

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
Wednesday, April 24, 2019
Virginia Horse Center
Lexington, Virginia**

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board convened at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 24, 2019 at the Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, Virginia.

VIRGINIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard A. Street, Chair
Barry L. Marten, Vice Chair
Chuck Arnason
Gray Coyner
Janette Kennedy
Charles Newton
Cindy Smith
Adam Wilson
Clyde Cristman, DCR Director Ex Officio
John A. Bricker, NRCS, Ex Officio
Dan Goerlich, VCE, Invitee

VIRGINIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Mario Albritton

DCR STAFF PRESENT

Rochelle Altholz, Deputy Director for Administration
Isaac Sarver, Deputy Director for Board and Constituent Services
David Bryan, Agricultural Incentives Program Manager
Michael Fletcher, Board and Constituent Services Liaison
Darryl M. Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation
Wendy Howard-Cooper, Acting Director, Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management
Sharon Partee, Finance Director
Amy Walker, Conservation District Coordinator
Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator
Matthew Gooch, Office of the Attorney General

OTHERS PRESENT

Kendall Tyree, Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Steven Meeks, Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District
James Tillman, NRCS
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau
Kyle Shreve, Virginia Agribusiness Council
Matt Kowalski, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Suzanne Brown, Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District

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 10:00 a.m. and called for introductions.

Mr. Gooch announced that this would be his last meeting with the Soil and Water Conservation Board as he was leaving the Office of the Attorney General.

Director Cristman thanked Mr. Gooch for his seven years of service to the Board and the agency.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 20, 2019

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved that the minutes from the March 20, 2019 meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board be approved as submitted. Mr. Arnason seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Coyner observed that the section regarding the Equine Workgroup should be more comprehensive and not just limited to horse pasture management.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Marten moved that the minutes from the March 20, 2019 meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board be amended to address concerns regarding the Equine Workgroup and staff was directed to make the necessary edits to the document. Mr. Coyner seconded and the motion carried.

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

Director Cristman noted the following in his report.

- He thanked Ms. Howard-Cooper for serving the role of Acting Director of the Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management. The agency will be posting an announcement to recruit for a permanent Director position within the next week.
- Wayne Davis, former Eastern Area Regional Manager, has retired.
- Governor Northam's office announced the submission of the draft Chesapeake Bay TMDL Phase III WIP (Watershed Improvement Plan). Mr. Baxter and Mr. Glover met with the EPA earlier in the week to review the plan.

DAM SAFETY AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT – *Wendy Howard-Cooper, Acting Director, Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management*

Ms. Howard Cooper noted that the majority of the Dam Safety and Floodplain Management issues would be addressed at the May meeting.

DCR staff met with officials from the City of Lynchburg on April 12 to discuss moving forward with the \$5 million appropriation for the repair of College Lake Dam. DCR staff are in the process of working with

the City to develop a grant agreement for this appropriation. The City is currently preparing a scope of work. A motion allocating the funds on July 1, 2019 will be presented to the Board at the May meeting.

Director Cristman noted that the General Assembly appropriated \$5 million specifically for this dam. The City intends to decommission the dam, although there is a road across the dam which makes the decommissioning more challenging.

Ms. Howard-Cooper reported that the pilot project approved by the Board at the March meeting is moving forward. DCR has signed a letter of intent with the Army Corps of Engineers. Meetings have been scheduled with the City of Franklin and Southampton County. A meeting will be scheduled with respective dam owners.

Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund Grant Round Update

Ms. Howard-Cooper reported that fifty-two (52) grant applications had been received on time. Two additional applications had been received after the deadline and were disqualified. Nine of the fifty-two were incomplete. Those applicants were given the opportunity to submit the required information.

There is \$1 million available for grant funding. That includes up to \$400K for flood prevention and \$600,000 for dam safety. Applications were received for \$390K of the available flood prevention funding, and \$828K of the dam safety funding. If all projects are eligible, applications will have to be denied for the first time through this grant process. Applications will be scored according to the grant manual criteria. All of the available funds will be awarded. High hazard dams will be prioritized.

Ms. Howard-Cooper advised that the General Assembly had appropriated \$400K for the agency to fund remote monitoring for district owned dams. The agency is currently meeting with vendors who provide this type of equipment. Director Cristman noted that the Jordan Dam on the Maury River is scheduled to be decommissioned. That is likely to happen in May.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DIVISION REPORT

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

Mr. Glover gave the following written 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” (WIP III) was released to the public on April 5. Public comments will be accepted through June 7, with a final WIP completed in early August. Comments can be submitted via:

Please include the name and mailing address (or e-mail address) of the commenter.

