

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
Wednesday, August 06, 2014
Department of Forestry Board Room
Charlottesville, Virginia**

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Members Present

Herbert L. Dunford, Jr., Chair
Gary Hornbaker
Stephen Lohr
Clyde E. Cristman, DCR Director
Barry Harris, for John A Bricker, NRCS
Dr. Bobby Grisso, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Daphne W. Jamison, Vice Chair
Jerry L. Ingle

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Members Not Present

Joan DuBois
Raymond L. Simms
Wanda J. Thornton

C. Frank Brickhouse, Jr.
Richard A. Street
Tommy Branin

DCR Staff Present

Scott Ambler
George Chieffo
Darryl Glover
Stephanie Martin
Matthew Gooch, Office of the Attorney General

David C. Dowling
Michael R. Fletcher
Robert Bennett

Others Present

Ann Jennings, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Dr. Kendall Tyree, Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Julie Morris, Department of Planning and Budget
Libby Norris, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Sharon Connor, Hanover-Caroline SWCD
Greg Wilchens, Culpeper SWCD
Brad Copenhaver, Virginia Agribusiness Council

Call to Order and Introductions

Chairman Dunford called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present.

Minutes of the May 21, 2014 Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Lohr moved that the minutes of the May 21, 2014 meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation board be approved as submitted.

SECOND: Mr. Hornbaker
DISCUSSION: None
VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

Director's Report

Mr. Cristman gave the Director's report.

Mr. Cristman said that DCR had hired a new Director of Administration and Finance. Rochelle, Altholtz. He noted that Joe Elton had been named Deputy Director of Operations and that Craig Seaver had been named State Parks Director.

Mr. Cristman said that good progress is being made on addressing the recent audit points.

Mr. Cristman noted that in terms of the stage budget the projected revenues were down significantly. He said that the Governor would be speaking to the money committees in the General Assembly. The shortfall is about 400 million according to an official forecast.

Mr. Cristman said that on August 25th, Governor McAuliffe would be visiting Gerald Garber's Cave View Farms in Weyers Cave to kick off the state's new agricultural resource management plan program. He said that Board members were welcome to attend.

Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management

Mr. Bennett gave the report for the Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management.

Mr. Bennett gave an update on the probable maximum precipitation study for Virginia. He said that the General Assembly asked that a new study be conducted as the data in use was forty years old. He said that the information is critical in the design for emergency spillways for dams. He said that without the correct data, the designs may be beyond what is actually needed or could be less than what is necessary for public safety.

Mr. Bennett said that previously the National Weather Service (NWS) had nationally developed the standards. However, an update to the standards had not been conducted by NWS in forty years. A number of other states are currently having studies completed as is the case in Virginia. Applied Weather Associates has been conducting these PMP studies.

The first technical review panel meeting was held on July 8th and staff received the first presentation of the work being conducted by Applied Weather Associates. He said that the work being done for Virginia would result in a professional and comprehensive product.

Mr. Bennett said that Applied Weather Associates also sent out their list of storms dating back to 1882. He said that the company looks at the storm and goes through a process to maximize the storm. Then they take the data to areas that are similar in topography.

Mr. Bennett said that the final product will be grids throughout Virginia with new probable maximum precipitation values. An engineer can then take the grid PMP values for their watershed area and determine the design specifications for their emergency spillway.

Mr. Bennett reviewed the status list of high hazard dams. He said that at latest count there were 362 dams on the list. He said that these dams are being found through the dam dragnet. He noted that some dams being found are not of regulated size.

Mr. Cristman noted that there were 92 dams with no certificate.

Mr. Bennett said that many dams found through the dragnet do not have a certificate. He said that staff will meet with the dam owner and explain the requirements.

Mr. Dunford asked Mr. Bennett to explain the dragnet.

Mr. Bennett said that staff uses the National Hydrology Database which is a U.S. Geological Survey product. He said that staff will view the database and consider all lakes that are larger than an acre and a half. He said that staff identified about 6,000 areas in the state. Staff then looks at aerial photography and topography. From there staff will go out and examine the area.

