

Virginias TSP Training Module

Purpose of this Module

This module will provide some general information that TSPs need to conduct conservation planning in our state. This information is general in nature so the TSP may need to follow up with additional reading or training to make sure they have the knowledge, skill, licenses and certifications to conduct conservation planning in this state.

Review of Important Resource Issues

In Virginia , agriculture spans a wide spectrum of activities, from the traditional raising of field crops, vegetables, livestock, and nursery production, to the breeding of commercial horses, the bottling of premium wines, and the growing of fish, or aquaculture.



Important Resource Species of Concern

Longleaf Pine

Shortleaf Pine

Golden-Winged Warblers

Bog Turtles

Chesapeake Bay Oysters

Indiana Bats

Long Eared Bats

Review of Major Land Uses or Agronomic Practices

The Commonwealth of Virginia has four geographic Regions:

- Allegheny Plateau
- Ridge and Valley
 - Piedmont
- Coastal Plain

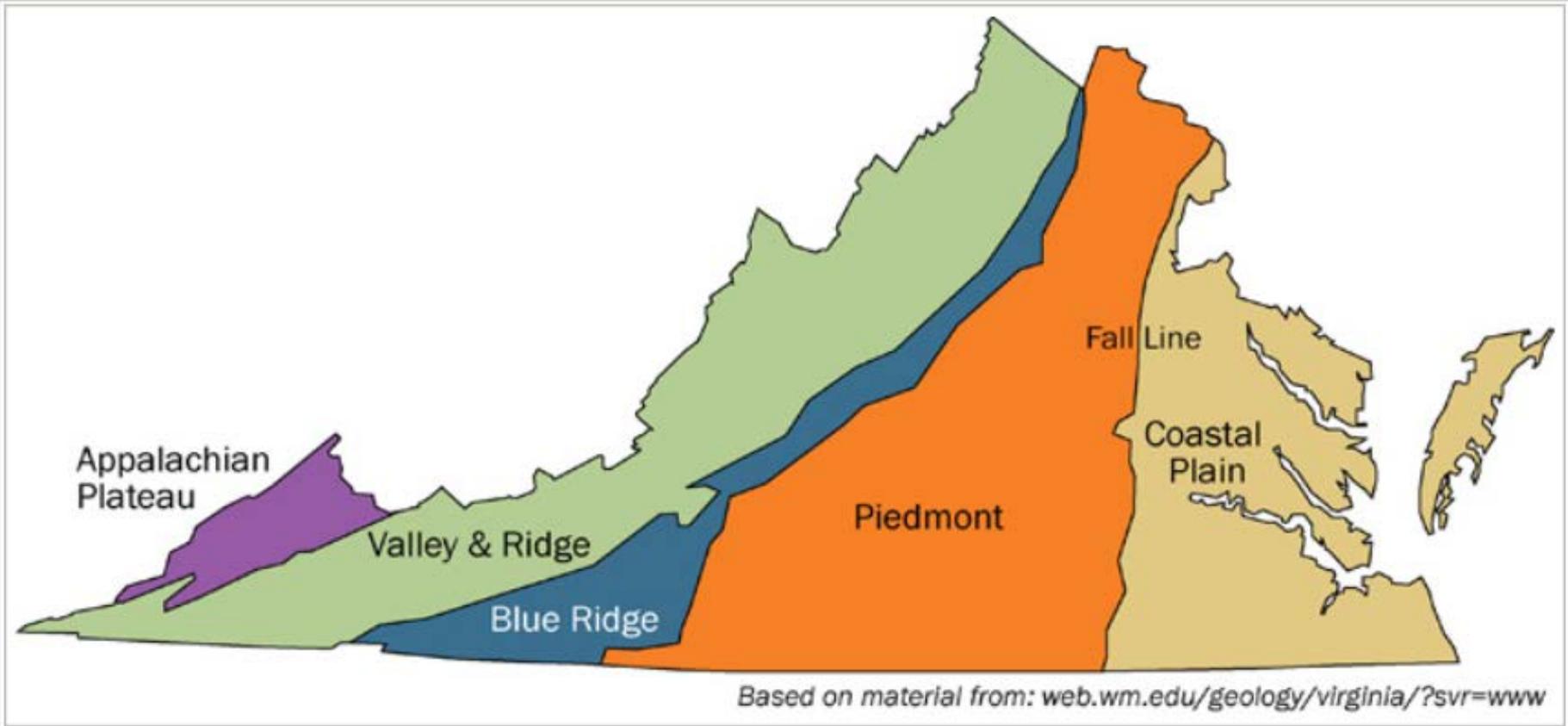


Figure 1. Physiographic provinces of Virginia

Review of Major Land Uses and Agriculture

State Ag Statistics:

- 3,047,505 acres of pastureland
