The Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Program

-FY23 VACS-

- Please Mute your Microphones
- Type Your Name in the Chatbox for “Sign-In”
- Questions and Comments only via the Chatbox

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Training Overview

- VACS History
- Program Guidelines
- Top VACS Practices
- CREP

***Special thanks to the many DCR staff who have reviewed and provided input on this presentation as well as Ben Chester, Raleigh Coleman and Jason Wilfong for many of the pictures (unless otherwise credited).
VACS: A Partnership

Partnership between SWCDs and DCR per Code of Virginia §10.1-104.1(B)

The Department shall be assisted in performing its nonpoint source pollution management responsibilities by Virginia's soil and water conservation districts. Assistance by the soil and water conservation districts in the delivery of local programs and services may include (i) the provision of technical assistance to advance adoption of conservation management services, (ii) delivery of educational initiatives targeted at youth and adult groups to further awareness and understanding of water quality issues and solutions, and (iii) promotion of incentives to encourage voluntary actions by landowners and land managers in order to minimize nonpoint source pollution contributions to state waters.
History of the VACS Program

- Officially began on July 1, 1984 to improve the quality of water entering the Chesapeake Bay and the Chowan River.
- Provided financial incentives to producers.
- Included 68 counties (2/3 of VA).
- 6 eligible BMPs
  o Conservation tillage
  o No-till pasture planting
  o Grass filter strips
  o Reforestation
  o Animal waste control facilities
  o Grazing land protection
By 1988, Program encompassed entire state, although financial incentives and eligibility varied:

- Funds distributed to Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) based on how agriculture affects water quality.
- Local SWCD Board of Directors approved prioritization of applications.
- SWCDs funded applications with greatest likelihood of improving water quality.
Program History

- Increased emphasis on the Chesapeake Bay by policymakers seen through the years (currently a 70/30 split).
- Funding levels have gone up and down through time, but the long-term trend has been upwards:
  - 1987 = ~$1,280,000
  - Record in 2023 = ~$123 Million
Purpose of the Program

• Water quality improvement program.
• Meant to reduce nutrient, sediment and bacterial contamination of Virginia’s waterways.
• Some partners address additional “resource concerns” but the VACS Program is much more limited in scope.
  – Example: NRCS promotes the so-called “SWAPA+HE” resource concerns (aka Soil-Water-Animals-Plants-Air+Human-Energy)
Purpose of the Program

• Funded by the taxpayers of Virginia.
• Collectively, our goal is to maximize nutrient and sediment reductions while protecting the taxpayer’s interest by implementing the most cost-effective BMPs possible.
• The program works to achieve the greatest pollution reductions on a field by field basis.
• “Least cost, technically feasible”.
Key VACS Funding Sources

• Water Quality Improvement Fund (WQIF)
  – 10% State Surplus Funds or Appropriations Act

• Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund (VNRCF)
  • Subfund of WQIF established in 2008
  • Where VACS dollars are placed for Cost-Share & Technical Assistance (TA) to SWCDs after reserve deposit and earmarks (such as CREP and DOF funding) are taken out of WQIF

• Real Estate Recordation Fees (2010)
  – $10 from each real estate sale
  – Funds deposited into VNRCF
Funding Admin and Distribution

- Administered via an annual grant agreement between each SWCD and DCR.
- Grant agreement specifies deliverables in exchange for funds.
- Allocations to SWCDs are largely influenced by DCR’s Nonpoint Source (NPS) Assessment, completed every two years as a part of the Virginia Water Quality Assessment Report.
Funding Distribution

- DCR uses the agricultural component of the NPS assessment, which takes into account the following factors:
  - Land Use
  - Tillage Data
  - USDA Cropland Data
  - National Ag Statistics Service Data
  - Hydrologic Soil Groups
  - Average Water Content of Soils
  - K Factor of Soils
  - Stream Flow from Gauge Stations
  - Climate Records
  - Growing Seasons
  - Dominant Crop Types
  - CB Watershed Model Output
  - Animal Numbers by Type and Location
  - Distribution and Extent of Conservation Practices
  - Slope
Funding Distribution

• Using the data inputs from the last slide, the model estimates and ranks the pollutant loads (i.e. nitrogen, phosphorus and sediments) from each hydrologic unit.

• Allocations to SWCDs determined by the hydrologic unit ranking process:
  – Watersheds Ranked: 20% High, 30% Medium, 50% Low
  – Funding Distribution: 50% to High, 30% to Medium, 20% to Low
  – The High, Medium and Low acreage in a SWCD as compared to that of the total drainage basin helps determine the funding distribution to each SWCD
Virginia's Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Funding Priorities

Total Agricultural Unit Ranking - PY2023

Cost-Share Funding Priorities
- Red: High
- Yellow: Medium
- Green: Low

NOTES:
Hydrologic units are ranked for the BMP cost-share program using a collective measure of the ag area pollution loads of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment per unit divided by the ag area, as determined in the 2022 biennial NPS assessment. The ranked order of the individual unit pollutant loads were summed to produce a total ag load order. This total was then ranked as follows:
- The top 20 percent are ranked "High".
- The next 30 percent are ranked "Medium".
- The remaining 50 percent are ranked "Low".

DATA SOURCES:
WATERSHED NPS LOADS: VH-BISE, VADCR, VADEQ & USEPA
HYDROLOGIC UNIT BOUNDARIES: VADCR
S&W CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOUNDARIES: VADCR
HYDROGRAPHY: USGS

03 May 2022
SWCD Participant Recruitment Options

• Districts should continuously take applications; however, there are a variety of options for managing the Program throughout the year.
  – Hold an advertised sign up period:
    • Applications would be ranked at the close of the application period and approved for funding according to ranking.
  – Have a rolling sign up:
    • Applications are taken throughout the year and brought before the SWCD Board for approval as funding allows.
SWCD Participant Recruitment Options

- Use a combination of the two methods if funding allows
  - Hold a sign up period and approve applications for funding
  - Continue to take applications and approve for funding until funds are depleted
- Continue to take applications after funding is all obligated
  - Have applications on hand in the event of cancellations of approved projects
  - Roll applications over to the next program year
  - Helps DCR to identify future funding needs
Determining Eligibility

- Definition of Ag Land:
  - Land used in a bona fide program of agricultural management and engaged in production of agricultural, horticultural or forest products for market;
  - Minimum of 5 acres (contiguous);
  - Must be verifiable gross receipts in excess of $1,000 per year from the production or sale of agricultural, horticultural or forest products produced on the applicant’s agricultural land for each of the past 3 years.
  - For purposes of the VACS program, commercial equine operations such as breeding, boarding and training facilities are eligible for funding if they meet the 5 acre/3 years/$1000 requirements.

- SWCD can request financial records to show proof of ag production.
Determining Eligibility

- Eligibility is tied to the land, not to the participant i.e. if a new farmer gains a lease on land that has been previously farmed for many years, it is probably eligible for funding (e.g. cover crop, nutrient management, etc).

- To try and determine eligibility where a participant recently purchased land:
  - Check with county land use records;
  - Check with FSA to see if there are any production records for the previous owner;
  - Check to see if the previous owner participated in the VACS program in the past 5 years.

- Land owned by municipalities or state or federal government agencies is not eligible to receive cost-share or tax credit.
Land Falling Outside of SWCD Boundaries

- Land Crossing State Borders
  - Field is only eligible if a portion of the field being treated lies within the Commonwealth of VA; entire fields outside of the Commonwealth are not eligible.

