



**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday, August 9, 2017**

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

**ATTENDANCE:** Chair Robin Rich-Coates called to order the monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District. The following Directors and Associate Directors were in attendance:

Davis Lovell, Director  
Jim Evans, Director  
Edwin R. Long, Assoc. Director

Theresa Pittman, Director  
Robbie Lewis, Assoc. Director

Others present were:

Carmie Savage, ESSWCD  
Latonya Justice, ESSWCD  
Jane Corson-Lassiter, NRCS  
Palmer Smith, Camper

Cole Charnock, ESSWCD  
Mary Melson, ESSWCD  
Art Kirkby, DCR  
Jim McGowan, TNC

**MINUTES:** The June 14, 2017 meeting minutes were approved. (Pittman, Lovell)

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The financial reports for June and July 2017 were approved. (Pittman, Lovell)

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Conservation Youth Camper Report – Palmer Smith:** Palmer attended the Conservation Youth Camp July 2017. She said she was out of her comfort zone because she knew no one there. However, the very first day, they were split in groups of “Frogs”, “Bats” and “Dragonflies” to play a game of special bingo to get to know each other. Palmer was a “Frog”. They went electro-fishing at Claytor Lake. Palmer stuck her hand in the water by accident and received a small shock. The fish are stunned when shocked but do not die. Palmer met a friend right from the beginning named Lydia. They hung out together at the picnic on the first day of camp. The campers went hiking in Mountain Lake. One camper fell off the side and had to get stitches on his knee. Palmer was excited about touring the Dairy Farm and VA-MD Vet School because she would like to get in the Vet School. The Dairy Farm provides all of the milk for the students on campus. Palmer was able to stick her hand

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIRMAN SECRETARY

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in the cow simulator and determine that the cow was pregnant by the feel of a cyst-like object. This was Palmer's favorite event. The campers visited Lane Stadium and discussed how difficult it was to grow and manage the turf there. Palmer was able to hit the Hokie Stone. They hiked up to the Cascades Waterfall. It was really hot but they were not able to go swimming, however. While kayaking on the New River, they were caught in a thunderstorm and had to pull off to the side. Palmer has had a lot of experience kayaking, but has never been kayaking on a river so she found it exciting. The food was great but it was because the school was giving their best meals for orientation students. Palmer is a senior in high school this coming fall and wants to go to Tech so this was a great experience for her. Robin presented Palmer with a travel reimbursement check for \$75. Palmer then resumed her busy schedule and left for volleyball practice.

- B. June 28, 2017 Operations Committee Meeting Minutes:** The Operations Committee Meeting written minutes from the June 28, 2017 meeting were included in the packet. **A motion was made and carried to approve the Operations Committee Meeting minutes. (Pittman, Lovell)**
- C. FY17 Cost Share Report:** For the FY17, Carmie went back to look at the NMP approval amounts compared to the NMP payment amounts. The total amount approved was \$55,311.00. The total amount paid was less at \$55,127.80. A chart is attached to these minutes. As the crunch time came for planners to get acreage into the District, by the time they actually wrote the plan, the farmer may have added acreage or even decreased from what the set aside approved amount was for. **A motion was made and carried for contracts shown in the attached list as paid over the initial approval amount, that those amounts be approved retroactively to the date when those practices were initially approved. (Lovell, Pittman)** The final FY17 Cost-share Report states the District had \$0.10 left in the Chesapeake Bay funding and \$0.00 in Outside Chesapeake Bay. An End of Program Year Cash On-Hand Balance Report was submitted to Art Kirkby, DCR on July 12, 2017 stating this. The total amount disbursed in FY17 to Eastern Shore producers was \$733,315.80. Carmie completed a comprehensive FY17 SWCD Admin & Ops Questionnaire and submitted to Art. **A motion was made and carried to approve the Final FY17 June 30, 2017 Costshare Report. (Lovell, Evans)**
- D. Request for Willingness to Co-Hold Easement on Grey Property – Jim McGowan, TNC:** TNC is applying for a VA Land Foundation Grant to purchase the Grey property. The property is adjacent to the 759-acre Parker's Marsh Natural Area Preserve. It is primarily salt marsh, pine forest, and fields managed for wildlife on the Onancock Creek Water Trail. If TNC would purchase the property, it would become a conservation and public access project. TNC would install trails, an observation platform by the marsh, kayak launch and manage property for wildlife in cooperation with Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, DCR and Dept of Forestry. The

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property has been on the market for at least two years. The RFP came out in June and is due Thursday, August 10, 2017. The District sent a letter of support to TNC for TNC's VA Land Conservation Fund Grant Application. TNC is requesting a letter from the District that states the willingness of the District to co-hold the Grey Property Easement of 127 acres on Onancock Creek, Onancock, VA. **A motion was made and approved to have the District write a letter stating its willingness to co-hold the Grey Property Easement. (Lovell, Evans)**

- E. Spray System Workshop:** The Spray System Workshop will be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2017 behind the NH Extension Office, 7247 Young ST, Machipongo, VA on the football field.
- F. Second Annual Northampton Agricultural County Fair:** Hosted by Farm Bureau's ES Young Farmers, will be held on Saturday, October 21, 2017 from 10am – 1pm behind NH Extension Office, 7247 Young ST, Machipongo, VA.