- 2,990,336 acres cropland
- 13,016,673 acres of private forestland
- 2,866,568 acres of public forestland

Review of Major Land Uses and Agriculture

State Livestock Statistics:

- Cattle and calves: 1,631,882 animal units (AUs)
- Hogs and pigs: 9,755 AUs
- Sheep: 7,060 AUs
- Horses: 86,840 AUs
- Layers: 3,584 AUs
- Pullets/replacements for layers: 1,056 AUs
- Broilers: 509,570 AUs
- Turkeys: 75,230 AUs

- CAFO/AFO animal units in VA: 303,666 AUs

Agricultural Growing Season

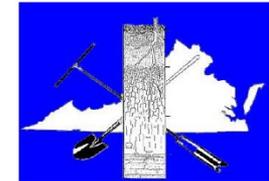
- Agricultural Growing Season –Very long ranges of 136 (mountain/ valleys) to 214 days (eastern shore). With such a long growing season, timely installation can ensure the success of most conservation practices requiring the establishment of plants.

Virginia Soils

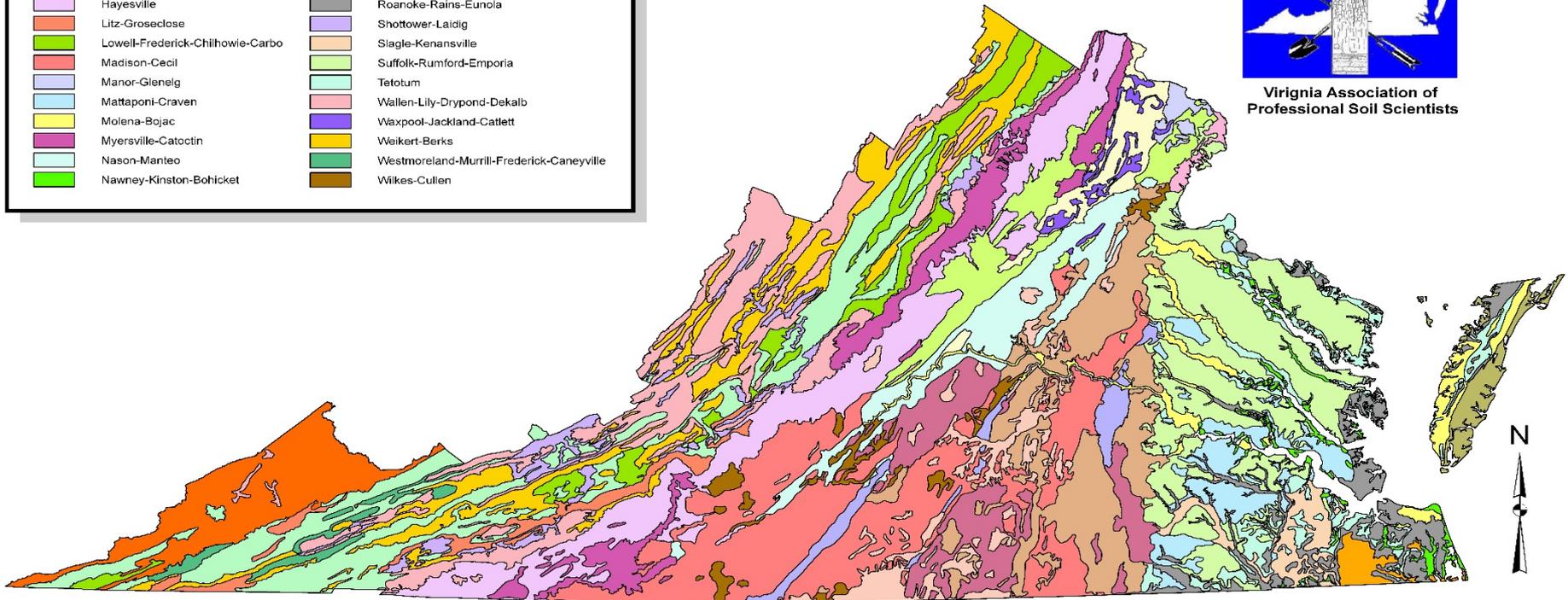
- Wide variety of soils (Nearly 415 soils in VA) with Pamunkey being the highly productive state soil
- Soils east of I-95 (which is generally the fall line) are sandier in nature. (Costal Plain)
- Soil in the Piedmont are mostly high weather clays, with a long history of erosion.
- Soils in the mountain and valley region vary from , very rocky to deep clays in the valleys.

