

*State Parks * Soil and Water Conservation * Outdoor Recreation Planning
Natural Heritage * Dam Safety and Floodplain Management * Land Conservation*

Resource Management Plan Implementation

Stakeholder Advisory Group- May 17, 2017



Purpose of Stakeholder Advisory Group

Chapter 836 (2017); Item 364 Q

Resource Management Plan (RMP) Implementation

- To encourage additional implementation of resource management plans, the Stakeholder Advisory Group will:
 - Examine funding, training, and resource needs
 - Explore new incentives for additional implementation

2011 General Assembly Session

- HB1830 (Patron – Delegate Scott)
- Established the RMP Program
 - Recognizes efforts of agricultural producers to be good stewards of the land
 - Encourages agriculture producers to install BMPs voluntarily
 - Provides nine years of certainty for producers that implement required RMP standards
 - Method to account for best management practices (BMPs) installed with no use of cost-share funds (voluntary practices)
 - Confidentiality provisions (FOIA exemption) included
 - Required VSWCB to adopt regulations governing program

Development of Regulations

- March 20, 2011 – Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board (VSWCB) initiated regulatory action
- Regulatory Advisory Panel met between June 29, 2011 and February 14, 2012
- March 29, 2012 – VSWCB proposed regulations
- April 4, 2014- VSWCB approved final regulations
- July 1, 2014 – Effective date of regulations

Highlights of Program

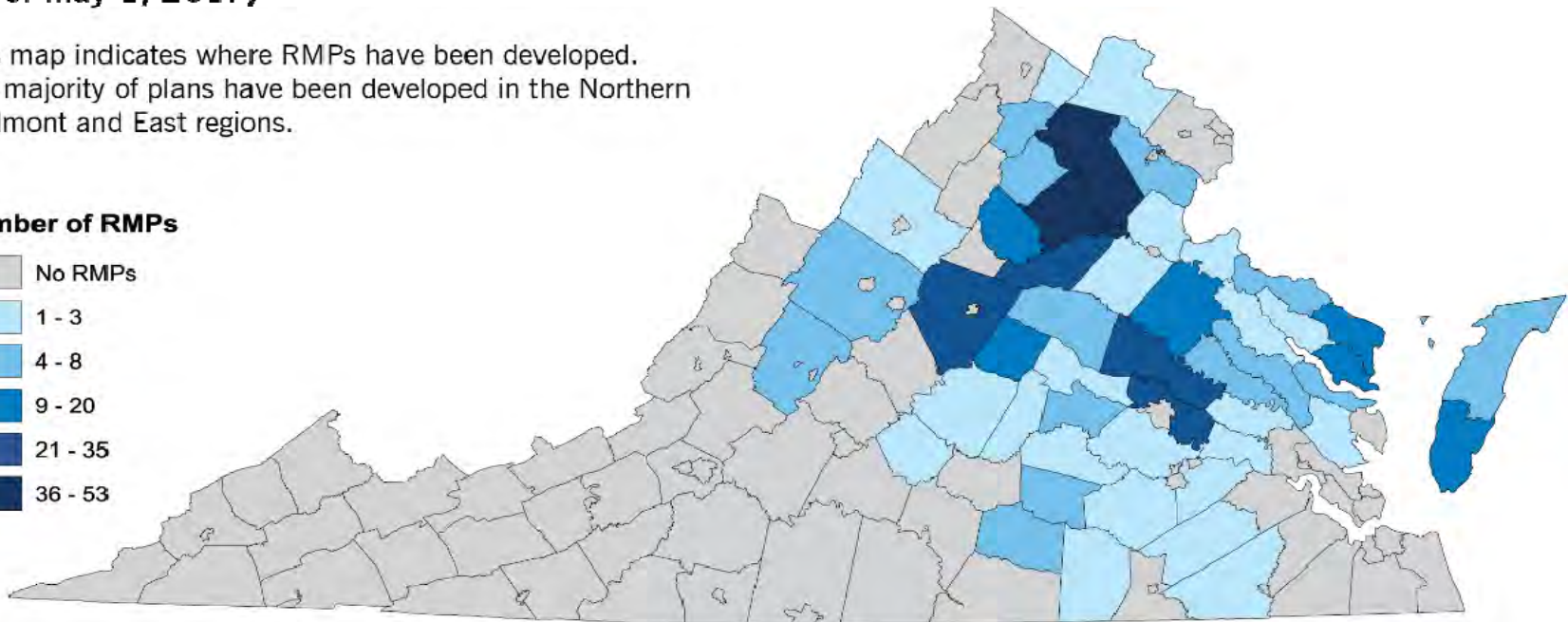
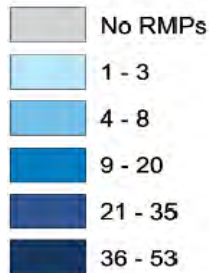
- As of May 1:
 - 377 RMPs covering 90,273 acres
 - Average acreage per plan = 240
 - 290 plans in implementation phase
 - 34 being reviewed by Technical Review Committee
 - 9 certified
 - 2,622 BMPs included in RMPs
 - 1,356 voluntary BMPs
 - 1,266 cost-share BMPs

