

Virginia Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee
 Meeting 9:30 AM, June 14, 2017
 Approved Summary

Attendance:

Member	Representing	Member	Representing
Charlie Wootton	CB, SWCD staff (proxy)	Joe Wood	CBF
Jim Wright	VASWCD Area I (proxy)	Mark Hollberg	DCR CB CDC
Emily Horsley	FSA	Chad Wentz	NRCS
Robert Bradford	VASWCD Area II (proxy)	Scott Baker	VCE
Tim Sexton	DCR, Nut. Man.	Scott Ambler	DCR, RMP
Scott Baker	VACDE	Tim Sexton	DCR, NMP
Stephanie Martin	DCR, Dist. Liaison	Stacy Horton	DCR, SR CDC
Todd Groh	DOF	Amanda Pennington	DCR, Engineering
Chris Barbour	SR, SWCD staff	Pete Farmer	VASWCD Area IV
Spencer Yeager	VASWCDE	Tim Higgs	DACS
Ricky Rash	Area V (proxy)		

Other Participants: Keith Burgess, Monacan SWCD; Emily Nelson, DCR Eng.; Luke Longanecker, T. J. SWCD (proxy for SWCDE Assoc.); Leslie Ann Hinton, Three Rivers SWCD; Raleigh Coleman, DCR Eng.; Davis A. Kuzma, Isle of Wight Co.

The Ag. BMP Technical Advisory committee agreements document was distributed and discussed to assure any new members were aware that the TAC tries to operate with consensus agreements and how to express your opinion. It was determined that an old version of the agreements had been printed, and the proper document should be distributed via e-mail for TAC review. Gary Moore proposed that a new Guiding principal should be considered as follows:

- ❖ *Suggested changes to the program received before the published (in each year’s Ag BMP Manual) will be considered by the TQAC for inclusion in the “Program of Work” for the upcoming fiscal year. If suggestion are received after the cut-off date they may be accepted and discussed at the discretion of the TAC.*

The draft summary of the February 13, 2017 TAC meeting was reviewed and approved with no changes needed. 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:** The VA EQIP received approximately \$28M in federal funds, and have approved 362 contracts valued at approximately ½ of the total allocation. An additional 202 preapproved EQIP applications have yet to be processed. There is a large EQIP backlog of over \$2.5M outstanding.

- **State Conservation Innovation Grants:** Approximately \$470,000 has been allocated for CIG awards. Stand by for upcoming CIG announcements.
 - There are 4 active Resource Conservation Planning Programs (RCPP) valued at over \$5M with ~1\$M yet to be committed.
 - All existing Conservation Security Program reenrollments have been completed and new applications are being ranked to increase CSP acreage in VA
The VA NRCS is anticipating less money available for conservation programs with no hiring until the end of the 2014 Farm Bill on Sept 30, 2018. Presently there are 5 vacant District Conservationist positions throughout the state.
- ◆ **FSA:** FSA has temporarily suspended CREP enrollment due to its state partner DCR having obligated all of its available state cost-share and rental funding.
- As of March 1, 2017 there were 19 FSA approved CREP contracts that had not received confirmation of state funding availability. Of these two cancelled and 17 have received state funding confirmation. This leaves approximately 60 unapproved CREP applications caught in the suspension of contract approval.
 - FSA and DCR have a meeting scheduled for next week. DCR would prefer to restart the program July 1, 2017. The CREP agreement must be amended to before the program can restart.
 - There is a 24 M acre cap on the Conservation Reserve Program nationwide, presently contracts must be approved at the state office to assure the acreage cap is not exceeded, 2.5 M acres are scheduled to expire in 2017, and this may provide a buffer to the acreage cap.
- ◆ **Consideration of suggested changes:** (*Italics indicates TAC discussion topic and/or instructions to subcommittee*)
1. Generate new programmatic guidelines for SWCDs to address utilizing any previously cost-shared animal waste storage (or existing?) animal waste storage structures as part of requests for new WP-4 cost-share applications. (from 2018 suggested changes)
 - a. Does not matter if out of lifespan
 - b. Should apply to all types of WP-4 structures
Referred to Animal waste subcommittee, Amanda Pennington Chair add Gary Flourey and Ricky Rash to subcommittee.
 2. Modify WP-4 or WP-4B, (SVSWCD) to add NRCS-560 Access Road to the list of eligible components. *Already includes trails and walkways, why is access road necessary?*
Referred to Animal waste subcommittee,
 3. Modify WP-4C, (SVSWCD) to allow cost-share funding on drum composters
Referred to Animal waste subcommittee
 4. Modify WQ-1, (GM DCR) to require NMP on file with SWCD before cost-share payment can be issued, make this a gateway agronomic practice.