- Land Crossing County/SWCD Borders
  - The SWCD having the largest amount of acreage (by field) within its boundaries should administer the program.
  - Use county boundary layer in Ag BMP Tracking Program to determine which SWCD should administer the program.
  - SWCD staff should coordinate with their neighboring SWCD if signing up practices outside their boundaries.
Signing Up a Participant

- Self-Certification Form: Optional but Strongly Suggested (see Glossary).
- W-9 Form: Required (Ag BMP Tracking Program).
- Contract Part I: Required (Ag BMP Tracking Program):
  - Ensure that:
    - Each blank at the top of the form is completed;
    - A box is checked regarding application for cost-share at another SWCD;
    - Form is signed and dated;
    - Personal information matches that provided on the W-9 Form;
    - The participant reads and understands the language on Part I
- Ensure that the participant understands that cost-share funding is considered to be income (i.e. tax implications), but the District should NOT give tax advice.
VIRGINIA BMP INCENTIVES PROGRAMS CONTRACT  
(Part I – Application for Program)

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**APPLICANT’S REQUEST:**
The following information is applicable to all of the following incentive programs: Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) Cost-Share Program (VACS or cost share program), Virginia Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and/or the Virginia Agricultural BMP Tax Credit Program. I agree to install and maintain all practices receiving financial incentives according to program specifications. I agree to allow appropriate agency personnel or their designee access to land under my control for the purpose of evaluation, design, construction and inspection of said practice(s) from this date forward through the required lifespan. I agree to refund all or part of the cost-share financial assistance or tax credit I have received if my practice(s) is/are found not to meet program specifications required at the time of installation/payment, or if the practice(s) is/are removed or not properly maintained during the lifespan of the practice(s). I understand that the sale, lease, or changed use of the property will not exempt me from fulfilling this/these requirement(s). I also understand that my period of responsibility begins with the acceptance of payment and/or tax credit and extends through the lifespan of the practice in accordance with program requirements. Lifespan is defined as “The number of years a BMP must be maintained in accordance with program standards. The lifespan begins on January 1 of the calendar year following the year of certification of completion.” A BMP is subject to verification checks throughout the practice lifespan. The voluntary participation in one or more of the state agricultural incentive programs does not relieve or relinquish me and my farm operation from compliance with ordinances, laws and regulations that may exist at any level of government. I understand that applying to participate in any of the above listed program(s) does not guarantee that any or all of my request will be funded. I understand that if the practice I am requesting cost-share funding or tax credit for is located within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, nutrient and sediment reduction information related to that practice will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for reporting to the Chesapeake Bay Program to determine progress made towards Chesapeake Bay pollution reduction targets.
Applicant Self-Certification of Eligibility:
For the purposes of the Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Program agricultural land shall be defined as "land being used in a BONA FIDE program of agricultural management and engaged in the production of agricultural, horticultural or forest products for market. The real estate must consist of a minimum of five contiguous acres and have verifiable gross receipts in excess of $1,000 per year from the production or sale of agricultural, horticultural or forest products produced on the applicant’s agricultural land for each of the past three years.

Districts may request that applicants provide proof of agricultural production. To be considered an agricultural producer there must be an annual minimum of $1,000 of agricultural products being produced, sold or both from the applicant’s agricultural land (non-industrial private forest lands are exempt from the $1,000 requirement). Any financial records supplied by an applicant to verify eligibility will not be duplicated or retained by the District.

I certify that I meet the above defined qualifications to participate in the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practice Cost-Share Program. I certify that I am not currently contracted to receive cost-share funding from any other funding source for the same conservation practice on the same acres of land during this fiscal year, unless multiple funding sources are being used to share the costs for my practice. I further certify that the practices I am requesting cost-share funding or tax credit for are not, and will not, be included in a mitigation bank.

REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO SPECIFIC INCENTIVE PROGRAMS:

VACS Program (if applicable to this request): The VACS Program has a $300,000 per applicant per program year (July 1 thru June 30) cost-share limit. Cost-share funds are considered income. Recipients of these funds are responsible for compliance with all applicable tax requirements including requirements of the Internal Revenue Service.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) share information concerning VACS/VNRSC funding limits and cost share funding that approved participants have received from other SWCDs to ensure the program applicant cap is not exceeded.

[ ] Yes [ ] No Have you received or will you receive cost share funding from another SWCD during the current program year? If yes, which one(s)?

I certify that I will not accept VACS/ program funds that exceed established limits whether funds I receive are issued by a single SWCD or multiple SWCDs during a single program year. Furthermore, I understand the limits of the tax credit I am eligible to receive.

VA Agricultural Tax Credit Program (if applicable to this request): The VA Agricultural Tax Credit Program (§§ 58.1-339.3 and 58.1-439.5) allows agricultural producers a tax credit equal to 25% of the first $100,000 expended for all eligible agricultural best management practices completed in any single tax year. If the agricultural producer has an approved resource management plan, the producer is eligible for a tax credit equal to 50% of the first $100,000 expended for all eligible agricultural best management practices completed in any single tax year. If the amount of the certified tax credit exceeds the taxpayer’s liability for the tax year in which the BMP was completed as certified by the SWCD Board, the excess may be refunded by the Tax Commissioner.

Signature of Applicant

Date

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA: Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Soil and Water Conservation, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.
(Original to be retained by the SWCD, Copy with Signature provided to the applicant). Date Stamp: __________________________
Farm Bill Compliance

• If the SWCD is notified by USDA that an applicant is in violation of any Farm Bill conservation provision, then the applicant is not eligible to receive cost-share funds.
  – If application has been received but not approved for funding, application is pulled.
  – If application has been received and approved for funding, approval of application is pulled.
  – In both situations, applicant is notified that he/she is ineligible to participate as a result of being out of compliance with USDA.
  – Applicant can reapply once back in compliance with USDA.
  – As an alternative, farmers can participate in the Tax Credit program regardless of USDA compliance.
State Envir. Law Compliance

• Eligible:
  – Problems identified as part of a founded Agricultural Stewardship Act (ASA) complaint if applicant is implementing an ASA plan to correct the problem.
  – Problems identified as possibly being in violation of state environmental law or regulation as long as the participant is working with DEQ to come into compliance with state requirements or if the participant has independently identified needed actions.
State Envir. Law Compliance

• Ineligible:
  – Problems identified as part of a founded ASA complaint where the Commissioner of Agriculture has issued a **corrective order** as a result of not implementing an approved ASA plan.
  – Problems identified as being in violation of a state environmental law or regulation if the applicant has received an **enforcement order** from DEQ, unless cost-share assistance was requested to correct the problem prior to commencement of the enforcement action.
Priority Considerations

• An application must meet one of the following criteria in order to be eligible for funding:
  – Located in the highest ranked hydrologic units
  – Field located within or upstream of an impaired stream segment (which can be found in the Tracking Program)
  – Field meets 1/3 HEL (highly erodible land) criteria
  – Application will implement a BMP within an approved Resource Management Plan

• Exceptions to the above criteria include “priority practices”:
  – Animal waste practices
  – Practices to protect groundwater, prevent gully erosion or critical areas (e.g. NM-1A, SL-6W, WP-4… see Manual Page II-8 for full list)
Secondary Considerations

• Secondary Considerations are developed and used by SWCDs to prioritize applications that address locally identified water quality concerns.

• Consist of a set of written narrative statements and is accompanied by a ranking worksheet.
  – The ranking worksheet assigns numerical values to the criteria in the secondary considerations document so applications can be ranked against each other.

• Specific practices cannot be prioritized for funding.

• SWCDs must use CEF in the application ranking process.

• Must be approved by local SWCD Boards and by DCR each year before any approvals can take place.

• Must remain in place throughout the entire program year; changes cannot be made during the year.
The Conservation Efficiency Factor (CEF)

- Calculated by the Ag BMP Tracking Program.
- Composed of eleven different components.
- Each component carries a different weight.
- Good for comparing like practices.
- Can also be used as part of Secondary Considerations and the ranking worksheet to rank practices that are not similar.
  - Prioritize the project with the lower CEF value (lower CEF = higher conservation efficiency).
Average Cost List

• Each SWCD should annually develop an average cost list for BMP components. This is done prior to approval of first application of the fiscal year and provides the basis for estimates.

• The SWCD must submit the Average Cost List to DCR each year before local use.

• SWCD can use the NRCS Average Cost List and make modifications so that it is more applicable locally.
  – Note: The NRCS Average Cost List is typically released around October 1 of each year. If the SWCD elects to use/modify it, then the SWCD cannot change its cost list during the fiscal year to match the new NRCS cost list.
Average Cost List

• Can use an abbreviated Average Cost List to include components for commonly used practices, but must have a contingency plan for handling costs for components not included on the list.

• There may be a statement at the bottom of the Average Cost List that notes that the SWCD will use the NRCS Average Cost List for unlisted components.

• The SWCD may not change their Average Cost List mid-year except in extremely rare circumstances due to market-based cost increases; requires both District Board and DCR approval using process outlined in the Manual.
Cost-Share Rates

- Three types of cost-share payment rates:
  - Percentage-based rate e.g. WP-4
  - Flat per acre rate e.g. SL-8B
  - Combination of percentage-based and flat rate cost-share e.g. SL-1 practice which includes a 75% cost-share rate for eligible component costs plus a flat rate incentive payment which varies based upon lifespan.

- VACS funds can be combined/piggybacked with federal funds such as EQIP or 319 to pay the maximum cost-share rate as allowed in the VACS BMP specification.

- “Double-dipping” is not allowed, however (as noted on the Part I application).
Note on Work Completed by Producers

• For specifications where Districts pay cost-share AND the producer chooses to complete their own work, the District should have the participant turn in a bill/invoice for their work.

