dam removal is now underway and expected to be completed within the month.
- The Maury River will return to a natural free-flowing state, complete with pools, rapids, and runs.

Kalnasy Dam

Kalnasy Dam is a high hazard dam in Loudoun County. DCR was faced with the challenge of a cooperative dam owner and another owner who did not wish to comply with regulations.

The Johnsons, who held the deed to the dam as fee simple owners, refused to operate and maintain the dam according to program requirements and did not take any corrective action to make needed repairs. In addition, they attempted to prevent the Weiners, additional dam owners according to the Virginia

Dam Safety Act, from properly operating and maintaining the dam as well as making the needed upgrades and repairs.

Ms. Crosier noted the following:

- DCR first inspected the dam in February 2014. Inspection found that the principle spillway was blocked, the emergency spillway activated, and the water level was rising.
- The DCR Regional Engineer verified with the Weiners that no application had been made for a certificate of operation from DCR.
- The Weiners assumed responsibility for the appropriate short-term emergency corrective actions.
- On April 3, 2014, the Enforcement Manager, the Regional Engineer, and Dam Safety Director met with the Weiners and their attorney to discuss ownership issues and a schedule for bringing the dam into compliance.
- The Johnsons refused to attend the meeting saying they could not afford to pay for repairs.
- Costly litigation led to a finding by the Loudoun Circuit Court that the covenants allowed the cooperative dam owner to make the repairs and that the spillway should be upgraded to meet regulatory requirements.
- The Johnsons disappeared and a bank foreclosure is now on the property.
- The dam now operates under a Regular Operation and Maintenance Certificate in a safe condition.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DIVISION

Division Report – Darryl Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation

Mr. Glover presented the following report.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, please accept this Soil and Water Conservation Division Report.

Chesapeake Bay WIP III

The “Draft Chesapeake Bay TMDL Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan” (Phase III WIP) was released to the public on April 5. Public comments will be accepted through June 7, with a final WIP completed by August 9.

In addition to two informational webinars, both on May 13, that DCR participated in presenting, there have been numerous presentations about the Phase III WIP given either by Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources Ann Jennings, DEQ, DCR, DOF, and others. Comments are beginning to come in. While so far, the majority have been supportive of the draft WIP, a few concerns have been raised about, among other things, the two backstops for agriculture that are included in the Phase III WIP as explained in the following edited excerpts from the WIP document.

Virginia’s Phase III WIP seeks 85% implementation of nutrient management plans (NMPs) on all cropland acres. This level of treatment is representative of all cropland having NMPs and 85% of those plans being followed in a given year. It is expected that in many areas, these plans will include advanced

actions, such as precision application, which further enhance the timing, rate and placement of nutrients. The Commonwealth will pursue this level of implementation through the VACS program and enhanced documentation of voluntary implementation of NMPs.

Simultaneously, Virginia will pursue legislation specifying that agriculture operations larger than 50 acres that apply fertilizer, manure, sewage sludge, or other compounds containing nitrogen or phosphorus to support plant growth will develop and implement nutrient management plans in accordance with the regulations. The legislation will incorporate an enactment trigger linked to progress in achieving 85% implementation. If Virginia is not on the trajectory determined annually by the Secretary of Natural Resources (with advisement from DEQ and DCR) to achieve 85% implementation no later than December 31, 2025, the regulatory requirement for an NMP will be initiated within six months. Additionally, Virginia will seek legislation specifying that all contractor-applicators – i.e., persons required to hold a permit to apply any regulated product pursuant to § 3.2-3608, – must apply commercial fertilizer on farm operations larger than 50 acres pursuant to an NMP, in accordance with the regulations.

Virginia's Phase III WIP also seeks the exclusion of livestock from all perennial streams in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Commonwealth will pursue this level of implementation through substantial incentives provided through the VACS Program and commits to pursuing additional flexibility in the program for participating landowners and operators. The Commonwealth will also pursue legislation establishing a date by which all farms with livestock accessing perennial streams must provide exclusion measures. The enactment date for new requirements will provide sufficient time for livestock operations to install practices necessary to exclude access to streams and provide alternative water sources. It will also take into account availability of state and federal cost-share funds for exclusion practices. Operations having excluded livestock by the enactment date will be considered exempt from the legislation.

There is also a proposal in Virginia's Phase III WIP to establish a work group to develop recommendations for extending the beneficial management measures established under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (CBPA) throughout Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed. The work group will include potentially impacted stakeholders and the general public. The work group will consider identifying, mapping and protecting sensitive natural resources on lands west of I-95; protecting water quality through local land use planning and decisions; ensuring septic pump outs are increased to equal 20% of all systems in the Bay watershed being pumped in a year; determining financial and technical assistance needs of local governing bodies west of I-95; and existing state and federal programs that provide water quality protections. This group will have its initial meeting this summer.

The Office of the Secretary of Natural Resources shall also convene a voluntary BMP task force consisting of several agencies and organizations. The goal of the task force is to identify an efficient and effective method or methods to document agriculture BMPs, which are employed without federal or state incentive payments. The task force will review existing methods including, but not limited to, a farm survey protocol developed and implemented by Pennsylvania State University. The task force will also review staff and funding needs to successfully document voluntary BMPs. Such review shall specifically consider the agriculture technical assistance roles of the VCE and local SWCDs. They will also determine approaches for engaging the farm community in method(s) employed to effectively document the implementation of voluntary BMPs. The task force will have its first meeting on June 25.

Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee

In addition to the full Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has scheduled meetings on: July 9, August 14, October 8, November 20, and December 18, some of the TAC subcommittees have upcoming meetings:

- **Animal Waste** - May 28th, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM, Virginia DOF Headquarters, 900 Natural Resources Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22903
- **Programmatic** - June 5th, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM, Monacan SWCD office, 2478 Dogtown Road, Goochland, VA 23063

Related to the work of the TAC, DCR is hiring two summer interns. One will work on equine issues, to include researching zoning requirements for (non-commercial) horse owners in localities throughout Virginia and other selected states, such as Kentucky and Tennessee. They will also research environmental practices and the framework of any incentive programs identified from other states for equine.

The second summer intern will work on incorporating Phase III WIP implementation cost estimates into, and possibly changing the format of, the Agricultural Needs Assessment. Both interns will also provide support to the TAC and its subcommittees as needed.

Approval of the Poultry Litter Transport Incentive Program – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington noted that the Board approved the BMP manual at the April meeting with the exception of the section regarding Poultry Litter Transport. She advised that the section now includes references to Accomack, Page, and Rockingham Counties. The majority of the changes reflect the new contracts as well as previous updates to the NMP regulations. Other references include rates related to the areas in the Chesapeake Bay watershed versus those areas outside the watershed. Forms were updated to reflect changes.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Newton moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the 2020 Poultry Litter Transport Incentive Program as presented. Mr. Arnason seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of the Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations. She noted that Board members were provided with two versions. The first was the one presented at the April meeting. This version was sent to Districts for comments. The second version anticipates the RFP for district auditors and seeks to address issues that typically arise in District audits. Additional language clarifies the use of gift cards, checks, receipts, and more.

Ms. Watlington requested that the Board approve the April version, noting that the second version would come back to the Board in spring 2020 following getting comments from Districts.

Mr. Newton asked that the Board be provided District comments by the December meeting.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations as presented by staff at the April 24, 2019 Board meeting. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operations Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2020 – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the draft Board Policy on SWCD Administration and Operations Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2020. She noted that this was the same version presented in April with the addition of the appropriate Chapter numbers.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operation Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2020. Mr. Coyner seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Administration and Operations Grant Agreement – Christine Watlington

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operational Support Grant Agreement (Fiscal Year 2020). Ms. Smith seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2020 – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington reviewed the Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-share and Technical Assistance Funding Allocation for Fiscal Year 2020.

Mr. Coyner asked for clarification regarding the additional financial assistance for WIP acceleration and the requirement that funds be disbursed within one year or they would have to be returned. He advised that it was often difficult for Districts to establish new programs in just one year.

Mr. Glover responded and suggested that the Board could review how successful Districts had been at obligating and disbursing funding at this level and if necessary, the policy could be amended at that time.

Mr. Arnason expressed concern regarding funding for programs and the lack of stable funding for technical assistance.

Ms. Watlington noted that this would be one of the concerns addressed by the Allocation Subcommittee established at the April meeting.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Policy and Procedures on Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Funding

Allocations (Fiscal Year 2020). Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District is authorized to utilize up to \$700,000 of the FY2020 cost-share allocations to supplement the funding provided for the *Whole Farm Approach Pilot Project*, if needed. Mr. Arnason seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement – Christine Watlington

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement (Fiscal Year 2020). Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District is authorized to utilize up to \$700,000 of the FY2020 cost-share allocation to supplement the funding provide for the *Whole Farm Approach Pilot Project* if needed. Mr. Newton seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Supplemental Grant Agreements for Remaining 2015 SL-6 Practices – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington noted that this item was brought before the Board in April but deferred until the final budget was approved and signed.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Supplemental Grant Agreement for the Retirement of Pending FY15 SL-6 practices (Fiscal Year 2019). Mr. Marten seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of the Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Grant Agreement for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (Fiscal Year 2020) – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington advised that this information was presented to the Board at the April meeting. The Association has concurred with the language.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Association of Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Districts Grant Agreement for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (Fiscal Year 2020). Mr. Albritton seconded and the motion carried.

Review of Grant Agreement for Resource Management Plan BMP Pilot Project – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the Grant Agreement for the Resource Management Plan BMP Pilot Project. The agreement includes additional technical assistance funds for implementation. This was reviewed with the District.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Marten moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Northern Neck Soil and Water Conservation District Grant Agreement for the implementation of the *Resource Management Plan BMP Pilot Project* (Fiscal Year 2020). Mr. Newton seconded and the motion carried.

District Director Appointments and Resignations – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the District Director Appointments and Resignations.

Daniel Boone

Appointment of Mr. Michael Hobbs, of Lee County, effective 5/22/19, to fill the unexpired elected director term of Mr. John Dickie Bailey (term of office expires 12/31/2019).

Lonesome Pine

Resignation of Mr. Harry Lee Strouth, of Dickenson County, effective 5/2/19, elected director position (term of office expires 12/31/2019).

Appointment of Mr. Johnnie Stanley, of Dickenson County, effective 5/22/2019, to fill the unexpired elected director term of Mr. Harry Lee Strouth (term of office expires 12/31/2019).

Tazewell

Resignation of Ms. Virginia Turley, of Tazewell County, effective 5/13/19, At-Large director position (term of office expires 12/31/2022).