Mr. Cristman asked Mr. Bennett to address the benefit of a dam owner having inundation mapping and explain the agricultural exemption.

Mr. Bennett said that in 2008 the General Assembly amended the laws of the Commonwealth to require that all dams must have an inundation study done. The study shows the impact in the event of dam failure. He said that when the study is done and is filed with the locality, a developer must follow up with the locality and DCR to determine the impact of a proposed development in a dam break inundation zone on the dam. The locality can then tell the developer not to build in the inundation zone. The developer can either modify the plan or choose to build in the zone. Should the developer choose to go ahead and build in an inundation zone, the developer will be responsible for 50% of the cost of upgrading the dam. The intent is to discourage development in inundation zones.

Mr. Bennett said that the agricultural exemption applies if a dam is below a certain size threshold and is being used for irrigation or livestock.

Ms. Jamison asked if houses were built in the zone below a dam with an agricultural exemption if that exemption would be lost.

Mr. Bennett said that the dam owner would still be liable, but not required to meet the specifications for high hazard dams until the agricultural use is discontinued.

Mr. Bennett reviewed the enforcement report.

Mr. Dunford asked that staff provide a list and a map showing the dam safety regions.

Mr. Bennett said that members may find a copy in the Dam Owners' Manual. He said that he would provide an additional copy for Board members.

Soil and Water Conservation

Division Director's Report

Mr. Glover gave the following Division Director's report.

Engineering Services

We are pleased to report that interviews for a Professional Engineer (PE) were completed in late July and we expect to have that position filled in September. Once we upgraded this position to a higher pay band we attracted a pool of qualified candidates. There is funding authorized in the budget for one additional engineer. The Department will evaluate the need for a second PE versus an Engineer in Training (EIT) based on the outcome of grants we are competing for.

We have applied for two U.S. Department of Agriculture Regional Conservation Partnership (RCPP) Grants. One of these would provide funding to hire a few Engineers in Training to work under our PE, as well as funding to contract with engineering firms, universities, and/or other qualified entities for both engineering and other technical assistance services, such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) planning process, to assist agricultural producers. This grant request totaled \$3 Million over four years, of which \$2 Million would be for such services, and the other \$1 Million for technical assistance through the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) in easements. DCR, VOF, and other partners have offered \$7.8 Million in both cash and in-kind match.

RCPP

A second RCPP grant was applied for through a joint proposal with both the states of Maryland and Delaware. This grant request totaled \$10.5 Million over four years, of which \$4.3 Million would be for Virginia. If awarded, Virginia would use these funds to provide \$3.5M in financial assistance via the NRCS EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) directly to producers in the Virginia portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, for stream exclusion practices. The state would then provide the producers' required match to ensure that 100% of the costs are covered. This grant request also includes \$705,000 for two new staff at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, also for four years, who would provide technical assistance with installing forested riparian buffers throughout the Virginia portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and \$95,000 for related technical assistance by the Virginia Department of Forestry. Their combined efforts would improve progress to achieve the Chesapeake Bay WIP goal of an additional 80,000 acres

of riparian forest in the watershed. Both of these pre-proposals have been selected for the next round, submission of a full proposal.

The Department greatly appreciates those who are partnering with us on either of our two RCPP grant proposals, including but not limited to the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Virginia Department of Forestry, Virginia Forage and Grassland Council, Virginia Farm Bureau, Virginia Agribusiness Council, Chesapeake Conservancy, and Trout Unlimited.