• Districts should have a plan to address such self-billing via their Average Cost Lists to avoid intentional or unintentional gouging.

• Participants may claim their own time, materials, equipment use, shipping, etc., just as a contractor’s overall pricing would reflect these items.
Engineering Job Approval Authority

- DCR Agricultural BMP Engineering Services Staff issue EJAA for each NRCS component.
- 3 Categories of EJAA:
  - I&E (Investigation & Evaluation): On site observations of an exploratory nature for planning and preparation of sound alternative solutions of sufficient intensity for the cooperator to make treatment decisions. May require assistance from higher levels for large or complex jobs.
    - Asks the question: “What is the best practice to use to solve the problem?”
Engineering Job Approval Authority

- **Design**: Designing and checking all aspects of the supporting data, drawings, and specifications to ensure that the planned practice will meet the purpose for which it is installed. Also includes setting any specific inspection requirements. Approval signature is required.

- **Construction**: Surveys, layout, staking, inspection of materials and work, making tests to determine that the job meets specifications. Approval signature is required.
Methods for Acquiring a Design

- Structural Ag BMPs require engineering (See Manual II-24-29).

Methods for acquiring an engineered design for a BMP:

- Contact a P.E.:
  - Required for some BMPs such as animal waste structures, composters, mortality incinerators and streambank stabilization practices.

- SWCD Staff:
  - Can earn competency and then engineering job approval authority for BMP components.
  - Can design and certify practices once they have achieved EJAA for needed components.

- DCR Ag BMP Engineering Services Staff:
  - When SWCD staff do not have any EJAA or lack a sufficient EJAA level for a specific component, they can contact DCR to get assistance in performing I&E and for designing and certifying practices.
Participant Caps

• Monetary practice caps on individual practices no longer exist.
• Participant cap is $300,000 per participant per fiscal year.
• RMP-1, RMP-2, WFA-CC, and WFA-NM do not affect this cap.
• SWCDs can choose to set lower participant caps if they wish, but can go no higher than the statewide participant cap.
Variance Procedure

• Process in place to allow Districts to request an exemption to the VACS participant cap when VACS dollars are already in their budget (i.e. this is not additional money!).

• Must be requested by the District Board before submittal to the DCR Variance Committee.

• Eligible practices:
  – SL-6W, WP-4, WP-4B, WP-4LL, WP-4LC, WP-4SF
  – SL-6W/SL-6N combination projects
  – SL-6N/ WP-4FP combination projects
  – SL-6W/ WP-4FP combination projects
  – SL-6N/ WP-4SF combination projects
  – SL-6W/ WP-4SF combination projects

Credit: williamsonsource.com
Variance Committee

• Variance requests are submitted to DCR Agricultural Incentives Program Manager who then convenes the Committee to consider the request.

• DCR Variance Committee will consist of:
  – Agricultural Incentives Programs Manager
  – CDC
  – AG BMP Engineer
Variance Committee

• The Committee will respond to the District Board within 45 business days of the receipt of request.

• Committee can ask for a field visit or require extra documentation.

• The District Board can only approve the practice AFTER the Variance has been approved by DCR.
Variance Documentation

- Narrative outlining resource concerns, including AWMS Plan
- Contract number
- Tract number
- BMP specification
- Conservation Plan
- Animal type and numbers

Credit: dairygood.org
Variance Documentation

• Quantity of waste treated
• Sizing calculations
• Size of storage facility
• If a feeding facility, how is the feeding being done? Percent confinement?
• Needs Determination Worksheet or Risk Assessment Form
Variance Documentation

- Plan map with proposed location of facility and all associated components
- Detailed total estimated project cost
- Estimated cost-share and tax credit
- Other sources of funding (partner agencies)
- Additional documentation such as pictures
Applications into Tracking

• An estimate is drawn up for each application. This is used to determine the amount of cost-share and/or tax credit being requested for approval. P.E. expenses can be included as part of the estimate.

• Applications are entered into the Ag BMP Tracking Program.
  – Includes input of measures and mapping the BMP, which in turn generates the CEF score used for ranking applications and allows for the resource review query to be completed.
  – A Contract Part II form is generated for the applicant.

• A Conservation Plan and/or Nutrient Management Plans are written for the practice (if applicable – see Manual).
User name: 
Password: 
Login
Resource Reviews

• Part of the Conservation Planning process used to evaluate potential impacts of BMP projects on resources of the Commonwealth (e.g. T&E species).
• Review process is required for ground disturbing BMPs receiving state funds.
• Tracking Program is set up to automatically run a query once all BMP components are digitized as required.
• SWCD is required to follow up with the appropriate agency if there is a hit when a query is run (allow 30 days).
• Documentation of the review process and any follow up documentation should be maintained in the case file.
Resource Reviews

• Archeological sites & preservation easements:
  – VA Department of Historic Resources

• Rare, Threatened & Endangered Species & Communities:
  – VA Department of Conservation & Recreation & VA Department of Wildlife Resources

• Active TMDL Implementation Plan Areas:
  – VA Department of Environmental Quality

Note: Federal Partners also have their own review process
Approval Process

• All applications are ranked.
• The Conservation Plan and the application is brought before the Board for approval.
• Contract Part II and the Conservation Plan must be signed and dated by a Board member.
• Contract Approval Date, Conservation Plan Approval Date and the Required Completion Date must be entered into the Ag BMP Tracking Program.
### Virginia BMP Incentives Programs Contract (Part II – Technical Determination and SWCD Approval)

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**TOTAL(S)**

### Statement of Technical Need

I have reviewed this application and have indicated the extent authorized based on technical need. All practices are subject to verification procedures and any other quality control measures.

**District Employee Name**

**Title**

**Date**

**Authorization:**

Your request form has been: [ ] Approved [ ] Not approved

**Required Completion Date**

This practice must be installed and certified at the issuing SWCD by the above date.

**District Authorization by (SWCD Director)**

**Date**

**Carryover of this practice is granted to be completed by date:**

1st Carryover Completion Date (if applicable)  
2nd Carryover Completion Date (if applicable)  
3rd Carryover Completion Date (if applicable)

**SWCD Director Signature**

**Date**

**SWCD Director Signature**

**Date**

**SWCD Director Signature**

**Date**

**Commonwealth of Virginia**

Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Soil and Water Conservation, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.
Notification of Contract Approval

• Once approved, the SWCD must notify the participant of contract approval via written correspondence.
  – Correspondence should include the amount approved and a deadline for completion.
  – Letter can be generated from the Ag BMP Tracking Program.

• For practices where the cost of any one component is estimated to exceed $30,000, the Bid Process must be followed. See next slide.

• A copy of the correspondence and the completed Bid Solicitation Sheet (if applicable) should be maintained in the case file.
**PART 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Applicant Name: ___________________________ Soil and Water Conservation District: ___________________________

Applicant Address: ___________________________

Applicant Email Address: ___________________________ Applicant Telephone Number: ___________________________

Specifications Prepared by: ___________________________ Quotes Secured By (if applicable): ___________________________

☐ Check here if the Bid Process is not required; stop here.

☐ Check here if the applicant will complete the work on his/her own. Bid solicitation is not required; stop here.

☐ Check here if the applicant will not complete the work on his/her own. Bid solicitation is required for each component with an estimate of $30,000+ as indicated by the District.

**PART 2: VENDOR INFORMATION**

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<tr>
<td>Date and Time that Bid was Obtained</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PART 3. VENDOR ESTIMATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Component(s) Requiring Bids (e.g. Pipeline, Watering System, Well)</th>
<th>Vendor #1</th>
<th>Vendor #2</th>
<th>Vendor #3</th>
<th>Vendor #4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand Total if Multiple Component Bids:
Estimated Project Start Date:
Estimated Project Completion Date:

**Selected Vendor:**

Reasoning if Lowest Bid is not Selected:

Reasoning if the Minimum Three Bids are not Obtained:

Other Comments:

Applicant Signature:

Signature Date:
Bid Solicitation Process

• Required when the cost of any one component of a VACS contract is estimated or equal to $30,000.
• Process must be used for each component that exceeds an estimated cost of $30,000.
• Practice will be “Conditionally Approved Pending Bids” with Conditional Approval Form Letter sent.
Bid Solicitation Process

• Bid sheet should be completed and returned in 120 days.

• Three bids required. If three bids cannot be obtained, documentation must accompany the bid sheet. Same with choosing a contractor that was not the lowest bid.

