

SHENANDOAH VALLEY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF April 3, 2025
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
STANLEY, VIRGINIA

Board Members Present:

Directors: Charles Newton, Betty Reese, Elizabeth Baldwin, Jeff Heie, Keith Sheets

Associate Directors: Dan Downey, Lisa Perry, Matt Dale, John Hoffman

Board Members Absent:

Directors: Keith Sheets, Kevin Craun, Jimmy Burke

Associate Directors: Keith Thomas, Walter Heeb

District Staff Present: Megen Dalton, Megan Trice

Cooperating Agency Representatives Present: Cory Guilliams (NRCS), Stuart Baker (DOF), Tad Williams (DCR)

Guests: none

Charles Newton, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. Megen Dalton advised the group that Megan Trice was going to provide an overview of the District's Education Programs. Megan shared a detailed PowerPoint presentation highlighting the many education and outreach programs that the District administers. Various questions were asked and answered during and after the presentation.

Elizabeth Baldwin moved to accept the March 6, 2025 Board Meeting minutes. Betty Reese seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Keith Sheets moved to receive the February 2025 Treasurer's Report. Betty Reese seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Megen Dalton and Megan Trice each highlighted items outlined on their Staff Report. See attached Staff Report.

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS

Cory Guilliams (NRCS) – Cory highlighted items on the NRCS report.

Elizabeth Baldwin (VCE) – No written report provided. Ms. Baldwin mentioned an Agribusiness producer meeting that is scheduled for April 9th at the SVEC-Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative and advised that registration was required.

Tim Higgs (VDACS) – Not present. No report.

Stuart Baker (DOF) – No written report provided. Mr. Baker reminded the group that his coverage area was Rockingham County. The problem with the spongy moth is being experienced across the Shenandoah Valley but is more of an issue in the northern valley. He explained that last year approximately 80,000 acres were defoliated. He noted that DOF has a program to support cost share for aerial spraying to help address the spongy moth infestation and advised that Counties are expected to have a coordinator who can manage and coordinate the spraying on properties within the county. He also mentioned the RIFLE program, which offered turnkey riparian buffer plantings to landowners. He advised that DOF appointed contractors planted the buffers for approved properties. He noted that this program was funded with IRA funds and thus the future of this program is uncertain moving forward. He advised that he had a few free trees that he could offer if anyone was interested.

John Hoffman asked about the status of the spotted lantern fly. Stuart noted that they are here to stay and thus, there is no need for the public to report their presence or sightings. He also advised that the lantern flies are not a forest health issue.

Sara Jordan (DEQ) – not present. See attached DEQ Report

Tad Williams (DCR) – Tad highlighted several key items from the DCR – CDC report. See attached CDC Report.

Felicity Zimmerman (CBF) – Not present, See attached CBF report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chesapeake Bay –

Keith Sheets advised that the Chesapeake Bay Committee met on March 31st to review and discuss various ag BMP related business. Mr. Sheets advised that there were a number of actionable items from this meeting that require Board action today.

Keith Sheets moved to approve the Conservation Plan for Tax Credit on Equipment listed on the attached Chesapeake Bay Committee Report. Betty Reese seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Keith Sheets moved to approve the Agricultural BMP Conservation Plans listed on the attached Chesapeake Bay Committee Report. Betty Reese seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Keith Sheets moved to approve the Agricultural BMP Contracts listed on the attached Chesapeake Bay Committee Report including the attached list of PSNT practices. Betty Reese seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Keith Sheets moved to approve the Project Cancellations listed on the attached Chesapeake Bay Committee Report. Betty Reese seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Dam Maintenance – Megan explained that the contract renewal with Crooked Road Fencing and Property Maintenance had been executed. Megan mentioned that dam inspections were scheduled for next week- Monday and Wednesday. She requested that those interested in participating in the inspections, let her know so that she could plan for travel to the dams accordingly.

Education & Awards – Elizabeth Baldwin mentioned that an Education & Awards Committee had not met in the past month, but were scheduled to hold a meeting on April 15th at the SWCD office. Megan Trice highlighted a number of topics that would be discussed at the upcoming Committee meeting including: teacher of the year selection and scholarship review. Megan mentioned that typically posters are judged at the spring Education Committee Meeting, but noted that we haven't received many posters to date and therefore, she was considering extending the deadline for the poster contest. Ms. Baldwin indicated that the Committee would need approval authority to select local scholarship recipients and to determine the District's nominee to the VASWCD for the State scholarship. Youth Conservation Camp applications among other things. Megan mentioned that staff were busy planning and preparing for the Envirothon Competition and encourage folks to reach out to Megan Trice if they were interested in assisting with our local or the Area Envirothon Competition.