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Albritton moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the appointment of the individuals being recommended. Ms. Smith seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of the Initiation of a Periodic Review of the Resource Management Plan Regulations (4VAC50-70) – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington advised that the Code of Virginia requires that all regulations be reviewed every four years to determine whether they should be continued without change, amended, or repealed.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the initiation of a periodic review of the Resource Management Plan Regulations (4VAC50-70) and further that the Board request a report from the Department regarding specific issues that were raised during the periodic review after the close of the public comment period. Mr. Newton seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Procurement of Remote Monitoring Equipment by the Department – Christine Watlington

As reported at the April meeting, the General Assembly appropriated \$400K for the agency to fund remote monitoring of district owned dams. These funds are managed by DCR following consultation with the Board.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the use of up to \$400,000 from the Soil and Water Conservation District Dam Maintenance, Repair, and Rehabilitation Fund for the purchase and installation of remote monitoring equipment for District-owned high and significant hazard dams. The Board authorizes the Department to purchase the necessary equipment through the appropriate procurement process.

The Board further directs the Department to coordinate with the eligible Districts to determine the most cost-effective and efficient method of procuring equipment installation. The Department should provide an update to the Board on such determination and request additional authorizations, if needed, at the next meeting.

Mr. Newton seconded and the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Establishment of the Timberlake Watershed Improvement District – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington reported that the Robert E. Lee Soil and Water Conservation District certified the formation of the Timberlake Watershed Improvement District (WID) at their April 25 meeting. Minutes from that meeting were approved at a special meeting on May 9. As required by Code, the establishment of the WID requires that the District submit the certification and official minutes. There was no action required by this Board.

Ms. Watlington also noted that the WID may appoint up to three individuals to serve as Trustees of the WID. Two names and resumes were submitted with the certification of the WID. The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board must approve the appointment of the Trustees.

The Board did not have enough information was available to appoint the Trustees and agreed there should be a third Trustee. It was recommended that the WID be invited to the September meeting to present the recommended Trustees and to advise the Board regarding what actions they intend to pursue with the WID.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved that the Board table the discussion of the WID Trustees and request that representatives from the District and the WID be invited to the September Board meeting to provide additional information regarding the purpose and direction of the WID. Mr. Coyner seconded and the motion carried.

Election of Officers

Chairman Street advised that terms for Mr. Marten, Ms. Kennedy, and himself were expiring on July 1. Chairman Street is not eligible for reappointment. Mr. Marten and Ms. Kennedy have asked not to be

considered for reappointment. He then recommended that the Board elect new officers to assume their role effective July 1, 2019.

Mr. Martin nominated Mr. Arnason to serve as Board Chair. Mr. Coyner seconded.

Mr. Coyner nominated Mr. Wilson to serve as Vice Chair. Ms. Smith seconded.

Mr. Coyner moved that the nominations be closed and that Mr. Arnason and Mr. Wilson be elected by acclamation. Mr. Marten seconded and the motion carried.

PARTNER REPORTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mr. Bricker presented the report for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. A copy is included as Attachment A.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Mr. Goerlich presented the report for Virginia Cooperative Extension. A copy is included as Attachment B.

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Ms. Frantz reported for the VASWCD. She noted that the Association recently completed a successful Administration and Operations Training for District Staff. Staff from 31 districts participated. Training will be offered again in October.

On June 24 and 25 the Association will hold Director training (June 24) and the summer quarterly Board meeting (June 25) at Graves Mountain Lodge.

Ms. Frantz expressed appreciation for allowing Districts the opportunity to review and comment regarding information presented at the meeting.

Virginia Farm Bureau

Mr. Rowe advised that Virginia Farm Bureau would be available to help distribute information to farmers.

Virginia Agribusiness

Mr. Shreve reported that Governor Northam had proclaimed May 18-22, 2019 as Virginia Agriculture Week. The Governor was participating in a number of events across the Commonwealth.

Director Cristman announced that June 1 is "Clean the Bay Day." Twenty-three state parks are participating and there are other sites throughout the watershed. More information can be found at www.cbf.org.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sharon Connor from the Hanover-Caroline Soil and Water Conservation District invited members to participate in their Conservation Kickoff event at the State Fair Grounds in Doswell on July 9, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Marten expressed appreciation to the Board and staff for his time on the Board and noted that it was both an honor and a privilege to serve.

NEXT MEETINGS

September 25, 2019 (location to be determined)

December 11, 2019, Norfolk Sheraton, Norfolk, Virginia

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Attachment A

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ASTC-Programs**EQIP, CSP, RCPP and Easement Programs****Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)**

Our EQIP allocation is \$24,686,250.00. We received 1,146 applications requesting \$44 million in Financial Assistance. Preapprovals of 522 applications is complete and obligation of landowner contracts is underway.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

On Friday, April 5th, NRCS announced the application period for CSP. Applications are due May 10th. This program changed from an acre-based program under the 2014 Farm Bill to a monetized-program in the new 2018 Farm Bill. Additionally, the 2018 Farm Bill authorized higher payments rates for certain activities including 125 percent for cover crops and resource conserving crop rotations and 150 percent for advanced grazing management activities.

Signups are underway for RCPP projects with VMRC, TNC, Franklin County Extension and Sustainable Chesapeake. Blaine Delaney recently retired and our new RCPP program manager is Stacey Bradshaw.

We are currently awaiting the new Announcement for Program Funding for the revised and expanded RCPP program under the 2018 Farm Bill. We have held many meetings over the last several weeks with partners who have expressed interest in the new program.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

We received 6 ALE applications for easements on 1,335 acres for nearly \$3 million and 2 WRE applications for approximately 65 acres and ranking us underway. We received 1.2 Million to allocate to high ranking applications.

