

State Technical Committee Meeting  
September 22, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.  
NRCS State Office Conference Room

A G E N D A

|                                                                        |                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Welcome and Opening Remarks                                            | NRCS - Hawkins                        |
| Conservation Reserve Program (CRP & CREP)                              | FSA - Horsley<br>DCR - Moore          |
| Regional Conservation Partnership Program                              | NRCS - Howard                         |
| Status of FY-15 Program Funds & FY16 changes<br>Easements<br>EQIP, CSP | NRCS - Dunaway<br>NRCS - Vincent/Wood |
| State Technical Committee Schedule                                     | NRCS - Hawkins                        |
| Agency Updates                                                         | All                                   |
| Anionic Polyacrylamide                                                 | Mara Peltz, Macon<br>Edwards Company  |

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*Next Meeting – TBA*

## **State Technical Committee Meeting Minutes**

**September 22, 2015**

**10:00 a.m.**

NRCS State Office, Large Conference Room  
1606 Santa Rosa Road, Richmond, Virginia

### **Attendees:** Those in attendance were:

Alexander, Ebonie (BLFT-Black Family Land Trust)  
Allen, Buddy (farmer, Mississippi delta)  
Bowles, Betsy (DEQ-Department of Environmental Quality)  
Carter, Ken (Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Districts-VASWCD)  
Calhoun, Jay (VCA-Virginia Cattlemen Association, phone-in)  
Coffman, Seth (TU-Trout Unlimited, phone-in)  
Edwards, Macon (President, Macon Edwards Co.)  
Griffin, Will (SNF Holding Company)  
Horsley, Emily (FSA-Farm Service Agency)  
Peltz, Mara (Vice President, Macon Edwards Co.)  
Richardson, Sara (DCR-Department of Conservation and Recreation, phone-in)  
Rowe, Ben (VGPA-Virginia Grain Producers Association)  
Schonbeck, Mark (VABF- Virginia Association of Biological Farming, phone-in)  
Stansbury, Patricia (VABF- Virginia Association of Biological Farming, phone-in)

Dunaway, Diane (NRCS, Easement Specialist)  
Hawkins, Julie (NRCS, ASTC-Programs)  
Majette, Kilby (NRCS, ASTC-FO)  
Vincent, Patrick (NRCS, Programs Manager)  
Wentz, Chad (NRCS, State Resource Conservationist)  
Wood, Ron (NRCS, Programs Manager)  
Anderson, Kathleen (NRCS, recorder)

The meeting opened with a warm welcome from Julie Hawkins. Everyone present introduced him/herself.

Julie Hawkins briefly reviewed the agenda. She stated that we are finishing up with recommended changes, as we look to the end of the fiscal year.

### **AGENCY UPDATES**

**Emily Horsley (FSA):** There is re-enrollment for forest buffers and CREP. There are a huge batch of CREP contracts about to expire. 3275 acres to encourage people to re-enroll. We already had 2400 acres re-enrolled, 75% of the full amount. 500 acres since June, to 100% cost share for forest buffer

implementation. We are expecting an announcement of the Forest Initiative. Emily was in Denver to receive national CRP training. \$5 million is dedicated to the Chesapeake Bay states. *(See handouts entitled, "2015 State CRP Grassland Zone Counties," "County CRP Grassland Rental Rates," and "Conservation Fact Sheet.")*

**Jessie Howard** (NRCS): There was a rollout of forestry RCPP and many applications received. This RCPP forestry project will be announced again in FY16. There are two new opportunities coming up in FY16: both addressing water quality resource concerns. There will be a conference call on October 20 for training for field offices in NRCS and SWCD. One project is only offered in Rockingham County and we will be working with the National Fish and Wildlife, while the other is with DCR in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. *(See handout entitled, "Regional Conservation Partnership Program.")*

**Julie Hawkins** (for Blaine Delaney) added that the Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) report is for existing projects plus new national awards to CBF and Virginia Tech.

**Diane Dunaway** (NRCS, Easement Specialist): An easement update handout was distributed, summarizing the highlights in FY15. Five easements were closed; five are in progress; and there are six new ones. Of the ACEP applications, 15 were received, totaling \$8.7 million requested. The ACEP allocation was approximately \$1.6 million. Wetland restoration was completed on five WRP easements. GARC (Geographic Area Rate Cap) will be used for WRE valuation for easement purchase using a 5% reduction of Fair Market Value as opposed to an Area-wide Market Analysis done in past years. New applicants are to submit applications by mid-November. *(See handout entitled, "Land Conservation Easements.")*

**Patrick Vincent** (NRCS, Programs Manager): A Programs handout was distributed. In Virginia, in EQIP, \$13,550,429 has been allocated. There are 422 contracts, and \$13,465,487 has been approved. \$84,941.46 remains. For CSP, 39 contracts (8 for forestry and 31 in agricultural land) and, with 13,830 acres, we exceeded our acreage allocation. For the RCPP forestry budget, eight preapprovals, totaling \$24,749,000, have been preapproved. The funds remaining are \$13,302. Forestry practices are listed by area, and also CAPS plans by area. Included in the handout is a draft of fund pools, listing in National Initiatives, \$100,000 for each: organic, energy (Conservation Activity Plans) and high tunnels. Regarding the Conservation Activity Plans (CAP), a majority of applications are for forestry management plans. The breakdown of state initiatives are as follows: \$8.5 million for livestock (60% is required to go for livestock); \$2.2 million for cropland; \$655,000 for wildlife (5% is required for wildlife); \$25,000 for aquaculture; \$1.3 million for beginning farmer/socially disadvantaged (5% is required for this); \$50,000 for forestry (forestry management plans and RCPP plans will fund the forestry practices); and specialty crops – but this category will be done away with. The \$25,000 that had been planned for specialty crops will go to another fund pool. The total request capped at FY15 EQIP allocation is \$13.1 million. This is what we requested to National HQ for EQIP allocation. *(See handouts entitled, "EQIP Budget Allocation," "RCPP Forestry Budget," and "FY16—EQIP, Draft Fund Pools.")*

There is limited funding. We are proposing to have only one application period, EQIP Feb 19 deadline and then March 18 is ranking deadline for applications that are ranked and eligible. For RCPP FY 16

deadlines, December 18 is the deadline for the RCPP-DCR project and November 20 is the deadline for the RCPP-NFWF project.