Finance – Megan Dalton advised that the Finance Committee had not met since the last Board Meeting and indicated that a Finance Committee Meeting is scheduled for April 23rd at 1:00pm at the District office.

Urban – Lisa Perry, Committee Chair, advised that the Urban Committee met on March 18th. She stated that during that meeting, the Committee reviewed and recommended that 4 urban BMP projects be approved by the City for the HCAP Program. She noted that the next scheduled Urban Committee Meeting was scheduled for April 15th.

Personnel – Megan Dalton mentioned that the Personnel Committee has not met since the last Board meeting and advised that the District has been advertising for our seasonal PSNT Technician positions. She advised that the closing date for applications was March 28th. She indicated that she had already received four or five applications and expected more in the coming weeks. She noted that she would likely be onboarding the four new PSNT Technicians at the end of May. She explained that funds to cover these positions was included in the current approved Budget. The Board agreed that since these positions were in the Budget, there was no need for action on this item.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

CORRESPONDENCE – None

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

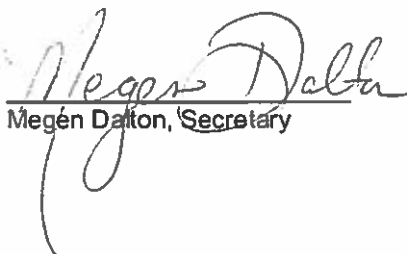
Matt Dale – Matt noted that at last month's meeting, he mentioned a planned meeting with Congressman Ben Cline. Matt thanked Cory Williams and Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley for helping prepare him for the meeting. He advised that the meeting also included Delegate Runion and Augusta County farmers – Jeff Slaven and Gerald Garber. He overviewed the two focuses of the meeting- stability in conservation funding and honoring signed contracts as well as concerns with the bottleneck in getting cost share projects approved resulting from the lack of engineers. He noted that it was a good conversation.

Lisa Perry – Ms. Perry advised that she was on the Board of Directors for the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO). She highlighted a conversation that she had with a staffer from VSO regarding how hard it is to obtain federal funds, noting that it has become harder recently, resulting in the organization having to rely on private donors.

Keith Sheets – Keith explained that he recently was invited to participate in a meeting with the new Secretary of Agriculture, Brooke Rollins. He explained that Ms. Rollins wanted to hear from agricultural producers and Keith indicated that there were ag producers present at the meeting from various east coast states. He advised that it was an interesting and productive meeting and indicated that there was much discussion focused on ensuring that the federal government carried through on the current contracts that were in place with ag producers and the importance of maintaining the good federal staff that were currently in place.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL:


Megan Dalton, Secretary

APPROVED:


Charles Newton, Chair

Chesapeake Bay Committee Report

4/3/2025

Conservation Plan Approvals for Tax Credit on Equipment

| Plan # |
|--------------|
| CP-9-25-0082 |

Conservation Plan Approvals

| Plan # |
|--------------|
| CP-9-25-0026 |
| CP-9-25-0025 |
| CP-9-25-0025 |
| CP-9-25-0071 |
| CP-9-25-0071 |