• Final Approval contingent upon receipt of the completed bid sheet; then practice will be switched to Approved status with final letter sent.
Approval of Additional Cost-Share

• If available, additional cost-share funds and/or tax credit can be approved by a SWCD for a practice that has already received approval but certain conditions must be met.
  – Unforeseen circumstances that warrant design or construction changes or additional material expenses directly related to the unforeseen circumstance (e.g. dry well).
• Any additional cost-share or tax credit granted should be documented in the Comments box in the Ag BMP Tracking Program as well as in the minutes of the SWCD Board meeting. Minutes must include the amount and the reason for the increase.
Carrierover Process

• VACS practices are split into three categories:
  – Practices with one program year completion dates eligible for carryover (see Page II-42)
  – Practices with two program year completion dates eligible for carryover (see Page II-42)
  – Practices not eligible for carryover (not listed… aka everything else)
# Practices with One Program Year Completion Dates Eligible for Carryover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FR-4</td>
<td>Woodland Erosion Stabilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM-3C</td>
<td>Split Application of Nitrogen on Corn Using Pre-Sidedress Nitrate Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM-5N</td>
<td>Precision Nitrogen Management on Cropland - Nitrogen Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM-5P</td>
<td>Precision Nitrogen Management on Cropland – Phosphorus Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM-7</td>
<td>Cover Crop for Managing Liquid or Semi-Solid Manure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMP-1</td>
<td>Resource Management Plan Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMP-2</td>
<td>Resource Management Plan Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-1</td>
<td>Long Term Vegetative Cover on Cropland (May not be carried over more than two planting seasons, i.e. spring and fall.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-8A</td>
<td>Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WQ-12</td>
<td>Roof Runoff Management System</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practices with One Program Year Completion Dates Eligible for Carryover

• So What Does This Mean?
  – Prior to June 30th, 2023, the District must assess all BMPs.
  – If justified (i.e. under construction), the District Board may take formal action to extend the completion date until June 30th, 2024.
  – The BMP Status in the AgBMP Tracking Module should be changed to “Carryover”.
  – Practices on this list that are not completed by the end of PY24 on June 30th, 2024 will be cancelled; no further extension will be granted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices with Two Program Year completion date (all are eligible for Carryover)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FR-1  Afforestation of Crop, Hay and Pasture Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR-3  Woodland Buffer Filter Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE-1  Vegetative Stabilization of Marsh Fringe Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE-2  Shoreline Stabilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-4  Terrace Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-5  Diversions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-6F Stream Exclusion in Floodplains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-6N Stream Exclusion with Narrow Width Buffer and Grazing Land Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Width Buffer and Grazing Land Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-7  Extension of Watering Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-9  Grazing Land Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-11 Permanent Vegetative Cover on Critical Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL-11B Farm Road, Animal Travel Lane, Heavy Use Area Stabilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-1  Sediment Retention, Erosion or Water Control Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-2A Streambank Stabilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-2B Stream Crossings &amp; Hardened Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-2C Stream Channel Stabilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-2N Stream Protection (Fencing with Narrow Width Buffer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-2W Stream Protection (Fencing with Wide Width Buffer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-3  Sod Waterway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4  Animal Waste Control Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4FP Feeding Pad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4LC Animal Waste Control Facility for Confined Livestock Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4LL Loaing Lot Management System with Manure Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4SF Seasonal Feeding Facility with Attached Manure Storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4B Dairy Loaing Lot Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4C Composter Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-4F Animal Mortality Incinerator Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-5  Stormwater Retention Pond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-6  Agricultural Chemical &amp; Fertilizer Handling Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-7  Surface Water Runoff Impoundment for Water Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WQ-5  Water Table Control Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WQ-11 Agricultural Sinkhole Protection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practices with Two Program Year Completion Dates Eligible for Carryover

• So What Does This Mean?
  – Practices on this list should always be allowed a minimum of two program years for completion per VACS Guidelines (i.e. formal Board approval is NOT required for the second Program Year).
  – By June 30\textsuperscript{th}, the District will need to change the status of all contracts that qualify for a two-year completion date to “Carryover” in the AgBMP Tracking Module.
  – Thus PY23 contracts on this list should all have until June 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2024 to be completed.
Practices with Two Program Year Completion Dates Eligible for Carryover

• So What Does This Mean?
  – At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Program Year, if justified (i.e. substantially under construction), the District Board may take formal action to extend the completion date for one additional year (i.e. the 3<sup>rd</sup> Program Year), keeping the BMP status as “Carryover”.
  – Therefore, an FY23 project that is not completed by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 may be granted Board approval for a Carryover extension through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (i.e. the 3<sup>rd</sup> Program Year).
  – This Carryover into a 3<sup>rd</sup> Program Year should only occur if the Board deems that the Carryover is justified with the project being substantially under construction.
Practices with Two Program Year Completion Dates Eligible for Carryover

• So What Does This Mean (continued)?
  – The District Board may only extend the completion date for one additional Program Year (i.e. the 3rd Program Year).
  – If a Two-Program Year practice is still not completed by the end of the 3rd Program Year, an additional Carryover into a 4th program year may be requested by the District for approval by DCR on a case-by-case basis by May 15th each year.
  – Any additional carryovers granted by DCR must be complete by the end of the 4th program year or be canceled; no further extension will be granted.
SL-6W Carryover Example

• SL-6W signs up in September 2022 (PY2023)
  – Should be carried over by District into PY2024 (2nd PY) starting July 1, 2023; no formal Board motion is required.
  – Not done by June 30th, 2024? The District Board (with justification) can approve a Carryover into PY2025 (3rd PY).
SL-6W Carryover Example

– Still not done by June 30th, 2025? District can request a Carryover from DCR for moving the project into PY2026 (4th PY).

– If this Carryover is approved by DCR, the project must be completed or cancelled by the end of the 4th PY.

– No further Carryovers will be granted.
DCR Requests

- To make this work, DCR will pull LOGI reports in early spring and reach out to Districts to discuss projects that may need approval for carrying over into 4th PY.
- Districts should work with their CDCs in the spring of the year to discuss upcoming Carryover needs.
- For Carryovers requiring DCR approval, Districts should be in contact with the Ag Incentives Program Manager by May 15th at the latest to seek required approval before June Board meetings.
Carryover Justifications

- All Carryovers must be given justification on the Measurements tab in the AgBMP Tracking Module.
- Districts can choose up to three justification options from a pull-down window.
- For any carryover requests requiring DCR approval, planners must choose “Other (describe in BMP Comments)” as one of the three choices; use the Comments section on the General tab in order to give a full description as to why a fourth fiscal year is needed.
### Selection of Justifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of streambank protected (Lin. Feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of alternative water systems installed (Count)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Carryover Measures (for Carryover BMPs only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Completion (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Completion Date (Date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Verifying Practice is Under Construction (Text)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Carryover Justifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Carryover Justification (Reason)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Carryover Justification (Reason)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Carryover Justification (Reason)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Select Justifications:
- Contractor backlog
- Contractor issues
- Dry well encountered
- Engineering Issues
- EQIP piggyback
- Family or health issues
- Federal partner contract
- Late spring approval
- Multi-phase project
- Other (describe in BMP Comments)
- Power company issues
- Seasonally restricted practice
- Weather related issues

- Contractor backlog
- Contractor issues
LOGI Report

• Use “Cost-share Program Carryover Report for BMPs Carried Over into FY23”.

• This report needs to be printed and signed at June District Board meeting and then turned in to CDC as a part of EOY reports.

• Remember that LOGI updates every evening; Districts will need to wait a day to see justification updates included from Tracking.
Exceptions

• Normal VACS Carryover rules also do not apply to partnership projects where DCR is not the lead agency (e.g. CREP, EQIP Piggyback).

• However, Districts should still reach out to participants to encourage project completion.
Cost-Share Payments

- May only be made to the entity (SSN or Tax ID #) that signs the Contract Part I Form.
- May not be split between two participants.
- Two-party or co-payee checks where two signatures are required are only allowed for lending institutions.
- IRS 1099 Form must be issued to the entity that receives a cost-share payment of $600 or more.
- May not be made until the participant AND the SWCD have certified the practice as complete and meeting standards and specifications.
### Virginia BMP Incentives Programs Contract

**Part III – Technical Installation and SWCD Payment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Name:</th>
<th>Contract Number:</th>
<th>Total Contract – Amount for BMP Payment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address:</strong></td>
<td><strong>State:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Zip Code</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instance No.</strong></td>
<td><strong>DOR Practice Code</strong></td>
<td><strong>Program Type(s) for funding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL(S)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participant Practice Installation Certification:**

I certify that the information above is true and correct. I have installed and agree to maintain this/these practice(s) for the lifespan in accordance with program requirements. I agree to refund all or part of the cost-share financial assistance or tax credit I have received if my practice(s) is/are found not to meet program specifications required at the time of installation/payment or if the practice(s) is/are removed or not properly maintained during the lifespan of the practice(s). I understand that the sale, lease or changed use of the property will not exempt me from fulfilling these requirement(s). I also understand that my period of responsibility begins with the acceptance of payment and/or tax credit and extends through the lifespan in accordance with program requirements. Lifespan is defined as the “The number of years a BMP must be maintained in accordance with program standards. The lifespan begins on January 1 of the calendar year following the year of certification of completion.” A BMP is subject to verification checks throughout the practice lifespan.