Julie Hawkins said that the State Technical Committee is to meet, at a minimum, twice a year. We currently meet six times a year. We want to make use of everyone's time. Perhaps we consider meeting twice a year, such as once in the fall (September or October) and in the spring (April or May). We would like to have feedback. Mark Schonbeck stated that this would be too much of a drastic change. How about meeting quarterly? Patricia Stansbury added that quarterly should be minimal, not twice a year. Julie said that quarterly it is!!!!

## **AGENCY UPDATES**

**Ben Rowe (Virginia Grain Producers Association):** Ben reported on the Va Ag Expo held recently. Reducing drift in spraying, and winter feeding were highlights of the tour at the Expo. Hardywood Brewery plans to increase malt barley production in the state. In fact, Virginia Tech has a brewing program.

**Betsy Bowles (DEQ-Department of Environmental Quality):** There is a surge in poultry productions, of new construction and also expansion, and a lot of it on the Eastern Shore. Fully involved in small facilities. The goal is to evaluate—to look at a facility and to assess if there is surface water around, or if there is water quality issues in the area. There is a numeric goal of 800 state wide. As of yesterday, 80% of the goal has been reached for the year. We will continue to work with people on this voluntary program, to help them work with their concerns.

**Ebonie Alexander (Black Family Land Trust):** VA Heirs and Forest resources in Southside held its first meeting on August 31.

**Patricia Stansbury (Virginia Association of Biological Farming):** There will be a farm tour on sustainable agriculture, on October 3 and 4. Twenty farms producing vegetables, fruit, meat, honey, and a brewery can be visited. See [vabf.org](http://vabf.org) for information on the tour. There is a \$25 fee.

**Jay Calhoun (Virginia Cattlemen Association):** Commodities and livestock prices are in a downward slide, and he hopes that things will get better.

**Seth Coffman (Trout Unlimited):** They are getting the ranking finalized to have rollout in October, to the end of November for the RCPP-NFWF project.

**Emily Horsley (Farm Service Agency):** She would like to say thanks to forestry and wildlife subcommittee. They helped with ranking in the state, for the new CRP grasslands program. The CRP grasslands sign-up is in November. It takes land out of production, protect grasslands from urban or crop production, and there is even a pollinator component.

## GUEST ATTENDEES

Several guests attended to discuss the product Polyacrylamide (PAM). Two are from Macon Edwards Company of Washington, DC: Mara Peltz (vice president) introduced Mr. Macon Edwards (president). Buddy Allen is a farmer and NRCS client from the **Mississippi** Delta. Will Griffin is the agricultural business manager with SNF Holding Company.

Mr. Macon Edwards thanked the group for allowing them to attend. He grew up on a farm in Mississippi, whereas Mara Peltz is from a city in Virginia. He stated that they are lobbyists. He began with the National Cotton Council in the 1960s in DC, and has been very involved in the policy aspects of agriculture. An important client of his is from SNF Holding Company the world's largest producer of polyacrylamide. Mr. Edwards reported that he has seen a trend in agricultural policy in last three or four farm bills. There is a shift away from money from FSA to NRCS. Large payments are gone, being replaced by crop insurance. There is an opportunity for PAM because of the Mississippi River algal bloom, which is the size of Connecticut. If we come under strict regulations, agriculture will change drastically. The goal here is to alleviate the agricultural run-off problems, and PAM can help with this. Buddy Allen, a farmer and NRCS client from the Mississippi Delta, said that PAM has been approved as a Best Management Practice (BMP) in the western United States, and is being brought to the Mississippi area. He said to the State Technical Committee that this should be adopted for Virginia. This is a new tool to address water quality issues. PAM has been used in fracking and water treatment, with some reformulation being required. The team has been in communication with NRCS Head Quarters. It causes particles of sediment to bind together. Apply, then particles become larger, and settle, instead of running downstream. Soil becomes more porous. Water quantity and quality is addressed with this product. This is a tool that hits on a lot of issues. The Mississippi aquifer is using this tool. They are also working with a restoration team, to reduce run-in to the Gulf. They are working with James Tillman, and Dr. Wayne Honeycutt. He is asking NRCS to please consider this product for FY16. It will not use a lot of NRCS funds, compared to larger projects. SNF is the largest producer of PAM. There is no financial assistance for the SNF product specifically since there are other manufacturers, but for using PAM. Practice number 450 could be for a pre-irrigation application of PAM. Chad Wentz asked if could only be used on irrigated land. The team answered that on bare ground with rain, it provides stability in run-off. Currently there is a large scale production trial (with 40 acre blocks), and results will be available from this trial within the next few weeks. The initial water samples are very encouraging. There is a decrease in nutrient discharge, so you can keep phosphorus and nitrogen in the field, rather than water running off. It is used in a dry form. The core business for this is in water treatment, to clean waste water. Ken Carter said that David Roberts had done some work with PAM at the Painter research station, so there is some work here in Virginia, for Eastern Shore tomatoes. Ron Wood suggested that perhaps this could be for clean till crops. Will Griffin said that the product is not taken into the plant. Diane asked about the product's connection with Idaho. The team replied that the research was done for agriculture in Kimberly, Idaho. She also asked about long term effects. Will said that this is not new chemistry, that is has approved by the FDA for use in washing fruit, etc., as well as with municipal waste water, and fracking. Mr. Edwards stated that the greatest potential is in agriculture. The practice standard is available in Arkansas and Louisiana also. The benefits are determined by geography-water quality. This is

a piece of the puzzle when used with other practices. Bringing tools to farmers to produce productivity. Mr. Edwards said that when charges are brought against Agriculture, PAM provides a great political tool in congress to defend farmers regarding the environment, and that "farmers are trying to find a solution." He stated that it would be good if we can use this on a large scale. *(See handouts entitled, "Anionic Polyacrylamide [PAM] Application" and "What is PAM?")*