## STAFF REPORTS

**District Manager Report:** Carmie Savage, District Manager, gave an oral report to Directors. Her report is on file in the District office.

**FY17 Reporting:** The books were closed for the year and the new fiscal year is going strong. Required year-end reports have been submitted to DCR which include the following:

- 1) Attachment E,
- 2) Cash-on-hand report, and
- 3) Assessment Questionnaire.

The Cash-on-hand report and assessment questionnaire are both listed under New Business. Payroll quarterly reports were also completed and filed.

**Final FY17 Cost-share Accounting:** At the close of the year, June 30th, the District paid a total of \$733,315.80 in BMP cost-share practices including contracted practices to Eastern Shore farmers and landowners. A breakdown summary report of practices paid in FY17 by practice, acreage and county is attached to the final cost share report for FY17 under New Business.

**FY 2018 Cover Crop sign-up:** Sign-up is underway and the response has been steady. The sign-up began July 10 and the deadline has been set for August 11th. Sign-up period advertisements were sent to the Eastern Shore News, Eastern Shore Post and WESR and post cards were sent to FSA's farmer and landowner list.

**FY17 BMP Roll-out Training:** Latonya, Cole and Carmie attended the FY18 BMP Rollout training on June 26th in Prince George. Program changes were presented and discussed and new BMP manuals were distributed. The training also focused on some of the changes being made to DCR Tracking program to allow for RMP input and Conservation Planning and the VCAP program.

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**Letter of Support:** With Robin's approval, Carmie sent a letter of support for a VA Land Conservation Fund Grant that TNC is applying for to help conserve 127 acres of Grey property at the end of Poplar Cove. A Copy of the letter was included in the meeting packet.

**New License Plates for District Vehicles:** The District Van and Truck are now licensed and registered with local government plates. The DMV authorized a new code for SWCDs as political subdivisions of the State to fall under local government plates. There was a one-time \$5 fee per vehicle and no more annual registration fees.

**District Awards Banquet:** Mary, Cole and Carmie attended the District Awards Banquet on Friday, July 28, 2017 at the ES Community College Workforce Development Center. All staff had input on the presentation slide show. All the awardees were honored to have been chosen and were very appreciative of the recognition.

**Graves Mountain Training:** Mary and Carmie will be attending this 3- day employee training August 22-24 in Syria, VA. This training is sponsored by the Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees

**Conservation Specialist Report:** Cole Charnock, Conservation Specialist, gave an oral report to Directors. His report is on file in the District office.

**Native Plant Workshop:** On Thursday July 6th District staff attended a native plant workshop held at the ES AREC. Bob Glennon gave a presentation on many different plants including choosing what plants will suit your needs, obtaining your seed, garden establishment, planting and maintenance.

**FY18 BMP signup:** Cole, Carmie and Latonya have been taking signup beginning July 10th from farmers for fall cover crops as well as nutrient management planning and continuous no-till. This data is entered into DCR's Tracking Program as well as our spreadsheet for District records. Signup ends August 11th.

**Awards Banquet:** Carmie, Mary and Cole attended the annual awards banquet hosted by the District on July 28th at the Eastern Shore Community College. Cole had also interviewed the recipients of the Conservation Farmer Award as well as the Clean Water Farm Award and put together the slides for their award announcements. He will now begin working on submitting Mt. Nebo Farms' application to be considered for the Grand Basin Award this fall.

**TRC Conference Call:** Cole attended the monthly TRC Conference Call on July 24th. Topics for discussion included Implementation and Development funding for FY18 and a reiteration of the application process. Also, a Stakeholder Advisory Group was assembled and has put together a survey for RMP participants who have approved plans but have not yet been certified (nearly all 2015 & 2016). This survey essentially is asking participants about the progress of their implementation of BMPs in order to complete the RMP process and their experiences with the program.

**Young Farmers:** The Young Farmers group has been planning via email to have a get together at some point in August to have more of an informal and closed event for themselves. The goal is to have a relaxed environment where they can invite potential members to discuss what they do as a group and build stronger relationships within our current members in order to plan more diverse and attention-grabbing events.

