

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
Thursday, June 28, 2018
Pocahontas State Park, Chesterfield, Virginia**

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board convened at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 28, 2018 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	Cindy Smith
Barry L. Marten, Vice Chair	Adam Wilson
Mario Albritton	Clyde Cristman, DCR Director, Ex Officio
Chuck Arnason	David Kriz for John A. Bricker, NRCS, Ex Officio
Gray Coyner	Dr. Bobby Grisso, VCE, Invitee
Janette Kennedy	

VIRGINIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Stephen Lohr

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Rochelle Altholz, Deputy Director, Administration and Finance
Russell W. Baxter, Deputy Director, Soil and Water Conservation/Dam Safety and Floodplain Management
Michael Fletcher, Board and Constituent Services Liaison
Darryl Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation
Matthew Gooch, Office of the Attorney General
Wendy Howard-Cooper, Business and Administration Manager
Barbara McGarry, Resource Management Program Plan Specialist
Lisa McGee, Policy Director
Roland Owens, Conservation Programs Data Manager
Isaac Sarver, Deputy Director for Board and Constituent Services
Carl Thiel-Goin, Conservation Planning and Training Coordinator
Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator
David Wilmoth, Dam Safety Engineer

OTHERS PRESENT

Gary Boring, New River SWCD
Suzanne M. Brown, Loudoun SWCD
Linda S. Campbell, Shenandoah Valley SWCD
Jason Carter, VCA
Richard Chaffin, Peaks of Otter SWCD
James Davis Martin, DEQ
Emily Horsley, USDA Farm Services Bureau
Daphne Jamison, Blue Ridge SWCD
Chip Jones, Northern Neck SWCD
Matt Kowalski, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Jonathan Lyle, Monacan SWCD

Steven Meeks, VASWCD, Thomas Jefferson SWCD
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation
Ed Overton, Colonial SWCD
Bruce Pearce, Halifax SWCD
Richard Phillips, Colonial SWCD
John B. Price, Prince William SWCD
Kathy Smith, Blue Ridge SWCD
Dr. Kendall Tyree, Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Donald Wells, Hanover-Caroline SWCD

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Street called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked for introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 19, 2018

Mr. Arnason moved that the minutes of the April 19, 2018 meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board be approved as submitted. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

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

Director Cristman welcomed members and guests to Pocahontas State Park commenting that Pocahontas is one of the original six parks built by the Civilian Conservation Corps and is the largest park in the State Park System. He recognized Dr. Bobby Grisso and Ms. Lisa McGee for their completion of the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute and provided the following DCR report to the Board:

The General Assembly passed a budget during a special session. That budget was signed by the Governor with no amendments, and no changes from an introduced budget that directly impact the work of the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

The budget provides for two engineering positions that will allow DCR to continue to provide assistance to Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Director Cristman noted that the Board could now move ahead with the approval of the policies and grant agreements. He advised that DCR staff would need to move quickly to get the approved documents to Districts.

State revenues are performing well. The amount deposited into the Water Quality Improvement Fund should be significant in this budget cycle. More details will be shared, as they are available.

Following Director Cristman's report, Chairman Street advised that this was a joint meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. He noted that the Board would conduct business and then break for the joint meeting with the Association.

DAM SAFETY AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Approval of Grants from the Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund – Wendy Howard-Cooper, Business and Administration Manager

Ms. Howard-Cooper shared that the Dam Safety Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund Grant opened in February with \$900,000 in available funds. Forty-three applications were received requesting a total request of \$1.2 million. Ms. Howard-Cooper advised that staff was recommending approval of twenty-eight (28) applications with an approval amount of \$562,346.27

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved that: The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approves the twenty-eight (28) grant applications, with an approval amount of \$562,346.27, 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 consultation with VRA.
2. All grant agreements will require that projects be completed within 12 months of the date of 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 funds are subject to rescission at the Departments 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 \$420,000 for Hearthstone Lake Dam in Augusta County will be disbursed by VRA after the funds are received by the Department and transferred to VRA pursuant to the Chapter 2 of the 2018 Special Session 1, Acts of Assembly, Item 362. O.1 and other 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 unanimously.