Agricultural BMP Contract Approvals

| Contract # | Practice | Estimated Cost | Cost Share | Cost Share Buffer | Staff |
|--|-----------|----------------|--|---|-------|
| Contract # 09-25-0007, Instance # 588798 | SL-6W | \$31,845.00 | \$250.00 | \$25.00 | CPC |
| Contract # 09-25-0005, Instance # 588796 | SL-6N | \$15,757.50 | \$250.00 | \$25.00 | CPC |
| Contract # 09-25-0316, Instance # 651751 | CCI-FRB-1 | \$1,720.00 | \$1,720.00 | N/A | CPC |
| Contract # 09-25-0316, Instance # 651026 | CCI-SL-6W | \$6,597.50 | \$6,597.50 | N/A | CPC |
| Contract # 09-25-0029, Instance # 585702 | SL-6N | \$50,979.78 | \$250.00 | \$25.00 | CPC |
| Contract # 09-25-0033, Instance # 585983 | SL-6W | \$34,698.13 | \$250.00 | \$25.00 | CPC |
| Contract # 09-25-0041, Instance # 614981 | SL-7 | \$4,950.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | CPC |
| Contract # 09-25-0303, Instance # 650775 | SL-6N | \$263,243.75 | VACS: \$99,824.38 DuPont: \$47,862.50 | VACS: \$9,982.43 DuPont: \$4,786.25 | EFD |
| Contract # 09-25-0302, Instance # 647048 | SL-6W | \$104,828.63 | \$101,898.75 | \$9,529.88 | EFD |
| Contract # 09-25-0302, Instance # 647506 | SL-7 | \$7,034.50 | \$5,116.00 | \$511.60 | EFD |
| Contract # 09-24-0326, Instance # 588737 | WP-4B | \$224,841.23 | \$258.50 | \$0.00 | EFD |
| Contract # 09-24-0312, Instance # 588341 | SL-6W | \$144,663.75 | \$16,839.94 | \$1,405.80 | EFD |
| Contract # 09-25-0073, Instance # 630633 | SL-1 | \$5,634.75 | \$1,536.75 | N/A | EFD |
| Contract # 09-25-0073, Instance # 630689 | SL-1 | \$2,642.75 | \$720.75 | N/A | EFD |
| Contract # 09-23-0048, Instance # 518061 | WP-4C | \$43,239.33 | VACS: \$1,012.50 DuPont: \$337.50 | VACS: \$101.25 DuPont: \$33.75 | EFD |
| Contract # 09-25-0326, Instance # 647615 | WP-4 | \$118,576.00 | VACS: \$70,620.00 DuPont: \$23,540.00 | VACS: \$18,312.00 DuPont: \$6,104.00 | MCT |
| Contract # 09-25-0326, Instance # 647616 | WP-4C | \$44,785.40 | VACS: \$30,535.50 DuPont: \$10,178.50 | VACS: \$3,053.55 DuPont: \$1,017.85 | MCT |
| Contract # 09-25-0290, Instance # 650367, 650368, 651812, 651813 | WFA-NM | \$461.57 | \$461.57 | N/A | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0279, Instance # 648830 | NM-6 | \$2,023.50 | \$1,214.10 | N/A | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0324, Instance # 651621 | NM-6 | \$9,700.50 | \$5,820.30 | N/A | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0300, Instance # 650532, 650533 | WFA-NM | \$403.05 | \$403.05 | N/A | MCT |
| PSNT List Attached | | | | | |

Project Cancellations

| Contract # | Practice | Cost Share | Program | Staff |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Contract # 09-25-0235, Instance # 648053, 648055, 640058, 640059, 648060, 648062 | SL-8M | \$5,449.80 | VACS | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0223, Instance # 648016 | SL-8B | \$2,778.40 | VACS | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0233, Instance # 648039 | SL-8H | \$359.60 | VACS | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0259, Instance # 648213 | SL-8B | \$8,260.00 | VACS | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0187, Instance # 647854 | SL-8H | \$371.00 | VACS | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0194, Instance # 647886 | SL-8B | \$2,222.50 | VACS | SNDF |
| Contract # 09-25-0252, Instance # 648193 | SL-8B | \$847.60 | VACS | SNDF |



We work with the people who work the land.