- A. Education Director Report:** Mary Melson, Education Director, gave an oral report to the Board. Her report is on file in the District office.

**Accomack County Public Schools:** On June 13th Christina Murray and Mary met with Dr. Maribeth Haines, Elementary Instructional Coordinator, to set training dates for Accomack county teachers. They scheduled 6 training days for all Pre-k through 5th grade Accomack County teachers. September 27th and 28th they will provide a Growing-Up WILD training for Pre-K and special education teachers. October 2nd and November 8th they will provide Project Learning Tree training for all K-2nd teachers. October 4th and November 9th they will provide Project WET training for all 3rd-5th grade teachers. By the end of November they will have trained approximately 200 teachers in integrated environmental education curriculums.

**Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund Grant:** Monies collected from Chesapeake Bay license plates are used as grants funds for environmental education, restoration and conservation. Mary is applying for this grant to support the new model for the watershed festival. If awarded this grant Mary plans to expand this project to the high schools and provide teacher trainings.

**Eastern Shore Birding & Wildlife Festival:** On July 21st Mary met with Forrest Gladden, Dave Gunnels and Bill Dyas of Kiptopeke State Park to discuss the 2017 Eastern Shore Birding and Wildlife Festival. A few weeks before this meeting, the planners of the 2017 ESBWF backed out. Regardless of the festival happening as a whole KSP & ESSWCD will still run the Outdoor Exploration Day on Saturday, October 7, 2017. They are expanding the day to have more programming and booths. Mary is in the process of requesting beverage and food donations and looking for volunteers. We are being given \$3,000 in leftover funds from CBES to provide the FoR program the day of and at Occohannock and Kiptopeke. These funds will also purchase supplies.

**Eastern Shore Public Library:** On August 4th Mary provided a "spectacular soil" lesson at Northampton Free Library. On August 18th Mary will be presenting the same lesson at the Accomac Location.

**Growing-Up WILD Workshop:** On July 19th in cooperation with Northampton Cooperative Extension and VA Project WILD Coordinator, Suzie Gilley, Mary assisted in a Growing-Up WILD Workshop. GUW is a hands-on, nature-based curriculum geared towards to ages 3-7. After the workshop Mary was facilitator trained and can now train other educators in this curriculum.

**MARSH Festival:** ESSWCD will be a science exhibitor and partner for MARSH Fest at Chincoteague Bay Field Station on Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> from 12-6pm. MARSH Fest is a family friendly event uniting the Eastern Shore's aqua/agricultural, artistic, and scientific communities. Mary will provide a hands-on, interactive exhibit during the festival.

**Master Gardeners:** On August 1st Mary attended the Master Gardeners meeting at the AREC in Painter. She spoke with the group about the outdoor exploration day and requested volunteers.

**Migrant Head Start:** On July 11th Mary started meeting with Migrant Head Start students at the Parksley center. This is a weekly program and will continue into September. As of today they have classes on soil, water, plants, and animals.

**Nature Detectives Camp:** Nature Detectives Camp is on the week of August 7, 2017. There are 8 campers. The campers meet at Ker Place from 1-4 pm. Students are investigating nature through activities and crafts.

**VAEE Envirothon Session:** On July 18th Mary assisted Beth Beran, VASWCD, in providing a 2 hour Envirothon session. This session was a part of Virginia Association of Agricultural Educator's Conference at Northampton HS. 20 teachers attended the session.

**B. Conservation Technician Report:** Latonya Justice, Conservation Technician, gave an oral report to Directors. Her report is on file in the District office.

**Native Plant Workshop:** The Native Plant workshop was held at the Agricultural Research Extension Center (AREC) on July 6, 2017. Dot Field and Bob Glennon instructed the workshop.

**Army Corps of Engineers and Wetland Determinations:** Latonya has been adding Danny Bacon's and Sara Bahnson's contact information on the Wetland Determination letters. They are with the Corps of Engineers.

**Annual Report/Newsletter:** Latonya is working on the FY17 Annual Report. It has the District Cost-share Program statistics and an Educational Outreach Program summary. There is also an advertisement for the Northampton County Fair.

**FY18 Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) Training:** The VACS FY18 Program Rollout was held on Monday, June 26, 2017 in Prince George, VA. DCR went over changes to the program from last year to this year.

**EE Council Meeting:** The next EE Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2017.

**Shore Outdoors:** Shore Outdoors was published in the June 28, 2017 Eastern Shore Newspaper issue.

**Project Wild/Growing-Up Wild Workshop:** Mary and Latonya participated in the Growing-Up Wild Workshop at the Northampton Extension Office in Machipongo, VA. Suzie Gillie of DGIF instructed the training. This workshop focuses on exploring nature with children ages 3-7. They went over the instructional work book and performed some of the exercises. Latonya received a Certificate of Completion for the Project Wild Workshop.

