



MINUTES OF DISTRICT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, March 11, 2020

EASTERN SHORE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
USDA Service Center, Accomac, Virginia

ATTENDANCE: The following Directors and Associate Directors were in attendance:

Robin Rich-Coates, Chair
Kyle Sturgis, Director
Jim Evans, Director

Nick Thomas, Director
Fred Holland, Director

Others present were:

Carmie Savage, District Manager
Bill Savage, Conservation Specialist
Jane Corson-Lassiter, NRCS
Jaclyn Friedman, DCR

Julie Head, Education Director
Norman Pitt, Conservation Tech.

CALL TO ORDER: Robin Rich-Coates, Chair, called to order the March 11, 2020 District Board Meeting of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District.

MINUTES: A motion was made and carried to approve the February 12, 2020 meeting minutes. (Evans, Holland)

TREASURER'S REPORT: A motion was made and carried to approve the financial reports for February 2020. (Evans, Holland)

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **ESVA Groundwater Committee Meeting Minutes- February 18, 2020:** A copy of the meeting minutes were included in meeting packets for review.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **FY20 Cost Share Report- Carmie Savage:** The original FY20 DCR Grant Allocation for Chesapeake Bay funding was \$1,568,171.00 and \$300,352.00 for Outside Chesapeake Bay (OCB). Interest earned totaling \$588.71 was reported through February 29, 2020. One no-till repayment of \$500 was applied to Chesapeake Bay funds and one no-till repayment of \$340.20 was applied to OCB Funds. A transfer of OCB funds from James River SWCD totaling \$100,000, a transfer of Chesapeake Bay funds from Shenandoah SWCD totaling \$1,000,000 and a transfer of OCB funds from Lonesome Pine SWCD totaling \$356,000 was reported. With the transfers, repayments and Interest, Chesapeake Bay funds now total \$2,569,259.71 and OCB

APPROVED:

BOARD CHAIRMAN

SIGNED

BOARD SECRETARY

Minutes

March 11, 2020

funds now total \$756,692.20. Carryover CREP funds from 2019 total \$10,567.00. After adjustments as a result of cover crop spot checks, approvals for Chesapeake Bay funds through March 11, 2020 total \$729,016.15 for cover crops, nutrient management, continuous no-till and nitrogen application practices. The total does not include the requests the District has received for animal waste BMPs and one chemical storage facility. Respectfully, the OCB approvals total \$483,722.05 in agronomic practices. Board approved animal waste practices approved through February 12th total \$1,000,233.78.

The following BMPs were presented for approval for cost share and/or Tax Credits:

Contract	Practice	Total Ches Bay Acres	Ches Bay Funds	Total OCB Acres	OCB Funds	Comments
20-20-0201	WP-4C (CS & TC)		\$50,000.00			Practice cap @ \$50K
20-20-0149	NM-1a	13.5	\$ 54.00			Addition to NMP
20-20-0166	NM-1a			59.7	\$119.40	Addition to NMP
20-20-0070	NM-1a	37.9	\$75.80			Addition to NMP

A motion was made and carried to approve the above requested BMPs for Cost share and /or Tax Credits as presented (Holland, Evans).

The following Nutrient Management Plans were presented for approval:

VA Certified Planner	Owner/ Operator	Cropland Acres	Poultry Operation	Plan Written Date	Plan Expiration Date
smithAg & Environmental Inc.	Pacific Tom. Growers Inc.	446.7		2/18/20	2/18/21
smithAg & Environmental Inc.	Jimmy Hopper	81.6		2/18/20	2/18/21
Broadwater Farms LLC	J & R Farming Operation LLC	1,597.6		2/01/20	2/01/21
Broadwater Farms LLC	H & R Farming Operation LLC	1,635.1		2/01/20	2/01/21

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Director Jim Evans exited the meeting. **A motion was made and carried to approve the four nutrient management plans as presented. (Holland, Thomas)** Director Jim Evans rejoined the meeting.

The following Conservation Plans were presented for approval:

DCR Certified Conservation Planner	Conservation Plan Contract Number	BMPs Included in Plan
Carmie M. Savage	20-20-0012	WP-4C
Carmie M. Savage	20-20-0011	WP-4, WP-4C

Minutes

March 11, 2020

A motion was made and carried to approve the two conservation plans as presented. (Holland, Thomas)

The following Animal Waste BMP was recommended for approval to send to Variance Committee:

Contract Number	BMP Practice (s)	Hydrologic Priority Unit	CEF Factor	Cost Share Amount of Requested BMP(s)	Requesting Approval to send to Variance Committee	VACS Funding Source
20-20-0200	WP-4	CB41/ Medium	13.72	\$158,568.00	X	Ches Bay

A motion was made and carried to approve sending the requested cost share contract to the Variance Committee for approval to raise the 100K participant cap. (Holland, Evans)

