

Virginia Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee
Monday, September 10, 2018
Virginia Department of Forestry, Charlottesville, Virginia

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Virginia Agricultural BMP Technical Advisory Committee convened at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, September 10, 2018 at the Virginia Department of Forestry in Charlottesville, Virginia.

ATTENDANCE

Matt Kowalski, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Charlie Wooton, Chesapeake Bay District Representative
Ashley Wendt, DEQ
Jason Carter, Virginia Cattlemen Association
Nick Livesay, Lord Fairfax SWCD
Scott Baker, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Chad Wentz, NRCS
Gary Boring, Area IV Representative
Chris Barbour, Outside the Chesapeake Bay District Representative
Tom Turner, John Marshall SWCD
Luke Longanecker, Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees
Robert Bradford, Area II Representative
David Massie, Culpeper SWCD
Shawn Ralston, James River Association
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau
Dana Gochenour, Lord Fairfax
Joe Wood, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Willie Wood, Northern Virginia SWCD
Greg Wichelns, Culpeper SWCD
Joseph Stepp, Hanover-Caroline SWCD
Kyle Shreve, Virginia Agribusiness Council
Carrie Swanson, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Anne Coates, Thomas Jefferson SWCD
Adrienne Kotula, Chesapeake Bay Commission
Charles Newton, Shenandoah Valley SWCD
Alston Horn, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Ben Rowe, Virginia Farm Bureau
Spencer Yager, Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees
Jim Tate, Hanover-Caroline SWCD

Chris Atkins, Virginia Grain Producers Association
Allyson Ponn, Lord Fairfax SWCD
Carl Garrison, Virginia Forestry Association
Dean Cumbia, VDOF
Sarah Hagan, VDOF
Patti Nylander, VDOF
Danny Withers, Three Rivers SWCD
Hobey Bauhan, Virginia Poultry Federation
Darrel Marshall, VDACS
Sam Truban, Lord Fairfax SWCD
Meglen Dalton, Shenandoah Valley SWCD
Ben Chester, DCR
Mark Hollberg, DCR
Amanda Pennington, DCR
Scott Ambler, DCR
Blair Gordon, DCR
Tim Sexton, DCR
David Kindig, DCR
Amy Walker, DCR
Wayne Davis, DCR
Carl Thiel-Goin, DCR
Roland Owens, DCR
Debbie Cross, DCR
Denney Turner, DCR
Christine Watlington, DCR
Bob Waring, DCR
Robert Shoemaker, DCR
Raleigh Coleman, DCR
Darryl Glover, DCR
Nick Moody, DCR
Jim Echols, DCR

OPENING AND INTRODUCTION

Mr. Darryl Glover welcomed everyone to the TAC meeting. The TAC process will be a transparent process and all meetings of the TAC and the subcommittees will be conducted in person. All meetings will be noticed on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall and all minutes will be posted there as well. Mr. Glover noted that there were over 170 recommendations received by DCR related to the cost-share program. The recommendations were categorized into six subject areas; there will be a subcommittee established for each subject area. The subcommittees are: animal waste; cover crops; forestry; nutrient management; programmatic; and stream protection.

A discussion of the participation ground rules was held. Everyone was asked to select the subcommittee they would like to participate in; however, no organization is allowed to have two voting members on a subcommittee. In depth discussion and debate of recommendations is to be held at the subcommittee level. Each subcommittee will report progress and actions taken at the TAC meetings.

All recommendations will be provided to the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board in March, 2019. Support for the recommendations, whether by Districts, the TAC, or DCR, will be noted as well. The TAC was reminded that some recommendations may not be able to be implemented immediately.

UPDATE ON CHESAPEAKE BAY WIP DEVELOPMENT – AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Mr. Glover provided an update on the status of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) development. DCR has been tasked with coordinating efforts involving the agriculture sector. There have been two rounds of meetings for all Areas I, II, III, and VI as well as other SWCDs with Chesapeake Bay drainage. Almost all SWCDs have submitted input decks; there are currently several Districts revising the original input deck submitted. DEQ will complete an analysis to see if the submitted strategies result in the needed nitrogen reductions. Achieving nitrogen reductions is the key to achieving the WIP goals. There will be a third set of meetings with SWCDs; the dates are:

- October 22, 2018 at the Department of Forestry in Charlottesville, and
- October 24, 2018 at VIMS in Gloucester Point.

Times have not yet been set for these meetings. The primary focus of the meeting will be discussions involving the eight SWCDs that need the largest amount of nitrogen reductions by 2025 because of how those areas influence the Chesapeake Bay. Those SWCDs are Culpeper, Eastern Shore, Hanover-Caroline, Headwaters, Lord Fairfax, Northern Neck, Shenandoah, and Three Rivers.

BREAKOUT TO SUBCOMMITTEES

Subcommittee chairpersons were introduced and the TAC was organized into the six subcommittees. The subcommittee meetings began at 10:00 a.m.

ANIMAL WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE

Voting Members Present

Amanda Pennington, DCR
Sam Truban, Lord Fairfax SWCD
Hobey Bauhan, Virginia Poultry Federation
Darrell Marshall, VDACS

Megan Dalton, Shenandoah Valley SWCD
Rick Shiflet, Headwaters SWCD

Voting Members Not Present

Eric Paulson, Virginia State Dairymen's Association

Non-Voting Members Present

Ben Chester, DCR

WELCOME

A quorum was established with 7 voting members present. Ms. Pennington welcomed the participants and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

FUTURE MEETING DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

The subcommittee discussed future meeting dates, times, and locations. Meetings will be held on:

October 2, 2018

November 6, 2018

November 29, 2018

December 17, 2018

All meetings will begin at 10:00 a.m. and are scheduled to end at 3:00 p.m. All meetings will be held at:

Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

1934 Deyerle Avenue, #B,

Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801

OTHER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS

The subcommittee reviewed all of the proposed changes and put them into one of two categories.

- More information or research is needed to adequately evaluate the suggestion.
- The subcommittee feels comfortable discussing the proposed change with the currently available information, and, once discussions have concluded, call for a vote.
- The subcommittee discussed each of the proposed changes and brought four of them to a vote, summary is as follows:
 - 1A-Need more information. Victor Clark of Farm Freezers and Greener Solutions is scheduled to attend the subcommittee meeting on October 2, 2018 to provide additional information on mortality freezers. The subcommittee also identified specific issues that would need to be further discussed such as what the payment structure would be since this is a prescription based service.
 - Subcommittee Action Item-be prepared with questions for Mr. Clark at the meeting so that we can thoroughly evaluate the proposal.
 - 2A (VOTE)-All subcommittee voting members present voted to not recommend this for further consideration/approval. The subcommittee feels this is a training issue. If the FSA maps do not accurately reflect the boundaries of the operation, the District employee, during the conservation planning process should determine the appropriate boundaries of the operation.
 - 3A-It does not appear additional information is needed at this time; the subcommittee will discuss at a future meeting.

- 4A- It does not appear additional information is needed at this time; the subcommittee will discuss at a future meeting.
- 5A- It does not appear additional information is needed at this time; the subcommittee will discuss at a future meeting.
- 6A- It does not appear additional information is needed at this time; the subcommittee will discuss at a future meeting.
- 7A- It does not appear additional information is needed at this time; the subcommittee will discuss at a future meeting.
- 8A- It does not appear additional information is needed at this time. The subcommittee did have further discussion on this recommendation. It does not appear this would fit into the current WP-4B specification, and a new specification would be needed. Further action/discussion is needed and this is not being recommended for advancement, nor is it being tabled, at this time.
 - Action item-Megen Dalton will work on a draft specification for the subcommittee to discuss at the November 6, 2018 meeting.
- 9A (VOTE)-All voting subcommittee members voted in favor of this suggestion and will recommend the TAC advance it for further approval by the Soil and Water Board. While the listed components may not be needed for every project, there are cases where they can be used to address a water quality concern in conjunction with a WP-4B practice.
- 10A-It does appear additional information is needed.
 - Action item-Amanda Pennington to research Bay Model credit for the sediment reduction.
 - Action item-What BMPs do other states have to address stormwater? Megen Dalton to research.
- 11A-More information is needed.
 - Action item-Hobey Bauhan will reach out to Bobby Long (DCR) to see about doing a joint presentation at the November 6th subcommittee meeting.
- 12A- More information is needed.
 - Action item-Hobey Bauhan will reach out to Bobby Long (DCR) to see about doing a joint presentation at the November 6th subcommittee meeting.
- 13A- More information is needed.
 - Action item-Hobey Bauhan will reach out to Bobby Long (DCR) to see about doing a joint presentation at the November 6th subcommittee meeting.
- 14A-This will be discussed at a future meeting.
 - Action item-invite Districts with a heavy equine presence in their area. These Districts may include Hanover-Caroline, Northern Virginia, Prince William, and/or Thomas Jefferson. Amanda Pennington to reach out to Districts with an invitation to the November 29th meeting.
- 15A-No additional information is needed at this time; the subcommittee will discuss at a future meeting.
- 16A-Additional information is needed.
 - Action item-Amanda Pennington to check to see if more specific information can be provided on the recommendation as it seems to cover several

- suggestions and subcommittees and is overall a very broad recommendation. This needs a more narrowed focus for the subcommittee to adequately discuss.
- 17A-Additional Information is needed.
 - Action item-Amanda Pennington to check to see if the Bay model will accept a 20-year lifespan.
 - Action item-Megen Dalton to check with NRCS to see what the lifespan for their similar practice is.
 - 18A-More information is needed.
 - Action item-The subcommittee plans to invite Richard Fitzgerald to a future meeting for more discussion.
 - Action item-get definition as to what qualifies for manure injection from the bay model input deck.
 - 19A (VOTE)-All voting subcommittee members in attendance voted to not recommend this suggestion for approval to the TAC as they feel it is an engineering policy issue, not a program issue or requirement, and is best handled by the Engineering Workgroup (EWG). A process for all animal waste projects is currently under development by District Engineering Staff and this document will be thoroughly discussed and approved by the EWG at a future date. A recommendation will be brought to the TAC to not advance the suggestion future or recommend it for approval to the Soil and Water Board.
 - 20A (VOTE)-All voting subcommittee members in attendance voted to not recommend this suggestion for approval to the TAC for the following reasons:
 - The first suggestion would be a board level decision and can be included in the District's secondary considerations.
 - The second suggestion is already a requirement.
 - The third suggestion should be addressed during the conservation planning and engineering inventory and evaluation processes. We should always consider the "least cost, technically feasible" option and sometimes this simply means moving the feeding operation to an alternative location.
 - The subcommittee also started discussions related to cap issues (3A, 4A, 5A, 6A, and 7A). While the subcommittee understands the reason for wanted to base the cap on heads of animals, they feel, if the program were to follow this route, this should be based on animal units as this is what we use for all our sizing, etc. Concerning 3A specifically, it would be difficult to pay on actual cost rather than estimates as then this would be a moving target, making it very difficult for a district to do allocations.
 - Action Item-Rick Shiflet to inquire with Headwaters, who submitted the request, to gain more information for subcommittee discussion.