Additional Review of Denied Applications from Grant Round – Russell W. Baxter, Deputy Director for Soil and Water Conservation and Dam Safety and Floodplain Management

Mr. Baxter noted that thirteen of the original grant applications were deficient in some part of their application. There was no opportunity prior to the closing of the grant round to notify applicants of the deficiencies and staff would like to allow these applicants an opportunity to address those deficiencies. Staff proposes to allow these applicants time to present missing information. If the applications are recommended for funding, they would be presented to the Board at the September meeting for consideration.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason moved that the Board direct the Department to contact each of the remaining thirteen grant applicants whose applications were denied and allow for the submission of additional or corrected information that may allow for the approval of the denied applications. Funding recommendations related to the previously denied grant applications will be presented to the Board at their September meeting. Additionally, the Board request the Department review its internal procedures to ensure that additional or clarifying information is requested from applicants prior to final grant approval during future grant opportunities. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

Citizen Request for Request of a De-obligated FY15 Grant – Russell W. Baxter, Deputy Director for Dam Safety and Floodplain Management and Soil and Water Conservation

Mr. Baxter referenced a letter in member's packets from Ms. Mary Ann Freeman. Ms. Freeman is a dam owner who previously expended funds for dam repair based upon an approved grant and an assurance of reimbursement. Due to medical issues of the project engineer, Ms. Freeman was not notified that necessary invoices were due to receive reimbursement for the 2015 grant cycle.

Mr. Baxter referenced the following action taken by the Board on December 7, 2016:

The Board approves the offering of a blanket extension until May 1, 2017 to all of the remaining recipients of 2015 Dam Safety, Flood Prevention, and Protection Assistance Fund grants. After such time, no additional extensions shall be granted and any outstanding grants shall be cancelled and the funds shall be de-obligated. For older grant rounds, where there has been no activity or extensions requested or approved, the Board approves that funds from all such projects be de-obligated. Remaining funds from closed out projects shall also be de-obligated.

Mr. Baxter requested the Board reconsider this action for the grant approved for Ms. Freeman.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Marten moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the reimbursement of Ms. Mary Ann Freeman in the amount of \$7,600 for the 2015 Agreement Number DSFP-57-15 once all work

requested through the agreement has been completed to the satisfaction of the Department. Mr. Coyner seconded and the motion carried.

Revision to Guidance on Dam Break Inundation Zone Modeling and Mapping Procedures - Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator, and David Wilmoth, Dam Safety Engineer

Mr. Wilmoth provided an overview of the 2018 Virginia PMP Temporal Distribution Analysis.

Temporal Distribution Initiative

- Current Curves – NRCS TR-60 / 5-Point theoretical curves
- DCR contracted with Applied Weather Associates (AWA) to complete Virginia based Temporal Distribution Curves
 - AWA Completed 2015 Virginia PMP Analysis
- Contract began in late fall 2017
- Split Virginia into two distinct Regions based on Watershed continental divide in Western Virginia – East and West
- Curves were 100% developed from real-world storms applicable for Virginia
- Curves were based on storm data (SPAS) from previously completed 2015 Virginia PMP Study
 - Approximately 79 distinct storm events (SPAS)
- Huff Curve Methodology
 - Process of characterizing storm mass curves (rainfall vs. time)
 - 50th percentile curve (middle loaded) – Distributions above and below curve
- Virginia Based Temporal Curves
 - 24 total Temporal Distribution Curves
 - 12 curves in EAST; 12 curves in WEST
 - General, Local, and Tropical Storm Type
 - 6-hour, 12-hour, and 24-hour Duration
 - 24-hour A and 24-hour B Curves
 - Why two PMP Curves?
 - How will the user know which curve to use
- Virginia 2018 PMP Temporal Distribution Calculation Worksheet
 - Excel spreadsheet developed by DCR to help engineers calculate their appropriate VA Temporal Distribution Curve based on calculated VA PMP values
 - Spreadsheet will utilize VA PMP values from 2015 VA PMP Study
 - Provide output temporal curves based on input PMP values for basin in question
 - Output curves will be placed into other hydrologic modeling programs
- Training Documents and Website Integration
 - DCR developing “walk-through” based training documents for Temporal Distribution Worksheet
 - Copies of final report, calculation worksheet, and other pertinent information will be placed on DCR Dam Safety’s website
 - Modeling and Mapping Guidance Document updates to include Temporal Distribution Curve

Director Cristman noted that when the General Assembly authorized the PMP study, the Board was to adopt the PMP values if the analysis was valid, reliable, and would result in cost savings for dam owners. Most of

the state did see some reduction in the rainfall events that were evaluated to determine spillway requirements. He asked Mr. Wilmoth if the implementation of the new temporal curves would impact those changes.