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Staff Reports –March 2025

Megen Dalton

- I have two quotes for IT services. One quote from Vision Technology Group (VTG) was provided in your 1st Round packet and a second quote from IT Decisions was provided in your 2nd Round packet. We need to select which IT service provider we would like to use. I plan to review and discuss our IT service provider for the coming year.
- The RFP Review Committee met following last month's Board Meeting and the group reviewed and ranked the proposals received. Following the Committee's recommendations, I was able to confirm acceptance of our agreements and terms with 3 farmers. I prepared 3 contracts for our NFWF Manure Injection grant funds and met with the 3 farmers to review and sign their contracts. Contract payments were made to each of the 3 farmers. A large portion of the NFWF grant funds needed to be spent by 3/31/25. We were able to spend all of those funds and will be submitting a reimbursement request in the coming weeks.
- With support from other SWCD staff I conducted two "Dine & Discuss" events on Monday, March 24th. The events were held at the Wood Grill restaurant in Harrisonburg, one at lunch and a second one at dinner time. We had a great turn out at these event, thanks to our outreach efforts which included a radio spot on WSAV with Frank Wilt, using our new email and texts message system to reach out to our clients, our posting of flyers throughout the ag community, as well as support from our conservation partners who helped share and promote the event.
- Chris and I conducted a full day of HCAP site visits. We expect to be out of HCAP funds in the next month or so.
- We had a very successful Rain Barrel Workshop in partnership with the City. We had approximately 12 participants/sets of participants who made 16 barrels. We even had 2 Headwaters staff attend this event to learn how to conduct their own Rain Barrel Workshop.
- We are scheduled to receive a tractor trailer truck load of 55-gallon Pickle Barrels on Thursday morning. We plan to clean the Barrels on Friday at Harrisonburg Public Works. We welcome your help to help us clean the barrels on Friday.
- We are gearing up for a busy PSNT season. We received 12 applications for our PSNT Technician-seasonal positions. We are in the process of selecting 4 candidates to fill these seasonal positions and will be onboarding these new employees the last week of May.
- A special thanks Megan Trice who attended the Rockingham Young Farmers Banquet with me and presented the Clean Water Farm Award to our Rockingham County recipient. A special thanks to Chris and Hunter for attending the Page County Farmers' Association Spring Banquet with me where Chris and I recognized our Page County Clean Water Farm Award winner.
- Chris and I participated in a "Conservation Speed Dating" event hosted by the Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley for the Keezletown Community.
- Megan Trice and I had a "kick-off" meeting with VDH staff for the Well and Septic project that we are contracted with VDH for. The project site is in Elkton. We will soon been reaching out to local VDH staff to chat about the project and will be setting up a meeting with the landowner to discuss the project.
- I attended the Area I Spring Meeting in Buchanan, VA. I was happy to have Charlie, Betty and Cory come along for the ride too. We received a number of agency updates from our Conservation Partners and friends including: DCR, VASWCD, DEQ, VACDE and DOF. We also hear from our fellow Area I SWCDs.

Elizabeth Dellinger

Ag Cost Share Implementation/Management

- Created a SL-6N Estimated Cost template that has DuPont funds
- Reviewed multiple revised Estimated Cost's for different changes
- Worked with Josh & Jack to get planning done for 2 projects
- Prepared several revised Estimated Cost Sheets and moved multiple projects into the templates to calculate tax credit on items not eligible for cost share
- Completed several bid solicitation sheets and conditional approval satisfied letters
- Wrote down process for other staff to follow on how to process piggyback projects
- Pulled docs needing producer signatures from folders and put in sorter for text message reminders
- Caught up on sending animal waste documents to Ben for current projects
- Reviewed GIS mapping with Jack
- Worked on tying up loose ends in many of the files on my desk

Financial

- Wrote checks and made deposits
- Processed checks for paying bills and put in mail after signatures
- Entered cost share checks into Tracking & printed Part III's
- Generated Treasurer's Report
- Filed sales tax & paid
- Scanned & saved reconciliation reports

Office Administration

- Attended District Staff Meeting
- MED/ED Consultation

VACDE

- Reconciliation
- Deposits and marking members paid

Megan Trice

- Went on two Animal Waste Site Visits.
- Met with VTG regarding IT services with Megan
- Attended the Rockingham County Young Farmers Banquet to present Richard Eppard with Clean Water Farm Award
- Made maps for manure injection grant
- Attended the lunch Dine & Discuss Event
- Attended Montevideo Middle School STEM Day
- Various ag work

Josh Walker

- Work with farmers to get nutrient management plans for manure injection
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation INSR grant focus meeting in Charlottesville
- Worked with producer on installing their own underground outlets
- As-built visits for completed structures
- As-built inspections for Roof runoff
- Survey for structural site plans and roof runoff
- Stream crossing and watering system designs for district only
- Training new staff on survey and design
- Inventory and Evaluation for potential piggyback projects
- Met with contractors on new stream exclusion and watering system

Shelby Foosness

- Multiple site visits- Staking fence for multiple projects and construction visits for district only stream exclusion with Josh
- Went out to District Only Animal Waste Visit with Megan T
- Prepared PSNT Estimated Cost Sheets and checked NMPs
- Worked on preparing WFA-NM and NM-6 Approval Packets with Hunter
- Spent time melding documents from Joint Engineering RFP into a master "RFP workflow" document with Megan
- Worked with Megan T to prepare and send out text messages for PSNT, NMP reminders and document signature reminders.