**Participant Signature**: ___________________________  **Date**: __________

**Technician Practice Installation Certification:**

I certify that all administrative and technical components of any practice listed above for payment and/or tax credit have been completed by an appropriately qualified individual and it has been determined that each practice meets all applicable standards and specifications necessary for certification, payment and/or tax credit. All practices are subject to verifications and any other quality control measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

For Tax Credit - A copy of the completed Agricultural Best Management Practices Tax Credit Certificate must be attached to this document.

For CREP - A copy of the completed and signed FSA forms AD-848A and AD-848B must be included in the participant’s record folder prior to issuance of the state CREP rental or cost share payment.

(Original to be retained by the SWCD, Copy with Signature provided to the applicant)
BMP Lifespan/Maintenance Requirements

• Responsible for maintenance of the BMP for the full length of the lifespan.
  – Lifespan begins on **January 1** of the year following BMP installation.

• Changes in control of land such as sale or loss of lease do not exempt a participant from maintenance requirements
  – Encourage long term written lease agreements for BMPs with long lifespan requirements or encourage the owner to sign up for the BMP rather than the lessee.
BMP Lifespan/Maintenance Requirements

• Transfer of Responsibility Agreement
  – Available for completed BMPs and BMPs under construction
  – Requires signature of both participants and SWCD Board approval

• In the case of participant death, the SWCD Board can waive the maintenance requirement.
Verifications

– Conducted annually by SWCD staff and DCR.
– Inspection of BMPs in lifespan to ensure they are functioning and maintained.
– Randomly selected by DCR.
– DCR Engineering Services available for help as needed.
– Additional verifications may be added by the SWCD at any time during the year (if needed).
Damaged/Destroyed Practices

• Responsibility of the participant.
• Once a practice is found to need maintenance or is destroyed, the SWCD must:
  – Verbally contact the participant and provide notification of the deficiency. Document the date and the conversation in the conservation planning notes in the case file.
  – Provide written notice within **two weeks** via certified mail. Written notice should include the nature of the deficiency and the time allowed to bring the contract back into compliance, noting that repayment will be required if the contract is not brought back into compliance. A copy should be maintained in the case file.
Damaged/Destroyed Practices

- The SWCD can provide the participant with **up to six months** grace period for practice compliance.
- At the close of the grace period, the practice must be re-inspected. If the deficiency has not been corrected, the SWCD will provide written notice that repayment of funds is required in **60 days**. A copy should be maintained in the case file.
- If repayment is not received or deficiencies corrected in **60 days**, the SWCD will contact the OAG for assistance in reclaiming funds.
- Tax credit must be returned to the Virginia Dept of Taxation.
Damaged/Destroyed Practices

– Calculation for return of funds is based on a prorated formula (see Manual):

- Installation date: October 10, 2014
- Lifespan of practice: 10 Years - January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2024: 120 months
- Spot Check Date: August 2017
- Practice in Compliance: January 2015 through June 2017: 30 months
- Cost Share to Landowner: $12,000
  o $12,000 divided by 120 months = $100/month
- Repayment Calculation: 120 months – 30 months = 90 months
- Landowner repayment to District: 90 months X $100/months = $9,000.00 (District will deposit funds to the appropriate cost-share account)
Practice Failures - Weather

- For certified practices that fail due to Extreme Act of Nature weather conditions such as drought or floods.
- Participant may request one-time additional cost-share in future sign-up periods to fix the practice and bring it back into compliance.
- Resets BMP instance lifespan.
- Must be approved by Agricultural Incentives Program Manager.
- See Manual for further details.
Hardship Process

- Utilized in highly unusual situations where a participant requests that the Board forgive repayment of cost-share funds.
  - Life-threatening illness, bankruptcy, or other highly unusual situation.
- SWCD Board must determine that due to highly unusual circumstances beyond the participant’s control, it is reasonable to forgive repayment of funds in whole or partially; the District may in turn suggest solutions to DCR.
- All hardship requests shall be submitted to DCR’s Ag Incentives Program Manager with a carbon copy to the CDC. An ad hoc committee will decide whether to grant hardship.
Practice File Maintenance

• All correspondence with a participant, including written correspondence and verbal correspondence (telephone calls and site visits) should be documented in the case file using Conservation Planning notes.
• Contract Part I, II and III Forms.
• All designs, job sheets and as-builts.
• All plans, worksheets, plan maps, agreements.
• W-9 form, copy of check, payment calculation worksheet, tax credit certificate, receipts/bills.
Practice File Reviews

• Administrative Reviews:
  – Randomly selected by the CDC – 10% of projects selected for field verifications.
  – Conducted by the CDC.
  – Review of case files to ensure completeness.
  – Cost Share File Administrative Review Form is available in the Glossary
Tax Credit Changes

• The 2021 General Assembly and Governor significantly increased agricultural BMP tax credits in Virginia.

• Retroactive to January 1, 2021, the current tax credit law sunsets on December 31, 2024 unless extended by further actions of the Virginia General Assembly.

• $2 Million annual total cap enforced by Virginia Department of Taxation.
Tax Credit Changes

• Two-tiered system:
  – 50% tax credit up to $50,000 cap per individual for agricultural BMPs implemented on acreage included in a District-approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) in implementation stage or beyond.
  – 25% tax credit up to $25,000 cap per individual for BMPs implemented on acres that don’t qualify for the enhanced RMP tax credit.
Tax Credit Changes

• No individual shall receive more than $75,000 in tax credits (i.e. maxed out on both types).

• If the amount of credit exceeds the taxpayer’s liability in a taxable year, the excess shall be refunded by the Tax Commissioner.
Tax Credit Changes

• Both tax credits will be based upon true out-of-pocket costs after cost-share.
• “Cost-share” includes both traditional cost-share as well as flat rate payment incentives and buffer payments.
• Receipts become extremely important!
Equipment Tax Credit

• For taxable years beginning January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2025.
• Equal to 25% of all expenditures for no-till or precision ag equipment as outlined in the VACS Manual.
• Capped at $17,500 per individual/entity.
• Responsibility falls on purchaser (not the District) as to whether their equipment qualifies.
Equipment Tax Credit

• The participant must, by the time of tax filing:
  – Have in place a SWCD Board-approved Conservation Plan.
  – Be implementing a NMP developed by a certified Nutrient Management Planner.

• Participants can use the “Sample Certification of NM Implementation” to document this last requirement.
Voluntary Reporting

• Designed to capture and provide credit for practices installed without public funding assistance and those that are out of contract lifespan.
• Must meet minimum specifications referenced in the Voluntary BMP Specifications section.
• Reported practices are subject to inspection for compliance during the lifespan of the practice.
10 Minute Break
An Intro to Key VACS Practices

• Stream Protection/Exclusion
• Forestry
• Nutrient Management
• Long Term Vegetative Cover
• Cover Crops
• Critical Areas
• Sod Waterway
• Animal Waste Control Facility
Stream Exclusion

Credit: Headwaters SWCD
SL-6N/SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Grazing Land Management

- Require stream exclusion fencing and an off-stream watering facility.
- Includes a grazing management plan if more than three grazing units are created by installation of interior fencing.
- Limited to pastureland that borders a live stream, CBPA-RPA, or in cases of severe environmental degradation occurring in and around springs, seeps, ponds, wetlands, sinkholes, etc.
SL-6N/SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Grazing Land Management

• *Connected* features should be included in the buffer with the minimum setback distance met.

• Isolated features may be fenced, but do not require full buffer.

• Grazing (including flash grazing) and haying are not allowed in the buffer; buffer payments must be paid back in full if the participant is caught flash grazing.

• When participant owns both sides of the stream, the livestock must be fenced out from both sides.