COVER CROP SUBCOMMITTEE

Voting Members Present

Bob Waring, DCR

Jim Tate, Hanover-Caroline SWCD

Ben Rowe, Virginia Farm Bureau

Chris Atkins, Virginia Grain Producers Association

Wayne Webb, Lord Fairfax SWCD
Spencer Yager, Association of Conservation District Employees
Alston Horn, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Non-Voting Members Present

Amy Walker, DCR
Carl Thiel-Goin, DCR
Wayne Davis, DCR
Nick Moody, DCR

WELCOME

A quorum was established with 7 voting members present. Mr. Waring welcomed the participants and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

FUTURE MEETING DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

The subcommittee discussed future meeting dates, times, and locations. Meetings will be held on:

October 4, 2018
November 1, 2018
December 6, 2018
January 3, 2018

All meetings will begin at 9:30 a.m. and are scheduled to end at 3:00 p.m. All meetings will be held at:

Virginia Farm Bureau
12580 West Creek Parkway
Richmond, Virginia 23238

OTHER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS

No additional actions were taken by the subcommittee.

FORESTRY SUBCOMMITTEE

Voting Members Present

Jim Echols, DCR
Carl Garrison, Virginia Forestry Association
Patti Nylander, DOF

Non-Voting Members Present

Todd Groh, DOF
Dean Cumbia, DOF
Sarah Hagan, DOF

WELCOME

A quorum was established with 3 voting members present. Mr. Echols welcomed the participants and asked everyone to introduce themselves. It was noted that a participant from an SWCD would potentially be helpful to the subcommittee.

FUTURE MEETING DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

The subcommittee discussed future meeting dates, times, and locations. Meetings will be held on:

September 28, 2018 beginning at 9:00 a.m.; and
October 24, 2018 beginning at 1:00 p.m.

Both meetings will be held at:

DCR Staunton Regional Office
12 Sunset Boulevard
Staunton, Virginia 22401.

OTHER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS

A discussion of the recommendations referred to the Forestry subcommittee was held. The subcommittee determined that additional clarification or information may be needed for several of the recommendations prior to the subcommittee's next meeting.

The discussion points regarding each recommendation are detailed below:

1F – currently FR-3 program criteria mirrors CREP guidelines. Can this be more flexible and give allowances to change densities and species as forester sees fit? Could the FR-3 standard be changed so that it no longer mirrors CREP tree planting guidelines?

2F – If landowners receive 100% cost-share, will landowners still be vested in their project? Will they do the maintenance, take care of the trees, invasive species management? Landowners are eligible for a tax credit on acres that are enrolled in a program.

3F – Primary difference between FR-1 and FR-3 is that FR-3 projects are for riparian planting whereas FR-1 is an Afforestation project (acres do not have to be along a creek). Idea is to remove the requirement that FR-3 follows NRCS/CREP standard 391.

4F – may need some clarification on what this recommendation is. Is the recommendation to raise the cap from \$70,000 since two programs are going to be utilized or is it to keep the cap where it is? What if there is still a cap on the SL-6 portion, but tree planting is cost-shared at 100% which would promote riparian buffers.

5F – this seems like a similar request to 2F suggestion; coordination with DOF nursery may also be a component

6F – may need some clarification on deed restrictions related to buffer exclusion

7F – will get clarification on this recommendation. Is the request to cover some of the maintenance needs with cost-share, not just establishment payments? Possible amendment would allow funds to be set aside from establishment; maybe set up maintenance projects as its own application.

8F – this could be done and seems reasonable. Would be good for landowners to have this option for SL-6 projects that have already been completed.

9F - may be a programmatic topic/idea than a forestry topic idea. Current participants in programs have to be agricultural producers. There is an income requirement to participate in the cost-share program (\$1000 in sales annually in order to qualify as a producer).

10F – hard to keep track of all the different options. Would be useful to develop a matrix for landowners to have a resource they can use to figure out what their options are. Some issues would be who could take care of this matrix? Who would be included on the matrix? Where would it be housed?

11F – within forestry, while the designations have been beneficial from a market access standpoint, the economic returns have just not been there for landowners. Can recognition be more to the forefront, and landowners get more points and are prioritized higher for access to agricultural BMPs. It may be that a program like this idea mentioned already exists.

12F – try to relax some of the maintenance allowances within stream buffers. Flash grazing had been used as a possibility in the past; farmers were asked to use a temporary fence along the streambank to keep cows out of the creek while they were in there. Was abused and so the allowance was moved away. Maybe eliminate the idea of flash grazing, but still allow production of fruit for sale. Fruit and nut trees planted and allowed to be harvested.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Voting Members Present

David Kindig, DCR
Danny Withers, Three Rivers SWCD

Voting Members Not Present

Jim Riddell, Virginia Agribusiness Council

Non-Voting Members Present

Scott Ambler, DCR
Blair Gordon, DCR
Tim Sexton, DCR

WELCOME

A quorum was established with 2 voting members present. Mr. Kindig welcomed the participants and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

FUTURE MEETING DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

The subcommittee discussed future meeting dates, times, and locations. Meetings will be held on:

September 25, 2018

October 30, 2018

All meetings will begin at 9:30 a.m. and are scheduled to end at 2:30 p.m. All meetings will be held at:

DCR Tappahannock Regional Office

772 Richmond Beach Road

Tappahannock, Virginia 22560

OTHER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS

The subcommittee reviewed the list of recommendations that were provided to the Subcommittee. The subcommittee adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

PROGRAMMATIC SUBCOMMITTEE

Voting Members Present

Darryl Glover, DCR
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau
Dana Gochenour, Lord Fairfax SWCD
Joe Wood, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Willie Woode, Northern Virginia SWCD
Greg Wichelns, Culpeper SWCD
Joseph Stepp, Hanover-Caroline SWCD
Kyle Shreve, Virginia Agribusiness Council
Carrie Swanson, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Anne Coates, Thomas Jefferson SWCD
Adrienne Kotula, Chesapeake Bay Commission
Charles Newton, Shenandoah Valley SWCD
Ricky Rash, Piedmont SWCD

Voting Members Not Present

Kendall Tyree, Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Non-Voting Members Present

Debbie Cross, DCR
Roland Owens, DCR

WELCOME

A quorum was established with 13 voting members present. Mr. Glover welcomed the participants and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

FUTURE MEETING DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

The subcommittee discussed future meeting dates, times, and locations. The first meeting will held on October 4, 2018 beginning at 1:30 p.m. and ending at 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at:

DCR Staunton Regional Office
12 Sunset Boulevard
Staunton, Virginia 22401.

The second meeting will held on November 6, 2018 beginning at 12:30 p.m. and ending at 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at:

235 Warren Street
Orange, Virginia 22960.

OTHER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS

The subcommittee reviewed the list of recommendations that were provided.

All members of the TAC agreed with supporting recommendation #1.

The subcommittee unanimously voted to table the following recommendations:

- #5 and #6 regarding the contracting and bid process;
- #8 related to TAC meetings;

- #19 regarding the replacement of components;
- #26 related to funding for demonstration and research areas;
- #27 regarding the CEF bonus for resource management plans;
- #29 regarding stream restoration projects;
- #30 related to prorated payback options for destroyed BMPs;
- #31 allowing funding for currently ineligible lands;
- #34 regarding 100% funding for BMPs on major waterways;
- #36 for non-urban stream restoration projects; and
- #38 related to priority for full-time producers.

The subcommittee unanimously voted to amend the following recommendations:

- #11 related to BMPs on alternative crops;
- #12 regarding a tier approach for a new practice;
- #13 related to the removal all practice and program caps;
- #14 related the removal of cap for some BMPs;
- #15 related to the cost share cap on larger practices; and
- #32 related to the development of BMPs for steep slopes.

STREAM PROTECTION SUBCOMMITTEE

Stream Protection Subcommittee Members Present

Mark Hollberg, DCR

Matt Kowalski, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Charlie Wootton, Chesapeake Bay Districts Representative

Ashley Wendt, Department of Environmental Quality

Jason Carter, Virginia Cattlemen's Association

Nick Livesay, Lord Fairfax SWCD

Scott Baker, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Chad Wentz, United States Dept. of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS)

Gary Boring, VASWCD Area IV Representative

Chris Barbour, Outside of the Chesapeake Bay (OCB) Districts Representative

Tom Turner, John Marshall SWCD

Luke Longanecker, Thomas Jefferson SWCD

Robert Bradford, VASWCD Area II Representative

David Massie, Culpeper SWCD

Shawn Ralston, James River Association

Voting Members Not Present

Tim Higgs, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Emily Horsley, United States Dept. of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency (USDA-FSA)

Keith Thomas, Shenandoah Valley SWCD

Stacy Horton, DCR

Non-Voting Members Present

Robert Shoemaker, DCR

Raleigh Coleman, DCR

Stacy Horton, DCR

WELCOME

The subcommittee meeting began at approximately 10am as a break-out from the full Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting. A quorum was established with 15 voting members present.