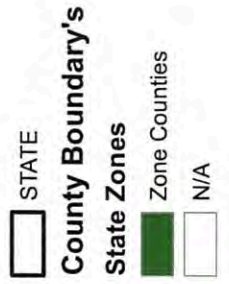
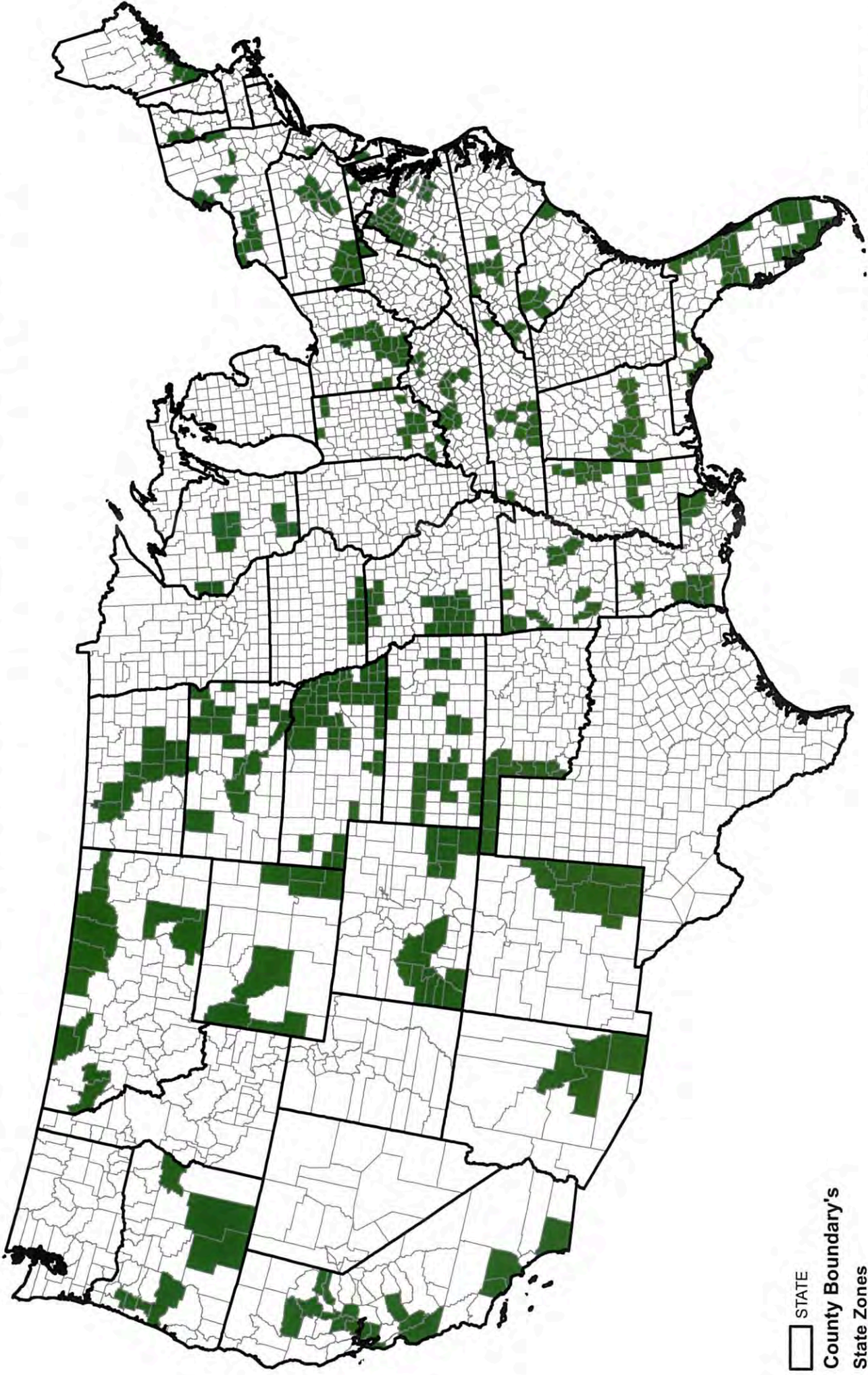
Kilby asked if this product would be applied annually. The PAM team replied that once every 30 days during the growing season, or one to three applications during in crop's season. When asked about if this should be used for no-till or conventional till, Will Griffin answered that it can be used in both. Betsy Bowles wondered about the waste water liquid. Mr. Griffin explained that there is a negative charge and a positive charge; liquid-solid separation. It is a good product to use at dairies, as these are almost like water treatment facilities. There are a lot of opportunities where this product can be helpful. Buddy Allen stated that users will need to be educated on appropriate application, as the product adds viscosity. Mr. Edwards said that can be used in fish aquaculture. It was put into a fish pond, and the pond cleared. Will Griffin added that it is used as erosion mitigation in construction sites.

Julie Hawkins said that we currently don't have this in Virginia for Fiscal Year 2016. The deadline for this year has passed, but wondered about for FY17? Chad would want to consider what the surrounding states (North Carolina, West Virginia, and Kentucky) are doing. Buddy Allen said that his team would be grateful for fiscal year 2017 adoption. Will said that there are different avenues to buy the product. It might have a different brand name.