1. E-mail: chesbayplan@DEQ.Virginia.gov
2. Postal mail: DEQ, ATTN: Chesbayplan, P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, VA 23218

3. Hand-delivery: DEQ, ATTN: Chesbayplan, 1111 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219 (Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., except on state holidays and any other days on which state offices in the Richmond area are closed)

There will be several public information meetings being hosted by various groups across the Virginia Chesapeake Bay watershed, as well as two webinars, both on May 13. To register, go to:

9:00 am <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1461104016153487873>

6:00 pm <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1788373652161109249>

DEQ evaluated the agricultural BMP input decks (i.e. projections of numbers of each type of BMP that could be implemented by year 2025) of the 31 (minus the 32nd District, Southside, which was exempted due to a heavily forested Bay watershed area) Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Virginia with Chesapeake Bay drainage. This evaluation concluded that if fully implemented, 73% of the total combined reductions for nitrogen and phosphorus for all 31 of these Districts would be achieved by these ten Bay Districts: Eastern Shore, Culpeper, Hanover-Caroline, Headwaters, Lord Fairfax, Northern Neck, Robert E. Lee, Shenandoah Valley, Three Rivers, and Thomas Jefferson. Both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service have been notified that the Commonwealth supports additional financial assistance in these areas. Accordingly, we shall propose measures to recognize these Districts' level of commitment to Chesapeake Bay cleanup via recommendations for FY20 Board policies during this meeting.

All agricultural BMP input decks were augmented, at the state level, in order to achieve targeted nutrient reductions. Increases to input decks were most notable for nutrient management (core and enhanced), cover crops, conservation plans (which include DCR plans, NRCS plans, and Resource Management Plans), and poultry litter transport (from 5,000 – 6,000 tons/year to 89,000 – 90,000 tons/year by year 2025). In addition to these agricultural BMPs, WIP III also emphasizes animal waste facilities, grass and forested buffers, and (additional) livestock stream exclusion.

WIP III recognizes the work of the Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) during 2018, which will continue through 2019, to propose changes to the Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost Share (VACS) Program that could increase participation and result in additional agricultural BMP implementation. The following TAC recommendations have been incorporated into the FY20 Ag BMP Manual and/or the annual Board policies being submitted for the Board's consideration and approval or will continue to be discussed by the TAC for FY21. These recommendations for the VACS Program noted in WIP III include:

- Create additional incentives for a variety of buffer widths and lifespans;
- Create new incentives for extended BMP lifespans;
- Establish an equine workgroup to address the implementation of BMPs on equine operations including horse pasture and manure management, appropriate stocking rates for horses, conditions for financial assistance, etc.;
- Remove or increase annual participant caps for cost share;
- Bundle BMPs into single cost share contracts to increase reporting of BMPs;
- Increase maximum tax credits for BMPs and conservation equipment;
- Modify practice specifications for cover crops, animal waste and stream protection, forest buffers and nutrient management; and

- Move towards regional agricultural BMP priorities.

Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee

The full Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has scheduled meetings on: July 9, August 14, October 8, November 20, and December 18. Revised ground rules for this year and an updated list of topics for discussion will be distributed to TAC members by the first full week in May.

Livestock Stream Exclusion Update

In order to propose the most efficient allocation of supplemental FY 2019 funding recently awarded by the General Assembly for the remaining PY15 pending SL-6 livestock stream exclusion practices under the 100% cost reimbursement initiative, the Department requested revised cost estimates. The eight affected Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are: Big Walker, Monacan, Mountain Castles, Patrick, Peter Francisco, Pittsylvania, Robert E. Lee, and Southside provided this information in early April. As a result, due to some cancellations, the number of backlogged PY15 SL-6 practices has been reduced, from roughly 100 to approximately 80.

Conservation Planning Certification Training

The RUSLE 2 (soils) training classes, scheduled for the coming months by NRCS, have been updated. The May 8 date has been cancelled. Classes will be on May 15 (Fishersville), June 5 (Richmond NRCS Office), and June 12 (Wytheville). As with the other in-person conservation planning courses, SWCD staff who are enrolled in the curriculum will be notified of the new dates and automatically registered.

Approval of Board's Fiscal Year 2020 Virginia Agricultural Cost-share (VACS) BMP Manual – Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator

Ms. Watlington advised the Board that copies of changes to the manual were mailed prior to the meeting. She noted that the packet contained the full BMP Manual with the exception of the section on poultry litter transport. That will be brought for approval at the May meeting. She also noted that tables and specifications had been updated.

