THE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT NETWORK: CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCE FOR OUR FUTURE
LEGISLATIVE OUTREACH SESSION

Virginia Assn of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Kendall Tyree, PhD
VASWCD Executive Director
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Agenda Overview
Interactive Conversational Session

- Comments and Legislative Perspective
  Speaker: Delegate Ken Plum

- Legislative 101 Discussion: Bill & Budget Process
  Speaker: VASWCD & Christine Watlington, DCR

- Legislative Insights: Our Work with Partners & Its Value
  Speaker: Kyle Shreve, Agribusiness Council

- Outlining the VASWCD Legislative Agenda Process

- Legislative Outreach Guidance
  Speaker: Don Wells, Director & Former Leg Chair
LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD
2020
Presented by
Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts
Kenneth R. “Ken” Plum
In Recognition of Exceptional Support to
Virginia’s Soil and Water Conservation Districts
How A Bill Becomes A Law

**Senate**
- Bill introduced in the Senate by Senator
- Bill referred to a committee
- Committee holds a public meeting
- Committee action
- First reading
- Second reading
  - Bill may be amended
- Third reading
  - Bill may be debated and passage vote taken
- Sent to House for approval

**House of Delegates**
- Bill introduced in the House by Delegate
- Bill referred to a committee
- Committee holds a public meeting
- Committee action
- First reading
- Second reading
  - Bill may be amended
- Third reading
  - Bill may be debated and passage vote taken
- Sent to Senate for approval
How A Bill Becomes A Law

If each house insists on its own form of a bill, a committee of conference is usually created. A compromise report from the committee is sent to each house for approval.

Governor

- **Signs the bill into law**
  - (If no action is taken within several days, the bill becomes law.)

- **Amended and returned**
  - (Amendments must be approved by both houses.)

- **Vetoed and returned**
  - (A veto may be overridden by 2/3 vote in both houses.)
Budget Process 101

**Budget Development**
- **Agency Budget Preparation**
  - Guidance & instructions issued to agencies
  - Agencies generate & submit requests

- **Review & Recommendation**
  - Governor, DPB, Cabinet review
  - Governor submits document & bill to the General Assembly (GA)

**Appropriation**
- **Legislative Action**
  - Budget Bill referred to Committees
  - Conference committee reports bill & GA approves

- **Gov’s Review**
  - Governor signs/vetoes bill/vetoes portions/returns to GA with amendments

- **Execution**
  - DPB, DOA & other agencies implement Appropriation Act
## Deposit to the Water Quality Improvement Fund (FY22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Deposit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special nonpoint source reduction projects (RMPs, poultry litter transport, nutrient management plans)</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Farm Outreach Program (DCR and VSU)</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Forestry (Virginia Trees for Clean Water)</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Forestry (Water quality grants)</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Water Financing and Assistance Program (DEQ)</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for development and maintenance of Conservation Suite Application (DCR)</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total for carve-outs</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,350,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding provided for agricultural BMPs</td>
<td>$26,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within the Chesapeake Bay watershed</td>
<td>$18,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed</td>
<td>$7,800,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Additional deposit for agricultural BMPs (Item Q)</th>
<th>$9,000,000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within the Chesapeake Bay watershed</td>
<td>$6,300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed</td>
<td>$2,700,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Provides funding for a baseline VACS program ($35 million)
- Technical assistance funding of $4.55 million has been included (Item A.1)
Natural Resource Players

- Virginia Association of SWCD
- Virginia Association of Counties
- Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation
- Virginia forever
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Save Our Food
- Virginia Agribusiness Council
- USDA NRCS
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- James River Association
- you.
- National Association of Conservation Districts

Many more...
Legislative Issues

The **2021 General Assembly Session** will convene on January 13, 2021 for a short session. In light of COVID-19 this session will not only be held differently but will require different outreach efforts by SWCDs. Bill limitations will be imposed on legislatures and much of the business of the General Assembly will be conducted in a virtual setting. There will be no in person legislative day.

We encourage SWCDs to participate in two training sessions via zoom to help prepare for session. See registration details below. If you are interested in joining the Legislative Committee please contact Kendall.Tyree@vaswcd.org and we hope you will join the conversations below.

- **January 6, 2021 – 10:00AM-11:30AM**
  Partner Agency Panel Updates and Q&A – Confirmed Speakers: Director Clyde Cristman, VA Department of Conservation & Recreation; Director Dave Paylor, VA Department of Environmental Quality; State Conservationist Dr. Edwin Martinez, Natural Resource Conservation Service; Superintendent, Community College of Fairfax County; and STEPS Executive Director
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Procedure for Approving State Legislative Agenda

1. At Area meetings in March-April legislative issues for upcoming session should be discussed.

2. Each district needs a legislative contact or local committee to review proposals and get input from all Directors, staff, and partners.

3. Each Area Chair should consider having an Area Legislative Meeting or Conference Call to discuss and endorse issues/proposals to be submitted to the VASWCD Legislative Committee by **August 15**.

4. Districts shall return recommendations, comments, revisions, etc. to VASWCD Legislative Committee by **August 15**.

5. VASWCD Legislative Committee will compile all comments and revisions and make its final report to the Board of Directors during the September/October Board meeting.

6. Board of directors will debate and approve the legislative agenda at its late September or October meeting.

7. At the Annual Meeting, the Directors would ratify the actions of the Board of directors, including the legislative agenda. If a legislative item is not ratified, it would be deleted from the VASWCD legislative agenda, for that year.
Legislative Agenda Items

1. Maintain operating funds for districts recognizing a need for increased support.

2. Establish a dedicated and adequate, secure and stable source of funding for the VNRCF. We support a minimum of $35 million annually for a stable, reliable cost share program, while realizing the full cost according to the Agriculture Needs Assessment and VirginiaForever Five Year Plan has been identified as greater than $100 million.

3. Continue support for urban best management practices as a means to addressing WIP and TMDL needs: Request restoration of $1,000,000 for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) recognizing that demand is in excess of $2,000,000.

Senator Emmett Hanger and Delegate Bulova to introduce a budget amendment for increased cost share levels to meet Ag needs Assessment Levels.

Seek support for this effort with your local legislators.
• VCAP Legislative Outreach Handout Available Online

• Budget Amendment to be Introduced by Delegate Ken Plum and Senator Emmett Hanger to increase VCAP by $500k for a total of $1 million in FY22.

• Seek support for this effort with your local legislators.
• Environmental Education Legislative Outreach Handout Available Online

• Budget Amendment to be Introduced by Delegate Bloxom and Senator Hanger for EE that was un-allotted because of COVID19.

• Seek support for this effort with your local legislators.
• Bill to Clarify the Soil & Water Board Appointment Process to be patroned by Delegate Ken Plum (HB1837) and Senator Emmett Hanger (Bill # TBD)

• Seek support for this bill with your local legislators.
**Advocacy & Outreach Tips**

1. **Build the relationships:** How are you connecting with your local leaders?

2. **Know the legislative process:** Are you and your district informed and involved in the process?

3. **Know your issues:** How have you prepared, shared local info to put VASWCD ask in context?

4. **Follow through/Follow Up:** Do you regularly circle back with info, updates and even a thank you.
What is a VA Soil & Water Conservation District?
THE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT NETWORK: CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCE FOR OUR FUTURE:

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