

Virginia Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting 9:30 AM, January 17, 2017
Approved Summary

Attendance:

Member	Representing	Member	Representing
Tom Turner	CB, SWCD staff	Matt Kowalski	CBF
Art Kirkby	DCR, CB CDC	Jim Wright	Peanut SWCD
Emily Horsley	FSA	Chad Wentz	NRCS
Robert Bradford	VASWCD Area II (proxy)	Scott Baker	VCE
Tim Sexton	DCR, Nut. Man.	Scott Ambler	DCR, RMP
Charlie Wootton	VACDE	Darryl Glover	DCR DSWC
Stephanie Martin	DCR, Dist. Liaison	Stacy Horton	DCR, SR CDC
Todd Groh	DOF	Amanda Pennington	DCR, Engineering
Herb Dunford	Area III		

Other Participants: Brandon Dillistin, NNSWCD; Emily Nelson, DCR Eng.; Bob Waring, DCR NMP; Kristal Evens, Tidewater SWCD; Amy Walker, DCR,

The draft summary of the November 29, 2016 TAC meeting was reviewed and approved with one change noted. The approved summary will be posted on the DCR webpage and distributed via all-district e-mail list-serve.

A summary of discussion topics, action items, and significant conclusions are as follows:

- ◆ **NRCS** reports that even though an appointee has not been named for the Secretary of Agriculture or NRCS Chief they are bracing for changes to conservation programs as a result of the new administration. VA NRCS is rolling out 2017 programs this week at Joint Employee Development (JED) meetings statewide, including ~\$31M in TA\$ available for EQIP and RCPP this fiscal year. Next year, fy2018 should be a year to develop a new Farm Bill, NRCS is anticipating significant changes to some programs.
 - RCPP (state funding) two new RCPP projects were approved
 - § One focused on Small Animal Feeding Operations and another
 - § With VIMS & VMRC leading this one is focused on oyster habitat restoration.
 - State Conservation Innovation Grants are available, \$450K available for projects to be funded up to \$75K/project

- ◆ **FSA** Jimmy Dunn (Division Director from the coastal plain) will be the Acting State Executive Director until a new Sec. of Ag. selects a new SED.
 - Nationwide the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is approaching the 24M acre enrollment cap so county offices can only approve a CRP contract if the start date is 10/1/2017. Otherwise a CRP contract must be approved by the state

office, therefore CRP enrollment may slow down. Otherwise, CREP is business as usual.

- Riparian Forest Buffer (RFB) Initiative; RFB implementation acres are up during 2015 & 2016. VA has received \$1M from USDA based upon the new CREP CB Agreement to increase CREP RFB implementation. An announcement of the grant amount and how it will be spent will be made January 26, 2017.
- SAFE Wildlife habitat and additional 1,500 acres of long leaf pine habitat establishment and tree thinning have been authorized.
- Grassland initiative; has enrolled 1 M acres nationwide.
- No new information on CRP sign up in 2018 Continuous Enrollment CREP acres are available.

◆ **Old Business:**

- **Report from Nutrient Management subcommittee:** *Tim Sexton*
 - § NM-5N Review & discussion:
 - § A draft specification was distributed and reviewed. The TAC suggested:
 - Include highly managed hayland production systems
 - What about alfalfa hay? HMH includes taking at least 3 cuttings of hay and following each cutting with an application of nitrogen. We need a definition of “highly managed hayland” to put into the BMP Manual Glossary
 - Change B. 10. to NM-3C or NM-4 and NM-5N, then delete the second sentence.
 - Keep rate at \$8.00/ acre.
 - § NBM-5P Review & discussion:
 - Add “highly managed hayland production systems” to second sentence in Description statement.
- **Report from Stream Exclusion Subcommittee:** *Emily Nelson*
 - § SL-11B Take out ground water recharge area as too vague and insert environmentally sensitive areas instead
 - § Remove winter from in front of feeding pad
 - § Use least cost environmentally effective language from SL-6 specification
- **Report from Cover Crop Subcommittee:** *Gary Moore,*
 - § Review for replacement of 590 Nutrient Management with
 - § In order to be eligible for cost-share, nutrient management plans must be prepared by a private planner who holds a current Nutrient Management Planner Certificate issued by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Nutrient Management Plans must be written to comply with all requirements set forth in the Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations, (4 VAC 50-85-10 et seq.) and the criteria set forth in the Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria, revised July 2014.