After all the cost share approvals were made, the Balance of VACS funds as of March 11th reduced to \$454,184.45 in Chesapeake Bay funds and \$44,358.26 in OCB funds. Once the Variance Committee approves lifting the 100K participant cap of the one new contract approved to send forward, the Chesapeake Bay funds balance will reduce to \$295,988.75. There is one new request for OCB WP-4 and WP-4C but there is only \$44,358.26 left unallocated in OCB funds. There is a need of an additional \$289,059.49 in OCB funds to be able to fully fund the requested project. **A motion was made and carried to approve the March. 11th Cost Share report as presented. (Holland, Sturgis)**

- B. Update on VCAP Projects- Bill Savage:** The first VCAP Living Shoreline (LS) practice submitted by Eastern Shore SWCD was approved for funding on March 28th.

VCAP project (20-20-04) was presented to the Board for approval to submit to the VCAP Assistant Coordinator, as it requires Board approval to move forward. It is a Living Shoreline (LS) project designed to stabilize a 470ft section of shoreline along Occohannock Creek. The project involves installing stone riprap sills, installing Koir log (to reduce erosion from the fill) backfilling the area directly behind the sills and planting Spartina Alterniflora grass. Estimate cost for this project is \$93,425.00. The VCAP cost share portion will cap at \$15,000.00. Bill also noted more interest in another living shoreline project and will expand on that project at a later date. **A motion was made and carried to approve sending VCAP project 20-20-04 to the VCAP Assistant Coordinator (Holland, Evans).**

- C. Support Request for Camp Woods and Wildlife-** A motion was made and carried to send \$200.00 to support one camper in June (Holland, Thomas).

- D. ESVA Groundwater Committee Meeting- March 17, 2020:** The next ESVA

Minutes

March 11, 2020

Groundwater Committee Meeting will be held on March 17, 2020 at the A-NPDC in Accomac from 10 a.m.- 12 p.m.

E. Herbicide Resistant Weed Workshop- March 19, 2020: The VA Cooperative Extension is sponsoring a Herbicide Resistant Weed Workshop from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the Painter AREC on March 19, 2020.

F. Phase 2 Director Orientation: The closest Phase 2 Director Orientation is being held on April 16th at the Tidewater AREC in Suffolk. Nick Thomas, Kyle Sturgis and Ursula Deitch are planning to attend.

G. Non-Compliant Contract Updates- Carmie Savage: Contract 20-15-0006 still has a remaining balance of \$2,687.68. This contract was turned over the OAG and payments have been made but not since September 2019. Carmie is going to reach out the OAG as there has been some staff turnover. Contract 20-16-0052 was given a deadline of March 3rd to submit full payment of \$1,286.00. Carmie called the participant and was promised it would be paid in full on Friday, March 13th. The Board instructed Carmie that if payment was not made on that date to turn it over to the OAG the following Monday. One new contract, 20-17-0009, was found to be out of compliance as the operator no longer tends the land as of December 2019. Bill contacted him and he said he would repay the full amount of \$449.28 soon. He was given a deadline of May 10, 2020 for repayment.

STAFF REPORTS

District Manager Report: Carmie Savage, District Manager, gave an oral report to Directors. Her written report was included in the meeting packet and is on file in the District office.

FY20 Cost Share:

Agronomic BMPs:

- Contracts have been adjusted as non-compliant practices have been found during cover crop spot checks.
- Carmie has been paying out NM1-a contracts as plans have been submitted to the District.
- Approval letters were mailed for new NM-3C and SL-15A practices approved at 2/12/20 Board meeting.

Poultry BMPs:

- Submitted the 3 variance requests for poultry BMPs to the Variance Committee after Board approval at the 2/12/20 meeting. Completed one more variance request for Board approval to send to Variance Co. at 3/11 Board meeting.
- Mailed approval letters to after the 2/12/20 to those practices approved not needing variance approval. Submitted NRCS Standards and practice specs to participants as well as engineers for designs.
- Completed 1 conservation plan to recommend for Board approval during March's District meeting.
- Submitted revised and new Agricultural Waste Management System (AWMS) Plans to Amanda Pennington, DCR's DESM for approval.

Minutes

March 11, 2020

- Provided information on DEQ's Ag BMP Loan to applicants that would help with the upfront costs needed since cost share is based on actual receipts after completion.

Accounting/ Reports: Daily accounting procedures and payroll are always ongoing.

District Office Relocation: District offices have finally moved. She has been working with landlord to draft new rental agreement to include additional large room to split for storage and conference room for an additional \$5,000 a year. Carmie will be presenting for Board approval at future Board meeting.