**Conserved Lands and Easement Study:** Dean Bellas of Urban Analytics and Terry Clower of George Mason University along with the study team had a close out teleconference call on July 11, 2017 to go over the final report of their analysis. The final report will be sent out at a later date.

**Cover Crop Sign-up:** Latonya has been helping with Cover Crop sign-up.

**Annual District Banquet/PowerPoint:** Latonya and the rest of the staff helped with the PowerPoint and set up of the Annual District Banquet.

## **PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:**

**A. DCR, Conservation District coordinator Report, Art Kirkby:** Art Kirkby gave an oral report. His written report is on file in the District Office.

### **Administration & Operations:**

#### **First quarter Administrative & Operational Support Disbursement Letters:**

First quarter Administrative & Operational support disbursement letters will be sent to districts on August 10. These letters also request FY17 cost-share funds as appropriate.

**FY17 Annual Report:** FY17 annual report due to Art by September 30. Be sure the "partnership acknowledgement" statement is included (see the DCR operating grant).

### **Cost-Share:**

**Allocation Letters:** Initial allocation letters including disbursement requests for FY18 technical assistance and any needed FY18 cost-share will be sent to SWCDs on August 31.

**Backlogged 2015 SL-6 Practices:** On July 4 the value of the remaining 309 backlogged 2015 SL-6s was under \$16 million.

**CREP:** CREP has resumed accepting applications!

### **Miscellaneous:**

**Clean Water Farm Awards:** Local winners should be selected soon. Local winners may be selected for each county/city served by a district. DCR will accept nominees from the pool of local winners (past or present) for basin-wide recognition on or before October 15.

**State Ag BMP TAC:** The TAC meets Tuesday, August 15, 2017 - VDOF, Charlottesville

**VACDE Annual Training:** The VACDE Annual Training will be held at Graves Mountain Lodge, Syria, VA, Tuesday-Thursday, August 22-24, 2017.

**RMP TRC Conference Call:** The RMP TRC Monthly Conference Call will be held Monday, August 28, 2017, 10:00-11:00am

**Chesapeake Bay License Plate Grants:** Chesapeake Bay License Plate grant applications due by Sunday, October 1, 2017. There is \$310,882 available.

**Conservation Selling Skills:** Training held at Central Virginia Community College, Lynchburg November 1-2, 2017.

**B. NRCS, District Conservationist Report, Jane Corson-Lassiter:** Jane Corson-Lassiter gave an oral report.

**CREP:** CREP has opened their enrollment which allows for re-enrollment of expiring contracts.

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):** CRP has hit its nationwide cap and will not be open for the rest of this FY17 which ends September 30, 2017.

**Quail Habitat:** NRCS is talking with the VA Eastern Shore Land Trust about running a program for landowners on quail habitat in the fall.

**C. RC&D Report, Edwin R. Long:** Edwin R. Long gave an oral report.

**Lavender Workshop:** The Lavender Workshop is being held on Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at the Barrier Island Center, 7295 Young ST, Machipongo, VA from 9-12pm. It is sold out.

**RC&D Board Member:** Sandy R. Mears, Accomack County Appointee has resigned.

**D. VA Department of Forestry Report, Robbie Lewis:** Robbie Lewis gave an oral report.

**Outdoor Exploration Day:** This event will be held instead of the Birding Festival down at Kiptopeke State Park. The VA Dept of Forestry (VDOF) will be participating in the Outdoor Exploration Day on Saturday, October 7, 2017.

**Farm Tour Day:** VDOF will be having a booth at the Farm Tour Day on Tuesday, September 19, 2017.

**Arbor Day:** Robbie will be helping with Arbor Day and the ordering of the tree seedlings. He recommends ordering them as soon as possible, around September for Arbor Day in April. Arbor Day will be held on the last Saturday in April, April 28, 2018.

**E. Extension Cooperative Office, Extension Agent Report:** Theresa Pittman gave an oral report.

**Sprayer Workshop:** This workshop will be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2017 behind the Northampton Office from 9-11am. Bryan Fowler of TeeJet Technologies will be discussing sprayer tip nozzle selections. Atlantic Tractor and Hooper will be there with precision ag technology available for sprayers.

**Farm Tour Day:** Farm Tour Day will be held on Tuesday, September 19, 2017 at Duncan Farms, New Church, VA for all the Christian School, Broadwater Academy and Accomack County third graders. Volunteers are needed.

**The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 13, 2017 at 5:00pm.**

**The August Board meeting was adjourned.**

*Meeting minutes were recorded by Latonya Justice*