- NRCS is making up to \$40 million available in technical and financial assistance to help eligible conservation partners voluntarily protect, restore and enhance critical wetlands on agricultural lands through WREP (Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program). Restored wetlands improve water quality downstream and improve wildlife habitat, while also providing flood prevention and recreational benefits to communities. These locally-led partnerships are instrumental in achieving greater wetland acreage and maximizing their benefits to farmers, ranchers and the local and rural communities where wetlands exist. Proposals must be submitted to NRCS state offices by June 14, 2019.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

We just released the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the state CIG and proposals were due May 20th. The priorities for FY19 are soil health, grazing land/livestock health, innovation in high tunnel technologies and Treatment Measures to address the in-stream loading of excess Nutrients and Sediment from Legacy Sediments trapped by Historic Millpond Dams. Blaine Delaney recently retired, and our new CIG program manager is Stacey Bradshaw.

- The 2018 Farm Bill authorized a new, additional sub-program for CIG (Conservation Innovation Grants) referred to as On-Farm Conservation Trials. The signup for this new opportunity opened this month for up to 25 Million for On-Farm Trials and is posted on

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Grants.gov. NRCS is accepting proposals from private entities whose primary business is related to agriculture, Non-governmental organizations with experience working with agricultural producers, and Non-Federal government agencies through July 15, 2019. The minimum award is \$250,000 with a maximum of \$5,000,000.

State Technical Committee Meeting

The second State Technical Committee Meeting of the fiscal year is scheduled for June 27th at the NRCS State Office in Richmond.

Engineering (SCE)

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

Construction for the Elmwood WRP restoration in Area 1, Culpeper County is complete.

Dam Rehabilitation

- **Mountain Run 11** – Work was suspended in late January due to weather. Construction is now scheduled to be completed by the end of May early June. The agreements expire July 1, 2019.
 - **Mountain Run 50** – Work was suspended in late January due to weather. Construction is now finished except for some punch list items. The agreements expire July 1, 2019.
 - **Upper North River 77** – Construction is ongoing, but it has been slow due to the wet weather at start of construction. We plan to request an extension until April 2020 for the agreements and construction contract.
 - **Cherrystone Creek 1** – The agreement was extended to June 28, 2019 to allow more time for the Sponsors to review the Supplemental Watershed Agreement. The Final Plan will be signed by the Sponsors and NRCS in early June. It will be submitted for the Chief's authorization in late June.
 - **Cherrystone Creek 2a** - The agreement was extended to June 28, 2019. NRCS staff have addressed the National Water Management Center comments and the agencies National Headquarters Programmatic Review comments. Interagency and Public Review ended on April 15, 2019. The Final Plan will be completed by the end of May and signed by Sponsors and NRCS in June. It will be submitted for the Chief's authorization in late June.
 - **Johns Creek 1** – The Sponsors selected a Recommended Alternative. The NWMC review began on April 19, 2019. The public and interagency review will be in June. The final plan will be completed by the end of August 2019.
-

State Resource Conservationist (SRC)

Customer Service/Outreach/Training

- Helped train, coordinate, and facilitate 33 NRCS and partnership outreach and training events this fiscal year where over 1994 participants attended. These training/outreach events strive to strengthen and expand NRCS partnership activities to achieve common goals. Some examples of the events:

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- Completed the JED trainings for all 4 Areas – Approximately 100 NRCS/SWCD staff in attendance to learn the added links and notes on the CPA-52 which will provide helpful tools to properly document the special environmental concerns.
- Led planning of and conducted the Jan 10 Area 4 JED using innovative partnership approach on ENM RCPP Program.
- Planned, coordinated and conducted the January JED's (VFGC Winter Conferences) for Areas I, II, and III providing our field staff timely technical information to directly support implementation of Farm Bill Programs where 81 NRCS Conservation Planners from around VA were able to attend, learn and earn 3.0 CEU's for their nutrient management certification.
- Partnered with VFGC, VA Tech, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Southern SARE to provide training to 28 agricultural professional employees at the 2-day intensive grazing school held at the Southern Piedmont AREC in Blackstone. Participants learned advanced principles of pasture and grazing management, developed hands on skills for using temporary fencing equipment for pasture allocation and completed an applied field exercise including pasture system evaluation, resource concern identification and recommendations for improvement along with a grazing plan layout map where participants had the opportunity to earn 6 nutrient management recertification credits and 8 certified conservation planner contact hours for DCR recertification.
- Partnered with VFGC, Extension, SWCD and Black Diamond RC&D to conduct an educational meeting and pasture walk on the economic and soil health benefits of stockpiling and strip grazing fescue. Attendees were able to earn 2.0 Nutrient Management Recertification credits and a total of 33 people attended.
- Worked with VANTAGE and Verona NRCS Office in selecting VANTAGE/NRCS 2019 No-Till Champion Award recipient.
- Helped plan Feb 5, 2019 VANTAGE Winter Conference; agreed to serve as one of main speakers; submitted request for NRCS exhibitor funding for the event; advertised to NRCS staff and partners.
- Helped plan 2018 Farm to Table Conference in Weyers Cave, coordinating with and inviting panelists. Helped secure continued financial support from SARE for NRCS registrations, representing cash value for 2018 of at least \$2,500.
- Coordinated SARE-funded registration at VABF Conference by NRCS staff.
- Partnered with the VFGC, VA Tech, Virginia Cooperative Extension to plan, organize and conduct the 2019 VFGC Winter Forage Conferences with the theme of Alternative Forages for Grazing Systems: Unlocking Your Farms Production Potential. The meetings were held in 4 regional locations (Wytheville, Blackstone, Brandy Station and Weyers Cave) with a total attendance of 452 participants for the week.
- Helped with presentation of VANTAGE/NRCS 2019 No-Till Champion Award (02/05/19, February 2019).
- Partnered with VFGC, VA Tech, and Virginia Cooperative Extension to plan and advertise the upcoming 2019 Winter Forage Conference including a theme of alternative forages and a key note speaker (Dr. Pat Keyser) that will promote the WLFW Bobwhite Quail program and provide the technical training to our employees and clients for successful implementation.
- Participated in the planning meeting at the Farmville Service Center to establish the conservation team to plan and support Sweet Briar College in their farm revitalization plan with comprehensive conservation goals in mind.