Mr. Wilmoth responded that there should not be a significant change because the numbers would be more accurate. He noted that this analysis could have been completed with the PMP study, but funding was not available at the time.

Mr. Baxter requested the Board approve changes that would reflect the new curves as presented by Mr. Wilmoth.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve revisions to the Guidance Document on Dam Break Inundation Zone Modeling and Mapping Procedures as outlined by DCR staff. Mr. Wilson seconded at the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Periodic Review for Impounding Structure Regulations (4VAC40-20) – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington advised the Board that regulations are to be reviewed, at a minimum, every four years. The process is to open a public comment period for a minimum of twenty-one (21) days. The Department then has sixty (60) days to respond. This does not mean that the regulations will be opened for a regulatory action. Once the Board authorizes the review and the Department responds to the public comments received, the Department and Board will make a determination regarding the need to begin a regulatory action.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the initiation of a periodic review of the Impounding Structure Regulations (4VAC40-20), and 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. Ms. Kennedy seconded and the motion carried.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DIVISION

Approval of Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operations Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2019 – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the final revisions to the Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operations Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2019. She noted that documents were revised to reflect the approved budget.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operations Funding for Fiscal Year 2019. Ms. Smith seconded and the motion carried. The final policy will be posted on the DCR website.

Approval of Administration and Operations Grant Agreement – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the revised Administration and Operations Grant Agreement.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Arnason 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 2019) with one edit noted on page 11; the word "training" should be inserted after COIA on section 15. Mr. Coyner 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 2019 – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the revised Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2019.

Mr. Coyner noted that the motion should reflect that discussions regarding the FY13 Technical Assistance base will continue.

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 2019) with the understanding that discussions with Districts and other stakeholders regarding the FY13 Technical Assistance base funding will continue. Mr. Albritton seconded and the motion carried as amended.

The final approved policy will be posted on the DCR website.

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

Ms. Watlington reviewed the revised Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement.

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 Grant Agreement (Fiscal Year 2019). Ms. Smith seconded and the motion carried.

Approval of the Conservation Plan Program - Carl Thiel-Goin, Conservation Planning and Training Coordinator

Mr. Thiel-Goin gave an overview of the proposed Conservation Plan Program. He noted that this program was developed by staff working with a stakeholder advisory group and additional partners. The documents presented were field-tested prior to finalization.

Mr. Thiel-Goin reviewed the components of a Conservation Plan, the Conservation Plan Resources Guide Sheet; the Conservation Plan Farm Summary, the training curriculum, recertification requirements, approval of the Conservation Plan Reviews, and the grandfathering of certain individuals from certain training requirements based on the individual's previous certification or training.

Director Cristman asked Mr. Gooch if there would be specific FOIA exemptions for producers for proprietary information as provided for with Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) and Resource Management Plans (RMP). The Board took a brief recess for the Chair and staff to consult with Mr. Gooch. When the Board reconvened, Mr. Gooch noted that the FOIA exemptions provided for proprietary information, similar to those provisions provided for NMP and RMP, would likewise apply.

Director Cristman noted that, as this was a new program, adjustments will be made as necessary.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board authorize the Department to administer and implement the Conservation Planning Program on behalf of the Board, and specified that the Department provide periodic reports to the Board regarding the program. Mr. Albritton seconded and the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETINGS

- September 27, 2018, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, Glen Allen, Virginia
- December 5, Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, Roanoke, Virginia IT Infrastructure Partnership

Chairman Street called for a brief recess.

**Joint meeting between the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and
the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Board**

Chairman Street reconvened the meeting and certified that a quorum of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board remained present. Mr. Steven Meeks, President of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, certified that a quorum of the Association Board was present.

PARTNER REPORTS

Department of Conservation and Recreation – Darryl Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation

Mr. Glover presented the following report.

Members of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, and Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Board, please accept this Soil and Water Conservation Division Report.

Livestock Stream Exclusion Update

As of June 5, 2018, 2,063 SL-6 livestock stream exclusion practices have been installed statewide under the 100% cost reimbursement initiative. These practices have resulted in nearly 8 million linear feet of streambank protected and 98,000 animal units excluded from water bodies. Another 299 SL-6 practices have been funded but are not yet completed. This leaves only 153 pending FY2015 SL-6s that need just under \$8 million in future funding.