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

5. Modify the SL-1 lifespan, (DC, DCR) to 10 years without a sliding scale from 5-10 years.

Referred to Cover Crop subcommittee

6. Modify SL-3, (GM DCR) to add required NMP on file with District before cost-share payment issued, make this a gateway agronomic practice.

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

7. Generate new BMP to restore pollinator habitat. (EvrSWCD)
Worthwhile approach but not directly supportive of water quality improvement, not referred to any subcommittee. FSA has Pollinator Habitat Practice as part of CRP.

8. Modify the NM-3C (SVSWCD) to allow for cost share payment to be made for acres receiving a zero application rate based on a PSNT.

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

9. Modify NM-1A language: (KB, MonSWCD)

- a. Consider making this a 3 year practice that requires submitting nutrient application records annually.

Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee.

- ~~b. B.2. Eligibility~~

- c. ii. Clarify if the 12 months mean after NM-1A practice approval or 12 months after NMP development.

TAC thought should be 12 months from signature date on cover sheet

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

- d. vii. Add e. Submit nutrient application records for the preceding 12 months prior to plan development or a statement signed by the planner and producer that nutrients were applied according to a NMP plan.

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

10. a. Modify NM-5N & NM-5P, (3RvrsSWCD) Nutrient Management Plan requirements under the NM-5N and NM-5P should be changed to read “5. Participants must be fully implementing their current nutrient management plan prepared and signed by a Virginia certified nutrient management planner. Where this practice is recommended or applied there must be a note to the effect in the narrative or elsewhere in the nutrient management plan indicating that the soils were sampled in an appropriate manner. Cost-share payments will not be made until a copy of the nutrient management plan and work orders, applied field maps and/or invoices are presented to the SWCD. ~~The nutrient management plan must include all participant controlled participant acres of the farm.~~ The nutrient management plan must include all agricultural production acreage

contained within the FSA tract on which this BMP will be implemented. A copy of the current nutrient application, record keeping and work orders shall be maintained by the participant for the purposes of verification.”

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

- b. Modify the NM-5N Section C. 2. (GM DCR) from a state cost share payment rate of 75% of the application charge, up to a maximum amount of \$8.00 per acre per year, for the acres receiving the variable rate or zone application of nitrogen or multiple split applications of nitrogen on corn, cotton and small grain or more than two applications on highly managed hayland. Acres receiving a zero application rate based on a PSNT result ~~can also receive~~ should be included in the applied acreage total as zero (0) is an application rate, and payed at \$8 per acre.

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

11. Modify WQ-4, (GM DCR) TO require NMP on file with SWCD before cost-share payment can be issued, make this a gateway agronomic practice like other cover crop practices.

Referred to Nutrient Management Subcommittee

12. Modify SL-8B and SL-8H, (SVSWCD) to remove the requirement for bin run seed testing from the specifications since practice certification is based on the establishment of 60% cover.

Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee.

13. Modify SL-8B language, (Tdh2oSWCD)

- a. Allow nutrient application prior to March 1.

Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee.

- b. Allow kill prior to March 15th

Referred to Cover Crop subcommittee

- c. Kill down by some method is something that is part of the process of cover crops already and should not be a limiting factor for completion of the BMP and payment.

Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee.

- d. Provide additional incentives for planting mixed species cover crop.

Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee.

- e. Section B. 2. iii. and B.9. Are redundant remove one or the other.

Referred to Cover Crop subcommittee

14. Modify SL-8B language, (KB, MonSWCD)

- a. C. Rates Add \$5/acre for NMP development and implementation.

Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee

- b. B. 3. Revise the language related to 30 plants per square foot and 60 tillers per square foot. With the allowable species and mixes this older language creates confusion. The current language relates more to soil erosion and nutrient uptake while the early SL-8B practice focused on soil erosion.

Referred to Cover Crop subcommittee

- c. Add - Nutrient application records, including lime, must be submitted from September 1 of the previous crop year to September 1 of the current crop year. The soil test supporting the NMP must be taken within 3 years of date of SL-8B application.

Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee

- 15. Modify SL-8B, (GM DCR) Remove one year of implementation without a nutrient management plan language from B. 2. & B.2. i

Supported by TAC, add to Matrix of TAC recommendations

- 16. Modify CCI-SE1 language, (KB, MonSWCD) C. Rates 1. To allow exclusion fencing of critical conservation areas to be eligible for cost-share...