Chris Coggin

- Scheduled and performed Continuing Conservation Initiative (CCI) Site Visits.
 - This includes meeting with the farmer to inspect their active best management practice to ensure it is in serviceable condition to function for another 5 year lifespan
- Worked on completing CCI applications including site visits, resource reviews, and data entry
- Performed Harrisonburg Conservation Assistance Program (HCAP) initial site visits with Megan Dalton
- Attended DCR minutes Training Webinar
- Attended and presented at the Dine and Discuss outreach meeting
- Attended Conservation Speed Dating Event in Keezletown w/ Megan Dalton
- Helped setup and administer the Harrisonburg Rain Barrel Workshop with Megan Dalton and City Staff
- Attended the Page County Farmers Association Banquet and recognized the Clean Water Farm Award Winner

Hunter Arehart

- Went on a mussel survey visit with DWR
- Multiple initial site visits with NRCS staff
- Multiple fence staking visits for stream exclusions
- Completed multiple online conservation planner courses
- PSNT and manure injection process
 - Estimated cost sheets and data entry
- Attended Page County Farmers Association Banquet with Chris and Megan

Jack Carlton

- Helping design stream crossings and watering systems with Josh for ASA complaint Projects
- Making site visits with Chris to CCI clients
- Working on Estimated Costs and Payment Statements for CCI and HCAP clients
- Dine and Discuss Dinner event March 24th
- STEM education event Montevideo Middle School on March 27th



United States Department of Agriculture

Harrisonburg Field Office Monthly Report

Shenandoah Valley SWCD Board Meeting

April 2, 2025

Program Updates/Deadlines:

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**
 - Over the month of March, we continued to complete site visits with our EQIP applicants to gather information to complete conservation plans and assessments for their potential projects.
 - Our FY2025 EQIP ranking/submittal deadline was on Friday, March 28, 2025. We submitted a total of 36 applications for funding consideration across several fund pools.
 - Our FY2025 Inflation Reduction Act funding continues to be frozen at the present time. Because of this freeze, Virginia NRCS has had to reshape our FY2025 EQIP program to only utilize Farm Bill EQIP funding.
- **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**
 - We submitted 5 FY2025 CSP Classic applications in Rockingham County for funding consideration by the Friday, March 28, 2025 deadline. Of the applications submitted, 4 were in the AgLand Fund Pools and 1 was in the Non-Industrial Private Forestland Fund Pool.
 - Participants with 2021 CSP contracts have been notified that they can sign-up for the renewal of their contract for additional five years. The deadline for these participants to sign up for the renewal of their contracts is June 20, 2025. We have 14 of these contracts that are eligible for renewal.
- **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)**
 - Three of the 4 Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley RCPP-ACEP-ALE conservation easement applications submitted for funding consideration have been preapproved for funding and the applicants have been notified. The Shenandoah Valley Conservancy will be the holder of each of these easements.

Outreach/Education/Agency Activities/Events:

- On March 17th, Cory went to Ferrum College and helped with an Ag Club and Environment Club outreach event for Agriculture Week where the soil Slake Test and infiltration tests were demonstrated to students to show the importance of soil health. Over 30 students and faculty, including the college president, stopped by the demonstration during the event.
- On March 24th, Cory attended both the lunch and supper Shenandoah Valley SWCD Farmer Outreach Meetings in Harrisonburg and gave a short presentation on NRCS Farm Bill Conservation Programs. Between the two meetings there were over 45 farmers in attendance.

Cory was able to speak with several of the attendees at each meeting, one-on-one, to have a conversation specific to their farm operations following the meeting.

- On March 26th, Cory helped with Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley's Keezletown Community Landowner Conservation Workshop Event held at the Keezletown Ruritan Club in central Rockingham County. Eight landowners attended the event and heard from representatives from 9 different conservation partners about opportunities for land that they own or manage. The conservation partners met one-on-one with each of the landowners present in a round robin, speed dating type manner and offered advice and information specific to their situation. The event was a big success.

Other Information:

- USDA is offering a second round of the Deferred Resignation Program for employees who wish to resign from their position. Interested employees can sign up through April 8, 2025.

