Division of Soil and Water Conservation

Chesapeake Bay Stakeholder Advisory Group

Updates on Agricultural Initiatives

October 28, 2020
Nutrient Management on Agricultural Land

• NMP Direct Pay for 37 localities with less than 10% of all agricultural acres under NMP (crop, hay, pasture) in 2019 – 3 yr. NMPs

• EPA $469K Grant for Direct Pay NMP only covers 9 of these 37
  • Albemarle, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Rappahannock, & Shenandoah

• 29 participating Private Sector Planners – 46K acres by Oct 2020

• NMP coverage on Bay cropland ~ 50% (426K acres in FY2019 – Virginia cost share & tax credits)

• Will revise target list periodically based on progress towards 852K acres
Percentage of Agricultural Land - 2019 Nutrient Management Data / 2016 Land Cover Data

Percentage of county total ag is the NM Total Acres divided by the county’s total of cropland and pasture as of 2016.
Percentage of Cropland - 2019 Nutrient Management Data / 2016 Land Cover Data

Percentage of county cropland is the NM Cropland divided by the county’s available cropland as of 2016.
EPA Most Effective Basin Grant

- Supplemental Bay Program Grant (Oct - awaiting EPA approval)
- $1.1 million BMPs + $130K technical assistance for SWCDs
- EPA selected Bay side of Eastern Shore, NNeck Great Wicomico
- Shore – Whole Farm Approach (WFA) on cropland w/RMP
  - Highly successful pilot in Three Rivers SWCD (95+% enrollment)
  - WFA bundles NMP core or (optional) enhanced, cover crops in one contract
  - Must be implemented on entire farm to qualify
- NNeck – Significant cropland erosion mitigation w/RMP
2017 Agricultural Census - Total Cattle

Total Cattle
- 0 - 5,106
- 5,107 - 14,310
- 14,311 - 29,208
- 29,209 - 51,969
- 51,970 - 81,051

Chesapeake Bay Watershed
County Outlines

Map showing the distribution of total cattle in Virginia counties.
### Stream Exclusion Funding

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<th>Range</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Chesapeake Bay Watershed</td>
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<tr>
<td>$809,945 - $2,372,709</td>
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<td>County Outlines</td>
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*Stream Exclusion BMP Funding - 2010 - 2020*

*VACS Program Years*
Total Cattle Excluded - 2010 - 2020 VACS BMPs

Number Cattle Excluded

- 0 - 1,479
- 1,479 - 3,970
- 3,970 - 9,224
- 9,224 - 14,175

Chesapeake Bay Watershed

County Outlines
Small Herd Initiative

• Target bovine herds 20 – 35 head
• Funded by returned and other unobligated cost share from Chesapeake Bay SWCDs
• Start-up goal of $2 million/year plus 13% technical assistance for SWCDs
• Non-competitive, one-time funding, via set-aside funds
• Cover any VACS exclusion BMP at 100% up to maximum $25K per participant
• No impact on other cost share participant caps
• Need VSWCB approval to initiate Small Herd Initiative
WIP Task #14

- Pending agreement between Virginia’s Secretaries of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Forestry, and Education and the Virginia Association of SWCDs (VASWCD)
- Goal is to identify and implement avenues for cross-collaboration that address technical assistance, education and training, research needs, and agriculture incentives.
- Includes 12 specific action items; w/focus on cross-training of agencies and SWCDs on programs available to assist farmers
- Monitor progress by semi-annual meetings and annual report
Farmer Survey

• Interagency committee coordinated by OSNR to develop agricultural BMP survey for Virginia farmers in Chesapeake Bay watershed
• Survey will be distributed in early 2021 by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)
• Survey will ask for information on cost-shared and voluntary BMPs
• VCE will be trained by DCR in spring 2021 to spot check BMPs on 10% of respondents’ acres
• VCE will provide DCR the raw data for deduplication and removal of personal data prior to aggregation on county level and submittal for Chesapeake Bay model credit
Data Sharing Agreement w/NRCS

- Agreement to share 11 types of end of lifespan NRCS BMPs
- Implementation procedures are pending
- Written permission from NRCS producers required first
- DCR seeks funding to compensate SWCDs to participate
- DCR w/SWCDs will then verify BMPs continued functionality
- Producers offered state voluntary agreement, VACS CCI, or RMP
- BMP data scrubbed & aggregated by DCR before reported
- DCR also reports results to NRCS of each federal BMP verification completed
Agricultural BMP Verification

- DCR/SWCDs began agricultural BMP verifications in 2015 – 2016
  - Verified 731/1396 agricultural VACS BMPs that expired 2010 – 2015
- DCR/SWCDs second verification round 2017 – 2018
  - Verified another 1504/1734 additional VACS BMPs due to expire by 2019
- Numbers of BMP verifications needed continues to grow
  - 492 structural VACS BMPs will expire 2020 - 2021
  - Plus an unknown number of NRCS BMPs
  - Two transect surveys in 2021 (conservation tillage and cover crops)
- Despite these efforts, many pre-2010 BMPs have expired