



Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation District

Annual Plan of Work July 1, 2016– June 30, 2017

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. In exchange for that support, the District is charged with providing specific administrative and technical assistance in the jurisdictions it serves. The following activities are provided by the District:

- Administer and provide technical assistance to reduce non-point source pollution through the following programs:
 - Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost Share
 - Virginia Agricultural BMP Tax Credits
 - Virginia Water Quality Improvement Act
 - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
 - Voluntary BMP installation by property owners/managers
 - Total Maximum Daily Load plan development
 - Agricultural Stewardship Act
 - BMP Revolving Loan Program
 - Small Business Environmental Assistance Fund Loan Program
 - Local development and implementation of Chesapeake Bay 2000 commitments by participation in:
 - Tributary Strategies
 - Small Watershed Management plan development
 - Sound land use planning applications
 - Environmental Education programs
- Deliver local natural resource conservation programs with consideration given to resource needs and issues affecting District watersheds.
- Support and foster partnerships with agencies, organizations, councils, roundtables, and others to protect soil resources, improve water quality and further natural resource conservation.
- Hold monthly Board of Directors meetings.
- Develop and maintain a Strategic Plan on a 4 year cycle consistent with the election cycle of District directors, with participation by district stakeholders. Review the Strategic Plan at least annually during a scheduled meeting of the District board. Plans require the inclusion of watershed priorities.
- Prepare and follow an Annual Plan of Work that reflects the District's strategic plan.
- Submit meeting minutes from all meetings of the District board and a copy of district publications (including an annual Plan of Work, an annual report, and the Strategic Plan) to the District's Conservation District Coordinator (CDC).
- Submit quarterly financial reports to the CDC to request funding drawdowns from DCR.

- Maintain employee position descriptions, performance expectations, the District personnel policy, and conduct timely evaluations. Provide the District's CDC with copies of current employee position descriptions and personnel policy.
- Provide data requested by DCR, on non-point source pollution reduction initiatives.
- Ensure that staff implementing the Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost Share Program secures and maintains required conservation planning certification and job approval authority.
- Provide data and other information for preparation of legislative studies and reports
- Notify DCR of any impounding structures identified by the District which are not regulated. but which were subjected to regulation by the July 1, 2002 change in the Code of Virginia which amended the definition of "impounding structures".

The District's Annual Plan of Work is implemented by the work of its committees. Committees work to directly benefit water quality and to further Virginia's commitment to the Chesapeake 2000 agreement, the Commonwealth's TMDL program, EPA's Chesapeake Bay TMDL program, and requirements to protect soils and improve water quality in the District.

The State of Virginia encourages all SWCDs to apply public funds in the most cost-effective manner and to take every opportunity to increase the effectiveness of every public dollar spent. With this in mind, each District committee has considered its activities for the coming year. The District presents the following Plan of Work to guide its employees and committees.

CONSERVATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mission

To assist the District in improving soil and water quality by establishing priorities for the allocation of cost-share funds for the installation of soil and water conservation BMPs, to review applications for those funds, and to recommend approval of applications to the Board. The committee will prioritize the allocation of cost-share funds to cooperators whose projects demonstrate the greatest pollution reduction.

The Conservation Technical Committee will carry out all responsibilities mandated by the District Board and DCR.

Water Quality Objectives:

The focus of our activities in the coming year will be to increase the number of Agricultural BMPs that are installed throughout the District in TMDL watersheds with particular emphasis on the Chesapeake Bay TMDL watershed. The District will direct its resources to cooperator recruitment and installation of the most cost-effective practices to obtain the greatest water pollution reduction and soil protection. The committee will become more pro-active in identifying sources of water quality impairment in District watersheds and to secure cooperation of the landowners at such locations.