Resource Management Plan Program

Tomorrow, on August 7th, the 2014 Virginia Ag Expo will be held in Lottsburg in Northumberland County on the Northern Neck. The Expo will be hosted by the Downing Family at Bleak House Farm; a Virginia Century Farm. Bleak House Farm is a diversified operation with annual production of over 2,500 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat, and barley and is the site of Virginia's first approved resource management plan (RMP). Since the regulations became effective on July 1st, an RMP has been developed, reviewed by the District Technical Review Committee, and approved by the Northern Neck Soil and Water Conservation District Board. A Certificate of RMP Implementation will be issued soon. The Virginia Ag Expo is the largest agricultural field day annually held in Virginia and is a joint project of the Virginia Grain Producers Association, and the Virginia Soybean Association in partnership with Virginia Cooperative Extension. DCR will have a booth there with RMP materials and the Secretary of Natural Resources, the Department Director, and I will be in attendance as will other DCR staff. Board members are welcome to attend. Over 140 exhibitors and sponsors will have on display all of the most up to date equipment, goods, and services for agricultural producers.

Governor Terry McAuliffe will promote Resource Management Plans (RMPs) during an "Agriculture Day" in the Shenandoah Valley to be hosted at Gerald Garber's Cave View Farms, Weyers Cave on August 25th. The Board is also welcome to attend this event and we shall provide additional details to members. Virginia's First Lady has taped a public service announcement, which will air soon, also promoting RMPs. The Department is grateful to the Virginia Farm Bureau for providing press coverage on several recent and upcoming occasions promoting RMPs. To prepare for the program's launch on July 1st, the Department conducted six Technical Review Committee (TRC) training sessions to which all 47 SWCDs attended one. Staff also participated in four annual cost-share training sessions to explain the RMP BMP specifications that have been revised and are before you again today. We also conducted training for our Nutrient Management Program staff, some of whom will serve on TRCs. Since your meeting in May, VITA did authorize the RMP/Conservation Planning computer module project to begin. Staff continues to meet with our stakeholder committee of SWCDs and other representatives regularly. Module development is moving along very well; however, with a revised completion date of late January/early February 2015. We have begun accepting applications for private RMP developers, and will be marketing this opportunity to certified nutrient management planners during recertification meetings in August. Also, to help ensure we meet our Chesapeake Bay Program goal of at least 40 RMPs in the watershed, we shall release a Request for Proposals (RFP) in September, using \$240,000 in Chesapeake Bay Grant funds, for private sector planners to write RMPs in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This is

similar to what the Department has done with nutrient management on a number of occasions. There is also \$160,000 in cost-share funds for RMP development. In addition to the first RMP pilot project mentioned earlier at the site of tomorrow's Ag Expo, we are working on several additional pilot farms that will proceed sequentially. The next one will be developed at the site of the Governor's Agriculture Day.

SL-6 Backlog

The \$3 Million for the SL-6 (stream exclusion) Outside the Chesapeake Bay (OCB) has been allocated, as well as \$985,000 in Chesapeake Bay Grant funds. This has left us with an SL-6 backlog of just under \$9 Million. We are awaiting an additional \$750,000 in Bay Grant funds, as noted earlier in this report, and we have applied for \$3.5 Million in RCPP funds that would also be used in Chesapeake Bay Watershed to help address the backlog.

Agricultural Needs Assessment

The Department is working with the Department of Environmental Quality to make minor updates to last year's Agricultural Needs Assessment, which will be included in the Consolidated Water Quality Report. A stakeholder meeting is scheduled for August 28th, to review this update.

Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee

The Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will begin its annual meetings on August 13th. The Department will solicit input from the TAC on such issues as recommendations for SL-6 payment rates in FY16 and a follow-up review of cover crop rates and any effect on sign-up.

Nutrient Management Plan Program

We are continuing to make progress in having nutrient management plans written on golf courses. An additional 13 have been written since your May meeting. We now have a total of 48 such plans written. Finally, we are about to award contracts to three private planners to develop nutrient management plans on small unpermitted dairies.

Ms. Jamison asked about a letter producers had received regarding SL-6 funding. She asked if that was associated with the backlog mentioned by Mr. Glover.

Mr. Cristman said that the letter was sent out after a meeting with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. He said that the letter was sent to inform producers that the money is not currently available but to also point out that there are other available sources of funding. He said that DCR's intent is to pay when the funds become available.