Division Staffing Update

Introducing Joshua Mott, one of two Diversity Outreach Interns working at the Department this summer. He is a recent graduate from the University of Kentucky with a Bachelor of Science degree in Sustainable Agriculture and a minor in Plant and Soil Science. A second outreach intern will be working in the Division of Natural Heritage. These internships are funded by a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and are intended to expose participants to the variety of occupations in an organization whose goal is to protect the environment. A nutrient management intern, Emma Aguero, has been hired to work in the Staunton Office. Ms. Aguero is currently Vice President of the Virginia Tech Chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.

Blair Gordon, formerly a DCR Conservation District Coordinator (CDC) for the Richmond Region, was promoted to the position of Soil and Water Conservation District Liaison in April. We shall interview for her former CDC position in July.

Benjamin Chester has been hired as our second Agricultural BMP Engineer. He will begin working out of our Christiansburg Office on July 10. He comes to the Department from Draper Aden Associates and has a wide variety of private sector experience. Finally, an offer will soon be made to fill a Nutrient Management Planner vacancy, also in Christiansburg.

Resource Management Plan Certification

New contracts with RMP developers take effect on July 1. Contrary to contracts in earlier years, and pursuant to discussions with the RMP Stakeholder Advisor Group last fall, these latest RMP contracts require at least 60% of payments be for certification of existing RMPs. Coupled with both the Conservation Efficiency Factor bonus for BMPs within RMP management areas and increased promotion of RMP-2 certification payments to agricultural producers, the Department anticipates a significant increase in RMP certifications during the coming fiscal year.

BMP Verification

Department staff met with EPA Chesapeake Bay Program staff in May, regarding nutrient management plan verification. While mandatory verification of other types of agricultural BMPs is already in effect, nutrient management verification is not required until July 1, 2018. This has enabled the Department to refine our database application and internal procedures, in order to better implement this additional expectation.

Training

Department staff conducted an engineering training class in Prince George in March for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. It focused on surveying with auto-level, putting design packets together, quantity estimation, interpreting standards and specifications, and where to find engineering resources. Another training session, on ford stream crossings, was conducted by Department staff in Galax in May. DCR Engineering Services staff will continue to schedule and conduct engineering training classes for District staff. The Department has solicited Districts regarding additional topics of interest to them.

In early June, the Department coordinated training by Sarah Adams on audit prep, QuickBooks, financial reporting (Attachment E), and Virginia Retirement System requirements, both in person and via webinar. Fifty-four Soil and Water Conservation District staff participated representing 39 Districts. This day-long training provided a more in-depth and focused training based on recent Robinson, Farmer, and Cox Associates District audits in order to assist districts with managing day to day financial operations, employee retirements, software usage, and preparation of documents for future audits.

The Department also conducted its annual cost share training for Districts via a set of four workshops in June. These were well attended by Districts.

Nutrient Management Training School

Department Nutrient Management Program staff taught a class in March, at the Extension AREC in Blackstone, to demonstrate how aerial photography can benefit farming by revealing skips and overlaps in planting and spraying, and how such imagery can be used for early detection of disease, pests, and nitrogen deficiencies. A two-part nutrient management training school will be offered in July at the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton on soil science, soil fertility and crop production. A second session will cover nutrient management plan writing.

Horse Stewardship Project

Tentative dates for four educational workshops, in Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed, on horse pasture stewardship, have been scheduled for:

- September 25th- Northern Virginia area;
- October 10th- Roanoke area;
- October 11th- Charlottesville area; and
- October 30th- Chesapeake/Tidewater area.

Also, in service training will be offered in the Charlottesville area on November 8th for interested staff from Virginia Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Department. More details will be circulated when available on the specific locations for these meetings.

DEQ recently announced that EPA 319 Total Maximum Daily Load project funds will soon become available for a few types of equestrian related BMPs.

Shoreline Erosion Advisory Service

The Department continues to work on a joint project with DEQ, Virginia Marine Resources Commission, and Virginia Institute of Marine Science to track, verify, and report Chesapeake Bay basin sediment and nutrient load reduction credits associated with shoreline stabilization and management projects in tidal Virginia waters installed since year 2010. The Department will submit up to an estimated additional 500 qualifying projects (including living shorelines, sills, breakwaters, and revetments) to DEQ and EPA in fall 2018. Bulkheads however do not qualify for credit. This project has already resulted in load reduction credits for 481 sites submitted in November 2017.