CCI-CNT, Implementing Long Term High Residue Minimum Soil Disturbance System
SL-9, Grazing Land Management
SL-15A, Continuous High Residue Minimal Soil Disturbance Tillage System
SL-15B, Continuous No-Till Forage Production System
WP-4, Animal Waste Control Facility
WP-4B, Dairy Loafing Lot Management System
WP-4C, Composting Facilities
WP-4F, Animal Mortality Incinerator Facility
WQ-4, Legume Based Cover Crop
SL-6A, Small Acreage Grazing System
WP-8, Relocation of Confined Feeding Operations From Environmentally Sensitive Areas
WQ-6, Constructed Wetlands

- **Report from Animal Waste Subcommittee:** *Megen or Gary*
 - § WP-4 substituted 590 Nutrient Management Plan for TAC approved language

 - § Discussion about preferred approach tied to DCR Policy choice to require count of previous poultry litter shed.

 - § While considering editing WP-4 specification to clarify that end user (only) participants should not be able to receive cost-share for litter storage sheds. A letter from the Peter Francisco SWCD to the TAC was distributed that questioned the procedure for sizing litter storage sheds. PFSWCD requested additional clarity about the ability to require a producer that had received cost-share for a litter storage shed more than 10 years ago (now out of lifespan), and when the producer has expanded his flock and is now asking for cost-share to build a bigger litter storage shed. While possibly the old shed is being used as an equipment shed. Can a District require that an out of lifespan structure be used for its originally intended purpose? OR can a producer request additional cost-share every 10 years to build bigger litter storage sheds while diverting the out of lifespan structure to another use.
 - Several suggested approaches and perspectives were discussed including:
 - 1) Do not cost-share on litter storage sheds where space is needed due to expanded flocks, after all flock expansion a management decision and the program is not about putting people into business or assisting in the expansion of a business, only addressing water quality issues.
 - 2) Raise the lifespan of the WP-4 to 15 years, then the same question arises during year 16.

- 3) Require that the volume of the original shed be considered as storage space during the calculation of the size of the litter shed and only cost-share on the needed expanded volume (Shen. Valley SWCD uses this approach).
 - 4) Could a District by District determination of how to size requests for additional animal waste storage facilities be supported by the TAC?
 - 5) It was decided that both Districts and DCR should inquire to their OAGs representative as to the legality of requiring specific usage of a structure after the expiration of its life span. And if providing cost-share on environmental issues related to expansion of an animal operation is in conflict with permit requirements to not create environmental pollution/degradation due to a permitted operation. Ricky Rash and Stephanie Martin will follow up with OAGs inquiry.
- Reviewed recommendations from Engineering Workgroup about identified list of potential NRCS standards for use by a VACS BMP
 - § The excel file used to identify the NRCS standards to be added or removed was not the most recently published (in the 2017 BMP Manual)
 - § Need to make complete and specific recommendations about which specific VACS BMP needs to have what existing eligible NRCS standards added or removed from the specification.
 - Bio security language discussion vinegar is not a NRCS approved disinfectant. TAC suggested that communication with the VA state veterinarian's office should ask for VA Veterinarian approved disinfectants.
 - § Revise Bio security section language based upon state Vet's. response.

◆ **Agency Updates**

- **Dept. of Forestry (DOF):** (*Todd Groh*) Seedlings may be ordered from DOF on-line starting 1/10/2017. Hurry could be a high demand year.
 - § State budgets will be tight again in FY 2018 with further budget reductions being requested from state agencies, so some difficult decisions are being made.
 - § In the FY 2018 budget, DOF will lose 4 positions 1, in the field and 3 in the Headquarters office.
 - § For FY 2018, the Governor's budget the Reforestation of Timberlands Program (RT) general funding match is recommended to be reduced by \$300,000 and there is also a recommendation to charge a service charge to loggers each time they call in to register a timber harvesting operation.

- **DCR: (Darryl Glover)**
 - § Early in GA, session DCR has experienced an operational budget cut of over \$6M
 - § Office of Environmental Education closed, 4 employees lost.
 - § Potentially fy 2018 Cost-share \$ could be ~ \$7M, with \$1.2M in TA \$ all from Recordation Fee

- **VA Cooperative Extension (VCE):**
 - § Losing 3 extension agents with positions vacant for at least 6 months

- **Soil and Water Conservation Board meeting dates for spring 2017:**
 - § March 9, 2017, Pocahontas Dining Hall, Pocahontas State Park
 - § April 20, 2016, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, Glen Allen, VA
 - § May 23, 2016, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, Glen Allen, VA

Concerns from the Floor: None

Next TAC meeting: Monday February 13, 2017 9:30 AM at the DOF training room