Referred to Stream Protection subcommittee

- 17. Modify CCI-SE1 language, (Unknown) Add, under B.4. Gullies, channels and isolated areas may be included as follows:

- i. The length of “stream bank” may be extended upslope of the spring head/seep/wetlands to reduce channel & gully erosion.
- ii. Isolated gullies, seeps, springs or wetlands may be fenced based on professional judgement and landowner agreement

Referred to Stream Protection subcommittee

- 18. Modify SL-6 language: (Unknown) Add, under B.4.

- i. The stream exclusion fence may be extended upslope of the spring head/seep/wetlands to reduce channel & gully erosion. The extension fence does not require a 35’ buffer for the channel as there is no continuous surface water.
- iii. Isolated gullies, seeps, springs or wetlands may be fenced based on professional judgement and landowner agreement.

Referred to Stream Protection subcommittee

- 19. Modify WP-1, (SVSWCD) to add NRCS 620-Underground Outlet, 382 Fence and 606-Subsurface Drain as eligible components to receive cost-share.

Referred to engineering workgroup.

Administrative suggestions discussed by TAC these are outside of the TACs venue

22. Currently the \$70,000 cost share cap does not apply to the WP-4C Composter Facility practice. This frequently creates a situation where a participant who applies for cost share funding for a combination WP-4 and WP-4C is only eligible for a maximum of \$50,000 in cost share funds. Since these practices are frequently installed in combination and since the WP-4 on its own would be eligible for \$70,000, we suggest that WP-4C be added to the list of exceptions to the \$50,000 cap only when installed in combination with a WP-4. (SVSWCD)
Supported by TAC, discuss with DCR decision makers
23. (KB, MonSWCD) We are not in support of making payment directly to NMP or RMP writers. This practice removes the producer from having a clearer understanding of the NMP and RMP practices. We understand the reason, but do not support this concept. The NMP and RMP planners should develop a contract that specifies deliverables between the planner and VACS program participant.
TAC did not support, not referred to any subcommittee
24. (3RvrsSWCD) Cost-share payments that are forwarded to a Technical Service Provider should not count against the participant state-wide cap.
TAC did not support, not referred to any subcommittee

Additional Suggestions (received after 7/31/2017)

25. Increase CCI-FRB-1 from \$100/acre to \$500/acre
Referred to forestry subcommittee
26. Generate new VNM-1A BMP
Not supported by TAC, not referred to any subcommittee

◆ **Agency Updates**

- **DCR: (Darryl Glover)**
 - Two new studies mandated from the General Assembly session, DCR has formed Stakeholder Advisory Groups, (SAGs)
 - 1) Stabilizing WQIA Funding, Assemblymen Hanger, Lingafelter, Boulva, Agribusiness Council, James River Assoc. Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Small Grain Council, Will review Budget Template data and process
Will look at a proposed loan program.
Met 6/13/2017 9:30 AM, will meet again early Sept.
 - 2) Expand Resource Management Plan Program
How to move approved RMPs Implemented RMPS
Met 6/13/2017 1:30 PM, will meet again early Sept.
 - DCR is utilizing a LOGI “Burn report” to track Allocated, Obligated and Paid VACS allocated funds.
 - NMP (Tim Sexton) through May 290 farmers surveyed 88.23% are implementing NMP

- **Cooperative Extension (VCE):**
 - Presently discussing how to replace lost Extension Agents
 - **Chesapeake Bay Program (Tim Sexton)**
 - Phase 6.0 WS model presently undergoing fatal flaw analysis
 - Includes 184,035 animal waste acres
 - Agricultural land use base loads = 180 lbs. N, and 150 lbs. P
 - Webinars scheduled for CAST trainings
 - Increase N & P reductions for NMP acres
 - Using new 1 meter PCAS maps
 - **Dept. of Forestry (DOF): (Todd Groh)**
 - Presently revising Forest Resource Assessment, looking for stakeholder input.
 - There are riparian forest buffer demonstrations plots at the Crimora and Catawba (near Roanoke) nurseries that can be toured by organizations Contact Todd Groh or Sarah Kammer to schedule
 - **Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF):** Presently developing new State of the Bay report, a meeting on the Agriculture meeting announced shortly to access milestone accomplishments.
- ◆ **Next Soil and Water Conservation Board meeting date: *September 26, Old Dominion Co-op, Innsbrook, VA***
 - ◆ Precision Agriculture Brochure Distributed to all TAC attendees. This brochure available from DCR Nut.Man. staff for distribution to stakeholders and farmers.

Concerns from the Floor: None

Next TAC meeting: Tuesday August 15, 2017 9:30 AM at the DOF training room

Adjourned