Submitted By: **Cory Guilliams, District Conservationist**

DEQ-Valley Regional Office Report to the Shenandoah Valley SWCD April 2025

- DEQ is accepting waterbody nominations for inclusion in the 2026 water monitoring plan. Nomination forms can be found at the following link and will be accepted until April 30, 2025.
Please email citizenwater@deq.virginia.gov with any questions. Link to the nomination form: [Monitoring Plan Nomination Form 2026MY](#)
- DEQ-VRO Ag Program Update:
 - Senate Bill 1495 was signed by the Governor on March 21, 2025, effective immediately. It allows an air exemption for all bovine incinerators much like the exemption that was already available for poultry and swine incinerators.
 - DEQ continues outreach to the ag community about water withdrawal reporting for surface water and groundwater agricultural uses. Withdrawal reporting contributes to the Water Supply Planning process which is starting back up across the state. Kickoff meetings for many localities have occurred <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/our-programs/water/water-quantity/water-supply-planning/water-supply-planning-resources>.
 - The Shenandoah River 1 and Upper James River 1 Regional joint kickoff meeting is scheduled for April 1, 2025 in Fishersville. The meeting info is found here with a link to the Town Hall and agenda. <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/our-programs/water/water-quantity/water-supply-planning/water-supply-planning-resources/water-supply-planning-meetings>
- DEQ's Clean Water Financing and Assistance Program's Agricultural Loan Dashboard as of March 25, 2025, is found below. For more information, contact Phil Davis, Ag BMP Project Manager with the Clean Water Financing and Assistance Program: (540) 209-4201, philip.davis@deq.virginia.gov.

AgBMP Loan Program Dashboard 03/25/2025

| Application Status | Total Number | Total Value | Average | Median |
|---|--------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Application Pending | 10 | \$ 1,743,835.05 | \$ 174,383.51 | \$ 174,771.60 |
| Conditionally Authorized | 64 | \$ 16,059,899.28 | \$ 250,935.93 | \$ 212,363.13 |
| Not Authorized | 1 | \$ 45,000.00 | \$ 45,000.00 | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Application Withdrawn | 70 | \$ 10,494,950.04 | \$ 149,927.86 | \$ 110,000.00 |
| Inactive | 20 | \$ 3,593,093.52 | \$ 179,654.68 | \$ 97,500.00 |
| Credit Approved | 10 | \$ 2,390,000.00 | \$ 239,000.00 | \$ 200,500.00 |
| Credit Not Approved | 10 | \$ 1,631,181.53 | \$ 163,118.15 | \$ 96,938.51 |
| Loan Closed | 68 | \$ 13,228,849.09 | \$ 194,541.90 | \$ 150,343.16 |
| Loan Closed with PF Granted | 3 | \$ 919,035.22 | \$ 306,345.07 | \$ 440,924.00 |
| Project Complete | 126 | \$ 21,528,962.12 | \$ 170,864.78 | \$ 112,961.00 |
| Project Complete with PF Granted | 14 | \$ 2,153,475.97 | \$ 153,819.71 | \$ 95,104.08 |
| Completed without DEQ Funding | 26 | \$ 2,971,538.29 | \$ 114,289.93 | \$ 58,129.63 |
| Equipment Purchase Complete | 22 | \$ 1,639,630.00 | \$ 74,528.64 | \$ 39,249.50 |
| PF Granted SWCD | 20 | \$ 349,370.43 | \$ 17,468.52 | |
| Total PF Granted to Producers | 17 | \$ 1,268,932.43 | | |
| | | | | |
| Total Applications | 465 | | | |
| Total Active Projects | 156 | | | |
| Beginning Fund Balance | | \$ 18,659,552.00 | | |
| Additional Funds Authorized by DEQ | | \$ 10,000,000.00 | | |
| Total Projects and Loan Funds Obligated | | \$ 53,718,188.99 | | |
| Total PF Granted | | \$ 1,562,966.52 | | |
| Total Repayments | | \$ 18,219,936.30 | | |



April 2025 – Conservation District Coordinator (CDC) Report

Tad Williams; Conservation District Coordinator
DCR-Division of Soil and Water Conservation
tad.williams@dcr.virginia.gov | 540-414-1278

