



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

Virginia Assn of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

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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

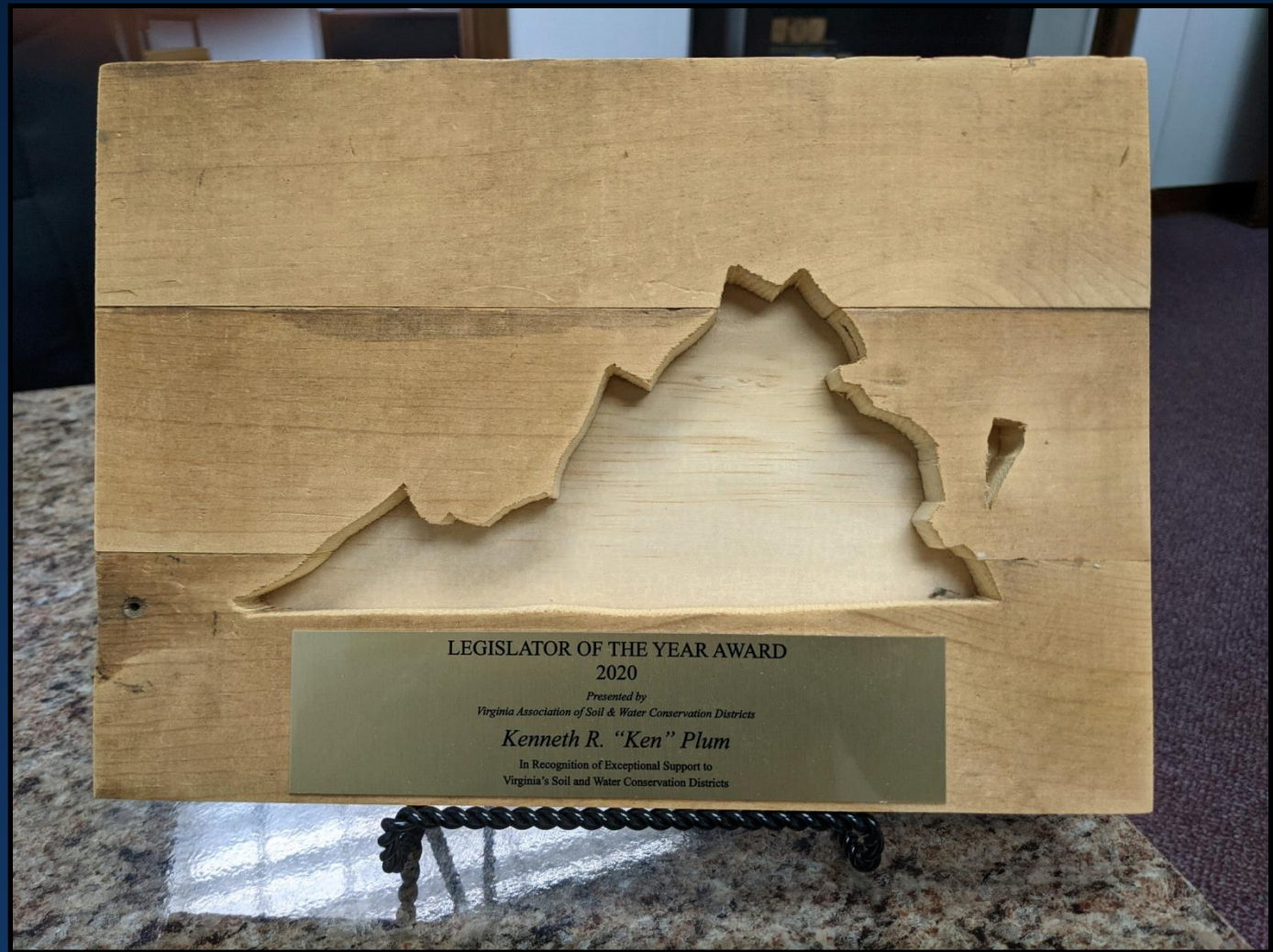
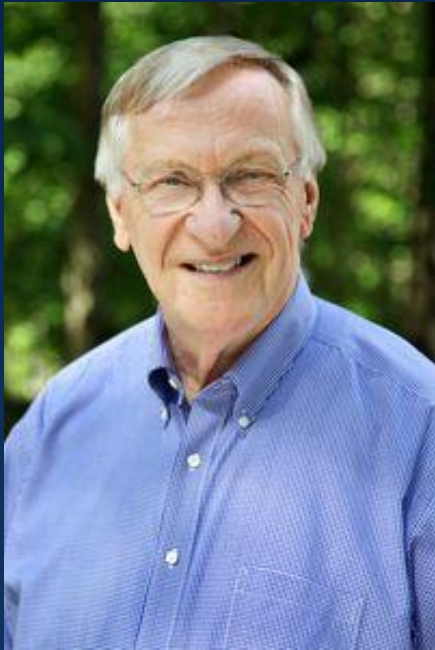
- Outlining the VASWCD Legislative Agenda Process