GENERALIZED SOILS MAP OF VIRGINIA

Legend	
Name	
Appling	Ocoquan-Meadowville-Buckhall
Belhaven	Penn-Croton
Chincoteague	Pineville-Berks
Frederick-Carbo	Pinkston-Mayodan-Creedmoor
Georgeville	Poindexter-Pacolet-Iredell
Hayesville	Quantico-Neabsco-Dumfries
Litz-Groseclose	Roanoke-Rains-Eunola
Lowell-Frederick-Chilhowie-Carbo	Shottower-Laidig
Madison-Cecil	Slagle-Kenansville
Manor-Glenelg	Suffolk-Rumford-Emporia
Mattaponi-Craven	Tetotum
Molena-Bojac	Wallen-Lily-Drypond-Dekalb
Myersville-Catoctin	Waxpool-Jackland-Catlett
Nason-Manteo	Weikert-Berks
Nawney-Kinston-Bohicket	Westmoreland-Murrill-Frederick-Caneyville
	Wilkes-Cullen



Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists



Virginia Specific State Laws



Review of State Laws Nutrient Management

The Commonwealth of Virginia requires that the competence of all nutrient management planners be certified by the Department of Conservation and Recreation – Virginia’s Nutrient Management Program.

Additional information can be obtained at the following web address:

http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil_and_water/nutmgt.shtml

Review of State Laws Prescribed Burning

If You Must Burn...

Follow these Fire Safety Tips:

1. Contact your local fire department or Virginia Department of Forestry office.
2. Beware of power lines, trees and structures.
3. Clear all flammable materials, such as dry leaves and dry grass, from around the fire.
4. Have water and hand tools, such as a shovel and/or rake, available.
5. Have communication available or have someone nearby who can call for help in case of an emergency.
6. Burn when the humidity is high and the wind is calm.
7. Burn between 4:00 p.m. and midnight. *The 4 PM Burning Law is in effect from February 15 through April 30.*
8. Stay with the fire until it is completely out.
9. Keep your debris piles small, adding to them as they burn down.
10. If you are using a burn barrel, make sure it is in good condition and covered with a wire mesh screen.

D. Any person who builds a fire in the open air, or uses a fire built by another in the open air, within 150 feet of any woodland, brushland or field containing dry grass or other flammable material, shall totally extinguish the fire before leaving the area and shall not leave the fire unattended.

E. Any person violating any provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor for each separate offense. If any forest fire originates as a result of the violation by any person of any provision of this section, such person shall, in addition to the above penalty, be liable to the Commonwealth for the full amount of all expenses incurred by the Commonwealth in suppressing such fire. Such amounts shall be recoverable by action brought by the State Forester in the name of the Commonwealth on behalf of the Commonwealth and credited to the Forestry Operations Fund.