Mr. Hollberg welcomed the participants and asked the participants to introduce themselves.

FUTURE MEETING DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS

The subcommittee discussed future meeting dates, times, and locations. Meetings will be held on:

September 25, 2018

October 11, 2018

All meetings will begin at 9:30 a.m. All meetings will be held at:

DCR Staunton Regional Office

12 Sunset Boulevard

Staunton, Virginia 24401

OTHER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS

The subcommittee began by looking at the “Matrix of Stream Protection Recommendations for Program Year 2020.” The subcommittee discussed each of the matrix items and assigned each a number to indicate its prioritization based on group consensus. The ratings are as follows:

(1) High Priority

(2) Medium Priority

(3) Low Priority

There was discussion regarding how to present the subcommittee’s decisions regarding the comments in the Matrix to the full TAC, since the subcommittee is charged with deciding whether to “advance, table, or amend” each comment. The consensus of the subcommittee was that none of the comments be advanced “as-is.” The subcommittee felt that many comments have merit, but further discussion is needed to integrate similar comments together and decide on recommendations for the appropriate methodology to implement these changes within the VACS program.

Mr. Baker suggested that the subcommittee classify each Matrix item as “advance, table, or amend” and also present how the subcommittee feels that the comments could be implemented to the TAC before actually proposing language changes or creating new practice specifications.

Mr. Carter made a motion that based on the prioritization ratings for each of the Matrix suggestions, comments rated “1” and “2” will be “amended” in some form (or at the very minimum be discussed in further detail), and those with a rating of “3” will effectively be “tabled.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradford.

Further discussion: Mr. Hollberg went through each Matrix item a second time to ensure that there was a consensus on the rating for each item.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hollberg passed around a preliminary table that he put together as a starting point for future discussion by the subcommittee. The “Table of CS Rate vs. Lifespan” lists cost-share/incentive rates based on fence setback and practice lifespan.

Much of the discussion throughout the meeting involved the possibility of creating a practice similar to the obsolete SL-10T practice. Mr. Turner offered to scan a copy of the old SL-10T practice specification to share with the group for future discussion.

The subcommittee meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m. to rejoin the full TAC meeting.

RECONVENING OF THE TAC

Agency and Other Partner Updates

DCR: Mr. Glover reminded all attendees that Mr. Gary Moore, Agricultural Incentives Program Manager, retired at the end of August. His position is currently being advertised. Denney Turner, who formerly assisted Gary Moore, has been promoted to Conservation District Coordinator for the Richmond District, replacing Blair Gordon, who was previously promoted to Soil and Water Conservation District Liaison.

NRCS and FSA: Mr. Chad Wentz informed the TAC that the federal agencies were completing their fiscal year. The RCPP had about \$4 million with over 100 new contracts including contracts with DCR and grants for oyster restoration. CSP has 142 new contracts covering 55,500 acres; there are approximately 37 renewals. It was also noted that committee meetings were being held regarding the proposed Farm Bill.

NEXT MEETING DATES

October 18, 2018 – Waynesboro Public Library

November 15, 2018 – Virginia Department of Forestry, Charlottesville

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

MATRIX OF ANIMAL WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
**1A.		Mortality Freezers: adding on-farm freezer units for storing routine poultry mortality to list of BMPs eligible for both programs	Rather than converting bird carcasses into a high-phosphorus material (compost) and then spreading it on farm fields, it's now possible to preserve the value of the fats and proteins in the carcasses by storing them in a large on-farm freezers, specially designed for this very purpose. The carcasses are then hauled away and recycled into products that can be sold on the commodities market—turning a waste into a new resource. Moreover, this nutrient management practice is much more cost effective than most other agricultural BMPs, including the mortality management practices that already are eligible for state support (e.g., composting sheds and incinerators).			
**2A.	WP-4	WP-4, Section B.2.i. requires that “all livestock must be excluded from all streams in the tract before cost share or tax credit is provided.” “Tract” needs to be defined for the purposes of determining eligibility.	Participation with FSA is not a prerequisite for participation in VACS cost-share. What should District staff use to determine eligibility when no FSA maps are available? Would an alternative wording better reflect the TAC’s intentions? Use of the word farm might be interpreted as “FSA farm number, “parcel” would be taken to mean “tax map parcel”, etc. A looser definition, such as “property”, would allow each SWCD the flexibility to better prioritize projects in their area.			
3A.	WP-4	Maintain buy-in from the client, but make the cost share rate on the actual cost with no cap. Example 75% of cost. Require bids to control cost, rather than a cap.				
4A.	WP-4	Animal waste should not have a cap or the cap should be built on a per head basis. For example, cap of \$50,000 per 50 head. A 500 head dairy would have a \$500,000 cap.				
5A.	WP-4	Higher cost-share rate for WP-4 infrastructure.				
6A.	WP-4	All species 75% cost share <u>Cost-share caps:</u> Beef and Dairy Dry Storage \$150,000 Liquid Storage \$300,000	Poultry The cost share rate for poultry litter storage will remain 75% with a \$70,000 cap, as this has been enough to encourage participation. The lifespan will be raised to 20 years. Beef and Dairy			

MATRIX OF ANIMAL WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
		<p>Poultry \$70,000 Swine \$70,000 Sheep, Goats, Small Ruminants \$50,000 Horses \$50,000</p> <p>Eligibility criteria may need to be revised to prevent abuse of the program.</p>	<p>The cap for dry storage livestock waste systems involving beef or dairy cattle will increase to \$150,000. The cap for liquid beef or dairy structures will rise to \$300,000 The cost share rate will be 75% up to the cap. The interest on construction loans will be cost shareable. (unless the DEQ Loan Program is funded). There will still be significant out of pocket cost for some operations, even with the higher cap.</p> <p>Dairy farmers cannot afford waste storage for the animals they already have. Winter feeding facilities can cost \$100,000 and more; some of the dairy waste structures can cost over \$300,000. The current cost share rates are nowhere near enough to cover the cost, and even at 100% cost share through the DuPont settlement, many participants are having difficulty paying the interest on the construction loans necessary to implement the projects.</p> <p>Swine Cap will be \$70,000 and the cost-share rate 75%. Most swine operations are under CAFO requirements and need little incentive to participate.</p> <p>Sheep, Goats and Other Small Ruminates The cap for sheep, goats, and other small ruminant livestock will be \$50,000. The cost-share rate will be 75%. These species do not represent as high of a threat to the Chesapeake Bay’s water quality that cattle do.</p> <p>Horses The cap for horses will be \$50,000 and the cost-share rate will be 75%. Horses are mainly a recreational industry in Virginia and horse operations are in a far better position to afford waste storage without cost share.</p>			

MATRIX OF ANIMAL WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
**7A.	WP-4 WP-4B	Increasing the current \$70,000 cap for WP-4 and WP-4B practices to \$100,00.00	Increased construction cost, size of operations, market weight of animals, and size of the waste storage needed (based on sizing calculations). Multiple years of animal waste data has been reviewed and evaluated; by increasing the cap Districts would be able to address additional water quality concerns that Districts are currently unable to address.			
8A.	WP-4B	Include all livestock types in order to account for different management styles and resource concerns, in addition to dairy livestock operations.				
**9A.	WP-4B	Include 642-Water Well, 533-Pumping Plant and 578-Stream Crossing to the applicable NRCS standards listed				
10A.	WQ-12	Include any agricultural building creating a resource concern related to soil erosion, water quality and sediment runoff.				
11A.		Poultry Litter Transport Incentive Program	Include Shenandoah County in the current program as an eligible source provider.			
12A.		Poultry Litter Management	Develop new practices to incentivize the use of poultry litter and management per a NMP. Incentivize the use of Virginia sourced poultry litter instead of commercial fertilizer applied per a NMP on operations with a tax credit program.			
13A.		We encourage DCR/DEQ to work closely with the Virginia Poultry Federation to review the poultry litter transport information and data used in the Chesapeake Bay model.	It is essential that the model use and reflect accurate and realistic litter transport information reflecting the poultry industries contribution to nutrient loadings so as not to exaggerate nutrient transport issues. The WIP III process presents a great opportunity to reevaluate this data and work with the Poultry Federation to explore poultry litter issues further.			
14A.		Create a specific VACS practice to address manure issues on horse farms.	Frequently sees horse operations that do not store/treat their manure properly which creates a major water quality problem. Create a specific VACS practice to allow cost share for horse sacrifice lots in order to prevent overgrazing on pastureland in an effort to reduce the runoff coming from denuded horse pastures.			

MATRIX OF ANIMAL WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
15A.		Animal Waste and Winter Feeding	More emphasis on storm water management related to winter feeding and concentrated livestock areas: infiltration ditches; constructed wetlands/restoration; rain gardens; roof run off systems; and diversions and grassed waterways			
16A.		Consider creating practices for these categories: agricultural storm water management, some cover crop practices, forest harvest practices, loafing lot management, etc.				
17A.		Because of the high costs to the tax payer for the animal waste practices, we recommend a 20 year lifespan for all animal waste practices beginning in the 2020 program year.				