- Legislative Outreach Guidance

Speaker: Don Wells, Director & Former Leg Chair

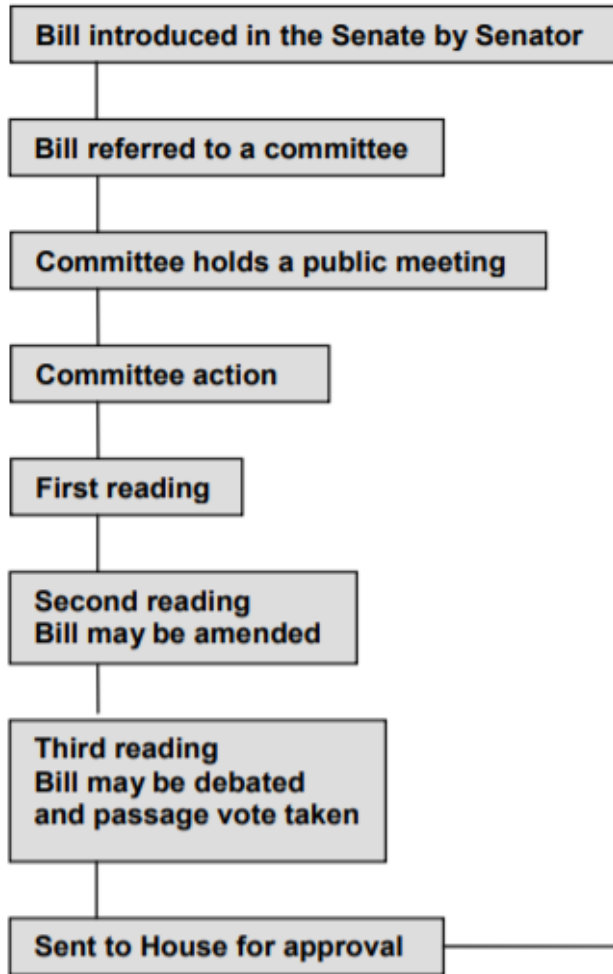


# LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

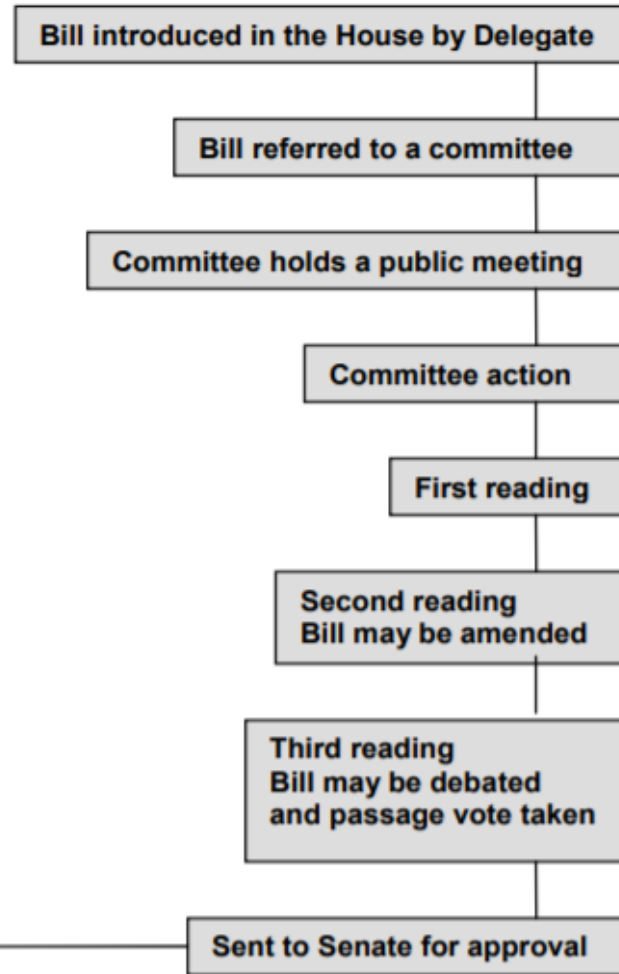


# How A Bill Becomes A Law

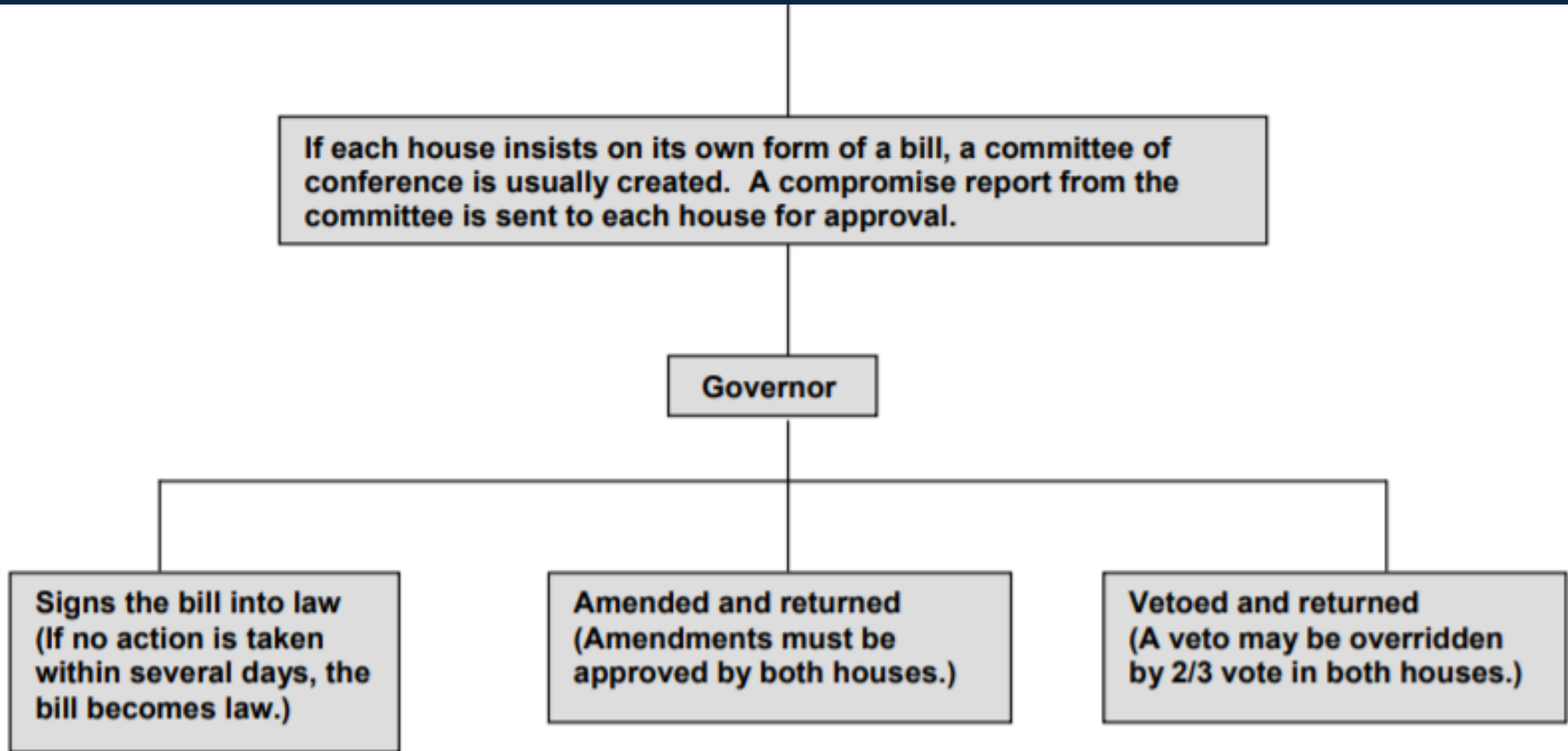
## SENATE



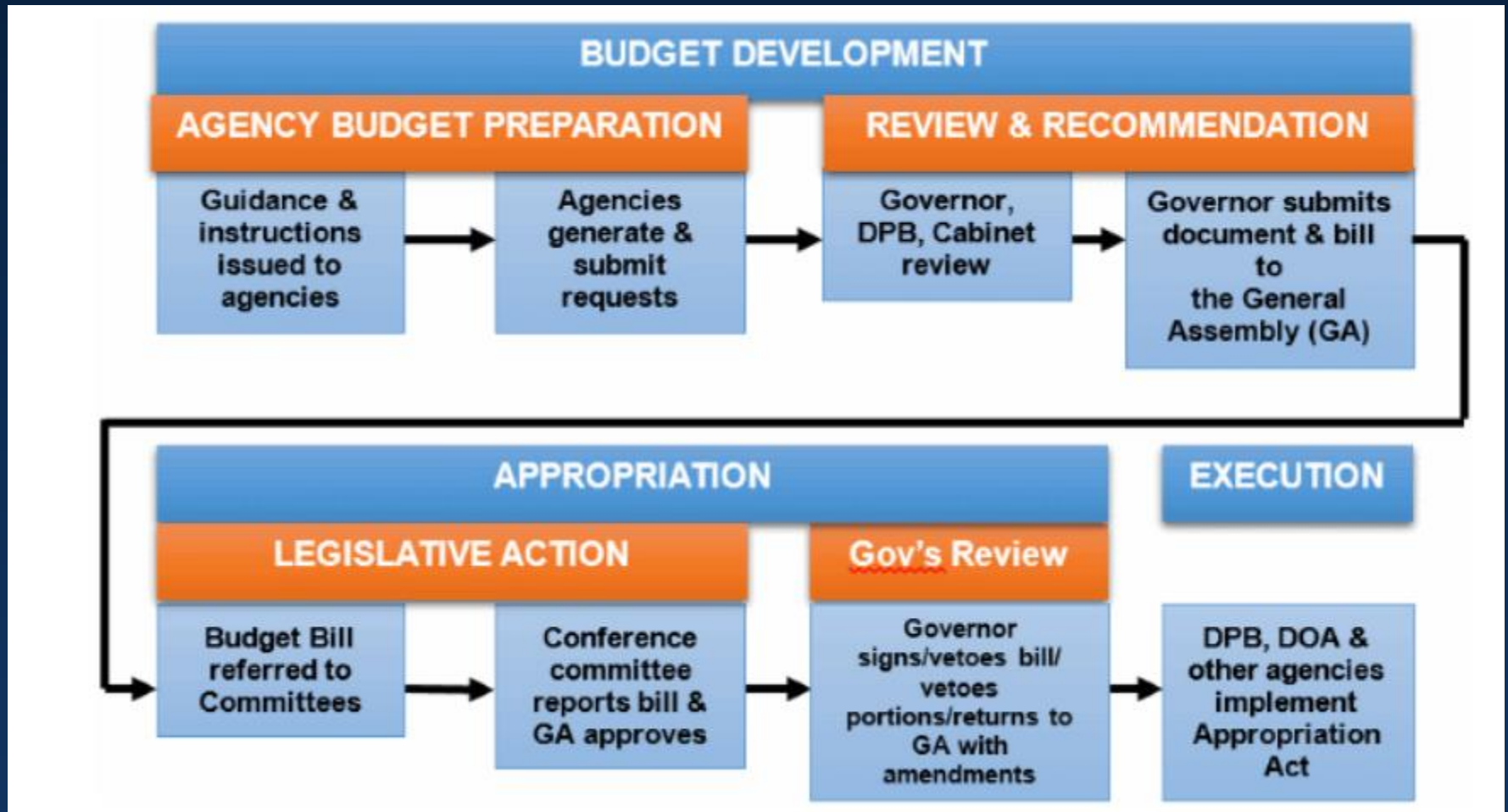
## HOUSE OF DELEGATES



# How A Bill Becomes A Law



# Budget Process 101



# Deposit to the Water Quality Improvement Fund (FY22)

<b>Total Deposit (Item P): \$30,350,000</b>	
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	\$500,000
Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)	\$500,000
Special nonpoint source reduction projects (RMPs, poultry litter transport, nutrient management plans)	\$1,000,000
Small Farm Outreach Program (DCR and VSU)	\$250,000
Department of Forestry (Virginia Trees for Clean Water)	\$500,000
Department of Forestry (Water quality grants)	\$250,000