Local Ordinances

Be sure to check with your local fire department or sheriff's office regarding any local fire laws or ordinances.

For More Information

For more information about VDOF services or programs, please contact your local Virginia Department of Forestry office or visit:

www.dof.virginia.gov

Western Region Office, Salem:

Phone: (540) 387-5461

Central Region Office, Charlottesville:

Phone: (434) 977-5193

Eastern Region Office, Providence Forge:

Phone: (804) 966-5092



Virginia Department of Forestry

900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 800
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903
Phone: (434) 977-6555

www.dof.virginia.gov

VDOF P00107; 05/2014

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OUTDOOR FIRE LAWS

What you need to know.

*Fire... No matter how small,
can take your life and your
property!*



Virginia Department of Forestry

**Be safe,
not sorry!**



Prescribed Burning Cont.



*Help protect your family,
your neighbors and yourself.*

Burning Laws in Brief

- ✓ No burning until after 4:00 p.m. February 15 through April 30 of each year, if the fire is in or within 300 feet of woodland, brushland or field containing dry grass or other flammable material.
- ✓ Fire shall not be left unattended if within 150 feet of woodland, brushland or fields containing dry grass.
- ✓ No new fires set or fuel added after midnight.
- ✓ Law applies to campfires, warming fires, brush piles, leaves, household trash, stumps, fields of broomstraw and brush or anything capable of spreading fire.
- ✓ The law provides for a penalty of up to \$500, plus payment of court costs and fire suppression costs if the fire escapes.



**Do Not Burn Until After
4:00 p.m. From February
15 Through April 30**

KNOW THE FOREST LAWS AND LOCAL ORDINANCES BEFORE BURNING



Accidents can happen. Should your fire get out of control, **CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY!** Leave the firefighting to trained professionals. Fire can be a valuable tool. It can also be deadly!

Burning Laws in Detail

§ 10.1-1142. Regulating the burning of woods, brush, etc.; penalties.

A. It shall be unlawful for any owner or lessee of land to set fire to, or to procure another to set fire to, any woods, brush, logs, leaves, grass, debris, or other inflammable material upon such land unless he previously has taken all reasonable care and precaution, by having cut and piled the same or carefully cleared around the same, to prevent the spread of such fire to lands other than those owned or leased by him. It shall also be unlawful for any employee of any such owner or lessee of land to set fire to or to procure another to set fire to any woods, brush, logs, leaves, grass, debris, or other inflammable material, upon such land unless he has taken similar

precautions to prevent the spread of such fire to any other land.

B. Except as provided in subsection C, during the period February 15 through April 30 of each year, even though the precautions required by the foregoing subsection have been taken, it shall be unlawful, in any county or city or portion thereof organized for forest fire control under the direction of the State Forester, for any person to set fire to, or to procure another to set fire to, any brush, leaves, grass, debris or field containing dry grass or other inflammable material capable of spreading fire, located in or within 300 feet of any woodland, brushland, or field containing dry grass or other inflammable material, except between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight.

The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any fires which may be set on federal lands.

C. Subsection B shall not apply to any fire set between February 15 and April 30 of each year, IF:

1. The fire is set for "prescribed burning" that is conducted in accordance with a "prescription" and managed by a "certified prescribed burn manager" as those terms are defined in § 10.1-1150.1;
2. The burn is conducted in accordance with § 10.1-1150.4;
3. The State Forester has, prior to February 1, approved the prescription for the burn; and
4. The burn is being conducted for one of the following purposes: (i) control of exotic and invasive plant species that cannot be accomplished at other times of the year; (ii) wildlife habitat establishment and maintenance that cannot be accomplished at other times of the year; or (iii) management necessary for natural heritage resources.