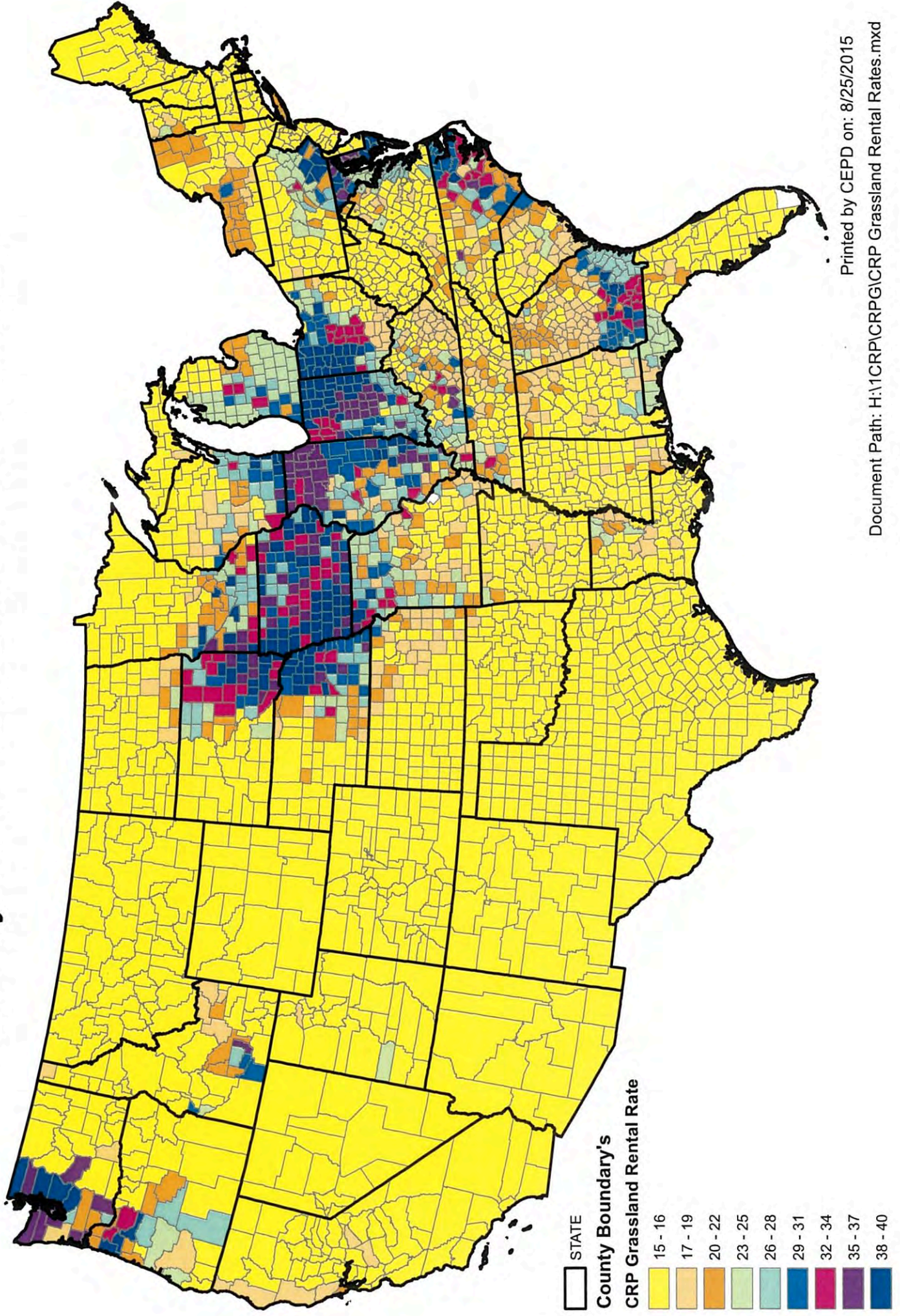
**CONCLUSION:** Julie Hawkins thanked everyone for attending.

*Next STC meeting: to be announced*

# 2015 State CRP Grassland Zone Counties



# County CRP Grassland Rental Rates





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
**FARM SERVICE AGENCY**

# CONSERVATION

## FACT SHEET

Revised September 2015

### Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - Grasslands

#### OVERVIEW

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands is part of the CRP program, a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 14 and 15 years.

CRP Grasslands helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland, and pastureland, and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. The program emphasizes support for grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and grassland and land containing shrubs and forbs under the greatest threat of conversion.

CRP Grasslands is authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill. The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers the program on behalf of the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

#### BENEFITS

Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations and improves environmental quality.

#### HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

Participants voluntarily limit future use of the land while retaining the right to conduct common grazing practices, produce hay, mow, or harvest for seed production (subject to certain restrictions during the nesting season of bird species that are in significant decline or those that are protected under federal or state law), conduct fire rehabilitation, and construct firebreaks and fences.

#### RANKING LAND OFFERED FOR CRP GRASSLANDS

Interested participants may file applications with FSA at any time. These applications will be batched and reviewed several times a year to determine which applications can be approved.

Applications for CRP Grassland will be ranked after each batching period using Grassland Ranking Factors. FSA collects data for each of the ranking factors based on the relative benefits for the land offered. Each eligible offer is ranked in comparison to all other offers and selections made from that ranking.

FSA uses the following ranking factors, including:

- Existence of expiring CRP or Grassland Reserve Program land;
- Existing grassland;
- Multi-species cover existence and predominance of native species;
- Livestock grazing operation;
- State Focus Area (land-based) determined in consultation with State Technical Committee;
- Whether the applicant is an eligible beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher and;
- Other factors as determined by the Deputy Administrator.

#### ELIGIBLE PRODUCERS

A producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to close of the CRP enrollment period, unless:

- The new owner acquired the land due to the previous owner's death;
- The ownership change occurred due to foreclosure where the owner exercised a timely right of redemption in accordance with state law or;

## FACT SHEET

### CRP - Grasslands

Revised September 2015

- The circumstances of the acquisition present adequate assurance to FSA that the new owner did not acquire the land for the purpose of placing it in CRP.

### ELIGIBLE LAND

Land currently must be planted to a grass cover.

### RENTAL PAYMENTS

In return for following an approved CRP conservation plan, FSA provides annual rental payments to participants in an amount that is not more than 75 percent of the grazing value of the land covered by the agreement as determined by FSA for the life of the agreement.

### COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE

FSA provides cost-share assistance to participants who establish approved practices on eligible land in an amount that is not more than 50 percent of the participants' costs in establishing approved practices.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only; other restrictions may apply. To find more information about CRP-Grasslands, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp). For more details on FSA conservation programs, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation) or contact your local FSA office. To locate the nearest FSA office or USDA Service Center visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)**

Three 2015 RCPP Agreements involving Virginia were signed this past spring:

### **68-33A7-15-001 - Virginia Department of Forestry** (State Funding Pool) *Forests - Fundamental for Conservation in Virginia*

Total EQIP FA = **\$940,000**

FY2015 = \$470,000

FY2016 = \$470,000

Total RCPP Award = \$1.3 million (includes EQIP TA for VDOF & for NRCS)

- Estimated accomplishments through RCPP (FY15 –FY19); these practices are on separate, unique acres from the Reforestation of Timberlands “RT” contracts.
  - CAP 106 Forest Management Plans: 8,750 acres
  - Site Preparation (490, 394 & 338): 7,690 acres
  - Tree Establishment (612 & 391): 11,950 acres
  - Forest Stand Improvement (666): 8,940 acres
  - Critical Area Protection (342): 48 acres
  - Total: 37,378 acres of practices
  - Total: Net Acres Treated: 25,700 acres
  - # of Landowners served: 385

### **68-3B19-15-020 - Maryland Department of Agriculture** (CCA Funding Pool) **(Maryland NRCS - Lead State) VA Partners: DCR, CBF & DOF - Accelerating Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs)**

Total EQIP FA = **\$1,450,000**

FY2016 = \$725,000

FY2017 = \$725,000

Total RCPP Award (*Virginia portion*) = \$2,119,102 (includes EQIP TA for the Virginia Partners & for NRCS)

- Estimated accomplishments through RCPP (FY16 –FY19):
  - EQIP Contracts: 40
  - Buffer Plans: 59
  - Stream Exclusion Fencing: 172,501 feet
  - Access Control: 141 acres
  - Watering Facilities: 80
  - Heavy Use Protection Area: 40,000 square feet
  - Pipeline: 60,000 feet

**68-2D37-15-763 - National Fish & Wildlife Foundation** (CCA Funding Pool)  
**(Pennsylvania NRCS - Lead State) VA Partners: TU, SVSWCD, etc. - Comprehensive Watershed Conservation in Dairy and Livestock Landscapes of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed**

Total EQIP FA = **\$992,000**

FY2016 = \$578,000

FY2017 = \$414,000

Total RCPP Award (*Virginia portion*) = \$1.4 million (includes EQIP TA for the Virginia Partners & for NRCS)

- Estimated accomplishments through RCPP (FY16 –FY19):
  - Three Rockingham County sub-watersheds will be targeted
    - Dry Fork (within the Smith Creek Showcase Watershed)
    - Linville Creek
    - Long Meadow-North Fork Shenandoah River
  - RCPP Agreement only listed 7 EQIP contracts as the deliverables
  - Trout Unlimited is the LEAD Virginia Partner
  - Focus Conservation Efforts on:
    - Livestock Exclusion
    - Forested Riparian Buffer Establishment
    - Improve Manure Management

**FY16 RCPP Agreements (ROUND #2)**

- Full Proposals are due by November 10, 2015
- Virginia is the LEAD State for two “selected” pre-proposals:
  - One for the State Funding Pool
  - One in the National Funding Pool (VA & TN project)

**Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)**

- No new CIG Agreements were developed this fiscal year, since we did not offer a State CIG Program due to unexpected cutbacks to our EQIP allocation. State Conservationists have the latitude to allocate up to 5% of their EQIP allocation to a State CIG Program each year. In Virginia, our maximum CIG support was around the 2% level of that year’s EQIP allocation.
- We have 13 active CIG projects. Two of them end their work on September 30, 2015; they have an extra 90 days to submit their Final Report.

- National CIG Awards (announced last week)

USDA awarded a total of \$20.5 million this year to develop and demonstrate progressive approaches to solving natural resource problems. Funded through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, these grants help groups work with producers who wish to develop and test new conservation technologies and approaches. At least 50 percent of the total cost of CIG projects must come from non-federal matching funds.

- The **Chesapeake Bay Foundation** received \$491,070 for a multi-state project to expand the use of management intensive grazing in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. CBF will enroll at least 35 farmers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed to transition 1,400 acres of farmland to rotation grazing. The group will also quantify the nutrient and greenhouse gas benefits associated with the transition and explore opportunities for producers to participate in water quality trading and greenhouse gas markets.
- **Virginia Tech University** received \$285,729 for their proposal to develop the information and tools required to incorporate agroforestry into Virginia's nutrient trading program, which currently largely depends on the retirement of marginal agricultural lands for credit generation.

**Land Conservation Easements**
  
**ACEP-ALE, ACEP-WRE, FRPP, GRP, WRP**
  
*Report to State Technical Committee, Virginia*
  
*September 22, 2015 Meeting*

**Easement Highlights for FY 2015**

- Closed 5 easements: 2 FRPP, 1 GRP, 2 WRP; see details in table below.
  - In progress are 5 easements: 2 FRPP, 2 WRP, 1 WRE.
  - New: 6 FY 2015 easements: 4 ALE, 2 WRE.
  - ACEP Applications: received 15 (7 WRE, 8 ALE), totaling requests for approx. \$8.7 million.
  - ACEP Allocation: approximately \$1.6 million.
  - Wetland restoration completed: on 5 closed WRP easements.
  - Monitored: 100% of NRCS easements by 9/23/15.
  - GARC: WRE valuation for easement purchase in FY-16 will utilize a Geographic Area Rate Cap (GARC) **percentage** of a 5% reduction, which will be applied to individual property appraisals, in order to determine easement value.
- 
- **FY 2016:** new applicants are encouraged to submit applications by mid-November.
  - ACEP Ranking tools: WRE, ALE ranking criteria worksheets are available for review as requested.
  - ACEP Final Rule is expected to be published in December.

**Easements Acquired: Closed and Recorded in FY 2015**

| Area | Prog. | County      | Acres |            |                                        |
|------|-------|-------------|-------|------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1    | FRPP  | Clarke      | 58    |            | Clarke Co. - Partner                   |
| 1    | FRPP  | Clarke      | 65    |            | Clarke Co. - Partner                   |
|      |       |             |       | 123        | Total FRPP Acres, on 2 easements       |
| 1    | GRP   | Augusta     | 111   |            |                                        |
|      |       |             |       | 111        | Total GRP Acres, on 1 easement         |
| 3    | WRP   | Charlotte   | 86    |            |                                        |
| 3    | WRP   | Greensville | 92    |            |                                        |
|      |       |             |       | 178        | Total WRP Acres, on 2 easements        |
|      |       |             |       | <b>412</b> | <b>TOTAL All Acres, on 5 easements</b> |



← Augusta County, Grassland Reserve  
 Program (GRP) easement, 111 acres,  
 closed October 2014.

