

Program Year 2023 Agricultural BMP TAC
Animal Waste Subcommittee
8-3-21 Meeting Summary
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
Virginia Department of Forestry, 1st floor Training Room
900 Natural Resources Drive
Charlottesville

- Introductions
 - Voting Members Present (12):
 - Amanda Pennington, Chair, DCR
 - Rachel Winters, Headwaters SWCD
 - Phil Davis, DEQ
 - Allen Jackson, Blue Ridge SWCD
 - Megen Dalton, Shenandoah Valley SWCD
 - Beck Stanley, Agribusiness Council
 - Eric Pauslon, VA Dairymen's Association
 - Darrell Marshal, VDACS
 - Kevin Dunn, Peter Francisco SWCD
 - Ben Chester, DCR as Steve Escobar, Virginia Horse Council, Proxy
 - Sam Truban, Lord Fairfax SWCD
 - Jay Yankey, Prince William SWCD
 - Non voting members present:
 - Jason Wilfong, DCR
 - Michael Tabor, Blue Ridge SWCD
 - David Bryan, DCR
- Ground Rules
 - Quorum
 - The PY23 animal waste subcommittee has 12 voting members and the quorum is 7 (50% +1)
 - Passing vote
 - 80%
- Review of PY2023 Animal Waste Matrix and Work Plan
- Go through the matrix to address any easy suggestions.
 - 2A-Suggest raising cost share rate from 75% to either 85% or 90% for the WP-1 practice.
 - Megen-land changes hands on a regular basis, how does the District board feel about investing money in a project that has a likelihood of changing hands?

Concerns about transfers of contracts. Why would we risk losing the money by increasing the cost share percentage.

- David-He thinks the plan is to get the landowner to sign the contract.
 - Megen-increasing cost share percentages for one practice opens the door for increasing it for other practices. Need a strong justification, maybe for this one it is the dramatic Bay credit. Bang for the buck.
 - Kevin-agrees with Megen, but does have concerns about new leaseholders destroying the practice. If we are going to increase the rate need to increase the lifespan.
 - Darrell-feels there is justification to raise the rate.
 - Allen-additional lifespan should be required.
 - Megen-leaning towards doing it, with an increased lifespan. 90% 15-years. Or tiered.
 - Sam-would it be beneficial to provide a buffer payment?
 - This would be a very small area that the farmer would lose from the farm field, so probably not worth it.
 - Amanda-we did have more sign ups when MEB grant brought cost share up to 90%.
 - **Motion-Megen proposed increasing the rate to 90% and increasing the lifespan to 15-years, second by Eric.**
 - Discussion-Allen do we want to consider a tiered approach.
 - Megen, engineers say the structure should last, why would you not go with 15-yr.
 - Older landowners may want a shorter lifespan-Jay
 - Kevin-if something happens there is the forgiveness process.
 - **No change to motion, motion to increase rate to 90% and increase the lifespan to 15 years passed unanimously, 12-0.**
- 3A-Request that the 512-Pasture and Hayland Planting be added to the WP-4B & WP-4LL specifications as the establishment of loafing lots allows for and may require the conversion of cropland to grass.
- Phil-great idea. From the loan standpoint if it is not in the spec it cannot be covered unless it is a major water quality improvement.
 - It has been assumed for the 4B that you could do that so has been happening.
 - Kevin-will not get credit for cropland conversion if done under the WP-4B
 - **Motion-Darrell add the 512 to the WP-4B and LL, second by Allen**
 - **Passed unanimously, 12-0**
- 4A-Consider modifying the WP-4B specification to refer to manure storage as an eligible component to be consistent with the WP-4LL.
- Amanda-need clarification as waste storage is already an eligible component.
 - Megen clarified that they are just asking to add the same language that is in the WP-4LL specification, which directly states storage separate from the bedpack can be cost shared on for storage of the manure generated in the feed lane. She will work on the specification to clarify to bring to the next meeting.