• No cost-share/tax credit allowed for any installation of interior fencing and watering facilities to distribute grazing in fields not receiving exclusion fence. (Applicant may apply for SL-7).
“N and W”

• SL-6, WP-2 and CCI practices have been split into “N and W” versions.
• N = “Narrow” buffer options <35 feet.
• W = “Wide” buffer options 35+ feet.
• Wide buffer options include a buffer payment (for a max of 10 acres) as well as cost-share, whereas narrow buffer options include cost-share only.
### SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Width Buffer and Grazing Land Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum fence setback (from the top of streambank)</th>
<th>Lifespan</th>
<th>Cost-share rate</th>
<th>Buffer payment rate</th>
<th>Buffer payment cap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50'</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$18,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$12,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35'</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$18,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$12,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SL-6W Example

- Participant willing to do a 50 foot buffer, totaling 17 acres, for 15 years.
- Using the table, cost-share rate for practice installation will be 100%.
- Also receives buffer payment of $80/acre/year
- $80/acre/year x 17 ac x 15 years = $20,400.
- Buffer payment will max out at $18,000 for this contract.
## SL-6N Stream Exclusion with Narrow Width Buffer and Grazing Land Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum fence setback (from the top of streambank)</th>
<th>Lifespan</th>
<th>Cost-share rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25'</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10'</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SL-6N Example

- Participant willing to do a 10 foot buffer, totaling 2 acres, for 10 years.
- Using the table, cost-share rate for practice installation will be 60%.
- No buffer payment in SL-6N.
Stream Exclusion Examples
Properly Installed Waterers
WP-2N/ WP-2W Stream Protection

- Protects streams by fencing out livestock except for at stream crossings and/or hardened limited access points.
- Watering systems are not eligible (would use an SL-6N/SL-6W).
- Grazing (including flash grazing) and haying are not allowed in the buffer.
- When participant owns both sides of the stream, the livestock must be fenced out from both sides.
WP-2W Stream Protection (Fencing with Wide Width Buffer)

For stream protection without watering system (i.e. using limited access).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum fence setback (from the top of streambank)</th>
<th>Lifespan</th>
<th>Cost-share rate</th>
<th>Buffer payment rate</th>
<th>Buffer payment cap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35'</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$12,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$6,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WP-2N Stream Protection (Fencing with Narrow Width Buffer)

For stream protection without watering system (i.e. using limited access).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum fence setback (from the top of streambank)</th>
<th>Lifespan</th>
<th>Cost-share rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25'</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10'</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stream Crossings and Hardened Limited Access
WP-2P Portable Fencing System

• Provides a portable fencing system to protect all live streams or live water in a field
• No minimum fencing standards
• No provision of water
• Pays $0.30 per linear foot of fence and $250.00 per fencing charger
SL-7 Extension Of Watering Systems

- For farms where livestock are previously excluded or concurrently excluded with a minimum 10’ or 35’ setback from all surface waters
- Can be used in addition to stream exclusion practices which do not authorize cost-share for any installation that is for interior fencing and watering facilities to distribute grazing in fields *not receiving exclusion fence*.
- Requires written grazing management plan
SL-7 Extension Of Watering Systems

• Cost-share on infrastructure to facilitate rotational grazing in fields where livestock are previously or concurrently excluded with a minimum 10’ or 35’ setback.

• On the CREP side, can be installed in conjunction with CP-22 Riparian Forest Buffer or CP-29 Wildlife Habitat Buffer.

• 10 or 15 year practice lifespan.

• 50% to 80% cost-share options depending on lifespan and associated buffer width.
CCI Highlights

• CCI = Continuing Conservation Initiative
• Meant to keep track of practices while also offering maintenance help to the farmer
• There are now five CCI options for stream fencing:
  – CCI-SL-6N = <35 ft buffers with exclusion & watering system
  – CCI-SL-6W = 35+ ft buffers with exclusion & watering system
  – CCI-WP-2N = <35 ft buffers with protection and limited access
  – CCI-WP-2W = 35+ ft buffers with protection and limited access
  – CCI-SE-1 = <10 ft buffer with top of bank fencing
CCI Highlights

• No minimum fencing or other standards required – practices merely need to be working and effective in judgment of the Conservation Planner.

• Practices must not be in lifespan from any other conservation program; however, following discussions with USDA, DCR has decided to allow CCI on CREP renewals.
CCI Highlights

• Practices paid after District staff makes field visit and confirms all components are functioning as intended and needed maintenance has been addressed.

• Whether the participant needs maintenance dollars or not at time of enrollment, he/she should be paid in full... At some point, maintenance will be needed.

• Practices eligible for re-enrollment.

• Practices subject to verifications from District annually for the lifespan of the practice (5 years).
Example: CCI-SL-6W

- Single payment rate of $1.25 per linear foot of stream bank protected plus:
  - $250 per trough
  - $500 per stream crossing
  - $1,000 per water system

- Participant has 10,000 linear feet of streambank protected, four troughs, one stream crossing and one watering system.
  - Payment would be ($1.25 \times 10,000) + ($250 \times 4) + ($500 \times 1) + ($1,000 \times 1) = $15,000!
CCI-SE-1 Stream Exclusion – Maintenance Practice

• Our stream exclusion maintenance practice with no buffer distance requirements (i.e. can be top of bank).

• $0.50 per linear foot of stream bank.
Forestry Practices

Credit: Chesapeake Bay Program
Forestry Practices:
General Notes for FR-1 & FR-3

- Land must have been in crop, hay or pastureland production 2 out of past 5 years to be eligible; VACS does not cover replanting of cutovers.
- DOF Forester will develop Form 7.8 plan specifying tree species and density.
- Plantings must be protected from grazing.
- Not authorized for Christmas tree production.
- Failures: SWCD must be notified within 6 months of the failure; cost-share available one time to address failure due to circumstances outside of participant control.
FR-1 Afforestation of Crop, Hay and Pastureland

- Essentially whole field conversion; land use change.
- 75% cost-share plus incentive payment:
  - $100/acre for 10 year lifespan
  - $150/acre for 15 year lifespan
FR-3 Woodland Buffer Filter Area

• For planting hardwoods and/or conifers on a minimum of 35 feet from the edge of the streambank (up to the width of the entire floodplain, capped at 100 feet).

• 95% cost-share plus incentive payment:
  – Conifers: $100/acre for a 10 year lifespan and $150/acre for a 15 year lifespan
  – Hardwoods: $100/acre for a 10 year lifespan and $250 for a 15 year lifespan

• Plus buffer payment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifespan</th>
<th>Buffer payment rate</th>
<th>Buffer payment cap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$18,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>$80 per acre per year</td>
<td>$12,000 per contract</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nutrient Management Practices

Credit: ingenia.org
Nutrient Management Plans

- Fully implemented NMPs are the key or gateway to over 30 VACS cost-share and tax credit practices.
- Can be written by a DCR NM Specialist or a private, certified NM Planner.
- Can be funded through the NM-1A VACS practice or the DCR Direct Pay Program.
Key Nitrogen Application Options

- **NM-3C** Sidedress Application of Nitrogen on Corn
- **NM-4** Late Winter Split Application of Nitrogen on Small Grains
- **NM-5N** Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Nitrogen Application
NM-3C Sidedress Application of Nitrogen on Corn at the 6-Leaf Stage or at Least 15” in Height

• Pay attention to the full name of the practice.
• This practice is designed for nitrogen applications on corn ONLY (i.e. not sorghum or any other crop).

Credit: no-tillfarmer.com
NM-3C Sidedress Application of Nitrogen on Corn at the 6-Leaf Stage or at Least 15” in Height

- Simple sidedress ONLY, not split applications (i.e. NM-5N).
- Application made when the plant is entering its highest demand for nitrogen at the 6-Leaf Stage or at least 15” in height.

Credit: no-tillfarmer.com
NM-3C Details

• May include either organic or inorganic N applications.
• May only be applied on corn acres to receive sidedress with rates specified by the NMP.
• Total application of nitrogen to be applied to the corn must be consistent with NMP or determined by using the PSNT (if required).
• PSNT must be conducted when corn is approximately 12 inches in height.
• PSNT samples should represent a minimum of 7 acres on average and a maximum of 20 acres on average.
NM-3C Sign-Up

- Annual Practice eligible for one PY Carryover.
- VACS Sign-Up Deadline: April 1 (though Districts can require earlier sign-up).
- Participants must submit their NMP to the District.
- Participants must provide written verification of contracted sidedress application cost (including PSNT results) to the District within two weeks of sample analysis.
- District staff should utilize NMP maps, nutrient balance sheets and summary sheets to confirm correct practice implementation.
NM-3C Payment

- 75% Cost-Share on the application charge up to a maximum amount of $6/acre.
- Producers applying their own sidedress receive the $6 per acre rate.
- Acres receiving a zero application rate based on a PSNT also qualify for the $6 per acre rate.
- Additionally, PSNT samples are reimbursed at a flat rate of $12 per sample.
NM-4 Late Winter Split Application of Nitrogen on Small Grains

- This practice should be utilized for applying nitrogen during the late winter in two increments based on the progression of growth of the small grain crop, thereby minimizing loss through runoff and leaching.
- Dependent on NMP and the total number of small grain acres specified to receive split N applications.
NM-4 Late Winter Split Application of Nitrogen on Small Grains

- On fields where organic nitrogen sources have been applied during the crop year or previous years, fall nitrate tests should be conducted.
- Rates for 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} splits are prescribed in the VACS Manual.