MATRIX OF ANIMAL WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
18A.		<p>Incentive the use of dragline manure injection systems, which will also serve to address increased compaction that is impacting production and the runoff of nutrients from the compacted land.</p> <p><u>Cost-share:</u> \$40 per injected acre/year for dragline injection Maximum \$15,000 cost-share per farm/yr.</p> <p><u>Requirements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livestock operation with liquid manure storage • Current Nutrient Management Plan at time of manure injection • Custom hired manure injection- invoice from Custom hired persons • Leased dragline injection equipment- rental invoice • Farm owned injection equipment approved by district <p><u>Participation</u> Sign-up in the winter, with field numbers and planned acres to spread provided to the District.</p>	<p>On contiguous acreage a dragline can be pumped several miles with booster pumps every estimated ¼ miles. On split and spread out properties that are prevalent in Augusta County, a frac tank (essentially a nurse tank) can be placed at the edge of fields that are distanced from the storage area. This allows the dragline and injector to continue to inject manures while nurse trucks empty into the frac tank pumping to the injector.</p> <p>Estimating that 25% of liquid manure producing farms would adopt this practice early. Our expectations are that *larger farms will initially be able to take advantage of this incentive due to their ability to bring in injector-capable contractors from longer distances. Once contractors are in the area routinely (or local contractors adopt the dragline technology), we hope that smaller farms will be able to use the technology.</p> <p>In the Chesapeake Bay Model this practice would receive a reduction for runoff and placement of N.</p>			
19A.		<p>The request that every project have a site plan, survey and determination of cut and fill adds work, time, and costs. Create a streamlined process</p>	<p>Only 10 percent of the projects actually need a site plan. Many sites for poultry litter were excavated for the litter storage at the time of the excavation for the poultry houses.</p>			

MATRIX OF ANIMAL WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
20A.		<p>No more than 70% of a District's allocation can go to animal waste unless no applications for agronomic practices are received.</p> <p>Only existing storage needs will be eligible for cost share, not expansion of the operation. Storage needs will be sized using calculations approved by DCR.</p> <p>The possibility of changing management to reduce the resource concern should be investigated, and cost share should only be approved if it is least cost alternative, technically feasible alternative that addresses the resource concern and provides the best water quality benefit to the taxpayers.</p>	<p>Waste storage and winter feeding should not be installed solely for a producer's convenience or to make the farm more productive.</p>			

NOTE: ** Submissions to the TAC

MATRIX OF COVER CROP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
1C.	FR-1s SL-1s	Increase the cost share rate and the incentives to encourage long term conversions especially on cropland and pastureland with poor soils and highly erodible land. For longer lifespans, implement deed restrictions for long term protection.	Rates for prime farmland need to be analyzed based on potential production value of cropland. However, this BMP should focus on cropland with higher erosion potential and should not be perceived as an attack on farmland. Recommend 100% cost-share for conversion costs on soils rated as Class 3 or below. Example incentive program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10 year lifespan \$100/acre ▪ 15 year lifespan \$150/acre ▪ 20 year lifespan-requires deed restriction \$200/acre ▪ 30 year lifespan-requires deed restriction \$300/acre 			
2C.	SL-1	Make this practice a 10 year only cost share practice to promote and define permanent conversion of land use with a higher rate of cost share than the proposed long term crop rotation cost share practice.	In most of Virginia, a 7 year rotation is common (5 years hay followed by 2 years of crops, back into hay). The 5 year SL-1 is being used as a long term cover crop and goes back into crops, often before the 5 year lifespan has ended. The current SL-1 is not a permanent land use conversion at all. Two practices should be offered: SL-1A for long term cover crop (5 years) and SL-1 for permanent land use conversion (10 years).			
3C.	SL-8	Turf grass production allowed in the SL-8 specialty crop cover crop practice.	More than 1/3 of the cropland in our District is in turfgrass production and an incentive is needed for these farmers to plant cover crops between harvesting and planting sod.			
4C.	SL-8	Add this to the list of “priority practices” and also adjust the CEF calculations to make this practice comparable to SL-8B in importance.	The producers that have specialty crops (particularly vegetables) strongly recommend that this practice be as much of a priority as SL-8B.			

MATRIX OF COVER CROP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
**5C.	SL-8B	Add greater flexibility in the timeline for the kill down of cover crop specified in B.11.	<p>Kill down, by some method, is part of the process of cover crop management already and should not be a limiting factor for completion of the BMP and payment. Many producers would prefer to leave the cover crops to grow as long as possible to obtain the maximum biomass and keep the soil in place. The time of killing cover crops is dependent on weather and what following crop will be planted. There is variation in the germination, nutrient uptake and subsequent growth of the cover crops.</p> <p>Completion could be verified when the coverage is checked. Kill down would still be a requirement but request that the May 15th deadline be extended to allow more management flexibility. Change the kill down date to June 1 or 15 if a deadline is still needed.</p> <p>This change would allow producers to be able to more accurately apply multiple nutrient split applications for precision management.</p>			
**7C.	SL-8B SL-8H	Removing the requirement for bin run seed testing from the SL-8B and SL-8H specifications	Practice certification is based on the establishment of 60% cover. It is counterproductive to deny payment to producers who meet the specifications of the practice but do not have seed test results to document germination rate and purity			
8C.	SL-8B SL-8H	Allow contracts to be switched from SL-8B to SL-8H or vice versa mid-year.	Would capture credits and acres that are canceled due to harvest of an SL-8B or capture additional credits when a harvest field is killed.			
9C.	SL-8B SL-8H	Remove the maximum acreage limit, find another way to prevent the program from spending all the money on commodity grain acres.				
10C.	SL-8B SL-8H	Should allow a certain amount of fertilizer or manure on the cover crop to tiller and thicken stand.				
11C.	SL-8B SL-8H WQ-4	Allow fall nutrient application if producer has a livestock operation and application is accounted for in the NMP – no imported manure.				

MATRIX OF COVER CROP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
12C.		Allow producers to add a shot of starter nitrogen to their cover crop.	To get a better stand of cover crop following a good summer harvest. Not all producers would want to do this, but some would and they would definitely see a benefit with greater cover crop growth in a shorter period of time.			
13C.	SL-8B SL-8, WQ-4	Take off the acreage cap for harvestable cover crops				
14C.	SL-8B SL-8H WQ-4	Add an incentive payment to producers who leave crop residues on fields to be planted with cover crops.				
15C.	SL-8B SL-8H WQ-4	Allow for later cover crop planting dates (Oct 5 and Oct 25 are too early for this area) – Nov 15 th . Add an extra window where the practices are eligible for tax credit only.				
16C.		Change the planting date deadlines; the current dates are difficult to work with	Differing dates have been recommended: The suggested change would have November 1st for early plant date and November 30th for the late plant date. Suggestion of December 1st or 15th being the standard planting cutoff instead of November 15th – this would encourage cover crop being planted after late soybeans (which are not often planted behind due to the current deadline dates and weather patterns)			
17C.		Eliminate the planting date restriction on cover crop practices and target the “percent cover” date requirement for practice compliance. Consider if the current percent cover date deadline is flexible with annual weather patterns.				
18C.		Give credit (even if no incentive payment) for cover crop planted after the late planting date that may not meet fall required growth but that works as an excellent trap crop in the spring in regards to sediment loss.				

MATRIX OF COVER CROP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
19C.		Give credit (even if no incentive payment) for cover crop planted after the late planting date that does meet the specs for growth and provides excellent sediment runoff prevention.				
20C.		Offer an incentive payment for flying on cover crop so that producers can get their cover crop planted earlier.	This practice is particularly useful for soybeans or cotton before leaf fall. This would increase acreage planted by late planting date.			
21C.		Provide higher payment rates	Many use airplanes to broadcast the seed, which is expensive, so a higher payment rate to supplement this practice would be helpful because broadcasting by airplane is beneficial in many ways including lessening compaction and being able to plant earlier before the late soybeans are harvested. Suggestion of \$60/acre – would make it less of a financial loss to plant			
22C.		Long term crop rotation cost share practice to define hay/pasture plantings that are within a 5 year or longer crop rotation. Practice would include lifespans between 5-9 years and would be at a lower rate than SL-1.				
23C.		Summer cover crop cost share practice to decrease soil erosion and nutrient runoff on fallow fields or crop fields unable to get cash crop planted due to extreme weather events or other extenuating circumstances.	Create a new BMP that provides incentives to plant summer cover crops. Summer cover crops could be applied to cropland that has experienced crop failure or land that could not be planted in time due to the weather. These summer crops would uptake the excess nutrients not being picked up by the planned crops and protect the soil during the summer. A cost share payment for this practice would be applicable across the state and yield considerable reductions.			
24C.		Build the soil health and carbon content of the soil by using no till, and non-sequential cover crops and crop rotation	This will increase water holding capacity, crop yields, and profits. This regime is claimed to eventually reduce erosion and the need for pesticides and chemical fertilizer.			

MATRIX OF COVER CROP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
25C.		Encourage mixed species cover crops	<p>Instead of \$8/acre bonus for rye, make the base payment for any cover crop \$23/acre or more. Many producers do not plant rye because of the seed cost or due to the rye producing too much biomass which is difficult to plant into. More research needs to be done whether rye is still the “best” cover crop species or whether it’s actually more beneficial to use Mixed Species cover crops.</p> <p>Encourage mixed species cover crops; do away with \$8/acre for “pure rye” and allow the bonus payment if it’s a cover crop of rye plus Legume or Radish.</p>			
26C.		Provide incentives for producers to grow their own cover crop seed	Often it is difficult to source rye at a reasonable cost. Some local producers are interested in harvesting their own seed to use for the following year.			
27C.		Offer a multi-year cover crop program, sort of like the old SL-8C but with more flexibility.	Farmer commits to plant cover crop on X number of acres but doesn’t have to be the same exact fields but does need to be same number of acres. Could provide a higher C/S rate to the farmer for a longer commitment to plant cover crop. May reduce administrative burden.			
28C.		Remove the limit/cap associated with the Cover Crop Program				
29C.		Higher incentives rates for cropland filter strips and cropland sod waterways should be considered.				
30C.		The “land retirement to open space” category will require higher incentives if it is to compete with market values.				