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

Dr. Tyree thanked the Board for agreeing to meet in joint session with the Association. She encouraged Board members to stay for the afternoon Association Board meeting.

Association staff has been very busy with planning the Youth Conservation Camp coming up in July.

In August, the Association will jointly host the National Association meeting in Williamsburg. This will be the NACD summer meeting and the Southeast regional meeting.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – David Kriz for John A. Bricker

Mr. Kriz presented the NRCS report. A copy of the report is included as Attachment A.

Farm Service Agency - Emily Horsley, USDA Farm Services Bureau

Ms. Horsley reported that USDA continues with reorganization efforts. She noted that Richard Fordyce was recently appointed as FSA Administrator.

FSA has launched a new website: <http://www.farmers.gov>.

The Bipartisan Budget Act made amendments to the 2014 Farm Bill to include \$90 billion for hurricane, fire, and other disaster relief.

Virginia Cooperative Extension – Dr. Bobby Grisso

Dr. Grisso thanked members and staff for participating in the Ag Natural Resources Summit held recently in Richmond. He also expressed appreciation for support of the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute.

Dr. Grisso announced that he will be taking over as interim department Head of Biological Systems at Virginia Tech. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to have worked together.

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services – Darrell Marshall

Mr. Marshall advised that Dr. Jewel H. Bronaugh, formerly Virginia State Executive Director for the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), was appointed as the VDACS Commissioner.

Mr. Marshall reported that following the Agricultural Stewardship Act case that the Board heard at the April meeting, that VDACS has received a plan from the appellant and the plan has been approved. He noted that the Agricultural Stewardship Act Annual Report will be distributed later in the summer.

Beginning July 1, VDACS will have a new industrial hemp program. VDACS will now be the lead for that program rather than working through cooperating universities.

Department of Forestry

Not represented.

Chesapeake Bay Commission – Adrienne Kotula, Director CBC

Ms. Kotula noted that CBC is working on Farm Bill policies and working on the state legislative update.

Presentation on Phase III WIP – *Roland Owens, DCR, and James Davis Martin, DEQ*

Mr. Glover provided the following summary.

DCR began holding meetings with Soil and Water Conservation Districts (Districts) that have Chesapeake Bay drainage area and other agricultural sector partners, in May. Four initial meetings were held for VASWCD Areas I, II, III, and VI. Districts in both Areas IV and V that also have Chesapeake Bay drainage area were invited to participate with one of the listed areas near their location. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) played a key role in all four of these meeting. Thirty out of 32 Districts with Chesapeake Bay drainage sent representatives to these meetings.

Each Chesapeake Bay District has been given and asked to complete a personalized District BMP input deck spreadsheet for year 2025, and with the exception of Southside District, to submit it back to the Department by late July. It was recently determined that Southside District will need no additional load reductions for

2025. Districts have been asked to prepare these BMP projections without regard to historical cost share program funding levels or existing District staffing levels. The projections are exploring the realm of possibility for each BMP by 2025 and which types of BMPs would likely be the most popular in each area. This will be used to modify the previous WIP II BMP input deck for the agricultural sector.

These input deck spreadsheets also have BMP progress through (June) 2017, the former WIP II BMP projections through year 2025, and based on the latest land use model, the maximum number of acres on which a specific BMP type could receive reduction credit from the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program. In a number of instances, placing a BMP on a given number of acres will result in a reduction of available acres for a similar type of BMP. This is especially relevant for cover crops where a producer might select from one of multiple types of cover crops for their particular operation, thus reducing the number of total available acres left for other types of cover crops.

In addition, all Districts, both in the Chesapeake Bay and outside the Bay, have been asked to submit suggestions by the end of July on policy and rule changes they recommend for cost share programs to increase BMP implementation. These suggestions could apply to practice and/or participant caps, payment rates, BMPs not currently eligible for cost share, etc. These suggestions will be discussed with the Agricultural Best Management Technical Advisory Committee (Ag BMP TAC), beginning in September 2018. All suggestions should be irrespective of funding and current staffing limitations.