Approval of Revised RMP-1 and RMP-2 Cost Share Practice Specifications

Mr. Ambler presented the Revised RMP-1 and RMP-2 Cost-Share Practice Specifications. He noted that these updates had been made to the two previously approved specifications.

Mr. Ambler said that when the specifications were presented at trainings, there had been some questions. The revisions are designed to provide greater clarity and to establish the payment rates.

Mr. Ambler reviewed the changes which included:

RMP-1

- The plan must be approved to receive cost-share payment.
- A pass-thru form was added.
- A recommended rate has been provided. The cost share-rate is \$10.00 per acre. Payment for any single RMP-1 practice instance must not exceed \$6,500.00.
- The SWCD must provide an IRS Form 1099-G to any cost-share program participant who receives \$600 or more in cost-share payments.

RMP-2

- A certificate of RMP implementation is required.
- RMP-2 cost-share is not contingent upon prior RMP-1 cost-share.
- As in RMP-1, rates and cap are established as well as the requirement for use of the IRS Form 1099-G. The cost share rate is \$5.00 per acre for all eligible acres within a management unit and payment for any single RMP-2 practice instance must not exceed \$3,250.00

MOTION: Mr. Lohr moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the revised specifications for RMP-1 and RMP-2 as submitted by staff.

SECOND: Ms. Jamison

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

District Director Resignations and Appointments

Ms. Martin presented the District Director Resignations and Appointments.

Hanover-Caroline

Resignation of Jim Schroering, Hanover County, effective 4/16/14, appointed Extension Agent director position (term of office expires 1/1/17).

Recommendation of Laura Mackay-Nay, King William County, to fill unexpired term of Jim Schroering (term of office to begin on 9/6/14 – 1/1/17).

Henricopolis

Recommendation of Lisa Sanderson, Hanover County, to fill unexpired term of Karen F. Carter (term of office to begin on 9/6/14 – 1/1/17).

Thomas Jefferson

Resignation of Paul D. Davis, Nelson County, effective 6/30/14, elected director position (term of office expires 1/1/16).

Recommendation of William Uhl, Nelson County, to fill the unexpired term of Paul D. Davis (term of office to begin on 9/6/14 – 1/1/16).

MOTION: Mr. Ingle moved that the list of District Director resignations and appointments be approved as submitted by staff.

SECOND: Mr. Lohr

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations Action to Address Outdated Code and Regulatory Citation Updates

Mr. Dowling presented the following regulatory action.

Before you today for consideration and action is a final stage exempt regulatory action for the Board's consideration that amends the Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations.

I offer the following brief background for this action.

House Bill 2802 and Senate Bill 1339 (Chapters 881 and 929 of the 2007 Virginia Acts of Assembly respectively) consolidated the Commonwealth's program that regulates the application of biosolids (sewage sludge) under the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) effective January 1, 2008. Prior to that, the responsibility for the regulation of the land application of

biosolids was split between DEQ and the Department of Health. Enactment clause 8 repealed §§ 32.1-164.2 through 32.10164.7 under the Department of Health's title of the Code and the legislation amended § 62.1-44.19:3 and promulgated §§ 62.1-44.19:3.1 through 62.1-44.19:3.1.4 within DEQ's title to effectuate this transfer of authority. Further, enactment clause 5 stipulated "[t]hat the State Board of Health's Biosolids Use Regulations (12 VAC 5-585) shall be transferred from the State Board of Health to the State Water Control Board on January 1, 2008, and the State Water Control Boards initial rulemaking to implement this act shall be exempt from Article 2 (§ 2.2-4006 et seq. of the Code of Virginia) of the Administrative Process Act. Such regulations that are in effect shall remain in full force and effect until altered, amended, or rescinded by the State Water Control Board."

Accordingly, references to the repealed Department of Health Code sections and to the Board of Health's regulations, in the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board's Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations, need to be amended to reflect the proper DEQ and State Water Control Board citations. Such amendments to the Code and regulatory citations have been highlighted on pages 1, 7, and 12 of the regulations mailed to you in your Board packets.