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- Developed and presented a presentation on enhancing the conservation of soils and wildlife in productive livestock systems through the Working Lands for Wildlife Program for 55 participants at the VASWCD annual meeting in Roanoke, VA. The presentation framed the need for using native warm season grasses, the importance of keeping productive agricultural lands working and how the participants can help spread awareness of this program to benefit producers across the state.
 - Participated in the annual Quail Council Meeting and provided NRCS accomplishments and FY19 wildlife program updates. (October).
 - Participated in the annual Mid-Atlantic Bog Turtle meeting to discuss on-going research and opportunities for restoration in SW Virginia. (December).
 - Partnered with VFGC, VA Tech and VCE to develop the winter conference them and provide speakers who presented quality technical information that directly supports education and outreach efforts of NRCS to facilitate using annuals and perennials to convert cool season pastureland to native warm season perennials using our Working Land for Wildlife Program.
 - Developed an additional partnership opportunity as a member on a steering committee for the Mountains to the Bay (M2B) Grazing Alliance to share with and learn from others in VA, MD, PA, and DE who are promoting improved grazing and pasture management to protect and enhance the natural resources in the Bay watershed.
 - Leading along with VA Tech/VCE a multi-year, statewide educational push to promote innovation, partnerships, and consistent messaging about cover crops called Virginia Cover Crop College. Cornerstone of content will be VA NRCS Cover Crop Planning Manual. First three events in late Jan and Feb 2019. On-going project.
 - Conducted VA Cover Crop College 101A session in Dinwiddie (01/29/19; January 2019).
 - Conducted VA Cover Crop College 101B session in Tappahannock (02/13/19, February 2019)
 - Gave invited presentation on Cover Crop College and underlying technical resources to Southern States agronomy and sales personnel in Richmond (02/14/19, February 2019)
 - Conducted VA Cover Crop College 101C session in Harrisonburg (02/27/19) February 2019).
 - Partnered in planning, organization and marketing of the upcoming VFGC Grazing School for Producers posted for May 7-8, 2019 in Middleburg Virginia at the AREC.
 - Partnered in planning, organization and marketing of the upcoming VFGC Grazing School for Ag Professionals scheduled for April 24-25, 2019 at the VA Tech McCormick Farm in Raphine, VA.
- Held 17 different soil health events where NRCS organized with partners and was a keynote presenter. This represented over 1162 agency staff, partner staff, industry and producers, a key feature of the VA Soil Health Initiative of training everyone at the same time. Since the 2013 Soil Health Kickoff event in Virginia, NRCS has helped organize and lead 251 soil health events which were attended by over 21,552 participants which heard the NRCS principles on Soil Health including the rainfall simulator demonstrations. See included SRC Training/Outreach Calendar for a full report of all activities. Some examples of the events:

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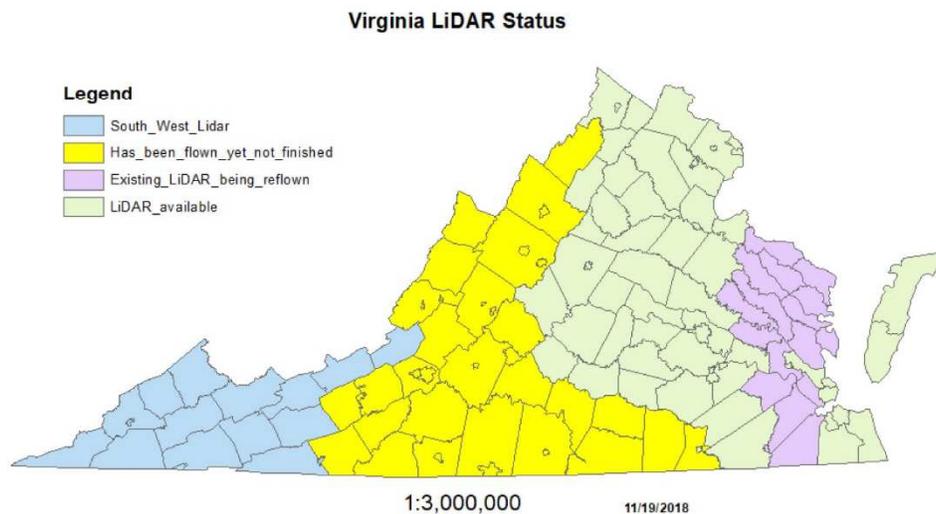
- Conducted 3 rainfall simulator demonstrations and provided an educational overview of our role as NRCS Conservationists and how we work with farmers to ensure a safe and reliable food source while conserving the natural resources to build soil health and sustain agricultural production systems for generations to come as part of the educational field tour for 65 FPAC employees from National Headquarters.
- Moderator for three soil health sessions at 2018 Farm to Table Conference (12/5 and 6/2018); presenter of soil health award at same event.
- Soil health presentation to soils students in Reynolds Community College Goochland Campus Horticulture Program (12/13/2018; December 2018).
- Soil health presentation at Halifax County Farmer's Breakfast program, at invitation of local FO staff (12/17/2018; December 2018).
- Presentation to 2019 VANTAGE Winter Conference on soil compaction management (02/05/19; February 2019).
- Presentation to VA Grain & Soybean Conference annual conference on soil compaction (02/20/19; February 2019).
- Leading along with VA Tech/VCE a multi-year, statewide educational push to promote innovation, partnerships, and consistent messaging about cover crops called Virginia Cover Crop College. Cornerstone of content will be VA NRCS Cover Crop Planning Manual. First three events in late Jan and Feb 2019.
- Coordinate training/outreach activities with partners on CIG grants and publish results of these projects.
 - Coordinated with VACPA to secure opportunity for Dr. Hunter Frame to share VA CIG project results on cover crops in cotton systems at upcoming 2019 VACPA Conference (October 2018).
 - Coordinated and publicized an education outreach activity for the Novel Endophyte Fescue Renovation workshop scheduled for March 11th at the SPAREC in Blackstone as part of the Fescue Conversion CIG.
 - Planning the April JEDs with a CIG partner to focus on fescue conversion.
- Partner with CBF, VFGC, VA Tech to support regional grazing schools, on farm grazing demos, farm tours, and networking graziers throughout the state.
 - Partnered with VA Tech and the Southern Piedmont AREC give a presentation to 50 producers on the WLFW Program to encourage farmers to consider transitioning some of their pasture acres to perennial native warm season grasses for the mutual benefit to their livestock and the northern bobwhite quail
 - Partnered with VFGC, Cooperative Extension and Virginia Tech to conduct an advanced grazing school for 24 producer participants to learn advanced forage species and grazing management techniques for enhancing production and conservation on their farm operations.
 - Partnered with VFGC, the Tazewell SWCD, local NRCS field staff and the ag industry to host a forage and grazing field demonstration on farm in Tazewell, VA highlighting the potential use of annual forages for extending the grazing season and building soil health where 42 participants attended from the region and offered 2.0 Nutrient Management CEU's for certified planners.
 - Partnered in planning, organization and marketing of the upcoming VFGC Grazing School for Producers posted for May 7-8, 2019 in Middleburg Virginia at the AREC.

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- Partnered in planning, organization and marketing of the upcoming VFGC Grazing School for Ag Professionals scheduled for April 24-25, 2019 at the VA Tech McCormick Farm in Raphine, VA.
-

State Soil Scientist (SSS)

LiDAR acquisition



- The South West LiDAR acquisition shown above is now available.
- The not finished areas shown have been flown, and are in the processing stage, and will be available at differing dates.
- The area shown as being reflowed we do have the LiDAR for that area. It is being reflowed with tide coordination as a partnership with USGS.
- NRCS's contribution to the FY 2019 reflowed lidar area was \$500,000.

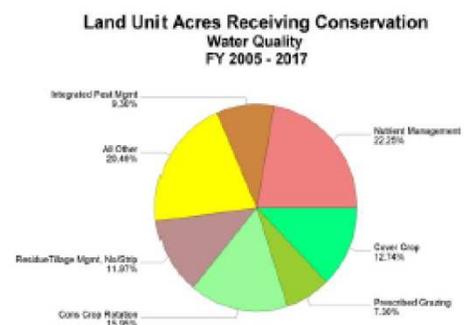
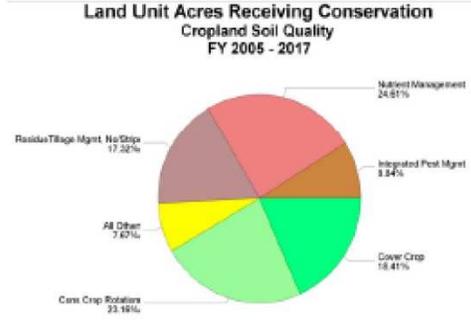
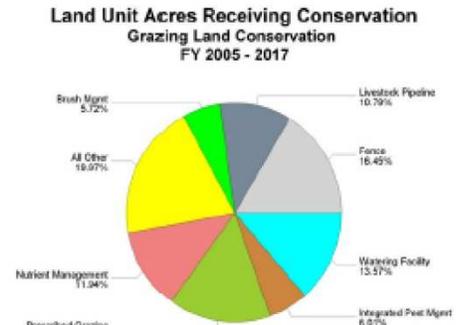
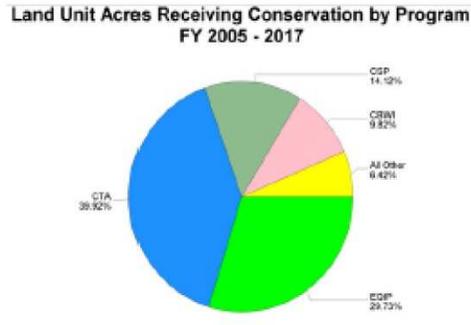
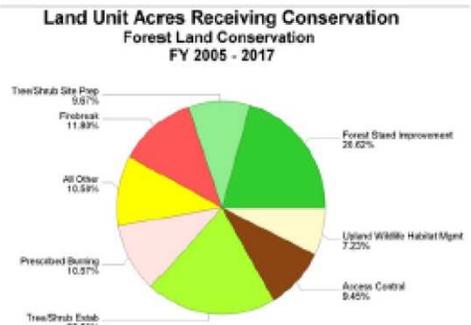
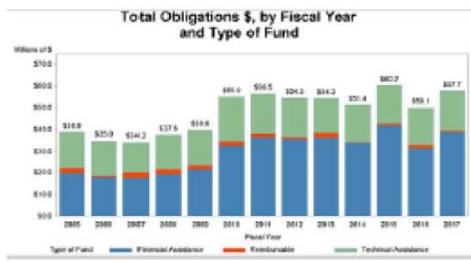
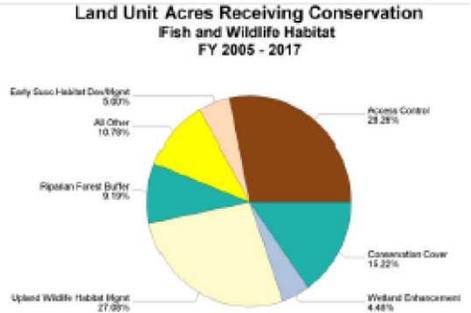
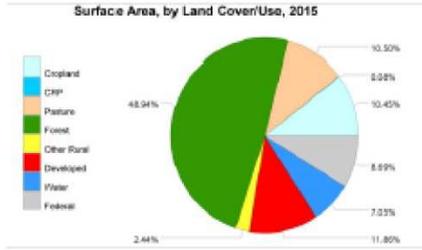
Natural Resources Inventory