The State Forester may on the day of any burn planned to be conducted pursuant to this subsection revoke his approval of the prescription for the burn if hazardous fire conditions exist. The State Forester may revoke the certification of any certified prescribed burn manager who violates any provision of this subsection.

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If the FIRE is beyond your control, STOP and CALL 911.

Prescribed Burning Cont.



Additional information can be obtained at the following web address:

<http://dof.virginia.gov/print/fire/Outdoor-Fire-Laws.pdf>

Review of State Laws Engineering

Virginia's Statute Title 54.1, Chapter 4 - Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, Landscape Architects and Interior Designers (54.1-400 thru 54.1-415) - Additional information can be obtained at the following web address:

<http://statutes.laws.com/virginia/title-54-1/chapter-4#sthash.qPLscri9.dpuf>

FOTG

What is the Field Office Technical Guide or FOTG?

- The FOTG contains primary scientific references for NRCS. They contain technical information about the conservation of soil, water, air, plant, animal and energy resources.
- The FOTG used in each field office are localized so that they apply specifically to the geographic area for which they are prepared.
- Appropriate parts of the Field Office Technical Guides are automated as data bases, computer programs, and other electronic-based materials such as those included in these web based pages.
<http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov>

Virginia Specific Technical Materials



Specific Information found in the Sections of the FOTG

Technical Notes

Pest Management References

Nutrient Management References

Water Quality References

Plant Establishment Guide

Threatened and Endangered Species

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Guidance Documents

Conservation Planning References

Animal Concentration Areas (ACA)

Design Notes

Conservation Practice Standards

Job Sheets

Wetlands

NEPA Requirements

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements will be incorporated into all steps and activities of the planning process as applicable and will not be considered as a separate process or requirement. The level of NEPA documentation will depend on findings during the scoping process or the Environmental Evaluation (EE). EE's which may lead to an EA or EIS, will be conducted for all NRCS planning activities and will be used to help determine the level of NEPA documentation required. Planners will identify the level of NEPA documentation required for each planning activity as early in the planning process as possible, and incorporate activities into each planning step to ensure that information required for NEPA documentation is developed simultaneously with the plan document.

Important Resource Issues Threatened & Endangered Species

Consistent with legal requirements of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and NRCS policy regarding State and Tribal species of concern, NRCS is fully committed to supporting the conservation of formally designated Federal (including “candidate” and “proposed” species), State and Tribal species of concern.

Threatened & Endangered Species Cont.

Section 7(a) of ESA requires NRCS, in consultation with and with the assistance of the Secretary of the Interior [US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)], to advance the purposes of the act by implementing programs for the conservation of endangered and threatened species, and to ensure that NRCS actions and activities do not jeopardize the continued existence of threatened and endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the species' critical habitat. NRCS must also consult with State and/or Tribal entities when considering impacts to species of concern protected by State or Tribal laws or regulations.

Important Resource Issues

Cultural Resources

VA601.10.A General Policy Summary

Pursuant to the State Level Agreement (SLA) between the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) signed March 3, 2006 (<http://www.va.nrcs.usda.gov/technical>), it is the policy of the Virginia NRCS that planned undertakings, i.e. conservation practices, classified as Ground Disturbing (G) or Potentially Ground Disturbing (PG) in Attachment 3 of the SLA, will be implemented consistent with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). NRCS personnel will adhere to the Cultural Resource Procedures found in Attachment 4 of the SLA when implementing “G” or “PG” conservation practices. The forms in Attachment 5 of the SLA will be used by Service Center and State Office personnel to accomplish the Cultural Resource Procedures found in Attachment 4.

Important Resource Issues

TMDLs

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) - When state waters are assessed to be impaired for one or more reasons, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or TMDL alternatives are developed by DEQ to determine the total amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can handle without resulting in the impaired status of that waterbody. These impaired waters are outlined in the biennial Virginia Water Quality Assessment 305(b)/303(d) Integrated Report, which can be found on the Water Quality Assessments page at

<http://deq.state.va.us/Programs/Water/WaterQualityInformationTMDLs.aspx>

Important Resource Issues

WIPs

The Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plans identify how the Bay jurisdictions are putting measures in place by 2025 that are needed to restore the Bay, and by 2017 to achieve at least 60 percent of the necessary nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment reductions compared to 2009.