This action is exempt pursuant to § 2.2-4002 C that states that "[m]inor changes to regulations published in the Virginia Administrative Code under the Virginia Register Act (§ 2.2-4100 et seq.), made by the Virginia Code Commission pursuant to § 30.150, shall be exempt from the provisions of this chapter" and § 2.2-4006 A3 that specifies that "actions otherwise subject to this chapter and § 2.2-4103 of the Virginia Register Act shall be exempted from the operation of this article" including "[r]egulations that consist only of changes in style or form or corrections of technical errors. Each promulgating agency shall review all references to sections of the Code of Virginia within their regulations each time a new supplement or replacement volume to the Code of Virginia is published to ensure the accuracy of each section or section subdivision identification listed."

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my overview for this final exempt action and I turn back to you for any questions the Board may have regarding this regulatory action and for consideration of the recommended motion.

MOTION: Ms. Jamison moved the following.

Motion to approve, authorize, and direct the filing of a final exempt regulation that amends the Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations to correct outdated Code and regulatory citations associated with the Commonwealth's biosolids program.

The Board approves this final exempt regulation that corrects in the Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations outdated Code and regulatory citations associated with the Commonwealth's biosolids program and authorizes the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Departmental Regulatory Coordinator to submit the final exempt regulation to the Virginia Town Hall and to the Registrar of Virginia.

This authorization is related to those changes that are exempt from the Administrative Process Act pursuant to § 2.2-4002 C and § 2.2-4006 A3 of the Code of Virginia.

The Department shall follow and conduct actions in accordance with the exemption processes within the Administrative Process Act, the Virginia Register Act, the Board's Regulatory Public Participation Procedures, and the Governor's Executive Order 17 (2014) on the "Development and Review of State Agency Regulations."

This authorization extends to, but is not limited to, the drafting of the documents, as well as the coordination, necessary to gain approvals from the Virginia Registrar of Regulations for the publication of this final exempt regulatory action.

The Board requests that the Director or the Regulatory Coordinator report to the Board on these actions at subsequent Board meetings.

SECOND: Mr. Hornbaker

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

Review and Discussion of Preliminary District Budget Template Results

Mr. Cristman said that he had suggested the process of a budget template for District funding several years prior. The intent is to provide documentation of the need. He said that it was clear that District funding was not sufficient, but that there also was not a good base of information to provide to the General Assembly with regard to what the actual needs are.

Mr. Dowling noted that the 2012 Summer Study called for DCR to develop a budget template. He noted that an overview sheet had been provided to Board members. He reviewed the budget sheet (included below).

Mr. Dowling said that the intent was to show a rebenchmarking for Districts. The numbers are designed to address how funds would be allocated should full funding be received. He said that no action was required by the Board at this meeting.

Mr. Cristman said that this had been a complex process. He said that the intent was to give the decision makers the necessary information to adequately address funding for Districts.

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
 Wednesday, August 6, 2014, 9:30 a.m.
 Department of Forestry Building
 Charlottesville, Virginia

PRELIMINARY Budget Template Results and Potential FY2016 Budget Request Overview

OVERVIEW

- The 2012 Summer Study called for DCR to develop a District budget template. This is the 2nd year the template has been utilized.
- In June of 2014, DCR received from the Districts funding needs estimates utilizing a budget template.
- A Soil and Water Conservation District Budget Partner Review Committee has since been working with the Department in reviewing the results.
- The results will be utilized by the Department in developing an FY16 District Operations rebenchmarked funding request.