*Diane D. Dunaway, Easement Specialist,*  
*Program Manager for ACEP-ALE, -WRE*  
*(FRPP, GRP, WRP),*  
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**EQIP Budget Allocation - 9/21/15**

| Fund Code    | Account Name                           | Allocated              | Contracts  | Contract Approval      | Funds Remaining    |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 76F 51       | Virginia                               | \$13,550,429.00        | 422        | \$13,465,487.54        | \$84,941.46        |
| 76F 51 BF    | Beginning Farmer                       | \$799,212.35           | 18         | \$799,212.35           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 CC    | Cropland - Christiansburg              | \$69,970.00            | 3          | \$69,970.00            | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 CF    | Cropland - Farmville                   | \$246,923.00           | 5          | \$246,923.00           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 CH    | Cropland - Harrisonburg                | \$1,076,605.70         | 25         | \$1,076,605.70         | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 CS    | Cropland - Smithfield                  | \$1,989,195.00         | 76         | \$1,989,195.00         | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 FS    | Forestry - Statewide                   | \$902,561.20           | 76         | \$902,561.20           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 2     | FY15 Certified Organic                 | \$23,445.00            | 2          | \$23,445.00            | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 3     | FY15 Organic Transition                | \$101,415.75           | 4          | \$101,415.75           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 5     | FY15 Seasonal High Tunnels             | \$578,369.48           | 61         | \$578,369.48           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 GW    | Golden Winged-Warbler                  | \$30,000.00            | 4          | \$30,000.00            | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 AC    | Livestock - Christiansburg             | \$1,259,112.85         | 6          | \$1,259,112.85         | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 LF    | Livestock - Farmville                  | \$1,246,693.50         | 13         | \$1,246,693.50         | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 LH    | Livestock - Harrisonburg               | \$1,982,063.90         | 22         | \$1,982,063.90         | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 LS    | Livestock - Smithfield                 | \$400,607.61           | 7          | \$400,607.61           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 LP    | Long Leaf Pine Initiative              | \$122,620.00           | 4          | \$122,620.00           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 FM    | NWQI - Fifteen Mile Creek              | \$56,046.80            | 4          | \$56,046.80            | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 MR    | NWQI - Smith Creek - Mountain Run      | \$160,909.00           | 5          | \$160,909.00           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 WB    | NWQI - Smith Creek - War Branch        | \$242,850.00           | 4          | \$242,850.00           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 SD    | Socially Disadvantaged                 | \$747,470.00           | 10         | \$747,470.00           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 SC    | Speciality Crop Fund Pool              | \$29,582.00            | 4          | \$29,582.00            | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 SF    | StrikeForce                            | \$396,317.20           | 5          | \$396,317.20           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 HM    | Wildlife - Habitat Maintenance         | \$22,265.00            | 4          | \$22,265.00            | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 HC    | Wildlife - Wildlife Habitat Creation   | \$500,575.80           | 53         | \$500,575.80           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 AQ    | Aquaculture                            | \$0.00                 | 0          | \$0.00                 | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 CA    | CAPS-Conservation Activity Plans       | \$0.00                 | 0          | \$0.00                 | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 4     | FY15 On-Farm Energy                    | \$0.00                 | 0          | \$0.00                 | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 EC    | FY15 On-Farm Energy CAP                | \$0.00                 | 0          | \$0.00                 | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 IW    | Irrigation Water Management            | \$0.00                 | 0          | \$0.00                 | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 SP    | Longleaf / Short Leaf Pine - Statewide | \$0.00                 | 0          | \$0.00                 | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 CD    | 2014 Carryover - Cropland              | \$108,302.00           | 3          | \$108,302.00           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 FY    | 2014 Carryover - Forestry              | \$39,206.00            | 3          | \$39,206.00            | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 LK    | 2014 Carryover - Livestock             | \$132,357.00           | 1          | \$132,357.00           | \$0.00             |
| 76F 51 16077 | FY15 EQIP Reserve                      | \$200,811.40           | 0          | \$200,811.40           | \$0.00             |
|              | Balance Available                      | \$84,941.46            | 0          | \$0.00                 | \$84,941.46        |
|              | <b>Total</b>                           | <b>\$13,550,429.00</b> | <b>422</b> | <b>\$13,465,487.54</b> | <b>\$84,941.46</b> |

| FY15 CSP General Signup |           |        |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------|
|                         | Contracts | Acres  |
| Forestry                | 8         | 2,598  |
| Ag Land                 | 31        | 11,232 |
| Total                   | 39        | 13,830 |

RCPP Forestry Budget - 9/21/15

| Fund Code       | Account Name                                     | Allocated    | Contracts | Contract Approval | # Preapproved | Preapproved Amount | Funds Remaining |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 77F 51 04       | Forests-Fundamental for Conservation in Virginia | \$470,000.00 | 101       | \$431,947.50      | 8             | \$24,749.70        | \$13,302.80     |
| 77F 51 04 16964 | RCPP Forestry Area 1                             | \$37,505.00  | 8         | \$36,705.00       | 1             | \$800.00           | \$0.00          |
| 77F 51 04 16965 | RCPP Forestry Area 2                             | \$21,155.00  | 3         | \$21,155.00       | 0             | \$0.00             | \$0.00          |
| 77F 51 04 16966 | RCPP Forestry Area 3                             | \$182,525.50 | 30        | \$181,551.50      | 0             | \$0.00             | \$974.00        |
| 77F 51 04 16967 | RCPP Forestry Area 4                             | \$184,637.70 | 24        | \$163,636.00      | 3             | \$16,549.70        | \$4,452.00      |
| 77F 51 04 16968 | RCPP Forestry CAPS Area 1                        | \$9,700.00   | 11        | \$9,100.00        | 1             | \$600.00           | \$0.00          |
| 77F 51 04 16969 | RCPP Forestry CAPS Area 2                        | \$10,000.00  | 6         | \$10,000.00       | 0             | \$0.00             | \$0.00          |
| 77F 51 04 16970 | RCPP Forestry CAPS Area 3                        | \$7,300.00   | 8         | \$4,300.00        | 1             | \$3,000.00         | \$0.00          |
| 77F 51 04 16971 | RCPP Forestry CAPS Area 4                        | \$9,300.00   | 11        | \$5,500.00        | 2             | \$3,800.00         | \$0.00          |
|                 | Balance Available                                | \$7,876.80   | 0         | \$0.00            | 0             | \$0.00             | \$7,876.80      |
|                 | Total                                            | \$470,000.00 | 101       | \$431,947.50      | 8             | \$24,749.70        | \$13,302.80     |