Clean Water Financing and Assistance Program (DEQ)	\$1,000,000
Department of Health	\$100,000
Funding for development and maintenance of Conservation Suite Application (DCR)	\$250,000
<b>Total for carve-outs</b>	<b>\$4,350,000</b>



<b>Funding provided for agricultural BMPs</b>	<b>\$26,000,000</b>
Within the Chesapeake Bay watershed	\$18,200,000
Outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed	\$7,800,000

<b>Additional deposit for agricultural BMPs (Item Q)</b>	<b>\$9,000,000</b>
Within the Chesapeake Bay watershed	\$6,300,000
Outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed	\$2,700,000

- 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



MANY MORE....



# Legislative Issues Website



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## 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](mailto: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*



## 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.
4. Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board Representation – A Bill to amend Code of Virginia § 10.1- 502. Soil and Water Conservation Board; composition.



## Agricultural Best Management Practices

Virginia farmers and the agricultural sector have played a key role in our ability to reach the reductions we have over the last ten years. Virginia's Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) program, which funds best management practices and technical assistance, has yielded significant pollution

reductions; continual, robust funding for this program will be essential to meet Virginia's 2025 goals.

***VIRGINIAforever recommends the General Assembly appropriate funding at the full needs assessment level: \$100 million per year.***

**Farmers are Key to Continued Success**

- 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.



Virginia Conservation Assistance Program

Presented by Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts



The Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) provides financial, technical and educational assistance to property owners across Virginia to install eligible stormwater control practices, playing an essential role in improving waterways and meeting Virginia's WIP III goals.

With state funding cut in half from FY 2020, all eligible cost-share funds have been allocated as of September. A cost-share waitlist currently exists.

To date, \$3,331,640 in cost-share and \$262,500 in Technical Assistance has been allocated for 651 projects.

Homeowners have contributed more than \$3 million of their own dollars in addition to VCAP cost-share funds.

Operational costs are minimal; increased funding allows for more cost share to be distributed to property owners across Virginia to reduce non-point pollution and improve water quality.