The 2015 NRI state wide data is currently publicly available at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/technical/nra/nri/>

Below are a few graphical examples for Virginia.

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Public Affairs

Outreach/Public Affairs

Minority Farmer Recognition. Submitted Virginia grazier Albert McGhee for inclusion in *Minority Landowner* magazine's "Farmers of the Year" issue. (McGhee was selected as the 2018 Civil Rights Advisory Committee Farmer of the Year.)

Soil Health. Nominated Crozier grazier Ronnie Nuckols for the NCBA 2019 Environmental Stewardship Award for his willingness to try innovative approaches and commitment to soil health building grazing management practices. Keith Burgess and the experienced Monacan SWCD staff were instrumental in developing Nuckols' conservation plan and helping him implement his grazing system using state cost-share funding.

Native American Outreach. Engaging federally-recognized tribes in the NRCS "Working Effectively with American Indians" course to be held in Glen Allen on May 6-10, 2019. Chiefs/representatives from the following tribes/nations have been invited to attend the program and participate in a facilitated panel discussion addressing barriers to program participation: Pamunkey, Chickahominy, Chickahominy-Eastern Division, Monacan, Nansemond, Rappahannock, and Upper Mattaponi.

NRCS in the News. Publicized recent accolade for J.B. Daniels' in the *Amelia Monitor* and *Southside Messenger*. The NRCS Forage and Grassland Agronomist received the Harlan White Distinguished Service Award for exceptional service to Virginia graziers and the forage industry. Look for a spotlight on this achievement in the VFGC spring newsletter.

CIG. Highlighted Virginia Dare SWCD CIG grant (***Southeast Virginia Farmers' 20/20 Club: Innovative Motivation in Conservation through Collaboration, Education and Implementation***) during a farm tour for Chief Lohr on March 15. Seven club members representing a cross section of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach producers were invited to attend and offer their perspectives on experimenting with conservation practices that increase yield. (Chief Lohr travelled to Virginia Beach to speak at the Virginia Excellence in Ag event on March 14.)

Winter Meetings. Networked and shared program information with 1,500+ attendees of 5 major farm shows: Virginia Farm to Table Conference, Virginia Biological Farming Conference, Virginia Forage and Grassland Council Winter Forage Conferences, Virginia Farm Show, and Virginia No-Till Alliance Conference.

Earth Team Program

Coordinated with VASWCD and the Holston River SWCD to present the SE Region Group Volunteer Award to the Emory & Henry GOLD Team at the Area 4 Spring Meeting on March 19. Forwarded news release and group photo to the Emory & Henry College Alumni Director and the *Bristol Herald-Courier*, *Washington County News* (Abingdon and Emory) and the *Smyth County News*. The SE Region and National Individual Volunteer Award will be presented at the Area 2 Spring Meeting on April 3.

Attachment B

**Selected Program Impacts**

Virginia Household Water Quality Program. In 2018, the VCE Virginia Household Water Quality Program (VHWQP) offered 66 drinking water clinics that served participants from 93 counties, testing 2161 samples from private water supplies. The sampled systems provide water for 5,470 Virginians. Statewide, 43% of samples tested did not meet the EPA standard for public systems for total coliform bacteria, 9% were positive for E. coli, and 9% of samples exceeded the recommended level for lead in water. The most commonly reported recommended action taken after clinic participation was shock chlorination (23.3%), followed by installing or improving the function of a water treatment device (19.1%). Nearly 75% of clinic participants reported having never tested their water previously (41%) or testing it only once before (33%). Participation in a VAHWQP clinic is designed to encourage subsequent, annual testing using a commercial lab. If delivered commercially, the value attributed to the VAHWQP drinking water clinics offered in 2018 would be \$691,520. The cost to the 2018 participants was \$113,452, a cost savings of approximately 84%. Erin Ling is VCE's Senior Extension Associate and Program Coordinator working with the VHWQP. Erin is currently exploring if there is interest in expanding this program to assist producers mixing pesticides with surface or well water. The premise is that chemistry of these water sources can vary greatly, affecting mixing recommendations and pesticide efficacy.