Number of RMPs by Locality

(as of May 1, 2017)

This map indicates where RMPs have been developed.
The majority of plans have been developed in the Northern
Piedmont and East regions.

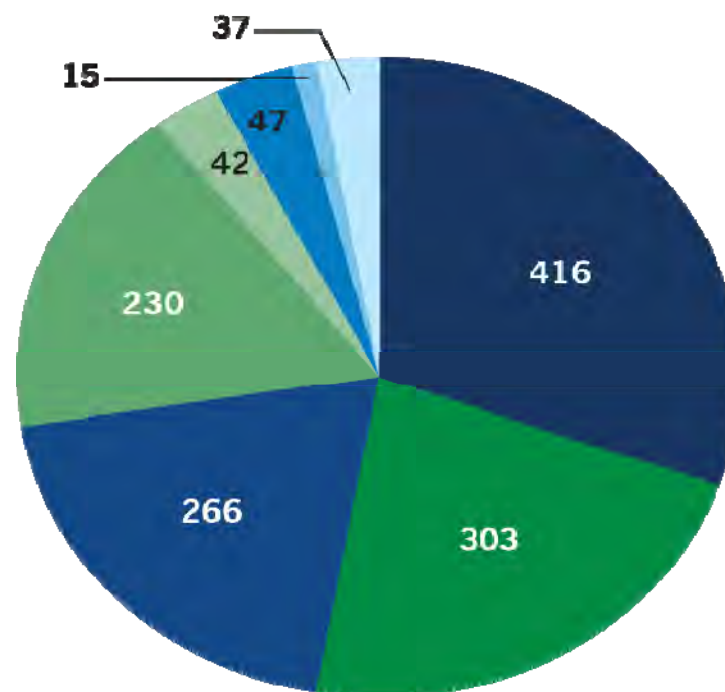
Number of RMPs



Best management practices in RMPs without public funding

- 416** Cover Crops (VSL-8B and VSL-8H)
- 303** Continuous/High Residue Tillage System (VSL-15A)
- 266** Split Application of Nitrogen on Corn (VNM-3 and VNM-3C)
- 230** Late Winter Split Application of Nitrogen on Small Grain (VNM-4)
- 42** Grass Filter Strips (VWQ-1)
- 47** Permanent Vegetative Cover on Critical Areas (VSL-11)
- 15** Stream Exclusion Practices (VSL-6, VSE-5)
- 37** Other BMPs

1,356 Total



Regulatory Overview (4VAC50-70)

- Regulations contain provisions on:
 - Minimum standards of an RMP
 - Processes for development, approval, and inspection of an RMP
 - How certificates of implementation are to be issued
 - Requirements for recognition as a certified RMP planner
 - Procedures for the program review by SWCDs

RMP Overview

- Can be written for single field, tract, farm or whole operation
- Either owner or operator can request RMP
- Completely voluntary program; no penalty for opting out at any time (except for BMP maintenance responsibilities required by Cost-Share Program)
- Certainty:
 - Deemed in full compliance with TMDLs for nutrients, sediment, benthic, or bacteria
 - Chesapeake Bay TMDL Implementation Plan
 - State water quality requirements for nutrients and sediment

RMP Requirements

- Variation in requirements depending on type of farm operation
- Set out in Code (§ 10.1-104.8)
- Cropland requires:
 - Nutrient Management Plan
 - 35 foot buffer along perennial streams
 - Soil conservation to “T”
 - Cover crops (when required by the nutrient management plan or to meet “T” requirement)