FY16 - EQIP  
**\*\*\*DRAFT Fund Pools\*\*\***

| <b>National Initiatives</b> | <b>***Draft***</b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Organic                     | \$100,000          |
| Energy CAPs                 | \$100,000          |
| High Tunnels                | \$100,000          |
| Total                       | <b>\$300,000</b>   |

| <b>State Initiatives</b>                | <b>***Draft***</b>  |                              |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| CAPs                                    | \$0                 |                              |
| Livestock                               | \$8,516,524         | statutory mandate of 60%     |
| Cropland                                | \$2,220,469         |                              |
| Wildlife                                | \$655,117           | statutory mandate of 5%      |
| Aquaculture                             | \$25,000            |                              |
| Beginning Farmer/Socially Disadvantaged | \$1,310,234         | statutory mandate of 5% each |
| Forestry                                | \$50,000            |                              |
| Speciality                              | \$25,000            |                              |
| Total                                   | <b>\$12,802,344</b> |                              |

|                                                     |                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>TOTAL REQUEST CAPPED AT FY15 EQIP ALLOCATION</b> | <b>\$13,102,344</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|

| <b>Additional Funding Request Options (no guarantee)</b> |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Strikeforce                                              | \$6,000,000        |
| Golden Winged Warbler                                    | \$50,000           |
| Long Leaf Pine Initiative                                | \$200,000          |
| National Water Quality Initiative                        | \$1,000,000        |
| Total                                                    | <b>\$7,250,000</b> |

|                                         |                     |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Grand Total of FY16 EQIP request</b> | <b>\$20,352,344</b> |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|

*Please Note:*

This is draft and dependent on many factors above the state level including but not limited to:

1. Congress (budget) and sequestration
2. OMB & allocation of funds
3. NHQ

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**  
**CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**  
**ANIONIC POLYACRYLAMIDE (PAM) APPLICATION**

(Ac.)

CODE 450

**DEFINITION**

Application of water-soluble Anionic Polyacrylamide (PAM) to meet a resource concern.

**PURPOSE**

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to achieve one or more of the following purposes:

- Reduce soil erosion by water or wind.
- Improve water quality.
- Improve air quality by reducing dust emissions.
- Reduce energy use.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

This practice applies to:

- Irrigated lands susceptible to irrigation-induced erosion where the sodium adsorption ratio (SAR) of irrigation water is less than 15.
- Critical areas where the timely establishment of vegetation may not be feasible or where vegetative cover is absent or inadequate.
- Areas where plant residues are inadequate to protect the soil surface from wind or water erosion.
- Sites where disturbance activities prevent establishment or maintenance of a cover crop.

This practice does not apply to soils with peat or organic matter surface horizons. This practice does not apply to the application of PAM to flowing, non-irrigation waters.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable To All Purposes**

All application rates listed in this standard are based on active ingredient of PAM in the product. Various formulations of PAM products should be applied according to the actual amount of PAM contained in the product.

The conversion rates are 1 mg/l = 1 ppm = 0.227 lbs/ ac-in = 0.0000835 lbs/gal

The PAM shall:

- Be of the anionic type meeting acrylamide monomer limits of  $\leq 0.05$  percent.
- Have a charge density of 10 to 55 percent, by weight.
- Have a molecular weight of 6 to 24 Mg/mole.
- Be mixed and/or applied in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Material Safety Data Sheet requirements and the manufacturer's recommendations.

**Additional Criteria Applicable to Reduce Soil Erosion by Water or Wind**

**Surface Irrigation.** PAM shall be used during the first irrigation and after any soil disturbance (for example cultivation). PAM shall be used during later irrigations if soil movement is observed. Pre-irrigation is considered irrigation.

Add mixed concentrations of PAM to irrigation water only during the advance phase of a surface irrigation. The advance phase shall be considered the time irrigation starts until water has advanced to the end of the field.

Place dry or patch treatments of PAM over an area of the first 5 feet of furrow.

The resulting concentration of PAM in irrigation water shall not exceed 10 ppm of pure form

polyacrylamide, applied on a total product basis.

**Sprinkler Irrigation.** The maximum application rate of polyacrylamide active ingredient shall not exceed 4 pounds per acre per single application event.

Totally mix and liquefy PAM mixtures prior to injection into the irrigation system.

Inject only on the downstream side of all screens and filters.

Conform to all federal and state chemigation standards.

**Critical Areas.** The maximum application rate of pure form polyacrylamide shall not exceed 200 pounds per acre per year.

Insure uniform application coverage to the target area, minimizing drift to non-target areas.

#### **Additional Criteria Applicable to Reduce Energy Use**

Provide analysis to demonstrate reduction of energy use from practice implementation.

Reduction of energy use is calculated as average annual or seasonal energy reduction compared to previous operating conditions.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

The following relate to the application of PAM that may enhance or avoid problems with the practice, but are not required to insure its basic conservation function.

#### **General**

PAM application rates may need to be adjusted based on soil properties, slope, and type of resource concern targeted.

Where reasonably possible, tailwater or runoff containing PAM should be stored for re-use or recycled on other land areas.

Use of PAM in combination with other conservation and Best Management Practices may improve erosion control.

The use of PAM may increase downstream or offsite deposition of sediment.

#### **Irrigation Induced Erosion Considerations**

Other conservation treatments such as land leveling, irrigation water management, reduced tillage, reservoir tillage, crop rotations, etc.,

should be used in conjunction with this practice to control irrigation-induced erosion.