In addition, Ms. Watlington advised:

- An animal waste variance procedure was added. This was recommended by the subcommittee and approved by the TAC.
- The section regarding carry over practices was revised. Practices that were considered 18 month practices are now recommended to be given two-program years to complete installation or implementation. The local District can approve a third carryover year. Beyond a third year, approval must come from DCR.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the 2020 Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share BMP Manual as presented. Further, the Department is authorized to make nonsubstantive changes to include formatting and stylistic changes as necessary to all approved sections of the Manual. The section of the Manual regarding Poultry Litter Transport is omitted from this approval. Mr. Coyner seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of Whole Farm Approach Pilot Project Grant Agreement and Specification – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington advised that this project was presented in March. She also noted that the Board originally approved the allocation for funding at the December, 2018 meeting.

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 for the Implementation of the Whole Farm Approach Pilot Project (Fiscal Year 2019) and the WFA-1 specification. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

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

This item was deferred until the May meeting.

Review of DRAFT Desktop Guidelines for District Fiscal Operations – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the changes to the Desktop Guidelines for District Fiscal Operations. She noted that in future years, the Guidelines may be brought to the Board at the March meeting in order to allow Districts additional time to revise accounting and other procedures for the upcoming program year.

Key changes related to responsibilities in the Administration and Operations grant, changes in the Code of Virginia related to FOIA and others. The Guidelines also clarified the use of gift cards and clarified certain tax forms.

No Board action was necessary at this meeting.

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

Ms. Watlington presented the Department recommendations to changes based on the expected allocation. Final action will be taken by the Board at the May meeting.

Review of DRAFT Administration and Operations Funding Contract and Deliverables – Christine Watlington

The funding contract and deliverables are based on the Board Policy. Final action will be taken at the May meeting.

Review of DRAFT 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 draft Board Policy. Additional funding for districts heavily impacted by the upcoming WIP efforts was discussed. Final action will be taken at the May meeting.

Review of DRAFT Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Contract and Deliverables – Christine Watlington

The deliverables are based on the contract. Both will be voted on at the May meeting.

Review of DRAFT Grant Agreement for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington reviewed the draft grant agreement for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program.

- \$1 million is provided from the Water Quality Improvement Fund surplus.
- The agreement is based on the existing grant agreement with the Association and the existing cost-share and technical assistance grant agreements.
- This allows for 80% to go the Chesapeake Bay areas and 20% outside the Bay area.

No Board action was required at this time.

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

Ms. Watlington reviewed the draft grant agreement with Northern Neck Soil and Water Conservation District for the Resource Management Plan (RMP) BMP Pilot Project. The TAC had recommended that certain practices be bundled into one contract that would make it easier for producers to implement the practices. The hope is to increase the number of RMPs that are certified.

No action was required by the Board at this time.

District Director Appointments and Resignations – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the following list of District Director appointments and resignations.

Daniel Boone

Resignation of Mr. John Dickie Bailey, of Lee County, effective 4/8/19, elected director position (term of office expires 12/31/2019).

Robert E. Lee

Resignation of Mr. Frank Goodwin, of the City of Lynchburg, effective 1/24/2019, elected director position (term of office expires 12/31/2019).

Resignation of Ms. Erin Hawkins, of Campbell County, effective 2/28/2019, at-large director position (term of office expires 12/31/2018).

Lord Fairfax

Resignation of Mr. Michael Neese, of the City of Winchester, effective 11/17/2018, elected director position (term of office expires 12/31/2019).

Recommendation of Mr. Paul Burkholder, of the City of Winchester, to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Michael Neese (term of office to begin on 5/1/19 – 12/31/2019).

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Newton moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the appointments of the individuals being recommended. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

Establishment of an Allocation Subcommittee – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington noted that in the previous year numerous questions arose concerning how Technical Assistance (TA) is allocated. Currently baseline technical assistance is based on FY 2013 numbers. The staff recommendation is for the Board to establish a subcommittee to review and provided recommendations for alternative ways of funding baseline technical assistance. Membership would include three members of the Soil and Water Conservation Board, three members of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and one staff member from the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

BOARD ACTION

Chairman Street moved the following:

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board establishes an allocation subcommittee to review the current methodology used for calculating the baseline technical assistance allocation to Districts and to provide recommendation(s) for alternative method(s) to determine this baseline.