Calculation of Funding for District Operations and Administration and Technical Assistance (July 23, 2014 Version)

	1	2	3	5	6	
1	Funding Categories	Historical Target for District Essential Services (Board approved May 2010)	2014 Appropriations Awarded	2015 Appropriations Awarded	PRELIMINARY District Budget Template June 2014 (for FY2016) LEVEL CS	PRELIMINARY District Budget Template June 2014 (for FY2016) INCREASED CS
2	FTE (Admin and Cost-Share)	94.0	170.53	167.50	191.93	57.07
3						
4	Base Personnel and Fringe Benefits	\$4,411,044			\$3,002,151	
5	Total Office Rent and Utilities	\$564,000			\$657,625	
6	Total Director Travel and Training	\$166,500			\$268,809	
7	Total Equipment	\$148,050			\$333,039	
8	Total Office Support	\$371,300			\$511,634	
9	Base Staff Training and Meetings	\$68,150			\$113,664	
10	Base Travel/ Vehicles	\$258,500			\$146,597	
11	ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS SUBTOTAL	\$5,987,544	\$6,048,573		\$5,033,519	
12	Other Expenses				\$148,275	
13	Environmental Education				\$1,824,820	
14	RMP		\$100,000		\$767,381	
15	Engineering Support Services		\$125,000*	In Agency Budget***	\$0	
16	CREP Administration				\$280,400	
17	ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS SUBTOTAL	\$5,987,544	\$6,273,573	\$6,209,091	\$8,054,395	
18	Dam Maintenance and Administration		\$312,000	\$312,000	\$585,785	
19	Dam Repair Small		\$90,303	\$150,000	\$303,500	
20	DCR Managed Funds for District Support		\$165,215	\$170,000	\$0****	
21	ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS TOTAL		\$6,941,091**	\$6,841,091	\$8,943,680	

22	Personnel and Fringe Benefits				\$4,403,140	\$3,128,344
23	Staff Training and Meetings				\$130,831	\$110,743
24	Travel/ Vehicles				\$224,618	\$184,132
25	TOTAL COST-SHARE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE		\$2,371,929	\$2,782,551	\$4,758,589	\$3,423,219
26	TOTAL FISCAL PROGRAM DELIVERY SUPPORT		\$9,213,020	\$9,623,642	\$13,702,269	\$17,125,488
27	VACS Cost-Share Total		\$19,402,186	\$21,939,337	\$26,499,337	\$50,675,040
28	TMDLs		\$750,000	\$0		
29	TMDLs LEI		\$525,000	\$0		
30	SL-6 Earmark		\$0	\$3,000,000		
31	RMP		\$100,000	\$60,000		
32	CREP		\$600,000	\$800,000	\$771,815	
33	NMP Golf Courses		\$0	\$100,000		
34	DOF Water Quality Grants		\$0	\$250,000		
35	WQIF Reserve Payment		\$0	\$2,965,612		
36	WQIF Surplus/ Recordation Total (C-S+TA)		\$23,749,115	\$31,897,500		

*reduced to \$62,500 during budget reductions

** This number was reduced by \$100,000 to reflect NGF appropriation

*** \$225,000 in GF support was provided in FY15

**** Will need to include [~~\$170,000~~ \$182,000] for District support functions (audits, bonding, Association contract, training, BMP cost-share manual printing, etc.)

Election of Officers

Mr. Dunford noted that the Board By-laws call for the election of officers to be held at the first meeting following July 1st of each year. He asked Mr. Gooch to chair this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Jamison nominated Mr. Dunford to continue to serve as Board Chair. Mr. Hornbaker seconded. There were no further nominations and Mr. Dunford was elected unanimously.

Mr. Dunford nominated Ms. Jamison to serve as Board Vice-Chair. Mr. Ingle seconded. There were no further nomination and Ms. Jamison was elected unanimously.

Partner Reports

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mr. Harris gave the report for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. A copy of the report is included as Attachment #1.

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Dr. Tyree gave the report for the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. She thanked those Board members who had participated in the Association's July board meeting and training.

Dr. Tyree said that the Association had done extensive education outreach over the summer, including the Youth Conservation Camp. She noted that the Envirothon had grown significantly and thanked Dominion for their support of the program. She noted that the Ft. Defiance team from the Headwaters SWCD had moved to the next level of competition.

