

Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Dam Owner Workgroup
Meeting Summary

Augusta County Government Center
South Board Room
75 Government Center Lane
Verona, VA 24482
July 19, 2018

I. DCR Update – Policy 700 – Engineering Responsibilities

A copy of Policy 700 – Engineering Responsibilities was provided to the group. This policy defines the responsibilities and duties of the Dam Safety Regional Engineer and District Engineering Services. District Engineering Services is the designated point of contact for Regional Engineer as well as District staff for Dam Safety compliance and regulatory issues. This will streamline communications as well as reduce redundancy of tasks within DCR

II. DCR Training – Dam Safety Inventory System (DSIS)

James Martin (DCR) provided training on how to use the new Dam Safety Inventory System (DSIS). District Staff will need to request access to the system using the DSIS Application Access Form. The training covered updating dam contact information, input and submittal of owner inspections, input and submittal of emergency action plans.

The process for completing Operation and Maintenance Certificate Application and Professional Engineering Inspections will not change at this time. The District Dam Engineer will provide the District with copies of the DCR Forms for review and signature. The District Dam Engineer will be responsible for uploading and submitting these documents in DSIS.

There was some discussion on the difference between the Emergency Action Plan document developed by the districts and the information stored in DSIS. The Hard Copy Emergency Action Plan that is kept on file at the District Office, Local Emergency Service, and Staff Gauge Observes is still required and is the document that will be used during an Emergency. The Emergency Action Plan information stored in DSIS will be used by Dam Safety and VDEM.

DCR is in the process of upgrading DSIS to include online submission of Small Dam Repair requests. It is anticipate that this will be available for use by the Districts in early 2019.

If the District has any issues or questions with DSIS, please contact:

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District Dam Engineer
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-OR-

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Conservation Data Specialist
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III. DCR Update - Small Repair Program for District Dams

The following topics were discussed with the Group:

A. Policy and Procedures – Proceed at Risk Projects

Based on feedback provided by Districts, a new project category has been added to the Small Dam Repair Program. This project type will allow districts to request funds for completed projects so long as they meet the eligibility requirements. Districts should be aware that the project will be considered with all other small dam repair request.

Proposed Language:

A request covering a discrete project that has been completed and paid for by the District. The project cannot have been previously considered for funding. The project must have been completed by the district within the last 12 months. The maximum project reimbursement cannot exceed \$15,000. If the project does not receive funding approval, the project will be ineligible for any future funding.

B. Policy and Procedures – Reallocation of Completed Project Funds

Based on feedback provided by Districts, the future grant agreement documents will allow the Districts to request that unexpended funds from a completed project be transferred to another District project with a current Grant Agreement.

Proposed Language:

Upon the final disbursement of project funds, any unexpended funds shall be returned to the Fund, shall be unobligated, and shall be available for subsequent project awards. The District may request for the unexpended funds to be reallocated to another District project with a current Grant Agreement. The request for the reallocation of funds must be approved by the District Engineer.

C. Gate Valve Evaluation Update

The Phase 1 evaluation for Blue Ridge SWCD, Mountain Castles SWCD, and Robert E. Lee SWCD is complete. A link to download copies of the report will be provided to the group.

DCR is in the process of scoping the phase 2 evaluation of Peter Francisco SWCD, Piedmont SWCD, and Southside SWCD. The phase 2 scope will be revised based on the lessons learned during Phase 1. Phase 2 field work will be split into a reconnaissance phase and evaluation and operation of the gate phase.

The reconnaissance phase (divers in the water) will determine site conditions and needed equipment for the evaluation and operation of the gate. The evaluation will include any need sediment and debris removal from around the gate. The second part will also include the operation of the gate by the District Engineer. The final report will include for each gate found to be non-operational a detailed list of maintenance items with cost estimate to make the gate operational.

DCR recognizes that the change in scope will have an impact on the project cost, as such the total number of dams that can be evaluated as part of phase 2 may need to be adjusted.

D. Engineering Tem Contracts Update

DCR has been researching the process by which the District can procure an Engineering Term Contract for use by all Districts. Procurement of the contract will need to comply with §2.2-4304(A). A single “Lead” District would be responsible for the development, advertisement, and administration of the Request for Proposals (RFP) to select the engineering firm. All other Districts that wish to use the selected engineering firm would need to have a Memorandum of Understanding with the “Lead” District prior to the advertisement of the RFP.

The District Dam Engineer will follow-up with the group in early September. After the Lead District is selected, the District Dam Engineer will assist the Lead District, as needed, in the development of the RFP Documents.

IV. DCR Update - Rehabilitation Plan for Virginia SWCD Dams

Amanda Pennington (DCR-District Engineering Services Manager) provided the group with an update on the Rehabilitation Plan.

DCR held meeting with Shenandoah Valley SWCD and Headwaters SWCD to discuss proposed rehabilitation design alternatives.

The report to the Legislature is on schedule for submittal in November. A draft copy will be sent to the Rehabilitation Committee for review in September and a DCR Policy review in October.

V. DCR Presentation – District Dam Easements

Amanda Pennington (DCR-District Engineering Services Manager) provided the group with general information on the rights granted to the District by the dam easements. The information was general in nature and a District should contact their Attorney General’s representative with any specific easement questions.

The District Engineer can provide copies of the easements upon request.

VI. Review of Recent Rainfall Events

A Slide show of the impact of recent rainfall events on District dams was shown to the group. The pictures showed before and after pictures for several different dams.

VII. Future Topics

Each District was tasked with bring a discussion item to the next workgroup meeting to share with the group. The discussion item can be a success story, interesting issue, or challenge faced by District.

VIII. Schedule Next Meeting - October 18, 2018 (Tentative) – Location - TBD

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