The subcommittee will consist of 7 members, with 5 members constituting a quorum. Three members shall be active members of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board appointed by the Board Chairman. Three members will be representatives of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts appointed by the Executive Board of the Association. One member will be the Director of the Department of Conservation and resignation or his designee.

The Subcommittee shall provide its recommendations to the Board no later than the December 11, 2019 Board meeting.

There may be ad-hoc members of the subcommittee, including the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, but these members will have no voting privileges.

Mr. Newton seconded and the motion carried.

Chairman Street appointed the following Board members to serve on the Subcommittee:

- Gray Coyner
- Mario Albritton
- Adam Wilson

APPROVAL OF BOARD BYLAWS – *Christine Watlington*

Ms. Watlington presented the revised Board Bylaws for approval. She noted that these were presented at the March meeting.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the revised Board bylaws as presented by the Department. Mr. Coyner seconded and the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business

NEW BUSINESS

Director Cristman noted that the terms of the three at-large members of the Board would be expiring on June 30. Mr. Street is not eligible to be reappointed. Ms. Kennedy and Mr. Marten have asked not to be considered for reappointment. The Governor's office is working on filling these appointments in a timely manner. Recommendations of individuals to fill these vacancies are welcome and should be forwarded to Director Cristman.

PARTNER REPORTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service – John A. Bricker, NRCS

Mr. Bricker presented the report for NRCS. A copy is included as Attachment A.

Virginia Cooperative Extension, Dan Goerlich

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

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts – Dr. Kendall Tyree

The Association is working on several training programs, including records retention and working with the Library of Virginia.

This summer is the educational season with youth camp and the Envirothon.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Shreve from the Virginia Agribusiness Council advised that the Council would be sending a number of recommendations to the full TAC regarding the equine workgroup in order to address the equine situation in the context of WIP III.

Mr. Kowalski from the Chesapeake Bay Association expressed appreciation to the Board for their work and the opportunity to attend the meeting.

Ms. Moore from the Virginia Farm Bureau noted that she looks forward to working with the Ad Hoc Subcommittee addressing the baseline technical assistance allocation.

Mr. Tillman, from NRCS conveyed greetings from NRCS Chief Matthew Lohr.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board will be at 9:30 a.m. in the Swift Creek Dining Hall at Pocahontas State Park, located in Chesterfield, Virginia.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Attachment A

NRCS REPORT
Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Meeting
April 24, 2019 ♦ Lexington, VA

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.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

We just released the Notice of Funding Opportunity for CIG and proposals are 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.

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.

NRCS REPORT
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Dam Rehabilitation

- **Mountain Run 11** – Work was suspended in late January due to weather. All of the concrete work is complete. It is anticipated that work will resume in mid-April. There is about 4 weeks of work including structural earthfill, final site grading and stabilization remaining to complete the project.
- **Mountain Run 50** – Work was suspended in late January due to weather. It is anticipated that work will resume in late March. There is about 1 week of work including final site grading and stabilization remaining to complete the project.
- **Upper North River 77** – Construction has started. Excavation of Tilman Road and portions of the embankment and processing rocky material is underway. Work is scheduled to be completed in mid-September 2019.
- **Cherrystone Creek 1 and Cherrystone Creek 2** – The Final plan for Cherrystone Creek 1 is complete and the next step is for the Sponsor to sign the Plan. The Final plan for Cherrystone Creek 2A is complete and will be sent to NHQ for review soon.
- **Johns Creek 1** – The Sponsors selected a Recommended Alternative. The final Draft Plan is being developed with Sponsor input and will be sent to the NWMC for review in April.

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:
 - 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.

NRCS REPORT
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- 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.
- 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).

NRCS REPORT
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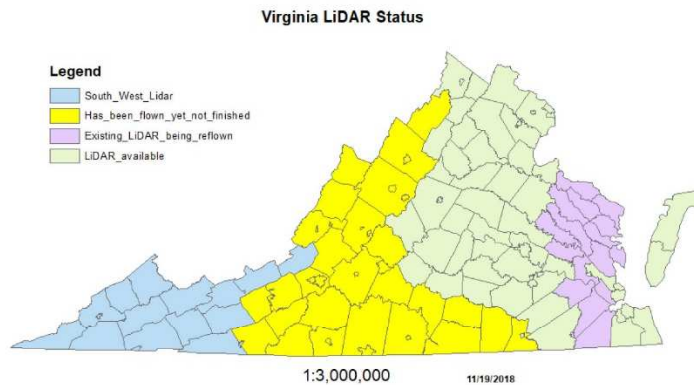
- Partnered in planning, organization and marketing of the upcoming VFGC Grazing School for Producers posted for May 7-8, 2019 in Middleburg Virginia at the AREC.
- Partnered in planning, organization and marketing of the upcoming VFGC Grazing School for Ag Professionals scheduled for April 24-25, 2019 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:
 - 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