Dr. Tyree said that Association staff was working with DCR's environmental education staff regarding the upcoming conference of the National Association of Science Teachers.

Dr. Tyree said that the Association would hold employee training later in the month. She noted that NRCS was assisting with the training and that the session would include a full-day training on SL-6. She encouraged board members and district staff to attend.

Ms. Connor invited Board members to attend an upcoming field day in Hanover County being sponsored by the Hanover-Caroline Soil and Water Conservation District.

Dr. Tyree said that the next quarterly Board meeting of the Association would be on October 1, 2014 during the State Fair week. She noted that the dates of the Annual Meeting are December 7-9, 2014. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Hotel Roanoke. She said that the Governor is expected to attend the Annual Meeting.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Dr. Bobby Grisso thanked the Board for inviting his participation in the meetings. He noted that Cooperative Extension operates at Virginia Tech and Virginia State.

Dr. Grisso invited Board members to attend the Ag Expo which is a showcase of what districts have done. He noted that Extension was celebrating 100 years as a federal agency.

Dr. Grisso noted that extension agents can serve as district directors, but not as officers. Currently eleven extension agents serve in that capacity.

Public Comment

Ms. Jennings from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation said that she wanted to thank DCR staff for the opportunity to partner with regard to the application to NRCS for the RCPP grant.

Mr. Wilchens from the Culpeper SWCD noted that the Water Quality Improvement Act specified the percentage amount for District program delivery. He said he would like to see how that measured up with what was noted in the budget template.

New Business

There was no new business.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board will be held on Wednesday, December 10th at the Hotel Roanoke. The meeting will follow the Annual Meeting of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Adjourn

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbert L. Dunford, Jr.
Chair

Clyde E. Cristman
DCR Director

Attachment #1

NRCS REPORT
Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Meeting
August 6, 2014 ♦ Charlottesville, VA

EQIP, CSP, RCPP and Easement Programs

EQIP:

- 483 contracts have been obligated for \$10,648,432
- 132 applications have been approved and awaiting signatures for \$4,132,089
- 118 applications have been preapproved for \$3,181,973
- Backlog of 382 eligible applications with requests totaling \$10,341,029 (some without cost estimates)
- Backlog of 160 pending applications (most without cost estimates yet)
- Applications are accepted on a continuous basis

CSP:

- Funded 15 forestry and 36 agricultural land contracts.
- Landowners with 2010 CSP contracts are being offered an opportunity to renew their contracts for another 5 years. There are 256 contracts from 2010 that could be eligible for renewal. Participants interested in contract renewals must apply by September 12, 2014.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program:

On May 29, Chief Jason Weller visited the Janet Gayle Harris farm in Fredericksburg, VA, to announce that Agriculture Secretary Vilsack has selected the Chesapeake Bay Watershed as one of eight RCPP Critical Conservation Areas and discuss the new RCPP with conservation partners. CBF Exec. Director Ann Jennings also spoke at the event, encouraging partners to collaborate on funding pre-proposals. There was a great deal of interest in Virginia: two pre-proposals for the State Funding Pool were submitted from Virginia for consideration to move on to the full-proposal stage. Nationwide, over \$2.4 billion in requests for federal funds were received for the \$400 M available.

Easements:

- Since the last report, five easements were closed: three FRPP easements totaling 505.77 acres (two in Shenandoah County and one in Northampton County), one GRP easement in Rockingham County for 71 acres, and 1 WRP easement in Isle of Wight County for 6.79 acres.
- Received two new Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) applications and four new Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE) applications. Submitted the two ALE applications for funding and 3 WRE applications for funding to NHQ. One WRE application was deferred to FY-15.
- The fund matching requirement for ALE has been reduced for Virginia because Virginia offers land conservation funding in the form of tax credits.

Dam Rehabilitation

- Pohick 8 – Construction is ongoing and completion is scheduled for August 2014. This is the 4th dam to be rehabilitated with NRCS assistance in this watershed.
- Upper North River 10 – 95% design out for independent and Sponsor review. Final design is scheduled for completion September 2014.
- Upper North River 77 – Planning engineering and coordination with Sponsors and USFS is ongoing.