Once District BMP input decks have been submitted in July, DEQ will then evaluate each individual District's recommended BMP projections, using the EPA Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST), to determine whether or not pollution reduction goals will be achieved. A second round of meetings has been scheduled to present these results on:

August 14 - AREA III – Department of Forestry, New Kent Conference Center, 10:00am - 12:00pm

August 20 - AREA I - Augusta County Government Center, 10:30am - 12:30pm

August 24 - AREA II - Culpeper Library, 1:30pm - 3:30pm

August 28 - AREA VI - Tidewater AREC, 10:00am - 12:00pm

If additional adjustments are needed to any District BMP input deck after August, then a third round of meetings will be scheduled during October, in whichever Area is needed, with an analysis of what will hopefully be final changes to the BMP input deck.

DEQ will begin meeting with the other sectors, each of which has their own pollution reduction goal, through five groups of Planning District Commissions (PDCs) within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Districts will be invited to these meetings, which are expected to be held from late June through July. All sectors, including urban (PDCs) and agriculture (Districts) will then meet together by geographic region in November to recognize each sector's efforts toward reaching the WIP goals.

Once the agricultural sector contribution to WIP III has been completed, and the Agricultural BMP TAC recommendations to the Board formulated, a cost estimate will be generated. This will then inform both the

District budget template process in 2019, future budget requests by the Department, including our staffing needs to support this effort, and future Agricultural Needs Assessments.

Mr. Owens and Mr. Davis Martin reviewed the spreadsheets containing the BMP input decks provided to Districts. Districts were also provided with a crosswalk between the Bay Program BMP names and the BMP names from the VACS program. Cost-estimates developed by the Bay Program for each BMP were also provided to the Districts. Both the input deck and the cost-estimates are unique for each District.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the joint meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

Attachment A

NRCS REPORT
Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Meeting
June 28, 2018 ♦ Pocahontas State Park, VA

ASTC-Programs

EQIP, CSP, RCPP and Easement Programs

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

- Allocation for FY18 is 28.1 Million.
- To date, 470 new contracts have been obligated for 18.6 Million covering 63,360 acres. All remaining funds have been distributed to preapproved applications to move to contracts.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- A total of 146 applications were ranked for 60,119 acres. 87 applications were recently preapproved for the nearly 30,000 acres allocated to Virginia.
- We have requested an additional 32,000 acres to fund all applications.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- Program guidance is under development to release 4 new RCPP projects in FY19:
 - *Critical Conservation Area – Chesapeake Bay Farm Stewardship and Preservation (6.08 M)* with Sustainable Chesapeake covering DE, MD and VA
 - National – Working Forests for Wildlife (4.99 Million) with The Nature Conservancy covering KY, TN and VA
 - State – Franklin County Dairy Ag and Water Protection with Virginia Cooperative Extension (850K)
 - *Critical Conservation Area – Engaging Small AFOs in the Nutrient Management Planning Process* with Sustainable Chesapeake covering MD, and VA (4.57 Million)

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

- One 90+ acre WRE application on the Eastern Shore and 3 ALE applications in Clarke and Loudon Counties for a total of 253 acres are in process for final obligation of agreements with landowners and or partner easement holders.
- We have scheduled closings for one WRE in Washington County for 72.63 acres and one ALE in Orange County for 381.99 acres during the month of July.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

- 7 CIG proposals were funded for FY18 (450K) and are in the process of awarding final grant agreements
 - VSU - High Tunnel Production Technologies: Environmentally Friendly and Profitable Alternative Production Methods for Small Farmers
 - UVA - Using Drone-Based Hyperspectral Imagery to Map Individual Species of Invasive Plants in the Northern Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia

- Virginia DARE SWCD - Southeast Virginia Farmers' 20/20 Club: Innovative Motivation in Conservation through Collaboration, Education and Implementation
- VA Tech - Does Reduced Tillage Minimize Potential Non-Target Effects from Neonicotinoid Seed Treatments?
- VA Tech - Does Reduced Tillage Minimize Potential Non-Target Effects from Neonicotinoid Seed Treatments?
- VA Tech - Intercropping Tillage Radish and Wheat for Improving Nutrient Cycling, Soil Properties and Yield
- VA Tech - Management of Cover Crops at Termination: How do Species, Biomass and Termination Method Affect Early Season Weed Control?

Engineering (SCE)

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

The acquisition process for the Elmwood WRP restoration Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) construction contract in Area 1, Culpeper County is ongoing. There is an apparent low bidder but the funds have been caught up in the recent recession process. Award date is not known.

