TO: Soil and Water Conservation District Chairs

FROM: Darryl M. Glover, Director, DCR-DSWC

CC: Carl Thiel-Goin, CDCs, SWCD Administrators

DATE: June 14, 2021

SUBJECT: Conservation Planning Certification Deadline for Completion

On June 28, 2018, the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board (Board) formally approved the establishment of a Conservation Planning Program (Program) administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (Department). The first cohort of participants in the Program have completed all of the required course work and have repeatedly been asked this year to submit a conservation plan for field review and approval by the Department in order to complete all requirements to receive their Conservation Planner Certification. The final course required, prior to submission of a conservation plan, was held on January 26, 2021; however, to date less than half of over two dozen District participants in this class have submitted conservation plans for field review. Consequently, in order to retain eligibility to receive their certification, participants who have completed all of the required coursework, including attendance at the January 26, 2021 class, must submit a conservation plan through the Conservation Application Suite, no later than September 1, 2021, for review and approval by the Department. It is the intention of the Department to seek Board concurrence that any individual from this group that fails to submit a conservation plan by September 1 will need to start the curriculum over, i.e. take all of the required courses again.

The conservation plan submission deadline above does not apply to those individuals who are currently seeking to renew their certification. At the April 21, 2021 meeting, the Board provided individuals seeking renewal of their certification in 2021 an extension of 60 days from the date of certificate expiration to complete the necessary contact hours (30) and to submit a conservation plan for review by the Department. Any individual in this group that fails to complete either the necessary contact hours or to submit a conservation plan through the Department’s Conservation Application Suite will lose their certification and will need to take all of the required courses again.

If you or your staff have any questions they can contact Carl Thiel-Goin, carl.thiel-goin@dcr.virginia.gov or 804-229-3385.