Credit: blog.ucsusa.org
NM-4 Sign-Up

- Annual Practice, not eligible for Carryover.
- VACS Sign-Up Deadline: **February 1** (though Districts can require earlier sign-up).
- Participants must submit their NMP to the District.
- Participants must provide written verification (such as a work order or bill) to the District within two weeks of the second application.

Credit: canr.msu.edu
NM-4 Payment

- Payment only for acres that actually receive the two split applications.
- If only one winter application is made, no reimbursement is to be provided.
- 75% Cost-Share on the application charge up to a maximum amount of $4.50/acre taken on the cost of the second application.
- Soil nitrate tests are reimbursed at a flat rate of $8 per sample.
NM-5N Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Nitrogen Application

- This practice supports multiple enhanced NM technologies to be applied to row crops, specialty crops, small grains and highly managed hayland.
- All applications for this practice must be based upon test results, regardless of whether organic nutrients have been utilized in the past.
- Fields that have received biosolids within the past 24 months are not eligible.
NM-5N Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Nitrogen Application

• Test results will be used to develop a prescription for N application (e.g. PSNT required where organic nutrients have been used).

• Prescription must be followed.

• Participant must be fully implementing NMP.
NM-5N Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Nitrogen Application

- A LUMPED practice covering multiple precision technologies:
  - Variable Rate Nitrogen Applications
  - Zone Applications
  - Two or More N Apps on Highly Managed Hayland
  - Injection at Sidedress

Credit: morningagclips.com
NM-5N Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Nitrogen Application

• A LUMPED practice covering multiple precision technologies:
  – Three or More Split Applications on Small Grains (Note: Choose NM-4 for Two Splits)
  – Two or More Split Sidedress Applications on Corn (Note: Choose NM-3C for One Sidedress App)
  – So-called “Starter” Applications do NOT count as a split!

• Read the spec and make sure you follow all relevant guidance.
NM-5N Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Nitrogen Application

- All split applications, including the first split, will be applied at the highest demand growth stage (e.g. 5-leaf stage or at least 12").
- Subsequent sidedress applications must be applied at least 14 days after the most recent application.
- Total N rates on corn cannot exceed 1 lb/bushel of expected crop yield.

Credit: morningagclips.com
NM-5N Sign-Up

- Annual Practice eligible for one PY Carryover.
- VACS Sign-Up Deadline: April 1 (though Districts can require earlier sign-up).
- Participants must submit their NMP to the District.
- Participants shall provide written verification of the recommendation and the resulting applications (e.g. lab test results, work order or bill, as-applied application map of field) to the District within 45 days of the final N application.
NM-5N Payment

- Final payment based on total acres that were sampled and applied according to rates advised by the results.
- 75% Cost-Share on the application charge up to a maximum amount of $8/acre.
- Acres receiving a zero application rate based on a PSNT also qualify for the $8 per acre rate.
- Additionally, costs for PSNT or fall soil nitrate tests are reimbursed at a flat rate of $12 per sample (up to one PSNT per field).
- No per sample cost-share is available for zone soil fertility tests.
NM-5P Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Phosphorus Application

- Very similar to NM-5N except for phosphorus applications.
- This practice supports multiple enhanced NM technologies to be applied to row crops, specialty crops, small grains and highly managed hayland.
- All applications for this practice must be based upon test results, regardless of whether organic nutrients have been utilized in the past.
- Fields that have received biosolids within the past 24 months are not eligible.
NM-5P Precision Nutrient Management on Cropland – Phosphorus Application

- Zone or grid fertility samples must be utilized:
  - Zones shall be no larger than 20 acres and based on soil type
  - Grid size shall be 1 to 4 acres in size
- Results will be used to develop a P prescription.
- Prescription must be followed.
- Participant must be fully implementing NMP.
NM-5P Sign-Up

- Annual Practice eligible for one PY Carryover.
- VACS Sign-Up Deadline: April 1 (though Districts can require earlier sign-up).
- Participants must submit their NMP to the District.
- Participants shall provide written verification of the recommendation and the resulting applications (e.g. lab test results, work order or bill, as-applied application map of field) to the District within 45 days of the final P application.
NM-5P Payment

- Final payment based on total acres that were sampled and applied according to rates advised by the results.
- 75% Cost-Share on the application charge up to a maximum amount of $8/acre.
- Acres receiving a zero application rate based soil test results also qualify for the $8 per acre rate.
- No per sample cost-share is available for zone/grid soil fertility tests.
Intro to Key VACS Cover Crops Options

Credit: agronomator.wordpress.com
Key VACS Cover Crop Options

- **SL-8B** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management (i.e. the “go to” option)
- **WQ-4** Legume Based Cover Crop
- **SL-8H** Harvestable Cover Crop
- **SL-8** Protective Cover for Specialty Crops
- **SL-8A** Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland (i.e. the “catch all” CC option)
- **SL-8M** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management with Fall Manure Application (new for PY23)
Key CC Practice Commonalities

- SL-8, SL-8B, SL-8H, SL-8M, and WQ-4 are all used to establish vegetative cover on cropland to reduce erosion and loss of nutrients.
- Annual practices; can sign up every year.
- Participants can elect for cost-share or tax credit, but not both.
- Most seed types, rates and planting dates prescribed.
- NMP Required.
- **No nutrients allowed at planting!**
- Require multiple field checks (cover check & end of season).
WQ-4 Legume Based Cover Crop

- Used as a natural source of nitrogen to reduce applied soil amendments.
- $45 per acre flat rate payment OR tax credit only.
- Grazing and removal of residue are not permitted; cover crop must be left on surface, intact and unincorporated, to serve as mulch for no-till planting of commercial crops (at which point practice can be certified).

Credi: today.oregonstate.edu
Key VACS Cover Crop Options

- **SL-8B** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management (i.e. the “go to” option)
- **✓ WQ-4** Legume Based Cover Crop
- **SL-8H** Harvestable Cover Crop
- **SL-8** Protective Cover for Specialty Crops
- **SL-8A** Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland (i.e. the “catch all” CC option)
- **SL-8M** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management with Fall Manure Application (new for PY23)
SL-8H Harvestable Cover Crop

• The Commonwealth’s harvestable option.
• 60% cover must be maintained.
• Harvesting for hay, haylage, silage, grain, straw or seed is permitted after March 14.
• Crop may be incorporated or left unincorporated on the field.
• Manure can be used on up to 300 acres but must meet conditions listed in the Manual.
• $20 per acre flat rate payment OR tax credit only.
Key VACS Cover Crop Options

- **SL-8B** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management *(i.e. the “go to” option)*
  - ✓ **WQ-4** Legume Based Cover Crop
  - ✓ **SL-8H** Harvestable Cover Crop
- **SL-8** Protective Cover for Specialty Crops
- **SL-8A** Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland *(i.e. the “catch all” CC option)*
- **SL-8M** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management with Fall Manure Application *(new for PY23)*
SL-8 Protective Cover for Specialty Crops

- For vegetables, tobacco and small grains.
- Seeding must be planted and certified by November 30.
- Must remain in the ground 90 days after certification.
- May be incorporated or left unincorporated on the field.
- Flat rate per acre payment of $40 per acre OR tax credit.

