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To: Partners Requesting the Use of State Agricultural BMP Cost Share for Grant Match

From: Darryl Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation

CC: David Bryan, Faye Campbell, Leigh Estes, Blair Gordon, Christine Watlington, CDCs

Date: July 1, 2020

Subject: Process to Request Cost Share Grant Match

Each year the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) receives requests from various partners for grant match. This match is provided via state funds appropriated to the Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) Program. The DCR Division of Soil and Water Conservation (DSWC) prioritizes the use of available match to assure that state cost share match is not overcommitted in any given year. Available match is approved only for those grant proposals whose purpose is the improvement of water quality through reductions in pollution from nonpoint sources.

This letter summarizes the process for requesting the use of cost-share as match for federal or private grants proposals. Please note that the use of state cost-share as “cash” match is rarely approved. In-kind cost share match is provided on a basin-wide basis (i.e. either Chesapeake Bay or Outside the Chesapeake Bay) and is not specific to a particular hydrologic unit, sub-watershed, county, District boundary, etc. Because of variability of state cost share funding every year, match commitments are typically front-end loaded into the first year of a grant proposal, although occasionally multi-year match commitments are made.

If an applicant would like in-kind cost share match, that applicant should submit a letter requesting match to the DSWC Grants Manager at the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Soil and Water Conservation, 600 Main Street, 24th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219, at least twenty-one days before the letter of commitment of match from DCR is needed.

The request letter must include the following information as outlined below:

- Identification of the grant program and the amount of the grant applied for
- A statement describing the purpose of the proposed grant project and the water quality benefits anticipated as a result of grant deliverable completion
- The amount of in-kind state cost share match being requested, and all other match secured
- The Basin(s) in which the project will be conducted (i.e. either Chesapeake Bay or Outside the Chesapeake Bay)
- Identification of the county(s), SWCD(s) or other location(s) where the grant will be implemented
- The timeframe for grant implementation
- Identification of the applicant grant manager, their postal delivery address and email address where the letter of in-kind match commitment, if approved, can be sent

The DSWC Grants Manager will serve as the point person for all in-kind match related inquiries and requests. Upon receipt of a formal letter requesting in-kind cost share match, the DSWC Grants Manager will first contact the DSWC Agricultural Incentives Program Manager who will review the request and make a recommendation to fund or deny the in-kind match request based upon its water quality benefits and compatibility with VACS fund utilization requirements. If the match request is approved on the basis of its merits, the DSWC Grants Manager will contact the DCR Finance Grants and Fund Analyst to see if in-kind cost share match is still available in the specified Basin(s). If so, the DCR Finance Division's Grants and Fund Analyst will notify the DSWC Grants Manager of its availability and track the additional match commitment. These three key DCR staff members will hold meetings at least semi-annually to discuss the status of all cost share grant match commitments.

Once a request for in-kind match has been reviewed, the DSWC Grants Manager will send a letter of commitment or denial signed by the DSWC Division Director. This letter will be sent hard copy via mail as well as via email to the responsible applicant grant manager within twenty-one days of the receipt of the request, assuming all required information has been provided and the grant application supports DCR water quality goals. A copy of this letter will be filed by both DSWC and DCR Finance.

Your cooperation with the process outlined in this letter will allow DCR to partner with multiple partners to leverage state cost share for additional water quality improvement.