Committee members will:

1. Annually establish secondary consideration priorities for the funding of BMPs and determine priority watersheds.

2. Review applications and make recommendations to the Board of Directors for tax credits and cost share funding for BMPs.
3. Assist in spot-checks and inspections within each Director's jurisdiction, to insure proper installation and maintenance of BMPs.
4. Make certain that BMPs are cost-effective and directly benefit water quality.
5. Respond to State and, local requests for input on BMP cost share programs.
6. Support the Chesapeake Bay TMDL Development Plan as well as TMDL Implementation Plans for all TMDL watersheds within the District.
7. Assist the District as requested with Agricultural Stewardship complaints.
8. Provide guidance to the Board of Directors with respect to special requests made to the District that relate to technical soil and water conservation issues.
9. The Committee will usually meet monthly at the District office on the Thursday preceding the District Board meeting to review cost-share applications and take care of other business.
10. The Committee will approve cost- share funds and tax credits for projects using the Conservation Efficiency Factor as a significant element in its recommendations.
11. The Committee will consult the list of primary and secondary considerations in its deliberations leading to BMP approval.
12. At its meeting in May of 2017 the Committee will develop its priorities and secondary considerations, to be submitted for approval at the June Board meeting. (DCR must approve the priorities and secondary considerations before any fiscal 2018 cost-share applications can be approved).
13. The Committee will prepare its plan of work for fiscal 2018 for submission to the Board at its May 2017 meeting.
14. The Committee will partner with other organizations and agencies to maximize the resources available to them for soil and water conservation programs, and to utilize the wide array of free expertise.
15. The Committee will encourage staff to promote all applicable soil and water conservation related programs (federal cost share programs such as CREP, EQIP, CSP; state cost share, grants and loan programs) when recruiting cooperators and designing effective conservation plans.
16. Staff will report all project information relating to BMPs and RMPs by entering data into the DCR tracking program, supplying up-to-date tracking forms (parts I, II, & III) to the Administrative Assistant for payment upon certification of practice completion.
17. The Committee will establish and update the average cost list as needed. Actual practice installation costs will be used for updating the average cost list.
18. The Committee will participate in Smith Creek Watershed Partnership program.
19. The Committee will support grant-funded programs.

NRCS Action Plan:

- a. Assist the District in reaching its goals in TMDL and other priority watersheds.
- b. Fulfill NRCS responsibilities under the Farm Bill. These include federal assistance programs, Highly Erodible Land conservation, wetlands, and farmland protection.
- c. Provide technical assistance as requested by District staff on design and installation of conservation practices.
- d. Provide on-the-job training to District staff in conservation planning and practice design and application.
- e. Provide training to District staff. This will be accomplished through the Joint Employee Development Training and other formal and field training opportunities.

DAM SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mission:

The Dam Safety Committee will work with DCR and NRCS to ensure that Lake Laura Dam #9 and Bird Haven Dam #10 are maintained and improved in compliance with applicable state regulations. We will also facilitate DCR's assistance to the Town of Woodstock for the Woodstock Reservoir.

Committee Members will:

1. Obtain technical and engineering support for the maintenance and improvement of the District's dams, working through NRCS, DCR's Design and Construction Group), DCR's Dam Safety group and the DCR Division of Soil and Water Conservation's Dam Safety Consultant
2. Conduct required dam inspections and maintenance through District staff, the Dam Safety Committee, and Consultant
3. Maintain and operate the District's dams safely, satisfying federal and state requirements, in cooperation with Bryce Resort.
4. Secure current operating certificates for the dams, work with the Consultant, and Shenandoah County to maintain current emergency action plans.
5. Obtains funds for maintenance and repair to the extent possible.
6. Encourage both staff and Directors to participate in the Dam Owners' Work Group meetings in Charlottesville, to learn about dam safety, maintenance and other dam issues.
7. Cooperate with the Legislative Committee to encourage funding by the State and Federal governments of dam maintenance, repair, and improvement.

NRCS Action Plan:

- a. Assist the District in annual maintenance inspections of Stony Creeks Dams #9 & #10.
- b. Coordinate as necessary with NRCS Watershed Programs Manager and State Engineer about needed improvements to Dams # 9 and #10.

EASEMENT COMMITTEE

Mission: The Committee is engaged in education, development, holding, and monitoring of conservation easements. The District’s primary expertise regarding conservation easements is related to soil and water conservation, water quality, and sustaining natural resources including the development of conservation plans and implementation of agricultural BMPs. The Committee will evaluate easement opportunities on behalf of the Board to determine the following:

- The extent to which proposed easements are consistent with the District’s overall mission.
- Whether or not proposed easements will unduly burden the District.
- For each proposed easement, recommend that the Board accept or decline to hold such easement.
- Ensure that a process is in place to monitor all easements held by the District.