1) Administrative and Operational Items

- **Third Quarter Reports.** Are due to the CDC by April 15. Please make sure reports are accurate and on time and that the signed version of the report is submitted electronically on or before April 15. Remember that the quarterly report packet should contain an original signed Attachment E form, a profit and loss statement for January 1, 2025 thru March 31, 2025 and a cash balance report with an ending date of March 31, 2025. Also, please make sure that all payments and monthly interest transactions have been recorded in CAS. All approvals should also be in CAS by April 15.
- **Audit Reports -** The VA Soil and Water Conservation Board (VSWCB) met 03/19/25 to review information provided by the auditors. The General Management Letter will be sent to all 47 SWCDs soon. Please be sure to include that letter in a future board meeting packet and take the time to review. Adhere to the recommendations made within the letter to ensure that your SWCD is in good standing.
 - **Fine for Paying VA Sales Tax:** The VSWCB did fine SWCDs, at a flat rate fee of \$250, who were found during the recent audits to have paid VA sales tax. Be sure you are not paying VA sales tax.
- **FY26 Budget:** SWCD board approval by June 30.
- **FY26 Annual Plan of Work:** SWCD board approval by June 30.
- **FY27 Budget Template:** due to DCR by July 15.
- **Meeting Minutes follow-up:** Here is the link to the recorded training: <https://youtu.be/s-wok1T-kl8>
- **Committee Meetings:** As your SWCD schedules committee meetings to handle end-of-fiscal year items, please remember the following:
 - Make sure that committee meetings are held in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. That means that all committee meetings, including Personnel Committee meetings, must be advertised to the public and minutes must be taken at each meeting.
 - Remember to reference the closed meeting guidelines in the event that the SWCD will be discussing subject matter that is recognized by the Code of Virginia to be exempt from FOIA (Reference FOIA Code §2.2-3711(A) for a complete list of closed meeting allowances).
 - A committee report should be presented to the board at the next appointed SWCD meeting.
 - Committee meeting minutes should be handled one of two ways:
 - Minutes should be approved by the committee at the next committee meeting; OR
 - Minutes should be approved by the full board at a regular board meeting if no committee meeting is scheduled for the near future.
 - Once approved by the committee or Board of Directors, committee meeting minutes should be signed by the committee chair. Per the grant agreement, committee meeting minutes must be submitted to the CDC

2) Ag and Cost-Share Items

- **CY 2025 Random Verifications (spot checks) and 25,26 & 27 EOL BMP Verifications:** Lists have been provided to SWCD staff. Over the summer/fall DCR will accompany the SWCD on the Random Verifications.
- **PY 2026 Secondary Considerations:** Require DCR approval. Must be submitted for review and approval on or before 06/30/25 to Sara Bottenfield, DCR-DSWC Ag Incentives Program Manager. Please cc your CDC. Remember that if your SWCD chooses to lower the PY26 participant cap, you must document that in the Secondary Considerations.
- **PY 2026 Average Cost List:** requires local SWCD board approval before being submitted to DCR. Submit to Sara Bottenfield and copy your CDC.
- **Conservation Plan Signature Page Reminder.** As conservation plans are approved, please remember to upload the plan's signature page into CAS promptly after receiving board approval and signature. Remember that the

board approval signature should be the last signature that goes on the signature page of the conservation plan and should be obtained at the time of plan approval. Also, please remember to document the date of board approval of the conservation

- **The requirement for districts to obligate 90% of cost share dollars no longer exists.** Any unobligated cost share funds, even if they have been disbursed will need to be returned to DCR with appropriate TA.
- **Cost-Share Obligations and Transfers.** If your SWCD is unable to obligate the cost-share funds provided and wishes to transfer funds to another SWCD, please let me know and I will work with Central Office to try and find a SWCD that can utilize some additional funds. Likewise, if your SWCD needs additional VACS funds, please let me know how much funding is needed. Remember that the BMPs serving as the basis for the additional funding request should be loaded in CAS at the time of the request. Please remember that all allocation transfers must include the transfer of a proportional amount (13%) of technical assistance funds. Please note that all transfers must be approved by both the giving and receiving SWCDs no later than June 15, 2025. Please recall that per the PY 2025 Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Policy, the return of VACS and TA funds to DCR is no longer an option.
- **TAC and PY27 VACS Program Recommendations:** DCR will convene a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to consider and recommend changes to the PY27 Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) Program. **Suggestions for the TAC must be submitted to Sara Bottenfield, Agricultural Incentives Program Manager (sara.bottenfield@dcr.virginia.gov) no later than April 30, 2025.** Please submit your most critical items for the future of the VACS Program. Suggestions will be reviewed for eligibility and assigned to the appropriate TAC subcommittee or to DCR for consideration. Any suggestions that have been considered and tabled by the TAC within the past 3 years will not be eligible. Suggestions may be prioritized to manage workload and allow for thorough consideration.
 - For Soil and Water Conservation Districts, state code § 62.1-44.119:3 now includes the following: *Each soil and water conservation district shall report to the Department of Conservation and Recreation recommendations for improving the disbursement of funding and for program efficiencies that would expedite disbursement of funds provided through the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund established under § 10.1-2128.1. Include these recommendations with your TAC suggestion submissions.*
 - Participants from last year's TAC & those who expressed interest in becoming participants will be contacted later to confirm participation. **If your district has not participated on the TAC before but would like to, contact Sara Bottenfield by 4/30.**
- **Carryovers:** Encourage VACS participants to complete their projects in time for payment prior to the end of the fiscal year to reduce carryovers into FY26. Keep in mind that only certain practices are eligible for carryover status. Districts should reference Pages II-42-II-46 of the *FY25 VACS Program Manual* for a list of practices eligible for carryover and an explanation of the carryover procedures. Practices approved in FY25 that are listed as "two-year completion date eligible" do not need formal board approval prior to the end of this FY. Other practices substantially under construction and eligible for carryover will need approval by SWCD boards prior to COB 06/30/25.