Increasing Virginia Cover Crop Acreage: A Collaborative Partnership. To build on the growing interest in soil health, cover cropping systems, and farm-to-table connections, Virginia Cooperative Extension worked collaboratively with agricultural and community partners such as Virginia Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service, Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition, Virginia State University's Small Farm Outreach Program, Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services, Virginia Association for Biological Farming, Soil and Water Conservation Districts such as Shenandoah Valley and Thomas Marshall, Shenandoah Valley Produce Auction, Southern SARE, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, Virginia Foundation for Agricultural Innovation Rural Sustainability, Farm Credit of the Virginias, Fauquier Education Farm, Virginia Forage and Grassland Council, Producer Associations, Non-Profit Organizations, and others to deliver educational and researched based programs that were farmer-oriented and community-focused, highlighted and reinforced foundational principles, and demonstrated innovative practices of interest to beginning farmers, experienced farmers, crop advisors, and agency personnel. Since 2012, cover crop acres in Virginia have increased from 170,000 acres annually to over 235,000 acres in 2018 (38% increase). According to estimates generated using the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST), this results in a reduction of 210,000 tons of sediment, 260,000 pounds of nitrogen, and 290,000 pounds of phosphorus that would otherwise have entered the Chesapeake Bay. To follow ongoing work in this area, visit the VCE Soil Health and Cover Crops Topic Page: <http://ext.vt.edu/agriculture/soil-health.html> and the VCE Cover Crops and Soil Health Blog: <http://blogs.ext.vt.edu/cover-crops-soil-health/>.

Note. In today's Virginia Tech News an announcement was made that Altria has awarded the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center \$609,000 to expand research capabilities, covering

the purchase and renovation of a large warehouse adjacent to the center.

Examples of Upcoming Educational Programs

20	MAY, MON	8 – 11am	Virginia Golf Turf Research Field Day Independence Golf Club
21	MAY, TUE	8am – 4pm 11am – 12pm 4 – 7pm	Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association Field Day Liberty University WEBINAR: New Farm Bill's Dairy Margin Coverage Program Join Zoom Meeting https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/128484967 Whole Farm Planning The Carver Center 9432 James Madison Hwy, Rapidan, VA, United States
22	MAY, WED	9:30 – 11:30am 12 – 1pm 3 – 8pm 5 – 7pm 6:30 – 8pm	Landscape Pest and Problem Walks 2019 James Madison's Montpelier Cacti and Succulents Williamson Road Library Small Grains Field Day 9194 Hill Farm Rd Seed Saving for Profit and Production Southern Exposure Seed Exchange 1259 Indian Creek Rd, Mineral, VA Organic Fruit Growers Study Group VCE, 100 Dominion Dr., Farmville, VA 23901
23	MAY, THU	7 – 8:30pm 7 – 8pm	In-Depth Tree Fruit Meeting Alson H. Smith Jr. AREC (Winchester Fruit Lab) at 595 Laurel Grove Road, Winchester, Virginia Moon Gardens and Nighttime Pollinators Bent Mountain Center
24	MAY, FRI	3:30 – 4:30pm 5 – 7pm	Current Trends in Garden Design Salem Library Grow Your Own Vegetable Gardening Series The Carver Center, 9433 James Madison Highway, Rapidan, VA 22733
25	MAY, SAT	All day	Low Stress Cattle Handling Clinic Shenandoah Valley AREC/McCormick Farm 128 Cyrus McCormick Circle, Raphine Virginia
26	MAY, SUN	All day	Low Stress Cattle Handling Clinic Shenandoah Valley AREC/McCormick Farm 128 Cyrus McCormick Circle, Raphine Virginia
28	MAY, TUE	1 – 2pm 6 – 7pm	WEBINAR: Managing Oaks for Northern Bob White Quail http://www.forestrywebinars.net/webinars/managing-oak-forests-for-northern-bobwhite-quail Growing Kitchen Herbs: Planting, Harvesting and Utilizing for you and your Family Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, 24 Pelham St., Warrenton
29	MAY, WED	9:30am – 2pm 6 – 7pm	Dairy: Managing \$ Risk Roanoke Extension Office, 3738 Brambleton Ave SW, Roanoke, VA 2019 Twilight Vegetable and Small Fruit Grower Meetings Tom McDougall – 4 P Foods 4169 Bludau Dr, Warrenton, VA 20187, USA
30	MAY, THU	6 – 7pm	Moon Gardens and Nighttime Pollinators Gainsboro Library
31	MAY, FRI	5 – 7pm	Grow Your Own Vegetable Gardening Series The Carver Center, 9433 James Madison Highway, Rapidan, VA 22733
1	JUN, SAT	1 – 2pm	Grow Your Own Mushrooms Marshall Schoolhouse #18 Demonstration Gardens, 7592 John Marshall Highway, Marshall (next to the Recycle Center), All

Known field days:

May 22 – Small Grains Field Day, 9194 Hill Farm Road

June 12 - VSU/USDA Field Day at The Carver Center, 9432 James Madison Hwy, Rapidan, VA

June 14 – Hop Yard Field Day, Urban Horticulture Center, Blacksburg, VA

July 25 – Industrial Hemp Field Day, Virginia State University

July 30 - Peanut Production Field Day, Tidewater AREC

August 16 – Cotton Production Field Day, Tidewater AREC