As of July 2020, over 250,000 lbs of Sediment, 241 lbs of Phosphorus, and 1,700 lbs of Nitrogen have been removed from Virginia's waterways with VCAP.

Number of Completed VCAP Projects and Total Program Funding Received by Fiscal Year



Total funding received per FY from 2016-December 2020 alongside the number of completed projects. The 500k in State Funds received July 1st, 2020 was obligated by September. \*Through Dec 2020

Eligible VCAP Practices Include:

- Conservation Landscaping
- Dry Well
- Permeable Pavement
- Bioretention
- Impervious Surface Removal
- Vegetated Stormwater Conveyance
- Rain Garden
- Green Roof
- Rainwater Harvesting
- Infiltration
- Living Shoreline
- Constructed Wetlands

The VASWCD, at a minimum, requests funding be restored to the previous level of \$1M per year as the true need is in excess of \$2M per year.



- 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.

# VASWCD

## Educational Outreaches FY 2020

If you teach people about the environment, people begin to care about the environment and that turns into caring FOR the environment.

73,779\*

The number of people who participated in educational programming provided by Virginia's Soil & Water Conservation Districts

275 Photos

submitted to the VASWCD Photo Contest



2020 Overall Winner by Bob Diller



515 Posters

submitted for the

"Where would we BEE without Pollinators?" Poster Contest



7th-9th Grade Overall Winner Nikhita Saravanan

\*Data taken from 30 SWCD's FY2020 Annual Report



- 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.

## Lobbyist-in-a-Box (LIAB)

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**Lobbyist-in-a-Box**  
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**CleanAir:** created on 01/15 at 09:46

Maintain bills in this profile <span style="float: right;">min</span>	Set up notification for this profile <span style="float: right;">min</span>
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*Help me select bills...*

- introduced by date
- offered by patron
- referred to committee
- that contain a phrase
- by subject

Put these specific bills in my profile:

*Notify me when bills are...*

- introduced
- offered by patron
- referred to committee
- offered with a phrase
- updated by status change - **enabled**

Notify me at email address:

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lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?211+sum+HB1837

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# LIS

VIRGINIA'S LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM

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OTHER SESSIONS

**LOBBYIST in a BOX**  
Free bill tracking service

VIRGINIA LAW PORTAL  
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[Virginia Administrative Code](#)  
[Constitution of Virginia](#)

## 2021 SESSION

| [print version](#)

**HB 1837 Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board; membership.**  
Introduced by: [Kenneth R. Plum](#) | [all patrons](#) ... [notes](#) | [add to my profiles](#)

**SUMMARY AS INTRODUCED:**  
Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board; membership. Clarifies that each of the six nonlegislative citizen members of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board (the Board) who is not an at-large member is to be appointed by the Governor from a list of two qualified nominees submitted for each vacancy by the Board and the Board of Directors of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts in consultation with other groups. The bill contains technical amendments.

**FULL TEXT**  
01/06/21 House: Prefiled and ordered printed; offered 01/13/21 21100998D pdf

**HISTORY**

### Summary

21100954S

SUMMARY

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board**  
 citizen members of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board to be appointed by the Governor and the Board of Directors of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts with other groups. The bill contains technical amendments.