On fine to medium textured soils, PAM may result in an increase in surface irrigation infiltration of up to 60 percent, with 15 percent being typical on medium textured soils. Infiltration increases can be expected to diminish or be eliminated in succeeding treated irrigations, if there is no soil disturbance between applications. Use of higher than recommended application rates will usually decrease infiltration rates, rather than increase them. PAM use on coarser textured soil is more likely to decrease infiltration.

To compensate for PAM changes in infiltration, adjustments in flow rates, set times, and tillage practices should be considered.

Reduction from maximum PAM rates and volumes should be considered, as long as no visible erosion occurs.

Sprinkler systems will likely need multiple applications to achieve a significant erosion reduction.

Applications at the end of the season are discouraged, unless the field has been recently tilled.

#### **Wind/Precipitation Erosion and Dust Emissions Considerations**

Combining seed with the PAM mixture extends erosion protection beyond the life of the PAM material.

#### **Safety and Health**

Use proper personal protective equipment, e.g. gloves, masks, and other health and safety precautions in accordance with the label, industry, and other federal or state, and local chemigation rules and guidelines.

PAM dust can cause choking and difficulty in breathing if inhaled. Persons handling and mixing PAM shall use a dust mask of a type recommended by the manufacturer.

PAM solutions can cause floors, other surfaces, tools, etc. to become very slippery when wet.

Clean liquid PAM spills with dry absorbent material (sawdust, soil, cat litter, etc.) and sweep/collect dry PAM material without washing with water.

To prevent slick conditions, avoid sprinkling roadways when applying PAM.

## PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications will be developed site specifically for each application. Specifications for this practice will be prepared for each field or treatment unit according to the criteria, considerations, and operation and maintenance described in this standard. Specifications shall be recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.

## OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

An Operation and Maintenance Plan must be prepared for use by the landowner or operator responsible for PAM application. The plan shall provide specific instructions for PAM applications to:

- Reapply PAM to disturbed or tilled areas, including high traffic use areas.
- Monitor advance phases of the irrigation to assure applications are discontinued when runoff begins.
- Operate and maintain equipment to allow uniform application rates.
- Maintain screens and filtering facilities.
- Clean all PAM mixing and application equipment thoroughly with water to avoid the formation of PAM residues.

- For sprinkler systems, flush injection equipment (PAM injection pump, tubing, valves, etc.) with crop oil before and after injecting concentrated liquid PAM (30 to 50 percent active ingredient). Crop oil provides a buffer between PAM and water so non-flowing PAM does not contact water and form a gelatinous mass that can plug valves and tubing.
- For sprinkler injection, the PAM injection pump should be started after water is flowing in the sprinkler system. To flush PAM from sprinklers stop injection pump before the irrigation pump stops.

## REFERENCES

- Aase, J.K., D.L. Bjorneberg, and R.E. Sojka. 1998. Sprinkler irrigation runoff and erosion control with polyacrylamide - laboratory tests. *Soil Sci. Soc. Am. Journal*. 62:1681-1687.
- Lentz, R.D. and R.E. Sojka. 2000. Applying polymers to irrigation water: Evaluating strategies for furrow erosion control. *Trans. ASABE* 43(6): 1561-1568.
- Sojka, R.E., D.L. Bjorneberg, J.A. Entry, R.D. Lentz, and W.J. Orts. 2007. Polyacrylamide in agriculture and environmental land management. *Advances in Agronomy* 92:75-162.

# What is PAM?

**Polyacrylamide (PAM) is a water-soluble polymer that reduces runoff and enhances water efficiency.**

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**Runoff** from irrigation water and rain events causes a loss of fertilizer and nutrient rich topsoil, reducing soil productivity. Furthermore, heavy nutrient loading is a primary factor in the worsening of hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico and other dead zones across the globe.

PAM acts as a strengthening agent, binding soil particles so they stay put. It is harder for water to move larger, heavier particles of soil, thus, runoff is greatly reduced and topsoil loss is virtually eliminated.

**Erosion** in furrow irrigation can be a significant contributor to soil loss since the soil acts as the water transmission line. Unfortunately, with runoff comes soil.

PAM reduces field sediment loss by as much as 94% by reducing soil detachment, maintaining soil structure and increasing infiltration rates.

**Soil Sealing and Crusting** after a rain event makes it difficult for emerging seedlings to break through the soil surface. Additionally, crusting increases runoff, which induces soil erosion.

PAM preserves soil porosity, which allows water to infiltrate the soil profile. Increased infiltration reduces all phases that lead to crusting, such as the breakdown of soil aggregates, soil compaction, and the clogging of the soil pores.

**Declining aquifers**, groundwater levels and water tables are a concern across the United States.

Extensive groundwater pumping has reduced water-levels in many regions by 300 to 900 feet.

PAM preserves a porous soil structure for increased infiltration rates, allowing for maximum utilization of rainfall and irrigation water so pumps might be turned off sooner.

**Root Zones** are the target for optimizing irrigation and plant yield.

PAM increases infiltration rates on average by 15%-20%. Combined with soil moisture monitoring systems, highly efficient water management can be achieved.

**PAM addresses** Soil Sealing, Erosion, and Runoff - contributing factors to poor water quality, downstream pollution, sedimentation in rivers and streams and Hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico.

**PAM addresses** Water Supply concerns by improving Irrigation Efficiency, maintains Soil Porosity and increases rates of Infiltration – essential factors for healthy productive soils and crops.

#### References:

<http://pubag.nal.usda.gov/pubag/downloadPDF.xhtml?id=15474&content=PDF>; <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2013/5079/>  
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Research/docs.htm?docid=18872> <http://www.ars.usda.gov/Research/docs.htm?docid=18876>;  
<http://water.epa.gov/type/watersheds/named/msbasin/hypoxia101.cfm>;

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**PAM has served various functions over the years, including food processing and wastewater treatment. It's been approved by the FDA and the EPA as a food and water additive.**

**PAM is an approved NRCS Best Management Practice (Code #450) and can be used in furrow, sprinkler, and flood irrigation. Areal application is also showing promise.**