Committee members will:

1. Evaluate proposed easements and seek to partner with appropriate land trusts, local governments and state agencies to ensure that adequate resources are in place to prepare legal documents and provide enforcement of easement terms.
2. Ensure that necessary monitoring is properly completed for easements held solely and co-held by the District.
3. Participate with other area land trusts, local governments and various stakeholder groups to educate the public about the benefits of easements and purchase of development rights.
4. Work with other SWCDs and DCR to obtain enforcement powers through the Attorney General’s office.

EDUCATION & INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Mission:

To increase community knowledge of and commitment to the conservation of soil and water through communication with local communities, local governments, agricultural organizations,

environmental organizations and individuals. To promote environmental education programs in the community and to support and encourage related education activities within the District.

Information/Communication:

1. Keep the community informed of conservation activities by distributing three newsletters a year to the District's email address list.
2. Solicit submissions from directors, associate directors and partners for the District's newsletter.
3. Publish and distribute (by September 2017) the annual report.
4. Partner with other District committees to develop and distribute informational materials and presentations.
5. Work with other staff members to create, maintain, and update a diverse library of materials for the District informational display boards.
6. Maintain the District website and Facebook page and update as needed.
7. Develop a FY2018 operational budget.
8. Maintain contact with local print media to enhance coverage of the District activities.
9. Submit no less than six (6) conservation-oriented news items per year to appropriate information outlets, such as newspapers, other newsletters, and websites.
10. Develop and maintain a calendar of education and information events, activities and deadlines.

Education:

Committee will:

1. Sponsor and conduct the Annual District-Level Envirothon Competition, as well as sponsor the District winning team to the Area I Regional Competition Continue sponsorship of the District Envirothon winning team, as appropriate and needed, to State and National Competitions.
2. Evaluate applications, select, and sponsor camper(s) to the annual State Youth Conservation Camp.
3. Evaluate applications, select, and nominate a High School Student from the District for the State SWCB scholarship. Recommend LFSWCD-sponsored scholarship (s) as appropriate.

Special Events/Activities:

Committee will:

1. Participate in conservation activities across the District, (e.g. Frederick County Conservation Field Day, Earth Day, Arbor Day, Soil & Water Stewardship Week, and local watershed meetings).
2. Enlist the involvement of directors and associate directors to assist in carrying out education-related activities for adults and families, especially within their home jurisdictions and localities.
3. Cooperate with District committees on educational programs and meetings that address relevant issues. Conduct at least one (1) producer Field Day/Workshop.
4. Plan the program and awards for the November 2017 Awards Luncheon. .
5. Plan and conduct an Earth Day activity in cooperation with conservation partner(s).
6. Explore the feasibility of producing a LFSWCD calendar.

NRCS Action Plan:

- a. Submit news articles publicizing available USDA programs and success stories about producers implementation of successful practices.
- b.. Maintain an active outreach program which will include working with the District to sponsor a field-oriented educational meeting.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mission

The Finance Committee oversees financial aspects of District operations. The Committee assures compliance with applicable fiscal laws, protects District assets, enables the District to operate in a financially sound and efficient manner, and monitors use of funds to ensure surety bond compliance and auditor approval. The Finance Committee will assist in obtaining funding for District operations.

Committee members will:

1. Conduct District fiscal operations in a manner consistent with the District Fiscal Operations Policies and Procedures Guide.
2. Meet a minimum of twice a year to establish a budget and review the financial statements. The Committee Chair should sign the minutes and these should be retained by the District.
3. Prepare monthly budget reports for presentation at Board Meetings.
4. Apply sound and consistent accounting principles to the management of all District funds.
5. Manage and invest District funds. Establish a plan to optimize CD management.