Dam Rehabilitation

- Mountain Run 11 and Mountain Run 50 – Concrete work at Mountain Run 50 is expected to be completed by the end of July with earthwork completion by the end of August. Concrete construction at Mountain Run 11 is expected to be completed by the end of November.
- Upper North River 77 – Schnabel Engineering has submitted a Final design for approval by NRCS. The review comments are due back by mid-April. Negotiations are ongoing with USFS about a road closure for construction.
- Cherrystone Creek 1 and Cherrystone Creek 2 – West Virginia NRCS engineering staff is providing engineering planning services. The Final plan for Cherrystone Creek 1 will be sent to NHQ for concurrence by the end of June. The Draft plan for Cherrystone Creek 2A will be sent to the NWMC for review by mid-July.
- Johns Creek 1 – Gannett Fleming has completed their field work. The preliminary engineering report is due at the end of June.

State Resource Conservationist (SRC)

NRCS Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative

- Provided updates at the March/April/May Joint Employee Development (JED) trainings on progress towards the transition to the new national conservation planning policy that was released in January 2017.
 - The transition period to the new national policy has been extended from a 3-year time period to a 5-year time period (January 1, 2022) to have all certified planners in the old system meet the new training requirement for the new training program.
 - This will provide for a consistent training program across the country from state-to-state, defining what level of training is needed to be a certified conservation planner and refocus the importance of conservation planning, the critical role it has on advancing voluntary conservation efforts and provide a consistent message on what a conservation plan is. This is an outcome from the National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCPPI).

- Currently working on developing the Virginia State Supplement and all the training materials needed to transition to the new national policy including a new national database to track certifications and expirations.
- Provided updates at the March/April/May Joint Employee Development (JED) trainings on implementation of a new Ecological Science Job Approval Authority (ESJAA) process.
 - National policy establishing ESJAA was established in 2017 with state implementation needed by September 30, 2018.
 - This policy for the most part mirrors Engineering JAA for all ecological science practices.
 - The Virginia State Supplement on the implementation of this policy has been developed and distributed to staff.
 - Currently populating the ESJAA database to assign job approval to employees.

Customer Service/Outreach/Training

- Partnered with Virginia Forage and Grassland Council to plan and promote the 2-day intensive grazing school for April 24-25, 2018.
- Gave invited presentation at VA Grains & Soybean Conference on soil health and VA Tech/Mark Reiter Cover Crop CIG project.
- Planned and conducted March 8 Area IV JED / CIG showcase at VSU. Highlighted CIG project outcomes; included DCR NMP CEUs; total audience 35.
- Recorded interview with WCVE as part of promotion of April 2 RealLocalRVA event where I will be giving invited presentation on soil health.
- Assisted National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) by helping teach webinar on soil health for Chesapeake Bay Funder's Network audience on 03/30/2018; teaching alongside Dr. W. Honeycutt of Soil Health Institute.
- Planned and conducted April 12 Area IV JED / CIG showcase at Tidewater AREC. Highlighted CIG project outcomes; included DCR NMP CEUs; total audience 40.
- Provided 8 hours of instruction on soil health for urban farmers, including rainfall simulator demonstration, for Tricycle Gardens class across two days (April 24 & 27) at State Office.
- Partnered with the VFGC, Extension, CBF, VA Tech and the local NRCS staff to conduct a 2-day
- Grazing School hosted at VA Tech McCormick Farm, in Raphine, VA, where 25 participants attended and over 60% had 5 years or less farm experience. The school taught the core principles of plant growth, soils/pasture and grazing management inspiring participants to manage for improved production while enhancing soil health. Participants were guided to contact their local Conservation office and request technical assistance in developing a full grazing plan for their operation to implement the new skills they had developed.
- NEDC Soil Health and Sustainability training completed on May 22-24. One participant stated,
- "this is the best training I have attended in my 40-year career with NRCS". This course included indoor teaching, demonstrations, education field trips to learn case studies with farmers and the rainfall simulator. Held the 2018 Longleaf and Quail Workshop and Field Tour with VDGIF, VCE, NRCS, and
- VDOF on May 8. Around 70 participants learned about Longleaf values and quail habitat enhancements including how cost share programs can assist. 48 landowners were in attendance.
- Conducted the rainfall simulator demonstration along with forage and plant ID and pasture
- condition scoring and pasture fertility management at the Soil and Water Conservation Field day for 74 participants hosted by Thomas Jefferson SWCD. I highlighted technical and financial assistance offered by our local Conservation Staff as it relates to developing grazing system as well as using the

Working Lands for Wildlife program to transition some grazing acres to NWSG. o Conducted two grazing coaching sessions for the Shenandoah Valley SWCD Envirothon teams. o Oral presentation judge for Area 1 Envirothon competition.