NRCS REPORT
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- 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.
- 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



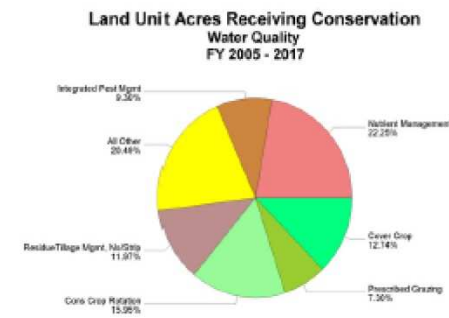
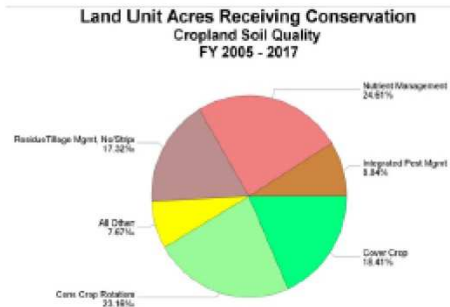
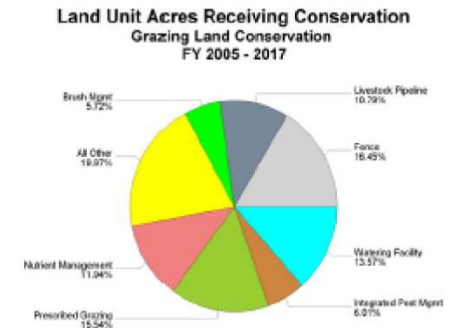
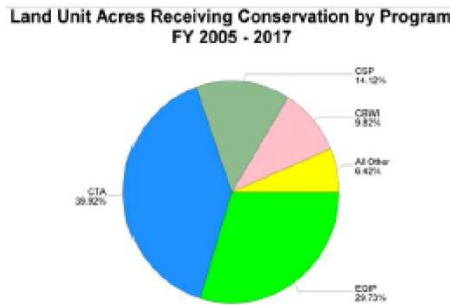
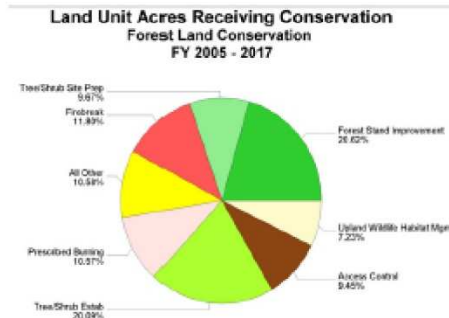
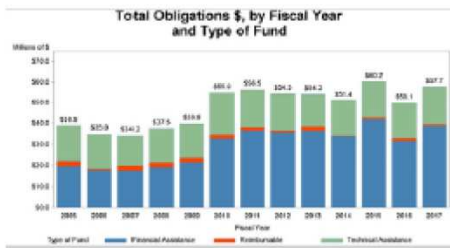
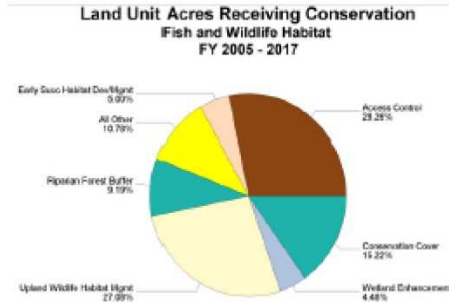
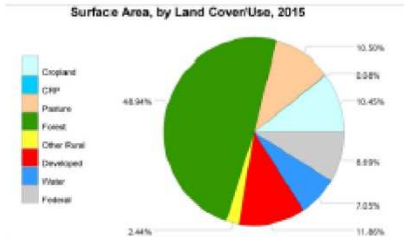
- The South West LiDAR acquisition shown above is now available.
- The not finished areas shown have been flown, and are in the processing stage, and will be available at differing dates.
- The area shown as being re-flown we do have the LiDAR for that area. It is being re-flown with tide coordination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

NRCS REPORT
Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Meeting
April 24, 2019 ♦ Lexington, VA

Below are a few graphical examples for Virginia.



