



RMP Program Update

JUNE 18, 2015

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- RMP Cost-Share 2
- CB and OCB RFAs 2
- Module Updates 2
- Voluntary RMP BMPs 2
- Marketing Materials 3
- Updated FAQ 3
- FOIA Guidance 4
- SWCD Reimbursement 4
- TRC Conference Calls 4

Status of 2014 CB RMP Development Contracts

Plans are pouring in! Contracts were issued in December 2014 to several private RMP Developers for the development of Resource Management Plans (RMPs).

In December, contracts totaling \$472,640 were issued for the development of 274 plans in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The workload included plans to be submitted to 19 Bay SWCDs.

At the beginning of June, there are **over 200 contracted plans in the RMP module** in various phases, including assessment, development, and review.

In June, DCR will be evaluating the progress of these contracts and reallocating funds if needed. Such a reallocation may slightly impact the workload that was originally targeted towards an individual SWCD.

Although District staff with Technical Review Committee (TRC) user roles will receive e-mail notification when a plan has been submitted to their District for review, those SWCD staff may log in at any time and search to see whether plans are under development within their District.

RMP Module User Roles

Any SWCD staff who attended the RMP Module TRC training events (either the events in March in Culpeper and Williamsburg or the trainings that followed Conservation Planning training in April and May) has been assigned a **TRC user role** in the production version of the module. TRC users may log into the module

using their current Tracking Program user name and password. TRC permissions have been added to their existing login. The TRC user role will allow the user access to the system for the purpose of TRC review. TRC users will receive e-mail notifications when a plan has been submitted to their SWCD for review.

This user role will not allow creation or editing of an RMP. Plans may only be created or edited by certified RMP Developers who have either a "Private RMP Developer" or "District RMP Developer" user role. Any person who does not currently have necessary access should send a request to Barbara McGarry.

RMP Cost-Share for 2016

For FY 2016, nearly \$60,000 is available for RMP-2 practices in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Districts in the Chesapeake Bay receiving an RMP-2 application may request to use this state set-aside to fund the application. If all state set-aside funds have been

used, the application may be funded using the District's cost-share allocation.

When requesting CB state set-aside funds, District staff should continue to use the "Approval Procedure for RMP-2 Applications" found at www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil_and_water/rmp.shtml under the heading

"Resources for Soil and Water Conservation Districts."

RMP-2 practices Outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed and RMP-1 practices across the state are to be funded with an individual District's cost-share allocation, pending SWCD Board approval.

2016 CB and OCB Request For Applications

DCR will be offering new contracts for RMP development for 2016.

\$120,000 is available for contracts in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and \$100,000 is available Outside Chesapeake Bay.

RFAs will be issued on or before August 1. Requests will be due early September and contracts will begin January 1, 2016.

Voluntary RMP BMPs

Module Updates

The Resource Management Planning Module is updated regularly to add functionality to the application. DCR staff will notify users via e-mail when these updates are installed and what issues were addressed.

Two new practices have been developed for the RMP program. These practices receive no cost-share or tax credit and meet the minimum standards of the RMP requirements.

The **VRMPSE-3** Voluntary Stream Exclusion for RMP Program practice is a voluntary permanent, year-round fence or stream exclusion system, but is not required to meet NRCS specifications.

The **VRMPSE-4** Voluntary Stream Crossings and Limited Access Points for RMP Program practice is a voluntary stream access and crossing. This practice is required to meet NRCS specifications.

Like other voluntary BMPs, the status will be proposed until an SWCD staff person certifies the practice is complete and changes the status.

Marketing Materials

New marketing materials have been added to the http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil_and_water/rmp.shtml site under the heading “Resources for Soil and Water Conservation Districts”. These materials include:

- **Fillable promotional rack card**
- **Sample news article**
- **“9 Things Producers Should Know”**

The fillable **promotional rack card** is double sided and may be used as a stand-alone piece or may be placed as an insert in the RMP brochure or a District brochure. The rack card has been designed to allow space



for SWCDs to customize with their own contact information.

The **sample news article** is a generic program article that can be used in District newsletters, local media, or Extension newsletters.

“9 Things Producers Should Know” is a double-sided, whole page handout in a basic Q/A format. This handout is intended for the interested producer who is just being introduced to the program.

Updated FAQ

The RMP program FAQ is a list of program-related questions and DCR responses. This document has been updated. New items to this document are formatted with a yellow highlight so that users can easily find these items.

The revised FAQ has 10 additional questions addressing :

- completeness reviews
- farm assessments
- nutrient mgmt plan
- new voluntary RMP BMPs
- user logins
- required RMP format
- TRC quorum requirements

The FAQ document is available at http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil_and_water/rmp.shtml. Under the title “Resources for Soil and Water Conservation Districts” there is a link to the “Program FAQ” pdf.

Program FAQs are updated periodically and posted on the RMP webpage

FOIA Guidance Document

As a result of new legislation that becomes effective July 1, 2015, an open meeting exemption has been created for the discussion or consideration of certain records, currently excluded from FOIA, that relate to Resource Management Plans. This legislation is the result of House Bill 1618 introduced by Delegate Edward T. Scott and Senate Bill 1126 introduced by Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.

In response to this, the VA Soil and Water Conservation Board has ap-

proved a *Guidance Document on Freedom of Information Act Requirements for Resource Management Plans Program Implementation by Soil and Water Conservation District Boards and Technical Review Committees.*

This document has been provided to all Districts and a link is posted on the RMP program website, under the header “Resources for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.”

The guidance serves to clarify procedures that TRCs and District Boards as public bodies should follow regarding the management and discussion of personal, proprietary, and confidential information associated with RMPs and the RMP program. It discusses the procedure for going into closed session when reviewing RMPs and emphasizes that the TRC or Board must come back into open session to discuss approval or rejection of the plan.



Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation

Resource Management Plans

*A Voluntary Approach
to Agricultural Certainty*



RMP Staff contacts:

Program questions:

Scott Ambler
scott.ambler@dcr.virginia.gov
540-332-9231

Barbara McGarry
barbara.mcgarry@dcr.virginia.gov
804-371-0297

Module questions:

Roland Owens
roland.owens@dcr.virginia.gov
540-280-5333

Operational Support Reimbursement Requests

RMP Program Operational Support Reimbursement Request Reports are due July 15 for the period of April 1—June 30, 2015.

Although there were no requests last quarter, it is expected that many Districts with contracted RMP development workload will have a request to submit in the upcoming quarter.

It is recommended that District staff discuss who

will be responsible for submitting this report.

If your District is not requesting any reimbursement, please respond via e-mail to Barbara McGarry with the text “requesting no reimbursement”, to ensure that no district’s request is overlooked.

Funding will be provided to SWCDs for all eligible RMPs reviewed January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

until all available funds are expended. These funds will provide support for plan review; funding is not being provided for any implementation inspections or activities.

Funding will be available to any SWCD reviewing an RMP, regardless of whether the plan was funded through the plan development RFP, VACS, or out-of-pocket.

Glossary:

FOIA: Freedom of Information Act

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

RFA: Request for Applications

RMP: Resource Management Plan

RMP-1: program code for RMP Plan Development cost-share practice

RMP-2: program code for RMP Plan Implementation cost-share practice

TRC: Technical Review Committee

TRC Conference Calls

RMP staff will host a monthly TRC conference call to interested TRC committee participants. Calls are currently scheduled for the 4th Monday of each month.

RMP staff will prepare a brief agenda of relevant discussion items, with allotted time for participants to ask questions.



Date: Monday, June 22

Time: 10:00—11:00

Call-in #: 866-842-5779

**Conference Code:
8047860007**