NOTE: ** Submissions to the TAC only

MATRIX OF FORESTRY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
1F.	FR-1 FR-3	Change these practices to allow DOF to make site-specific recommendations on number of trees per acre to be planted.				
2F.	FR-1 FR-3	Do away with incentive payment and make the practices 100% cost share.				
3F.	FR-3	Reduce number of stems per acre required in FR-3 from 300 to 100 stems per acre.	Deviate from the NRCS 391 standard. Allow FR-3 spec to revert back to 100 stems in order increase implementation and to make the practice more affordable and more appealing to producers.			
4F.	SL-6 FR-3	If applicant applies for FR-3, in conjunction with an SL-6, cap stays at \$70k to promote forested riparian buffers.				
5F.	FR-3 CREP	Provide 100% cost share on riparian buffers	Providing 100% cost-share on riparian buffers on crop land and pasture would be a significant incentive. Availability of seedlings has also been an issue certain years. Increased support to DOF nurseries may also be in order.			
6F.		Higher incentives for tree plantings within buffer	In order to establish more forest buffers have a rental for exclusion area if trees are planted and higher incentives for larger buffers. An example of higher incentives for longer lifespans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 15 year lifespan-\$300/acre o 20 year lifespan with deed restriction-\$350/acre o 25 year lifespan with deed restriction-\$400/acre o 30 year lifespan with deed restriction-\$450/acre 			
7F.		100% cost share for buffer establishment with 3 year establishment contract included to ensure proper establishment of forest buffer through proper maintenance.				
8F.		Consider creating a cost share option for planting trees in existing "SL6" practice buffers, possibly to include a rental incentive payment upfront.				

MATRIX OF FORESTRY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCD Support	DCR Supports
9F.		Develop buffer strategies for properties that are not traditional agriculture, but may be in a rural or even suburban setting, and have a stream flowing through their property.	Tree planting, bank stabilization, possible stream profiling, bee pollinator establishment, rain gardens could all be options. This may mean expanding the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program.			
10F.		Develop a position that can consolidate all of the best options for buffer projects. Something like a finance officer who shops around for a person for the best loan options, this person shops around for the best buffer project for landowners.	The number of programs, agencies, and cooperators that administer buffer programs is astounding. It's hard to keep a bead on everything that is out there.			
11F.		Some form of sustainable farming certification	Livestock raised on a farm that is managed using sustainable practices eventually gets better access to markets for their products. Perhaps a "Certified sustainable" label similar to what we see with the forest industry (SFI and FSC).			
12F.		With existing programs, reduce the restrictions to make the programs more palatable for farmers.	For example, allow flash grazing, allow periodic mowing, allow growth of non-timber forest products (apples, peaches, chestnuts, etc.), and allow different types of fencing.			

NOTE: ** Submissions to the TAC only

MATRIX OF NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020						
Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
1N.	NM-1A	<p>Modify or change the NM-1A so that it is only eligible for "new" acres or Nutrient Management Plans.</p> <p>Develop a second nutrient management and verification practice (existing plans).</p>	<p>"New" is defined as land that has not had a Nutrient Management Plan for 18 months or more.</p> <p>Develop a second Nutrient Management Plan and Verification practice (call it for now a NM-2025). This new practice would require verification as a first step. The plan writer would have to verify implementation of the previous year's nutrient management plan or the previous year of any existing plan. Cost may be more than current NM-1A, but gain verified acres.</p>			
2N.	NM-3C	<p>Modify NM-3C specification to be consistent with the proposed NM-5N specifications to allow for cost-share payment to be made for acres receiving zero application rate based on PSNT.</p>				
3N.		<p>Virginia Agricultural BMP Lime Program</p>	<p>A soil may contain all or more than the nutrients a plant needs, but unless the soil pH is in the correct range, the plant cannot access the nutrients. A program could be established which would provide landowners cost-share to correct the pH in their fields. The bound nutrients released would increase plant growth therefore decreasing soil erosion and decreasing nutrients leaching by increased plant uptake. The program would be of interest to most all farmers throughout the Commonwealth from the crop fields of Accomack County to pasture fields in Lee County.</p> <p>Pasturelands are often overlooked compared to croplands when it comes to Nutrient Management. To be eligible for the program landowners would be requirement to have a Nutrient Management Plan and take scheduled soil samples. There also could be an expanded payment or cost-share for the use of "Rick Haney Method Soil Testing" which utilizes "green chemistry" to promote soil health by providing the user the actual available nitrogen in the soil and is not based on fertilization needs of a particular type of plant like traditional soil tests results provide. This would help to reduce the over application of nutrients by applying only what the needed in the soil.</p>			

MATRIX OF NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
4N.		Nutrient management payments should be based on implementation not just writing the plan (recordkeeping, soil tests, application rates etc.)				
5N.		Higher incentives for nutrient management plans on environmentally sensitive areas				
6N.		More focus on precision nutrient management				
7N.		The precision nutrient application practices also need to be expanded to include turfgrass, fruit, and vegetables.				
8N.		The NMP requirement for SL-1 practice is overkill				

NOTE: ** Submissions to the TAC only

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020						
Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
1P.		Increase Funding to Support SWCDs	Provide Districts with a more reasonable operating budget, technical assistance funding and engineering support. WIP III goals will most likely not be reached without increased operational support and technical assistance funding. The continuous staff turnover makes it hard for SWCDs to put quality BMPs on the ground			
2P.		Modify how technical assistance is allocated.	Technical assistance is largely based on the amount cost share spent but doesn't take into account the amount of time it takes to implement certain practices. For example, a large SL-6 and a small SL-6 take about the same time when it comes to planning but the technical assistance is allocated very different. Structural practices require engineering, contractor meetings, multiple inspections, layouts, design work, surveys etc. compared to cropland practices that require far less. Additionally, the current system incentivizes Districts to fund high dollar practices that may not be cost efficient based on the achieved nutrient reduction.			
3P.		More funding for education and technical assistance for farmers	Districts need additional funds to educate farmers, write grazing plans, and follow up with farmers within the first few years of implementation to continue the education process. It is suggested that some way be used to encourage or require producers to attend Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia Forage and Grassland Council meetings.			
**4P.		Using CEF value rather than hydrologic unit (HU) rankings as the primary factor for ranking instances for the cost-share program.	Stronger utilization of the CEF value over the HU. HUs are archaic and the CEF value is more scientific when comparing like practices; and therefore, the CEF value should be the primary factor Generated CEF value should be used as the primary ranking factor when comparing like practices as it encompasses many detailed parameters already when taking into account the HU. This will make it easier to explain to producers why their application was not funded.			
5P. (NC)		Consider awarding a bid to a contractor to complete projects.				
6P. (NC)		Allow Districts to hire contractors directly	This would allow the taxpayers to get much better deals and would force contractors to a higher standard of work since they will lose contracts if they do not			

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020						
Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
			implement the practice to appropriate specifications. Larger scale contracts could save tremendous amounts of money. Allow the Districts to contract out the fence and the landowner contract out the other engineered practices. If Districts did this, we could also buy fencing material in bulk and save tax dollars.			
7P.		VACS Regional Program	Strongly support any regionally specific VACS programs and/or implementation. Baseline surveys, outreach and educational programming would an essential part of developing any regional program in order to get the most accurate data and to be able to determine what resource concerns have yet to be addressed.			
8P.		Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	Due to the geographical differences throughout Virginia, it may be beneficial to have TAC discussions based on SWCD areas prior to state-wide meetings.			
9P.		Allow for more proactive approaches for BMPs instead of being strictly retroactive.	We work with many farms that are transitioning or have new owners that want to participate but are ineligible due to certain VACS criteria.			
10P		Expand VACS program participant eligibility	A significant portion of the current, post 100% SL-6 interest is among new landowners, who recently acquired their farms and are just learning about SWCDs. Similarly, a new practice for land leasers needs to be available, with a reduced lifespan and stream fencing requirement, and perhaps a lower percentage of cost-share.			
11P.		Allow for BMPs to be applied to this land with alternative crops, such as hemp, that may be established in the next few years.				
12P.		Multi-practice or tier approach for a new practice	For example: Tier 1 – a producer would be implementing NMP, conservation tillage, split nitrogen on corn, and split nitrogen on small grain. Tier 2- a producer might do all of Tier 1 plus a cover crop. Tier 3- a producer might do all of Tier 2 plus grid sampling with precision nutrient management. Based on the practices the producer is implementing he would get one large payment. This way it would be a lot less work on the District and get credit for all the practices the producer is implementing. Instead of inputting each practice individually and ranking each one separately, we could enter one instance for a farm and check all the practices that producer is implementing on that particular farm.			

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
13P.		Consider removing all practice caps and program caps funding were to become unrestricted as suggested for this exercise.				
14P.		Remove the \$50,000 cap for cost-share on some BMPs.	There are farmers that would like to implement BMPs but cannot afford to do this on their own. Do not remove the cap for Cover Crops as the majority of these are being implemented anyway. If a producer is asking for more than \$50,000 for cover crops chances are they are a larger producer that has figured out that cover crops are beneficial to their operation. Perhaps finding a better way to track voluntary cover crops (i.e. CCI-SL8). A \$50,000 cap per practice type would be more reasonable, with exceptions going to SL-6s and Ag. waste.			
15P.		Consider removing the cost share cap as it limits feasibility of larger practices. If this isn't an option, consider having a tiered cap approach to BMPs.	The larger the AW storage/the more waste being treated the higher the cap. The more linear feet of exclusion of a project, the higher the cap.			
16P.		Anytime cost-share increases above the current 2019 program year rates, the lifespan should go up as well.				
17P.		Consider structuring cost share rates relative to the BMPs associated N/P/Sediment reductions.				
18P.		Cost share payments to be paid by component or in a phase process.	This would relieve the financial burden from land owners and contractors to put practices on the ground. The VACS program is set up to where payment cannot be made until completed. Some landowners do not have the ability to pay contractors as they go when components are installed. Most projects take over 90 days to install and in return most contractors require payment within 90 days. Change payment schedule to allow multiple payments throughout construction phases to lessen the burden on the landowner.			
19P.		Replacement of Components	Landowners that have participated in VACS programs have installed many components, with some of these components the manufacture warranty does not last or match the lifespan of the practice (10 years). There is no resource for the landowner to pursue when components fail after the warranties expire but the practice is still in lifespan.			