Area VI Spring Meeting: Eastern Shore SWCD hosted Area VI Spring Meeting at ESCC Workforce Development Center on 3/5/20. Sixty-one registered and Exmore Diner catered the meeting. Created meeting packet for business meeting and lined up speakers and created full agenda for the day. Many complimented on the food and the overall meeting. The mobile classroom was on-site for viewing and a tour was held after the meeting at VIMS in Wachapreague.

Reward Points from District Credit Card: At no cost to the District, used the reward points that have accumulated on the District Credit Card to purchase new GPS units for District's van and truck as well as a new Sony Cyber-Shot DSC-HX400 Digital Camera.

District Website/ Facebook: Julie and Carmie are keeping the District Website up-to-date and posting to the District's Facebook page as time allows.

Envirothon: All staff will be attending and helping with the local Testing Day on 3/12.

Conservation Specialist Report: Bill Savage, Conservation Specialist, gave an oral report to Directors. His written report was included in the meeting packet and is on file in the District office.

BMP – Cost Share: Bill has completed all cover crop inspections and updated spread sheets & tracking to reflect changes resulting from pulled cover crop tracts/ fields. He is updating Tracking with cover spot check dates.

VCAP: The first VCAP Living Shoreline (LS) practice submitted by the District was approved for funding on 2/28. Bill has worked on another one that is over 450' of living shoreline and presented it in detail to the Board during New Business.

Groundwater Committee Meeting – February 18, 2020: Bill was unable to attend the meeting due to the office move on that day. Minutes from that meeting were provided in the District meeting packet under Old Business.

Vehicle Maintenance: Bill has repaired a slight leak on the Soils Trailer roof on 3/6 and bought a two step stool to access the A/C unit controls and a bucket to store emergency spill clean-up absorbent material.

Minutes
March 11, 2020

ESVA Made & Grown Work Group: As a goal set forth by Agribusiness and Food Processing Subcommittee of A-N Economic Development, the ESVA Made and Grown Work Group was established to develop a regional brand and market opportunities for local goods and products. Bill attended the initial kick-off meeting for this group at the ES Farmers Market on February 27th. The group has quite a list of long term goals, but right now they are trying to obtain funding and artwork for an ESVA Brand to be applied to local ag products and artesian crafts, work with the Ag Extension office to try and bring back a local mobile meat processing operation on the Shore and develop either an online market place or a combination of online and brick and mortar location to serve the tourists trade. The meetings will be held quarterly and since the District is represented on the subcommittee Bill plans to attend and report back to the Board on the progress and other goals of the group as they become apparent.

Trainings:

- Bill attended the VCAP training session on February 25th. This training explained the process from site visit to application process. The training also providing a question and answer session on common situations encountered during the application process as well as individual guidance on current projects.
- Registered to attend the VA Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Protection and Virginia Cultural and Historic Resources Protection training on March 18th as part of my Conservation Planner Certification training requirement and also the Ag BMP Tracking Program training the next day on the 19th which is also a requirement to obtain certification.

Events:

- Bill moved the Soils trailer to Nandua H.S. on February 28th and assisted Julie with set up on March 2nd for classes that day.
- He moved the Soils trailer to location and helped set up for the Area VI meeting on March 4th. He also attended the Area VI Spring meeting on March 5th. After the meeting, Bill moved the Soils Trailer to the Barrier Islands Center for the upcoming Envirothon Testing Day.
- Bill will be assisting H. L. with soils on Envirothon Testing Day March 12th at The Barrier Islands Center.

VESLT Reports:

- Two VESLT monitoring reports were filed this month.

Conservation Technician Report: Norman Pitt, Conservation Technician, gave an oral report to Directors. His written report was included in the meeting packet and is on file in the District office.

Poultry:

- Norman has been meeting with poultry producers, conducting site visits to poultry farms as needed and completing farm summary reports as well resource reviews while at the sites. The summary and review is needed as a component of the conservation plan.

Minutes
March 11, 2020

- He has been mapping and digitizing in the Tracking program. Norman has created many required maps as well as submitted information for resource concerns if hits were found and have created required VCRIS.
- Norman has also been helping set up files for the poultry producers and has contacted some for copies of required paperwork such as site plans and nutrient management plans.
- Norman has worked on several components of the AWMS plans that are required for poultry BMPs.

Envirothon:

- He presented the Special Topic at this year's Envirothon Training Day and has created the Test to present to the teams on Testing Day on 3/12.

Va Rare, Threatened & Endangered Species Protection and VA Cultural Historic Resources Protection Training:

- Norman is registered to attend this all-day training on March 18th at Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg as part of the training requirement toward Conservation Planner Certification as well as the Ag BMP Tracking Program training the next day.

Education Director Report: Julie Head, Education Director, gave an oral report to Directors. Her written report was included in the meeting packet and is on file in the District office.