The 2014 Farm Bill made about \$262 million available for rehabilitation of 151 dams in 26 states, including Virginia. These watershed management projects provide an estimated \$2.2 billion in annual benefits in reduced flooding and erosion damage, recreation, water supplies and wildlife habitat for roughly 47 million people. In FY14, Virginia received a total of \$7,285,000 for nine projects. Project agreements are being developed between NRCS and the project sponsors to secure these funds that will be used over the next 4 years to plan, design and construct these dam rehabilitation projects:

Pohick Creek 8, Fairfax County
South River 10A, Augusta County
Upper North River 77, Augusta County
Upper North River 10, Augusta County
Mountain Run 50, Culpeper County, Town of Culpeper
Mountain Run 11, Culpeper County, Town of Culpeper
Cherrystone Creek 1, Pittsylvania County, Town of Chatham
Cherrystone Creek 2A, Pittsylvania County, Town of Chatham
Johns Creek 1, Craig County

Conservation Innovation Grants/Soil Health

NRCS received four full state CIG proposals for \$233,485.50. Three proposals were approved for funding. Soil health remains a priority for the agency and was designated as one of the CIG's priority topics. Soil health education and training continues at local JED trainings, farm shows, state-wide meetings and other venues.

Conservation Planning

NRCS recently had its' first new certification of a SWCD employee from our inaugural Conservation Planning "Boot Camp" held in March. Dana Gochenour from the Lord Fairfax SWCD was recently certified as a Certified Conservation Planner and Land Treatment Specialist.

Riparian Forest Buffer Initiative Leadership Summit

NRCS Virginia State Conservationist, Assistant STC for Programs, State Resource Conservationist and Watershed Coordinator attended the Riparian Forest Buffer Initiative Leadership Summit in Washington D.C on June 19, 2014. The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay organized the event and USDA hosted the meeting. The summit brought together all the leaders in the Bay states to discuss where we are in meeting TMDL, WIPs, and the executive order. Bay states will be convening with state partners to identify obstacles with current programs and recommendations on how to accelerate the establishment of riparian forest buffers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. A new Chesapeake Bay Agreement was signed on June 16, 2014.

Resource Assessment Tools

Virginia will be one of 25 states to get new NAIP (National Agriculture Imagery Program) Orthoimagery. This coverage is being flown now and it will have a one-meter ground resolution and four multi-spectral bands [natural color and CIR (color infrared)]. NRCS has been actively working with USGS and State partners in the acquisition and contracting of LiDAR, this is active remote sensing technology that uses laser light to detect and measure surface features on the earth. Both of these products are useful GIS tools with many applications.

StrikeForce

On July 1, USDA representatives from Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky met with local leaders, community based organizations, and non-profits during the Central Appalachia Regional Tour and Round Table Discussion in Southwest Virginia. Sponsored by USDA's StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity, the meeting focused on exploring ways that USDA programs and services can help growth in one of the country's poorest regions. Representatives from local NRCS service centers and Districts were present.

National Video Shoot

On June 24 & 25, National and Virginia Public Affairs staff worked with District Conservationists Cory Guilliams and Dana Bayless to coordinate a video shoot spotlighting Virginia famers who are helping to improve Chesapeake Bay water quality. Six landowners in Rockingham and Louisa Counties will be featured in the National videos. Their stories will be used on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and USDA blogs to spread the word about the benefits of conservation practices.

Customer Service/Outreach

Despite torrential rains, nearly 500 people attended the 43,560 Field Day/USDA Farm Bill Forum on June 12 at VSU's Randolph Farm. Smithfield Soil Conservationist Jake Browder and FSA Agricultural Program Specialist Emily Horsley discussed conservation programs at a station on "Protecting Your Land and Legacy," which included a model buffer and hoop house. Other stations offered information on loans and grants as well as programs that can help producers expand local markets and manage risk.