RMP Requirements

- Hayland
 - Nutrient Management Plan
 - 35 foot buffer along perennial streams
 - Soil conservation to “T”
- Pasture
 - Nutrient Management Plan
 - Fencing along perennial streams
 - Pasture management or soil conservation to “T”

RMP Step-By-Step



Farm Assessment and Plan Development

- Assessment performed by certified RMP planner
 - Gathers basic information about the management unit including:
 - Location and description;
 - Type of agricultural operation;
 - Water features; and
 - Any environmental concerns
- Plan developed from assessment
 - Includes:
 - List of existing BMPs;
 - List of recommended BMPs; and
 - Schedule of implementation

Plan Review and Approval

- After development of RMP, participant submits RMP for approval to review authority
 - If RMP is developed by private planner, SWCD is review authority
 - SWCD establishes Technical Review Committee to review RMPs
 - If RMP is developed by SWCD, DCR is review authority
- Once plans meet minimum standards, RMPs must be approved within 90 days of receipt

Issuance of Certificate

- After all BMPs fully implemented, participant requests certificate of implementation
 - Review authority conducts verification inspection
- Certificate of Implementation valid for 9 years
- Inspection to ensure continued implementation at least once every 3 years by SWCD

Commonwealth of Virginia



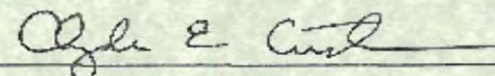
Department of Conservation and Recreation

Let it be known that

John A. Doe Farms, LLC

Has received this
CERTIFICATE of RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
for Resource Management Plan # 11-11-1111

Certificate No.	001
Issue Date:	7/1/2014
Valid Through	7/1/2023



Clyde E. Cristman, Director
Dept. of Conservation and Recreation

Cost-Share Funding Opportunities

- RMP-1
 - Assists with cost of RMP development
 - \$10 per acre with \$6,500 maximum
- RMP-2
 - Assists with implementation of RMP
 - \$5 per acre with \$3,250 maximum
- Both cost-share practices can be paid directly to planner if participant waives payment

RMP Funding

- Within Chesapeake Bay watershed
 - \$583,843 spent on RMP contracts
 - \$120,000 allocated for contracts through May 31, 2018
- Outside Chesapeake Bay watershed
 - \$93,961 spent on RMP contracts
- Nearly \$210,000 balance in Cost-Share Program set-aside for RMP-1 and RMP-2

RMP Developers

- To date, 13 certified developers
 - Only 2 actively developing plans
 - Most became certified at beginning of program
 - Only 2 applications received since summer 2015
- Developer qualifications
 - Two options to be considered qualified
 - Option 1 (must meet both criteria)
 - Certified nutrient management planner
 - Certified conservation planner (NRCS)

- Option 2 (must meet all criteria)
 - Certified nutrient management planner
 - Has knowledge and proficiency in:
 - Agricultural conservation planning
 - State and federal environmental laws, regulations, and local ordinances
 - State and federal laws concerning historic resources
 - Standards and specifications for agricultural BMPs
 - Soil erosion processes and skills
 - Fundamentals of water quality and nonpoint source pollution, pest management, and fire management
 - Site assessment tools; and
 - Other proficiencies identified by the Department

Marketing Strategies

- Designed new logo for program
- Program participants may purchase sign
- RMP sign could be used in conjunction with Virginia's Finest sign
- Revised and updated RMP brochure
- Participation in Field Days



dcr.virginia.gov/rmp



Challenges to RMP Implementation

- Lack of RMP developers
- Conservation planner training through NRCS not available for private developers
- Previous focus on plan development, not implementation
- Focus on SL-6 backlog remaining needs
- Additional workload on SWCDs
- Marketing difficult; no niche market for RMP-certified farms

Potential Administrative Solutions

- Expand DCR conservation plan training to private developers
- Devote remaining RMP set-aside funds primarily to RMP-2
- Revise Bay Grant contract to include implementation of RMPs, not just plan development
- Strengthen VSWCB policy giving priority consideration to RMPs
- Potential pilot project utilizing DCR staff to help with verification
- Increase RMP-2 payment rate and/or payment cap
- Additional marketing efforts for RMPs

Department of Conservation and Recreation

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