- Conducted training session for JMU (Chemistry and Biology) students on grazing and general farming in the Shenandoah Valley.
- Conducted pasture condition score training for newer Area 1 employees.

State Soil Scientist (SSS)

LiDAR acquisition

Virginia has complete coverage of LiDAR. Quality assurance and processing is continuing on some that has been flown but not yet available. The 2017 FEMA southwestern project is slated to be available by the end of June 2018. The VDOT project shown on this map along with the 2017 FEMA & NRCS project in South Central Virginia has been flown, and should be available by December.

Virginia NRCS LiDAR acquisition 3 year plan is an attempt to get the oldest flown LiDAR in the state (2010) re-flown to bring it up to national 3DEP standards. NRCS is contributing \$500,000 for LiDAR acquisition this year which should complete both fiscal year 2018 and 2019 LiDAR acquisition areas of interest shown on the map below as “planned.”

Soil Mapping

The city of Winchester and Waynesboro has been mapped and correlated, and should be available on the web soil survey by November. The city of Staunton had its soil mapping the week of April 8th and is currently undergoing NASIS data entry.

Public Affairs

NRCS in the News.

Showcased Virginia’s last Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) easement in a new multi-media feature story also picked up in Lancaster Farming. At 1,260 acres, the FRPP on Surry County’s Bacon’s Castle Farm is also the state’s largest easement to date. The agency is celebrating the 25th anniversary of NRCS conservation easements throughout 2018. A second multi-media feature on Purcell’s Seafood also appeared in the June 8-14 issue of Bay Brief.

Native American Outreach.

Prepared State Conservationist introductory letters for the six Virginia tribes that have recently received federal recognition (forwarded May 8, 2018).

Small and Nontraditional Operations.

Highlighted soil health for graziers, pollinator seeding rates, and high tunnel practices at the annual VSU/USDA Randolph Farm Field Day on June 7. NRCS also offered rainfall simulator demos and joined sister agencies in networking with many of the 625 attendees visiting the USDA Resource Fair.

Women Farmers.

Provided NRCS exhibit for the Women in Ag Gathering at the Virginia Farm Bureau on March 24. Female staff from Amelia and Warrenton connected with many of the 92 participants at the NRCS booth/breakout

sessions. Warrenton Soil Conservationist Casey Dietzen James also provided an overview of NRCS services and Women's Learning Circle outreach programs during a sponsor break before the afternoon workshops. (James serves as the Virginia NRCS Federal Women's Program Special Emphasis Program Manager.)

Partner/Meeting Support.

Collaborating with Chris Moore of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to finalize soil health and aquaculture breakout sessions for the SE NACD Summer Meeting in August. Secured Forage and Grassland Agronomist J.B. Daniel and State Biologist Jeff Jones as presenters and Assistant State Conservationist (Field Operations) Keith Boyd to moderate the aquaculture session. Reviewed session descriptions for event program and assisted with NRCS speaker request for RSET breakout.

Spring Meetings.

Networked and shared program information with more than 700 farmers and partners at two field days/events: Women in Ag Gathering (March 24) and VSU/USDA Field Day (June 7).

Earth Team Program

Shared how field offices can more effectively use Earth Team volunteers and conducted needs assessments at May Joint Employee Development (JED) sessions in all four areas. District staff participated in several sessions, sharing identified needs that will be assembled into a roster of volunteer opportunities posted on the Virginia NRCS website. Also collaborating with VASWCD to provide Earth Team materials (Area Volunteer Coordinator map, volunteer service agreement, timesheet, and fact sheet) in a new reference binder to be provided to district staff.

Coordinating with the advisory committee to identify a suitable replacement for Spec Campen who is no longer able to serve as the volunteer liaison. Also worked with National Earth Team Coordinator to secure Campen recognition items to include a thank you letter from the NRCS Chief, a certificate, and an Earth Team apparel item.