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
20P.		VACS practice that encourages producers to report all conservation practices implemented in their farming operation.	<p>This would require the producer to visit the District office and using aerial photographs, discuss and notate on the photos what BMPs are currently being implemented on the tract. There would need to be a minimum payment (\$200?) rate to encourage this and then a per acre (or field or tract) payment per practice and also a maximum payment rate.</p> <p>There might be consideration given to the % of the operations acres reported in determining payment minimum and maximum payments. The NRCS CSP program could be a reference, but not duplication.</p> <p>The ideal situation is a self-certification application for the producer. The producer would access the conservation planning suite application, drop a pin on an aerial image map and report from a dropdown list the BMPs implemented. Once a BMP is reported, an email message is sent to the respective SWCD for field verification. An alternative for the application would be for SWCD staff to preliminarily report practices in a similar matter.</p>			
21P.		An incentive could be provided for the producers to report their information for cover crop, nutrient management, no-till, buffers, etc.	When asked what incentive would be needed, the answers ranged from \$10-25 per acre to report this data.			
22P.		Refine the suite of BMPs and design standards that would be most suitable for equine and urban agriculture operations	Expand the VACS program to include these practices and support these kinds of operations. Support a new funding source to work on water quality issues from these areas. Provide adequate technical assistance funding to SWCDs to track the voluntary implementation of BMPs from these operations.			
23P.		Incorporate new practices that address storm water runoff issues in loafing areas and barnyards, particularly where stocking rate is high.	Allowing horse operations to participate in the practice, regardless of consistent agricultural income. Many horse farms have lesson and/or boarding income, but may only sell a horse once every few years. If a water quality issue exists, conservation specialists should have the means to assist landowners in addressing it.			
24P.		Open all livestock BMPs to equine boarding and pleasure operations to address pasture and manure management resource concerns. Create and fund new BMPs for	Horse operations are creating water quality problems and if ignored many counties and districts will not meet the intent of the CB WIP. One thought is to offer less cost share like 50% for the equine practices...			

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020						
Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
		equine issues and recognize that horses are a water quality problem.				
25P.		Expand VACS program participant eligibility	Include landowners with water quality issues regardless of animal species or length of property ownership. District staff working on agricultural lands with horses need to be able to implement practices that address water quality concerns regardless of the nature of the horse ownership (pleasure, rescue, equine business, etc.).			
26P.		Funding should be made available for producers that are willing to provide land for demo and research areas	Overall it is a suggestion that more research is needed, especially pertaining to cover crop species and timing. With the current staff reduction from the Extension Offices, less local research and demos is being done. The research in nutrient management, cover crop timing and species, and crop germination/pest management is invaluable to producers. Many would be willing to participate if some assistance was provided both financially and with possibly District staff participation.			
27P.		Resource Management Plans (RMPs)	Remove the new CEF 10% reduction for tracts in approved RMPs.			
28P.		All practices included under the conservation planning practice should receive priority consideration in the ranking process.				
29P.		Add a stream restoration practice that is not limited to participants that qualify for the VACS program in order address severely eroded streams on rural lands. Modify the cap associated with the practice to allow for larger restoration projects.	The VACS program does not currently provide cost share for true stream restoration. The current streambank stabilization practice available under VACS is not an adequate solution for these channelized streams. The practice restrictions and the \$50,000 cap are major obstacles for completing this type of work.			
30P.		Modify the contract language to remove the prorated payback option for BMPs that are destroyed etc.	Push for higher incentives but counteract the incentives with stricter repayment rules to discourage landowners from abandoning or destroying BMPs. We have seen several SL-1s destroyed due to rises in grain prices where it was more cost effective to destroy the BMP and convert the land to crops because the farmer only had to pay back a small portion of the contract.			

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
31P.		Allow funding to be applied on land that doesn't qualify under current VACS rules for practices such as critical area treatment and tree plantings.				
32P.		Develop practices that can be applied on orchards and vineyards in order to reduce pollution coming from these operations that typically are established on steep slopes.	These practices could include infiltration trenches, wetland creation, rain gardens, grass waterways, diversions etc.			
33P.		Consider offering 100% cost-share on streams that are identified as impaired by DEQ.				
34P.		Offer 100% cost-share on major waterways-North Fork, South Fork, North River, etc.				
35P.		Consider a practice that provides cost-share or tax credit to rehab or construct a farm pond.	These ponds provide a settlement area for sediment and nutrients. Ponds should not be constructed for watering livestock.			
36P.		Non-urban stream restoration opportunities exist within the agriculture sector. Cost share could be improved for this option.				
37P.	WP-4	Have a clearinghouse of designs possibly 15 or more already approved by the state engineer to avoid the time and cost of engineering. If a landowner has an unusual location or must fit a building into a tight place the option to hire an engineer would still exist				
38P.		Give priority for cost-share to the full functioning family farms (those with greater than 50% of their income from agriculture production. Part-time farmer less priority.				
39P. (NC)	SL-6	Flash grazing of livestock in excluded buffer	Consider allowing flash grazing in exclusion areas. Outline conditions where this would be acceptable. Particularly consider allowing winter grazing options. This option should not substantially affect the integrity of the BMP as livestock would be less apt to loaf in stream in winter months. Could even offer this option and provide a reduced cost share rate in exchange for the flexibility to winter graze/flash graze the exclusion area.			

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
40P. (NC)	SL-6	<p>SL-6 Stream Exclusion with Option Top of Bank Electric for Flash Grazing Within the Buffer</p> <p>This proposed practice would follow all existing SL-6 practice guidelines with three changes to address weed control by grazing within the 35 foot buffer.</p> <p>The SL-6 Flash Grazing Practice will offer <u>10% less cost-share</u> then the normal rate of the SL-6 during that program year. The cap for that program year will govern for the new SL-6 flash grazing practice.</p>	<p>Many landowners are reluctant to exclude livestock and create an unused area for invasive weeds and shrubs to thrive. Even in the state program where mowing is allowed, the buffer just adds another maintenance chore to the workload two or three times a year. Landowners consistently state that added maintenance is a major issue in the reluctance to fence streams.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eligible components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An eligible component would be one strand of High Tensile Wire along the top of bank to protect the stream when being flash grazed. • High Quality Solar Charger with power surge protection to protect from lightning strike. 2. Flash grazing will be allowed to control weeds and reduce grass and will be allowed twice during the growing season. The size of buffer and number of cattle will dictate the amount of time allowed but in no case will exceed four days. The conservation district must be notified before the cattle are allow in and upon removal. Any violation of the flash grazing option or any access into the stream other than a hardened crossing if it was the original alternative water supply will be non-compliance and will result in the loss of flash grazing rights or the return of all cost-share funds. 			
41P. (NC)	SL-6	<p>Allow flash grazing of SL-6 buffers.</p>	<p>Flash grazing to be defined in this program as a brief period of time (1-2 days) to allow livestock within a stream buffer to graze and manage vegetation. Stream banks will be protected with temporary fencing at a minimum composed of 1 strand hot electric. Flash grazing allowed only two times a year. Producer must notify the district of flash grazing dates and get approval prior to flash grazing.</p>			
42P. (NC)	SL-6	<p>Establish a silvopasture system to provide shade. This practice would piggy-back on an existing SL-6 practice and provide for the establishment of shade for <u>upland</u> pasture on those sites with stream exclusion.</p> <p>2 year maintenance payment of \$200 per acre</p>	<p>An increasing issue being raised by cattlemen regarding the fencing of streams is that the shade is being fenced out. While there is still limited debate as to how much shade is needed for cattle, the research does show benefits related to controlling the temperature of cattle. These include weight gains, breeding efficiency, and reduced stress on the livestock. An option is to use portable shade. Cattle producers with more than a few cattle cannot manage a portable shade</p>			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
		5 year maintenance payment of \$200 per acre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifespan is 15 years. • Cost Share rate 100% or maximum of \$6,000 per acre • Maximum acreage is three acres for every 25 acres of pasture in the grazing system. • A cap of \$6,000 per acre with a maximum cap of \$36,000 per grazing plan will be added to the eligible cap of the SL-6 for that program year. 	system. This unfortunately takes six to seven years even with fast growing species. It offers a long lasting solution once established. <u>Eligible components:</u> Site Preparation Tree planting Cage protection or fence protection - All methods for protection are expensive and represent the largest expense of establishment. Maintenance is the responsibility of the landowner. Compliance inspection will be each year until establishment is confirmed. Lack of compliance will result in the repayment of funds.			
43P. (NC)		Shade alternatives developed for cattle	Many farmers are resistant to excluding cattle from streams because that area makes up the majority of their shade.			
44P. (NC)		Providing cost share to replace out of lifespan watering troughs with cost share assistance	Plastic troughs fading/failing due to years exposed to weather. Without providing cost share assistance to replace these watering troughs, producers will be inclined to open buffer areas on streams banks to livestock since practice is out of lifespan.			
45P. (NC)		Invasive Species	VACS does not have an outlet to combat invasive species. If it did, landowners could combat these species and apply more sustainable cover to reduce sediment and bacteria in waterways.			
46P. (NC)		Consider 100% cost share and rental payments for non-riparian tree planting OR connect non-riparian tree planting to the creation of shade in livestock pastures.				
47P. (NC)		Offer a bonus payment for buffers that already exist on a property.	Some areas may have a stream where forest cover already exists. Since the existing forest condition may already be considered a forested buffer, the acreage may not qualify for some of the existing buffer programs because they tend to focus on establishment more. Offer a payment for the areas that already have buffers.			
48P.		Allow SWCDs to make payments to co-payees (lenders).	This is often an issue for some lenders that prevents BMP implementation. Farmer financing is often an issue and flexibility and creative options and solutions are needed. Low Interest Loan program worked!			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
49P.	WP-4	Fund the DEQ Ag Loan Program or allow assignments to the bank and joint checks with the bank of the cost-share funds. The loan program needs to come back for big WP-4 practices.				
50P.		BMP Loan Program	Suggest DEQ re-instate the BMP Loan Program or DCR develop a loan program. This would relieve the financial burden from land owners and contractors to put programs on the ground. The VACS program is set up to where payment cannot be made until completed. Some landowners do not have the ability to pay contractors as they go when components are installed. Most projects take over 90 days to install and in return most contractors require payment within 90 days.			
51P.		There needs to be a way for producers not to have to have as large cash upfront outlay for high dollar practices.	Either a low or no interest loan or part of the cost-share payment up front to help with purchasing materials. This issue kept two people from doing SL-6 practices with us this past year.			
52P.	NM-1	Allow NM-1s to be tax credit eligible since they are being verified				
53P.		Feed mixing equipment tax credit program for the purchase of equipment (related to the precision feeding and forage management BMP and similar to the tax credit purchase program for conservation tillage equipment). Tax credit for this equipment purchase should not be dairy specific.				
54P.		Alternative energy system tax credit program to encourage installation of alternative energy systems to meet the farm's energy demands and reduce resource concerns related to energy consumption. Alternative systems included, but not limited to anaerobic digesters, solar, wind, geothermal, etc.				
55P.		Offer higher tax credits or cost share for no till equipment purchases for farmers that meet certain criteria.	For some practices such as critical area plantings, pasture renovations, cropland conversion, many producers have a hard time finding access to no till planting equipment or are charged very high rates to plant small acreages. This can be a major hurdle for landowners.			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
56P.		Tax Credits - Raise the tax credit on conservation tillage and precision application equipment.	Inflation has driven the price of equipment up while the tax credit has remained static for some time. For example the sprayer this farmer is looking to buy is \$150,000. The tax credit is \$3,750.			
57P.		Farmers like to be able to “carry forward” their tax credits; consider allowing farmers to choose whether or not they want a refund of unused credit or want to carry it forward.	This could save the state money if credits weren’t used in the 5 years.			
58P.		Financial assistance for precision equipment:	<p>Though there is a tax credit option for the purchase of some precision equipment, it is suggested that more assistance may be needed for producers to purchase their own monitoring systems or to upgrade their current system. It can cost up to \$20,000 just to purchase the computer systems to obtain yield data and calculate the precision nutrients needed.</p> <p>For producers that have some of the monitoring equipment already, it can cost more than \$5,000 to purchase the computer equipment needed to print reports that can be used for precision nutrient management data information and distribution of that data.</p>			
59P. (NC)		Consider offering a tax credit only practice to help incentivize the removal or dilapidated farm buildings and other impervious surfaces on ag operations.	Ultimately these areas could be over seeded and would be contributing less runoff potential.			
60P.		Opportunity to grant a second extension (carryover) to our participants if needed on a case by case circumstance	The local SWCD Board should have the authority to grant a second extension for the VACS Program, rather than needing approval from DCR central office. The District knows what circumstances ie.(weather, contractor shortage, granting approvals late in the program year, etc.) a participant may be facing.			
61P.		Consider modifying tracking to allow for the capture of more/better data so as to allow for more accurate reporting to the Bay Model.	It appears that the measures SWCDs capture in tracking are severely lacking in regards to aligning with the measurements associated with the Bay Model.			
62P.		Since developed land has a considerable effect on the Bay, Virginia should dedicate resources to establishing an Easement program to keep land in agriculture and have required conservation measures spelled out in the				