- 5A-Eliminate the WP-6 Agricultural Chemical and Fertilizer Handling Facility from the VACS Program as it is one of the few specifications that truly does not address an existing resource concern.
 - Not based on an existing water quality problem
 - No bay model credit.
 - Not being used or being used inappropriately.
 - **Motion to eliminate the WP-6 by Megen, Kevin second**
 - Vote
 - Opposed
 - Jay, Phil, Eric, Darrel
 - Vote did not pass by 80%
 - Discussion on if this is actually a water quality problem
 - Allen-what if we convert it to a tax credit only
 - Phil-ag loans based on DCR specs or 319 so he would want to leave it in the manual.
 - Allen-**motion** to be tax credit only
 - Discussion-David read the law on tax credits
 - **Motion-Eric defer to next meeting Beck second**
 - **Verify there is no Bay model credit**
 - **Darrell to talk to pesticide experts at VDACS**
 - **Motion to defer to next meeting passed unanimous**
- 17S-Creat a summer cover crop practice to incentivize the reseeding of sacrifice areas to ensure protection from erosion and reduction of nutrient losses.
 - Allen-Should be able to use SL-8A with some slight clarification in the language
 - Kevin-specific to cropland so that wouldn't work
 - Kevin-such a small area more trouble than it is worth to even sign up for the practice.
 - David-SL-8A is \$14 an acre, this is basically the cropland version of that. For less than an acre, and doesn't get credit in the Bay model.
 - **Ben motion to table, second by Jay**
 - **2 opposed Allen and Megan, all the rest yay**
 - **Motion passed with >80%**
- 6A-Consider allowing poultry littersheds to be eligible for cost share when the poultry houses are being built instead of waiting for the birds to be in the houses and the resource concern is present.
 - Eric-makes sense but in the end, are sheds built that are never required
 - Yes, there are poultry operations that never need a littershed
 - Allen-isn't littershed and composter the cost of doing business.
 - We don't do it for anything else, should we put up fence before the cows are there
 - Part of the issue is we may not get bay credit to prevent a resource concern, but to solve one
 - Phil-the increase in cap may have taken care of the problem, more cost share and less out of pocket

- Allen-slippy slope. Do we start sizing seasonal feeding facilities for future herds?
 - Are we going to start being proactive instead of reactive?
 - Amanda-we are not going to take a vote today because Hobey is not here, just wanted to see how the discussion was going to go.
 - 1A-Create CCI practices to cover maintenance costs for existing animal waste facilities.
 - Discussion/brainstorming to write the new specification. The suggestion is generally supported by the subcommittee, just need to work out the details.
 - Which practices should it cover:
 - WP-4, WP-4C, WP-4B, WP-4LC, WP-4LL, WP-4SF
 - Tied to the manure storage treated tons per year
 - Megen-intention was to capture what was not being captured, fix a structure instead of building a new one, money for maintenance to continue the functionality.
 - Graduated scale
 - Based on a range of square footage
 - Also based on type of structure
 - Darrell-should this be a bay program question
 - Amanda-concerned about the liability of certifying the structure
 - Just have the requirement that a structure exists. Effectively treated manure. Existing facility/structure that effectively treats on site generate manure.
 - Manure payment, or something like that. Manure/Mortality Storage Incentive Payment
 - One spec to cover all practices
 - Have a separate contract for each instance, I.E. manure storage, mortality, etc.
 - Need to capture credit for the mortality composting that is done within the littershed, static pile
 - If littershed is undersized but it is working and they are not creating a resource concern
 - Nutrient management plan required
 - Evaluation of existing manure production, if they cannot effectively store or haul their existing litter, they need more storage and not just CCI. CCI and a new structure would need to be payed concurrently or the new structure is paid first.
 - Functional means the manure must be contained cannot be leaching or leaking. Cannot be creating a resource concern.
 - Evaluate structures in the floodplain, floodwaters must be kept out. Make sure it is not frequently flooded. overland flow and floodwaters must be kept out of structure.
 - Two payments-one based on the size of the structure and one based on the tons treated.
 - Roofed facility for dry storage

- Stay away from tying the money to the structure, tie the money to the system.
- Potential Dates for next meetings.
 - August 30-**chair has a conflict and this meeting has to be rescheduled**
 - September 9
 - October 4