Classroom Education Programs

- 2/18 – OES – landfill wrap-up
- 3/2 – Nandua HS – soils trailer for Ecology & Earth Science classes

Meetings Attended

- 2/5 & 2/6 – Ag conference
- 2/24 – ESRJ about working with their reentry program garden
- 2/25 – VCAP training
- 2/26 to 2/28 – VAEE Conference
- 3/3 – Project WET Training – DEQ
- 3/5 – Area VI meeting

Local Envirothon- Testing day is March 12, 2020. There will be 5 teams representing 3 schools competing.

Poster Contest - This year's theme is "Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators." Posters are due April 3rd.

Camps – Camp Woods and Wildlife is June 22 – 27 (ages 13 to 16). Youth Conservation Camp is July 12 – 18 (high school). If you know of anyone in these age ranges who might be interested in attending please reach out to them and have them contact me. Camp Woods and Wildlife is \$85 for the entire week and YCC has full scholarships available.

Minutes

March 11, 2020

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:

Department of Conservation & Recreation Update: Jaclyn Friedman, DCR CDC, gave an oral report to the Board. Her written report was included in the meeting packet and is on file in the District office

Administrative and Operational Items

- **FY20 3rd Quarter Reports due April 15, 2020-** Attachments E, QBs cash balance and P&L reports
- **FY21 Budget Preparations-** Finance committees should begin preparations for FY21 budgets for district board discussions. These committee meetings may provide a great time for a review of the *Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations*. FY21 budgets are to be SWCD board approved by June 30.

Review Ops/Admin grant deliverables

- *"Prepare and follow an **annual plan of work** ..." with Board documented review at least twice annually.*
- *"Develop and maintain a **long-term plan**..." A **documented review of the long term/strategic plan at least annually during a scheduled meeting of the District Board**. 2020 is a big year in that all districts should be developing an attack for creating a new plan commensurate with director elections.*
- *"**Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations**" annually reviewed by the District Board or their Finance Committee and **documented in official minutes***

Ag Cost Share:

- **VA BMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** has finished its work for this year and their recommendations for PY21 will go to the State Board on March 26 for consideration and discussion.
- **Encourage Completion of Projects:** Please encourage BMP participants to complete their projects in time for payment prior to the close of the fiscal year to reduce carry over. See pages II-31-33 in the 20 VACS manual for practices eligible to be carried over from one program year to the next and the new carryover process. **Carryovers** need to be approved by SWCD boards by June 30, 2020.
- **Program Year 2021 VACS Updates – Save the Date**, additional information will be coming soon
 - **June 9th - Prince George - Prince George County Library**
- **FY21 Base Technical Assistance (TA) Funding:** The VA Soil and Water Conservation Board (VSWCB) authorized FY21 Base TA to new amounts that will ensure that a SWCD will at least have enough to hold onto one full-time technical employee. At that same meeting there was discussion and action pertaining to FY20 TA funding. **The VSWCB will revisit this item at their March 26 2020 Board meeting to determine how FY20 policies on cost share and TA are affected.**

Conservation Planner Certification Courses Coming up:

March 18th VA Cultural & Historic Resources AND VA Rare Threatened and Endangered Species Protection

Minutes

March 11, 2020

March 19th Virginia Ag. BMP and Cost Share Program

May 5 & 6 DCR Conservation Planning Program, location TBD

New Director Reminders

- **New Director Orientation Phase II -**
 - April 16, Suffolk, Tidewater AREC

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Update: Jane Corson-Lassiter, District Conservationist, USDA NRCS, gave an oral report to Directors:

EQIP: Sign-up deadline was February 28. Even with this year's SWCD program for poultry, NRCS has requests for over \$3 million in assistance. There are several Working Lands for Wildlife Black Duck applications and high interest in that opportunity. In addition, Accomac is working with a handful of small farm producers on High Tunnel applications and pollinator habitat. Ranking and contracting is delayed this year with the new Farm Bill programming.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP): This program has high interest, for both crop and forest systems. Sign-up deadline is May 29.

Local Working Group: Every year NRCS works with the SWCD and their conservation partners (Local Working Group) to assess and comment on federal conservation programs. Jane discussed the list of questions that have come from the State Office this year and how they will be reviewed through a targeted outreach to stakeholder groups.

- There were some questions about the new EQIP Incentive Contracts option and how that might apply to area growers. Jane will follow up in the targeted outreach.
- The Board questioned why the Source Water Protection Area did not apply to the Eastern Shore Sole-source aquifer.
- On the RCPP questions, the District Board discussed the already high workload for the District staff and the advisability of taking on additional deliverables.
- Jane noted that the Conservation Innovation Grants program has targeted cover crops in the past. Board member Nick Thomas noted that the Groundwater Committee might be interested in a demonstration of well withdrawals from the surficial aquifer under Source Water Protection (as this applies to poultry operations).

The March Board meeting was adjourned.

Meeting minutes were recorded by Carmie Savage