MATRIX OF PROGRAMMATIC AND NON-CREDIT (NC) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020						
Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
		easements. In order to be eligible for an easement, the farm must have a fully implemented RMP.				
63P.		Create a mentorship program for those who are considering adopting precision rotational grazing. Consider incentives to support the mentors.				

NOTE: ** Submissions to the TAC

MATRIX OF STREAM PROTECTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
1S.	LE-2, SL-6A, SL-6, SL-9, SL-6B	Automatic 10% reduction to CEF for farms that have proper stocking rates determined by a certified conservation planner or grazing management specialist. Pasture acreage and livestock numbers are already being reported in the Tracking program.				
2S.	LE-2	Consider offering a 5 year option for SL-6s (perhaps at a reduced cost-share rate)	Sometimes (particularly on rented ground) the farmer doesn't have control for the 10 year lifespan.			
3S.	SL-6(s)	Bring back 100% cost share on SL-6s (that meet criteria)	Cost per animal unit and severity of water quality impact should be included in the ranking system. Allow the districts to prioritize practices and not guarantee 100% to every practice, only the ones with the highest water quality benefits. Let the districts use their secondary considerations and their VACS allocation to address the worst problems first.			
4S.	SL-6	Bring back 100% SL-6, but without guaranteed funding. Cap stays at \$70k for 100% cost share, but with additional decreased cost share rate (80%) given for any costs above \$70k.	Projects would have to compete with all other cost share practices. 100% SL-6 program would require a NMP and proper stocking rates as determined by certified conservation planner or grazing management specialist.			
5S.	SL-6s	Create a Blanket Permit Process for Simple SL-6s	There should be a streamlined cultural and T&E permit for SL-6s and similar practices. Districts invest substantial time in submitting individualized reviews that are returned indicating no impact—proceed with practice, even when it is sent up a level. Several layers of “red tape” can be eliminated if there was a standardized permit and installation procedure. For example, if the practice does not impact wetlands, does not involve a stream crossing- it should be allowed to move forward without delay. NRCS had worked this out but the new DCR planning process seems to more traditional and potentially time consuming.			
6S.	SL-6	Incorporate a rental or per payment for SL-6 buffers	This would address one of the longstanding arguments farmers raise against fencing the stream out- losing the productive land behind the fence. This was one of the strong arguments for CREP. However, CREP is much more complicated and deters many potential participants due to its complicated			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
			payment structures. Any per acre payment for buffers should be made at the time of the original cost-share payment. This would also place a strong emphasis on larger buffers and provide a good mechanism for conservationist to het the fence set further away from the streambank.			
7S.	SL-6	<p>Create a CCI-SL6 Practice</p> <p>This would look similar to the CCI-SE1 but would require management of the structural practices as well as the fence. Increase the lifespan for 10 years. Provide \$1.50/ ft. of stream bank protected with an additional \$10/acre for pasture.</p>	<p>Greater nutrient reductions are achieved with the addition of the pasture land management component. In tandem with this action, the CCI-SE1 should be reduced to \$.50/ linear foot of stream. This could remain a five year practice or be a 10 year lifespan. This practice would be geared to offer incentive to old SL-6 practices with 35 foot or more buffers for both fence maintenance as well as water system maintenance. If the water system begins to fail, the livestock are returned to the stream. This would replace the need to stack CCI practices (not happening much any way so we are not getting buffer with our CCI SE-1) VA gets more model credits with buffers and stream exclusion and pasture management.</p>			
8S.	Continuing Conservation Initiative CCI for Water Systems and Fence	<p>Provide a continuing conservation initiative for the entire stream exclusion system to protect the taxpayers' investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This practice would be for projects that were originally cost shared and have come out of lifespan. • Cost share per foot of fence, not the feet of the stream itself. This more accurately corresponds to the maintenance needs of the project. Cost share rate should be increased to reflect the higher cost of labor and materials due to inflation. \$1.50/foot. Fence must continue to meet specifications. • Cost share for the maintenance of the watering system. Troughs will have to maintain adequate gravel and stay operational for the lifespan. A flat rate of \$150 	<p>There is a \$1/foot incentive payment CCI-SE-1 to re-enroll projects falling out of lifespan. There is no incentive payment for maintaining the watering system or crossings. The fence, watering system, and crossings have to be built to NRCS specifications which, if properly maintained, can last decades longer than the contractual lifespan. Trough pads fail because the gravel around the pad is scattered by livestock. Trough valves start leaking after a number of years and the plastics in the trough can photo degrade. After the lifespan, cattle can be released into the stream for free rather than making the necessary maintenance. Crossings gradually deteriorate until they are no longer preventing soil erosion. The pumping system associated with a well may go bad and be too expensive to replace. This has already happened in some cases under the CREP program.</p>			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
		per-trough will be available, as well as a \$500 flat rate payment for the system itself, which includes well, pump, etc. •Lifespan will be 10 years for the CCI for water systems and can be re-enrolled.				
9S.		CCI program expanded to include assistance in repairing/maintaining water systems, for example those installed with an SL-6. Cost share rate 50% of estimated cost to repair components of water system installed in out of lifespan practice, up to a \$20,000 cap. Twenty-five percent tax credit for any out of pocket eligible expense, capped at \$17,500.				
10S.	SL-6	Provide an extra incentive for SL-6 projects that will practice rotational grazing management. For example, a yearly incentive payment for practicing rotational grazing for the first three years of implementation.				
11S.		More flexibility for stream exclusion fencing-more setback options besides 10' and 35'.	Different payment rates for 10', 20', 30', 40' etc. Different setbacks within the same field, less restriction overall. Potential example below: • 10' setback- 60% Cost Share • 20' setback- 75% Cost Share • 30' setback- 90% Cost Share • 40' setback- 100% Cost Share			
12S.	SL-6	Modify practice failure section so when cost-share for fence replacement for a BMP is paid the lifespan doesn't start over. Consider offering more than one practice failure payment if properly documented and deemed needed/eligible.	Offer an option so that if a farmer signs up for the 10 year lifespan SL-6 they could receive a guarantee that if the fence is taken out by the flood that they get cost share to help rebuild it. This might make a producer more likely to enroll.			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
13S.	SL-6	Offer cost share funds to go back to a BMP that is out of lifespan or at the very end of the lifespan to help get the BMP components back up to snuff and BMP on track so it can be beneficial to the farmer and provide the nutrient reductions needed in the next X number of years.	SL-6 in year 9 or 10- provide cost share to help the farmer fix up crossings, add stone to trough area, etc. This could be a part of the verification process and program and farmer could get cost-share for practice improvements and upgrades if they agree to maintain for another 10 years. Providing the farmer a true incentive to reenlist in the program.			
14S.	SL-6	Consider 100% cost share for SL-6 projects along with rent payments on the excluded acres.				
15S.	SL-6	Provide the same components as the SL-6, but with additional cost share in exchange for a longer lifespan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current option of 10 years and 80% cost share will still be available • 15 year lifespan will receive 90% cost share • 20 year lifespan will receive 100% cost share • Cost share cap will be increased to \$100,000 	The SL-6 stream exclusion practice currently has a 10 year lifespan. The lifespan of the practices has not been a limiting factor in recruiting participation nearly as much as the cost share rates have. Stream exclusion projects under the DuPont settlement have a 15 year lifespan with 100% cost share, and no applications were cancelled due to the longer lifespan. For fields that are expected to stay under the same ownership, a longer lifespan could help secure the taxpayers' investment.			
16S.	SL-6	SL-6 Stream Exclusion with Option Annual Hay Removal Proposed Practice: This proposed practice would follow all existing SL-6 practice guidelines with one clarification change to address weed control and eliminate the landowner's feeling that profit loss resulted from establishment of the 35 foot buffer. There should be no adverse effect so the cost-share rate will only be reduced by 5% from the Program Year rate for the normal SL-6. The cap will remain the same as the SL-6 option.	Issue: Many landowners are reluctant to exclude livestock and create an unused area for invasive weeds and shrubs to thrive. Even in the state program where mowing is allowed, the buffer just adds another maintenance chore to the workload two or three times a year. They are also concerned about taxed land not being used for profit. Maintenance is a consistent reason given for the reluctance to fence streams. Note: Thirty five feet is very narrow for modern equipment. This practice will not require but may actually result in a wider buffer so that hay equipment can be used. One cutting of hay can be removed from the buffer annually. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Nutrient Management Plan is a requirement 2. Nutrients can be added but only one half of normal production to avoid runoff and leaching into the stream 3. Routine weed control must be mechanical 			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
			4. Invasive weeds can be controlled by chemical means by spot spraying			
17S.	SL-6	<p>(SL-6 Leased Land) Stream Exclusion Practice Specific for Rented Land for WIP III</p> <p>Proposed Practice: Provide hardened livestock access, stream exclusion fencing and solar charger with surge protection to exclude livestock from streams on rented land.</p> <p><u>NO</u> OPTION is allowed for a mechanical water system or rotational grazing. If that is a goal of the landowner or renter, they may choose the SL-6 practice instead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback will be top of bank. • Lifespan is 15 years. • Cost Share rate 100% cost controlled by District award of Bid • Cap is \$70,000 • Maintenance is the responsibility of the landowner. Owner and renter must sign an understanding for maintenance in addition to the application parts I, II, and III. • Compliance inspection will be twice during the summer grazing season. Lack of compliance will result in the repayment of funds. <p>Eligible components include: Well armored and hardened access Two strand high tensile electric fence Quality solar charger with surge protection in the line fence</p>	<p>Short term leases present a significant problem when it comes to implementing conservation practices. Landowners and renters cannot justify making long-term investments in the land because they cannot recover their costs. Additionally, cattlemen need assurance that their cattle have access to water at all times. Cattlemen are assured their cattle have water if there is direct access to a stream. However, cattlemen are not assured their cattle have water with alternative watering systems, which can fail.</p> <p>The practice will improve water quality, control erosion and eliminate direct access to live streams where there is a defined water quality problem except at the drinking access point. Stream exclusion fencing is a required component of this practice.</p> <p>Contracting: To maintain quality control, consistency, and <u>control of the cost</u> of components, the district shall annually issue an Invitation for Bid for excavation and fencing. The successful contractor for excavating and the successful contractor for fencing will be responsible for the installation of all leased land systems approved for that program year. Multiple districts may contract together.</p> <p>Justification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of a well armored hardened access and the prohibition on a mechanical system is to address the need for a reliable water source. • The solar charger must be high quality and surge protection installed in the fence to limit lightening damage to the charger. • A well designed flood gate system is to be used to limit maintenance. • Having the district contract maintains quality, consistency, cost control, and eliminates confusion between owner and renter as to who is responsible for installation. 			