NRCS REPORT
Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Meeting
April 24, 2019 ♦ Lexington, VA

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



Report to the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board

April 24, 2019

Administrative Updates

- Dan Goerlich has been appointed as the VCE Associate Director for Economy, Community, and Food.
- Central District Director interviews were held April 11 and 12, 2019. Central District has full-time ANR Extension agent vacancies in Goochland, Franklin, and Charlotte Counties, but none of these vacancies currently impact local SWCD appointments.
- The Associate Director of Field Operations and District Directors developed a hiring plan for Extension agent positions from Summer/Fall 2018 through Summer 2019 using existing resources. This hiring plan included 4-H, FCS, and ANR agent positions. ANR positions included: King William / King and Queen, Orange, Suffolk, New Kent, Spotsylvania, and Bland. Bland was subsequently filled by an internal transfer from Wythe County.

Selected Program Updates

- VCE provides educational programming to enable over 30,000 agricultural producers and pest managers to maintain certification in 27 pesticide applicator categories. In 2018, Extension agents hosted 120 trainings to recertify 2,624 private applicators. Trainers were prepared to do so by attending the 26th annual Virginia Pesticide Safety Educators Workshop. In addition, Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs hosted 16 online courses to prepare applicators for certification with 257 individuals enrolled.
- In 2018, Healthy Virginia Lawns (HVL) had 223 volunteers serving 1,000 clients, contributed 1,060 nutrient management plans covering 291.5 acres. Volunteers contributed 4,077 hours valued at \$112,117. DCR was instrumental in contributing funding that helped make this program possible from 2013 to 2018.
- VCE has been involved in brainstorming conversations with the Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources regarding how existing VCE educational programs may have positive outcomes for the Chesapeake Bay, and how to capture these programmatic outcomes.
- Southern Pasture and Forage Crop Conference will be held May 21 through 23 in Roanoke, VA. Selected examples of VCE educational programs, or programming partnerships, for the week of April 30 to May 8 follow on page two.

29	APR, MON	● 1 – 4pm	High Tunnel Production at Dayspring Farm Dayspring Farm 942 Buena Vista Road, Shackelfords, VA, 23156,
30	APR, TUE	● All day ● 8am – 4pm ● 9am – 4pm ● 1 – 3:30pm ● 6 – 8pm	Virginia Forestry Summit - From Seedling to Stump Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel Horticultural Horizons: Beyond the Garden Path, Innovations in Home Gardening Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Setting Up a Sheep or Goat Enterprise Workshop Randolph Volunteer Fire Department, 2145 Cumberland Rd., Farmville, VA Farm Market Display 101 VSU Randolph Farm Pavilion 4415 East River Road, Petersburg, VA, 23803, Selling at Farmers' Markets Vendor Workshop Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center
1	MAY, WED	● All day ● 9am – 12:30pm ● 5:30 – 7:30pm	Virginia Forestry Summit - From Seedling to Stump Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel The Southern Virginia Makers Market Southern Virginia Food Hub Maker's Market 100 W. Danville St., South Hill, VA Value-Added Production with Herbs VSU Randolph Farm Pavilion 4415 River Road • Petersburg, VA
2	MAY, THU	● All day ● 1 – 5pm	Virginia Forestry Summit - From Seedling to Stump Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel Growing and Selling Cut Flowers: 2 Farm Tours Dug In Farms
3	MAY, FRI	● All day	Virginia Forestry Summit - From Seedling to Stump Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel
4	MAY, SAT	● 9am – 5pm ● 10am – 4pm	Powhatan's 5th Annual Celebration of the Horse and Ag Expo Rocky Oak Farm Buchanan Garden Festival Buchanan Fairgrounds, Buchanan, VA 24066
5	MAY, SUN	● 8am – 12pm	Shitake Mushroom Growing Demonstration Madison County Farmers Market
6	MAY, MON	● 2:30 – 3:30pm	Family Gardening Salem Library
7	MAY, TUE	● All day ● 2 – 4:30pm ● 6:30 – 7:30pm ● 6:30 – 7:30pm	2019 Grazing School Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension Center Emerald Ash Borer and Urban Wood Workshop Cooperative Extension Cacti and Succulents Hollins Library Sensational Salads Vinton Library
8	MAY, WED	● All day ● 1:30 – 4:30pm	2019 Grazing School Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension Center Farm Transition Workshop Randolph Volunteer Fire Department, 2145 Cumberland Rd., Farmville, VA 23901