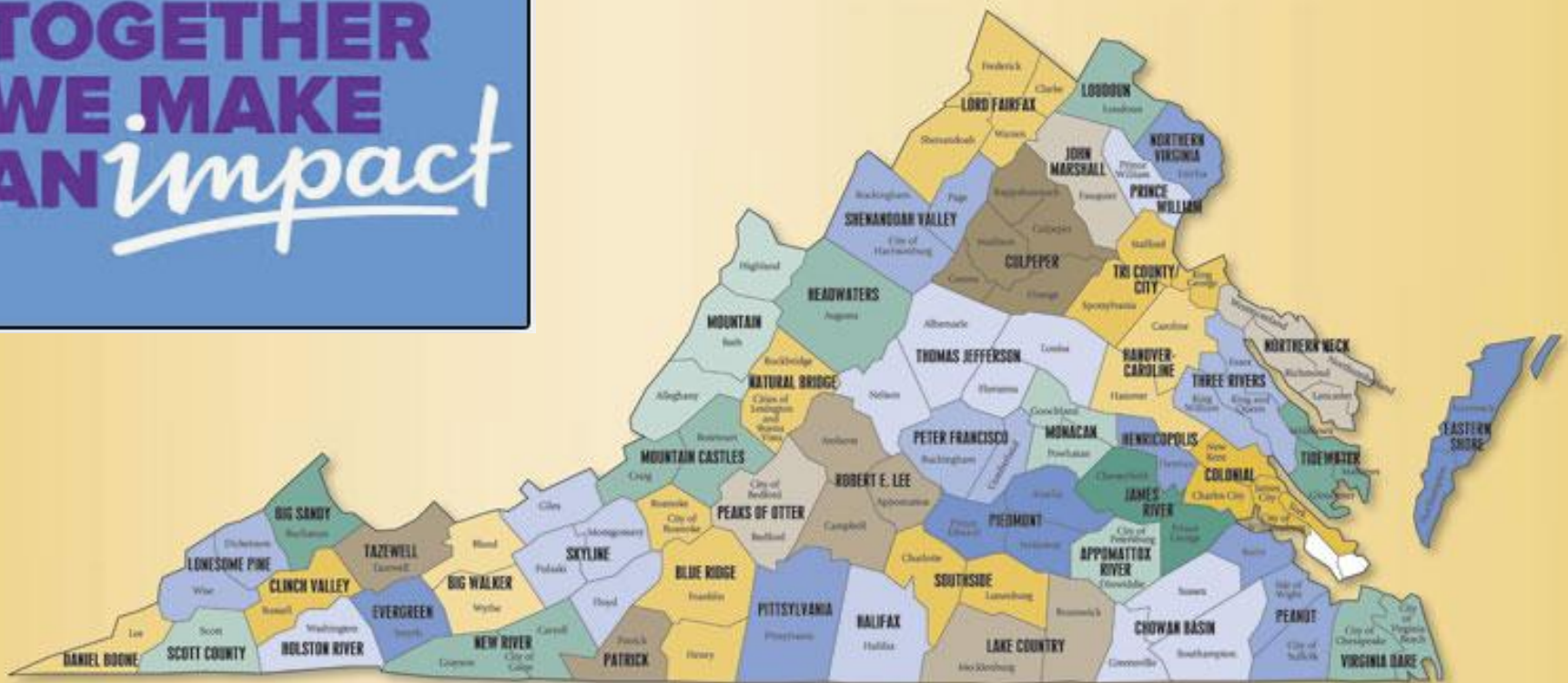
# Advocacy & Outreach Tips

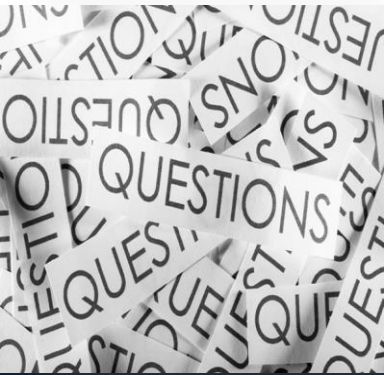
1. Build the relationships: How are you connecting with your local leaders?
2. Know the legislative process: Are you and your district informed and involved in the process?
3. Know your issues: How have you prepared, shared local info to put VASWCD ask in context?
4. Follow through/Follow Up: Do you regularly circle back with info, updates and even a thank you



# VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

**TOGETHER  
WE MAKE  
AN *impact***





# THE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT NETWORK: CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCE FOR OUR FUTURE:

## Virginia Assn of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

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