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		Well-designed flood gate system				
18S.		Consider allowing temporary fence along rivers that have known flooding issues.	Farmers often don't want to commit to an SL-6 because maintenance of permanent exclusion fence is risky on their site. This is a cost saving way to accomplish the goal of exclusion and save money and provides much needed flexibility to the participant.			
19S.		Top of Bank Stream Exclusion – Offer a top of bank stream exclusion option with 35% cost-share.				
20S.	SL-9	<p>Incentive for Maintaining Proper Stocking Rates Variation of the SL-9</p> <p><u>Proposed Practice</u> A practice similar to the cover crop payment system where producers are paid a given rate per acre per year when in compliance with the prescribed stocking rate for the given piece of land.</p> <p>The practice can be offered for a 5 year contract. For discussion purposes, \$25 per acre.</p> <p>Cap of 200 acres per any one landowner to prevent too much cost-share from going to one operation and impeding the implementation of other projects.</p> <p>The payment is intended to help the producer with cost associated with improving the pasture. For example; cost of seed, herbicides, fertilizer, labor, and cost of renting equipment to spread or drill.</p>	<p>The root cause of many of the water quality problems associated with pasture land comes from overstocking livestock. The main response given by farmers who are overgrazing is that large numbers are needed to meet cash flow. Few farmers would participate in cost share projects if maintaining stocking rates were mandatory, but an effort should be made to reward those who are willing to do better.</p> <p><u>Proposed Practice</u> A practice similar to the cover crop payment system where producers are paid a given rate per acre per year when in compliance with the prescribed stocking rate for the given piece of land.</p> <p><u>Requirements</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All livestock must be fenced out of perennial and intermittent water sources. 2. Participation in this practice makes the producer eligible for cost share on cross fencing and livestock watering systems for rotational grazing. 3. A short duration sign up period would take place in July to allow for planning that would include possible fall pasture improvements. 4. Carrying capacity of a given parcel would be determined by using Web Soil Survey to determine how many Animal Unit Months it can support and the use 			

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Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
			<p>of the Pasture Conditioning Scoresheet. A small percentage increase (10%) in AUM could be a secondary consideration based on verifiable yields.</p> <p>5. Producers would agree to maintain the suggested number of livestock with exceptions for temporarily leased bulls and twin calves on breeding operations.</p> <p>6. Producers would be subject and agree to a minimum number of “head count” inspections per year at random by district staff with no more than 24-hrs notice to prevent producers from removing livestock prior to inspections.</p> <p>7. A nutrient management plan and a rotational grazing plan is a requirement for the practice.</p> <p>8. NRCS Pasture Conditional Score sheet will be used to determine initial pasture quality and track performance of the pasture throughout the lifespan of the contract. Recommendations will be suggested for the producer if pasture score becomes unsatisfactory.</p> <p>9. A producer must be found in compliance with every inspection by district staff to be eligible for payment at the end of the year.</p> <p>10. Being found out of compliance would forfeit the producer of the payment in the same year, but not the entire contract. The producer can get in compliance and be eligible the following years of the contract lifespan. If found out of compliance in two separate years during the contract, it becomes cancelled and cost share on watering systems and cross fence is to be refunded.</p>			
21S.	SL-9	Offer a pasture renovation BMP	<p>Overgrazed pastures are common; improved pastures lead to better/more nutrient reductions. BMP could help pay to establish good vegetative cover and for needed soil amendments and nutrients to help ensure health of pasture and support improved stands. Practice needs to be holistic and provide cost share for not just seed but soil amendments as both components are essential to healthy pastures.</p> <p>Provide an incentive payment/BMP payment to producers who maintain a certain percentage of vegetative cover and follow a set stocking rate on grazed/pasture areas. (Could capture as pasture management and get credits.)</p> <p>SL-9 practice is not always practical as it is very hard to achieve what is asked in</p>			

MATRIX OF STREAM PROTECTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Item #	Ag. BMP	Recommendations	Comments	TAC Supports	SWCDs Support	DCR Supports
			this spec. Need a practice that dials back the expectations to something more realistic.			
**22S.	SL-9	Adding new well as a component to the current SL-9 practice	It has been found through the recertification process that many of the older spring developments are not reliable. It would be a help to the producers to provide some cost-share for a new well.			
23S.	SL-9 SL-10	Forage and Biomass Planting	In grazing operations increasing forage and biomass in return can accomplish the same benefits as cover crops to reduce sediment and bacteria in the waterways. There is not an outlet in VACS for this.			
24S.	SL-10	Additional incentives beyond infrastructure	Incentives payments to improve pasture-grazing heights, rotation schedules, soil fertility, nutrient management etc. to improve pasture quality and reduce pollution runoff.			
25S.		Wildlife habitat plantings cost share program to promote living field borders, conversion of crop land to wildlife habitat and insectary rows.	Cost share program would allow for payment for site preparation, plant establishment, invasive plant control, etc.			
26S.		Summer stockpiling cost share program for the conversion of a cold season grass pasture to native warm season grasses.	Cost share available for establishment of warm season grasses and for temporary fencing and watering supplies. To be eligible for this program, all streams and waterbodies on the property must be previously excluded from livestock.			
27S.		Cost share to establish native warm season grasses and pollinator habitat within buffer area.	Warm season grasses have deeper root structures than cool season grasses which will provides more streambank stability.			
28S.		Cost share made available for water monitoring devices to reduce farmer concern.	Many farmers are resistant to excluding cattle from streams because they are hesitant to rely on alternative water systems that are mechanical and can shut off due to mechanical failures or power outages.			
29S.		Consider adding forage management payments during the first 3 years of establishing precision rotational grazing practices.				
30S.		We suspect WIP 2 levels of off-stream watering likely exist as voluntary practices. Couple this practice to tree planning options in pastures.				

NOTE: ** Submissions to the TAC