Carryover BMPs coming to the end of their third PY and not expected to be complete by 06/30/25 can only be carried over again with prior approval from DCR. Requests to carry over BMPs a 3rd time into a 4th PY must be submitted to Sara Bottenfield, Ag Incentives Program Manager, by May 15. For each practice requested, District staff will need to:

- Update the Carryover section of the Measurements tab by selecting 'Other (describe in BMP comments)' as one of the justifications and entering a comment on the General tab to thoroughly explain the reason for an additional carryover. Include the date and initials of the person entering the request in the comment.
- Send an email to Sara (sara.bottenfield@dcr.virginia.gov), copying your CDC, with the contract number, instance number, and justification. This can be in the body of the email or as an attachment, but if submitting requests for multiple practices please include them all in a single email.

The "Cost-Share Program Carryover Report for BMPs to be Completed, Canceled or Carried Over into FY26" is available in Logi for assessing Carryovers.

3) DCR-DSWC News: Staffing Updates

- Alex Hessler, Small Farms Nutrient Management Specialist: Started 3/17/25. Email address is: alex.hessler@dcr.virginia.gov; Work Phone: 540-290-3602.
- Vanessa Lewis, Conservation Training Specialist: Started 3/25/25. Email address is: vanessa.lewis@dcr.virginia.gov;

Upcoming Training and Important Dates

- April 16: VSWCB Meeting, Drury Hotel; Richmond
- April 17: VASWCD Meeting, Drury Hotel; Richmond
- April 29: Area I Envirothon, McCormick Farm, Raphine, VA
- April 30: Area V Envirothon, Gentry Farm, Ringgold, VA
- May/June: VSWCB Meeting, Location TBD
- May 7: Overview of Nutrient Management Plans, 1:30pm;

Registration: https://us02web.zoom.us/join/c3Vu_pVDT0qP3nA8Du94tg.

cc: Blair Gordon, Soil and Water Conservation District Liaison
Sara Bottenfield, Agricultural Incentives Program Manager
Dr. Angela Ball, Western Area Manager

Electronically sent to SWCD offices 3/31/25.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF)

April 2025 Agency Report

- Felicity spend two days at East Rockingham High School in early March. The first day, she talked to Animal Systems classes about their plan for a hypothetical 50 acre farm with a near by stream, and shared suggestions for implementing best management practices and programs they could look into. The second day, she talked with the Ag. Structures classes about the bid process, some basic requirements for being a contractor for cost share programs, and the types of contractors needed for conservation projects.
- Matt, Alston and other staff worked hard to wrap up the Mountains to Bay Grazing Alliance grant that concluded at the end of March 2025.
- The Chesapeake Bay Foundation is doing a tree giveaway on Saturday May 10 from 8-12. Locations include Bridgewater, Verona and Troutville Ace Hardware. We will give out free trees and also give landowners information on our programs, and set up site visits with interested landowners. I have attached the flyer for the Bridgewater location if you know anyone interested in a free tree.
- Currently, through the Shenandoah Turnkey Grant, Felicity is providing project management assistance on two SWCD/NRCS projects in Rockingham County.