Credit: papaspuds.com
Key VACS Cover Crop Options

- **SL-8B** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management (i.e. the “go to” option)
- **WQ-4** Legume Based Cover Crop
- **SL-8H** Harvestable Cover Crop
- **SL-8** Protective Cover for Specialty Crops
- **SL-8A** Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland (i.e. the “catch all” CC option)
- **SL-8M** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management with Fall Manure Application (new for PY23)
SL-8A Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland

• “Catch-all” cover crop specification to reduce wind and water erosion and improve water quality.
• SL-8A incentivizes producers to keep cover on cropland when not in use.
• More specifically, SL-8A would be applicable for the following situations:
  – After a crop failure
  – After floods, hail, tornado or hurricane damage
  – Other unforeseen circumstances
  – Summer cover crops (buckwheat, sunn hemp, sunflowers, etc.)
SL-8A Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland

- Note that there are separate species lists designated for spring, summer and fall plantings.
- Seed must be planted and certified within 45 days after crop harvest or destruction.
- All seeding must be planted and certified no earlier than March 1 or no later than November 15.
- 60% cover must be maintained for at least 60 days or until the conservation purpose is served, whichever is greater.
- The cover shall be left on the land unincorporated or incorporated according to the participant’s choice.
SL-8A Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland

• Rates:
  – Payment provided in a variable rate structure based on the number of days the cover crop must be maintained on the ground *after achieving 60% cover:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Days Maintained</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60-89 Days</td>
<td>$20.00/Acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-119 Days</td>
<td>$30.00/Acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120+ Days</td>
<td>$40.00/Acre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key VACS Cover Crop Options

• **SL-8B** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management (i.e. the “go to” option)
  ✓ **WQ-4** Legume Based Cover Crop
  ✓ **SL-8H** Harvestable Cover Crop
  ✓ **SL-8** Protective Cover for Specialty Crops
  ✓ **SL-8A** Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland (i.e. the “catch all” CC option)

• **SL-8M** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management with Fall Manure Application (new for PY23)
SL-8B Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management & Residue Management – the “Go To” Option

- The key cover crop for Bay Model credit.
- Intended primarily as a fall/winter cover crop, SL-8B is usually planted following the harvest of corn (but not required).
- Intended to parallel and be subject to NRCS Standard 340.
- Designed to establish vegetative cover on cropland, reduce erosion and nutrient losses, as well as utilize the maximum amount of residual nitrogen from previous applications in the first three feet of the soil profile.
SL-8B Nutrient Requirements

- **No nutrients allowed** between harvest of previous crop and March 1 of the following year.
- Producers must be fully implementing a current Nutrient Management Plan on all acreage within the field that this practice will be implemented on.
**SL-8B Species Options**

Select one of following species and/or mixtures of species to plant in all soils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>bu./acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rye (Tetraploid)</td>
<td>2 bu./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Rye (not tetraploid)</td>
<td>2 bu./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Barley</td>
<td>2 bu./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Hardy Oats</td>
<td>2 bu./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Wheat or Triticale</td>
<td>2 bu./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Annual ryegrass</td>
<td>20 lbs./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small grain mixtures with</td>
<td>1 bu./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) legume† or</td>
<td>10 lbs./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Diakon (forage or tillage) radish or</td>
<td>6 lb./ acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) canola or rape</td>
<td>4 lbs./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diakon (forage or tillage) Radish mixture</td>
<td>6-8 lbs./acre°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with annual ryegrass</td>
<td>10 lbs./acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter-hardy Brassica (canola/rape) mixture</td>
<td>5 - 7 lbs./acre°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with annual ryegrass</td>
<td>10 lbs./acre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† - legume = Crimson Clover, Austrian Winter Pea or Hairy Vetch

°Use higher seeding rates for pure stands and lower seeding rates for mixed species plantings

**Note:** No Specific Seeding Depth Mentioned in VACS specs. However, Seed-to-Soil Contact is a Critical Concept when working with Participants!

Higher seeding rates are recommended for aerial seeding and non-incorporation seeding methods.
SL-8B Approved Rye Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6250 Abruzzi</th>
<th>Paster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzi</td>
<td>Ryman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dura</td>
<td>Virginia Abruzzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Grazer</td>
<td>Wheeler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elbon</td>
<td>Wintergrazer 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazer</td>
<td>Winterking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graze Master</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OR… any other indeterminate growth tetraploid rye cultivar.

Interested in a new cultivar to add to the list? Send it to the TAC!
SL-8B Planting Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Early Planting Date</th>
<th>Standard Planting Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cities of Chesapeake &amp; VA Beach</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>November 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Plain (including the Eastern Shore)</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>November 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piedmont</td>
<td>October 25</td>
<td>November 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain and Valley</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>November 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The planting dates above are NEW planting dates beginning in PY22. Most have been extended by two weeks due to climatic trends and the fact that corn is staying in the field longer.
SL-8B – Cover Requirements

• 60% cover must be obtained by December 15th
• Cover must be checked by the District.
• 60% cover required to be maintained through March 14.
• Pasturing is permitted as long as 60% cover is maintained through March 14.

Credit: Matt Ruark, Phys.org
SL-8B – Termination

• Harvesting for hay, haylage, silage, grain, straw or seed is **not permitted** in any situation.
• If producers anticipate a need for additional harvest, they should be applying for SL-8H instead.
• Crop must be terminated by grazing, mechanical or chemical means no earlier than March 15 and no later than June 1.
• May be incorporated or left unincorporated on the field.
SL-8B – Payment Options

- Flat rate per acre payment OR tax credit only; not both.
- Tiered system based upon what is planted and when:
  - $40 per acre base rate
  - $30 per acre early planting bonus
  - $20 per acre rye variety bonus
Key VACS Cover Crop Options

- **SL-8B** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management (i.e. the “go to” option)
- **WQ-4** Legume Based Cover Crop
- **SL-8H** Harvestable Cover Crop
- **SL-8** Protective Cover for Specialty Crops
- **SL-8A** Protective Cover for Agricultural Cropland (i.e. the “catch all” CC option)

- **SL-8M** Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management and Residue Management with Fall Manure Application (new for PY23)
SL-8M Small Grain and Mixed Cover Crop for Nutrient Management & Residue Management with Fall Manure Application

• New practice for PY23
• Similar to SL-8B but allows application of manure between harvest of previous crop and March 1 if certain conditions are met.
• Harvesting is not permitted
• Tiered payment:
  – $15 per acre base rate
  – $22 per acre early planting bonus
  – $8 per acre rye variety bonus
Other Key VACS Practices

Credit: agronomator.wordpress.com
SL-1 Long Term Vegetative Cover on Cropland

- Conversion Practice for a Land Use Change.
- Establishes grass and/or legume vegetation on cropland with existing cover of less than 60%.
- 3 year minimum cropping history required.
- Lifespan: 5, 10 or 15 year options
- 75% cost-share rate on eligible components + an incentive payment of $25, $100 or $150/acre depending on chosen lifespan.
SL-11: Permanent Vegetative Cover on Critical Areas

- For stabilizing critically eroding areas, thus reducing the movement of sediment and nutrients from the site.
- Allows for grading, shaping, filling, grass and/or tree establishment.
- Not to be used in areas where water concentrates and flows.
- 75% cost-share rate with tax credit.
- Minimum of 5 year lifespan.
WP-3 Sod Waterway

- Reduces the movement of sediment and nutrients via concentrated flow from crop fields into water bodies.
- Site preparation, grading, shaping, filling and establishing permanent vegetation.
- 75% cost-share with tax credit.
- 10 year lifespan.
WP-3 versus SL-11

The Difference?
Concentrated flow is causing the erosion for the potential grassed waterway.
WP-4 Suite: Animal Waste Control Facilities

• A planned system designed to manage liquid and/or solid waste from areas where livestock or poultry are confined.

• “Least cost, technically feasible” options only; sometimes moving the feeding area solves the problem!

• Number of livestock that would be used to design the animal waste control facility must be present before cost-share consideration is given.

• 15 Year Lifespan; 75% Cost-Share.
Expansion of WP-4 Options

• In PY21, DCR expanded the WP-4 Animal Waste Control Facilities to the following:
  – WP-4LC -> For livestock in confinement
  – WP-4LL -> For non-bovine loafing lot systems
  – WP-4FP -> For feeding pads
  – WP-4SF -> For seasonal feeding facilities

• In PY23, WP-4 CCI practices were added:
  – CCI-WP-4, Maintenance of Animal Waste Control Facilities
  – CCI-WP-4C, Maintenance of Composter Facilities
Examples: Bedded Pack
Examples: Litter Shed and Composter (WP-4C)
Examples: Manure Lagoon
WP-4B Dairy Loafing Lot Management System

• Similar requirements to WP-4.
• For dairy only, provides a loose housing facility plus a minimum of three grassed loafing lots.
• Free stalls are not least cost, technically feasible.
• 15 Year Lifespan.
• 75% Cost-Share with Tax Credit.
Examples: Dairies
Examples: Dairy Bedded Pack
CREP – Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

- Separate training (available upon request), but in brief, CREP is a riparian buffer program that involves several agencies:
  - FSA: Determines eligibility, draws up federal contract, pays federal funds to applicant
  - NRCS: Conducts field work and planning
  - DOF: Assists with planning and planting of the riparian forest buffer
  - SWCD: Gets Contract Part I signed, puts information from FSA in Ag BMP Tracking Program in order to ask for confirmation of state funds for the contract, approves funds once confirmed by DCR, issues SWCD portion of payment, maintains a case file for the contract
QUESTIONS?

Credit: cdrf.org