6. Review financial data on a monthly basis to assure the District's sound financial position.
7. Assist directors and staff and ensure coordination with all committees to:
 - Identify funding sources;
 - Obtain funds from such sources; and
 - Integrate these funds into the total budget
8. Track all funding accounts and complete required DCR quarterly reports in a timely fashion.
9. Maintain accounts in a condition that will successfully pass all audits.
10. Make preparations for an audit in the 2018 fiscal year.
11. Maintain and update District written financial policies, including the purchasing policy and the vehicle policy, and ensure compliance.
12. Comply will all surety bond requirements.
13. Develop a formula for equitable funding from jurisdictions.
14. Establish specific reserves for dam maintenance and other contingent obligations.
15. Create accounts payable for staff salaries.
16. Create rainy day account.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mission

With Board approval, the District Legislative Committee will recommend legislation to the State Association's Legislative Committee. It will evaluate proposed legislation pertinent to soil and water conservation introduced in the General Assembly, alert the Board to issues relevant to local concerns and recommend action when appropriate.

Committee members will:

1. Maintain liaison with legislators concerning proposed legislation.
2. Work directly with legislators and through the State Association's office on issues affecting soil and water conservation.
3. Respond to requests for support of needed legislation from the State and National Associations of Conservation Districts.
4. Maintain liaison with other agencies, including USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency, DCR, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Department of Forestry, and the Virginia Department of Transportation so as to coordinate efforts.
5. Attend state, area, and national meetings when possible to keep abreast of actions, concerns, and proposed efforts at those levels.
6. Become acquainted with and maintain liaison with local governing and planning agencies and their personnel, to apprise them of our interests and willingness to provide information for planning and zoning.

7. Invite legislators to address Board meetings on an annual basis
8. Support VASWCD funding and other legislative initiatives. The Committee will participate in state lobbying efforts related to cost- share programs for BMPs and Soil and Water Conservation Districts' administrative budgets.
9. Work with the General Assembly members to encourage funding for dam maintenance.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mission

To undertake those tasks which do not fall within the purview of other committees, or which may be assigned to it by the Board Chairman.

Committee Members Will:

1. Conduct, two times a year, a review of the Annual Plan of Work. Review will be held in conjunction with committee chairs. Recommendations to be presented to the Board for its consideration.
2. Conduct, in conjunction with committee chairs, the annual review of the Strategic Plan. Recommendations to be presented to the Board for its consideration.
3. Vet and recommend for Board approval applicants for associate directorships.
4. Vet and recommend for Board approval the nomination of directorship applicants for confirmation by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board.
5. Recommend, for Board approval, nominations for Association and other awards given outside the District.
6. Review the District's set of Standard Operating Procedures, making recommendations to the Board as circumstances require.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mission:

Foster personnel practices that encourage Directors, Associate Directors, and staff to contribute effectively to District activities.

Committee members will:

1. Review written personnel policies and recommend changes, if any, to the Board.

2. Evaluate current staffing levels and responsibilities and recommend any necessary adjustments to meet District responsibilities under the Agricultural BMP program, TMDL Implementation Plans, dam safety and maintenance regulations, and other responsibilities.
3. Ensure that personnel policies and decisions are based on merit principles.
4. Ensure that personnel management is conducted according to written policies.
5. Recommend to the Board salary levels for employees, and appropriate adjustments.
6. Apply Pay Band system to personnel salaries.
7. Review staff monthly reports and approve training plans for each employee.
8. Conduct annual performance reviews of each District employee
9. Update employee job descriptions and priorities, and communicate any changes to employees.
10. Respond to all employee grievances.
11. Respond to District Directors' concerns involving employee-related matters.
12. Review and update District Director's Reference Book.

URBAN BMP COMMITTEE

Mission:

The mission of the Urban BMP Committee is to expand the District's relevance *and presence* in localities where storm water and receiving streams are affected by increasing residential, commercial, and industrial growth, and to *identify an urban niche* for the District in addition to its agricultural *responsibilities*. An area of endeavor within our expertise and resources might include the organization of public education and outreach programs related to water conservation and stormwater management.

Committee Members Will:

1. Consult with relevant entities to help them identify their public education and outreach needs in the field of water conservation, and to determine how the District can help them meet those needs;
2. Consult with the DEQ and other Commonwealth-wide authorities (including the VASWCD) to determine the urban BMP roles they foresee for districts and the availability of Commonwealth resources to assist the Districts in carrying out those roles;

Plan and coordinate activities with partner organizations, such as the NSVRC, to promote cooperation and avoid duplication of effort;

3. Recommend for LFSWCD Board approval an urban BMP program which the District could usefully and realistically implement.

PLAN OF WORK APPROVED:

Richard W. Hoover, Chairman

Date



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