Additional information can be obtained at the following web address: <http://www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl/>

National Conservation Planning Policy

- General Manual 180 Conservation Planning, Part 409 –
Conservation Planning Policy

<http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/RollupViewer.aspx?hid=16970>

- National Planning Procedures Handbook –

<http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/RollupViewer.aspx?hid=32437>

Planning Policy Cont.

- TSP certified conservation planner candidates must complete the following additional training.
- Introduction to the Field Office Technical Guide (AgLearn)
- Cultural Resources Training, Part 1 (AgLearn)
- Erosion Prediction Software (Wind and Water Erosion) Training
- State specific training module for each State where planning will be conducted
- TSPs obtaining the national certified conservation planner designation will be certified to conduct conservation planning in all States where they have completed the State-specific training module.

Virginia's Planning Designations

- Certified Conservation Planner
- Approved CNMP Planner
- Certified CNMP Specialist – Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage
- Certified CNMP Specialist – Land Treatment
- Certified CNMP Specialist – Nutrient Management
- Certified CNMP Specialist – Feed Management
- Certified Pest Management Specialist

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planner (CNMP) Training

The minimum qualification for an employee in Virginia and be an **NRCS-approved CNMP planner** is to be a “certified conservation planner” as outlined in [GM-180, Part VA409.9\(D\)](#) and completion of the following:

1. Agricultural Waste Management Systems: A Primer – AgLearn online
2. Agricultural Waste Management Systems: Level 2 – AgLearn online
3. Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy Course – AgLearn online
4. Air Quality Resource Concerns Course – AgLearn online

CNMP Specialist Training

Manure and Wastewater Handling

The minimum qualification requirements for certified **CNMP Specialists**:

1. Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage - This element addresses the planning of the components and activities associated with the production facility, feedlot, manure and wastewater storage and treatment structures, and any areas or mechanisms used to facilitate transfer of manure and wastewater. The following are required:
 - i. Engineering practices included in CNMPs will be planned, designed, and approved by NRCS and/or partnership employees with an appropriate level of NRCS engineering job approval authority (EJAA).
 - ii. Skill to adequately inventory and evaluate the production site to identify resource concerns in the production area.
 - iii. Ability to plan the conservation treatment alternatives to treat the resource concerns identified in the inventory and evaluation.
 - iv. Ability to recognize needed expertise to identify appropriate conservation measures and treatments.
 - v. Ability to apply the information contained in the NRCS Agricultural Waste Management Systems Level 2 Course, or equivalent in a field setting.
 - vi. Knowledge of the concepts and principles contained in the NRCS Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy Course and the NRCS Air Quality Resource Concerns Course, or equivalents.

CNMP Specialist Training

Land Treatment

1. Land Treatment – This element addresses the land on which manure and wastewater from an AFO will be applied. The following are required:
 - i. Must meet the requirements of a certified conservation planner (GM-180, Part VA409.9).
 - ii. Knowledge to identify natural resource concerns.
 - iii. Ability to plan conservation systems according to the NRCS conservation planning process.
 - iv. Skill in applying water and/or wind erosion prediction tools, as appropriate.
 - v. Skill in using applicable site-specific nitrogen and phosphorus risk assessment tools.
 - vi. Knowledge adequate to design and implement conservation practices common to the geographic area.
 - vii. Knowledge and skill to use the NRCS planning software.
 - viii. Knowledge of the concepts and principles contained in the NRCS Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy Course and the NRCS Air Quality Resource Concerns Course, or equivalents.

CNMP Specialist Training

Nutrient Management

Nutrient Management – This element addresses the requirements for planning land application of all nutrient sources. The following are required:

- i. Certification by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation for Nutrient Management Planning.
- ii. Ability to plan in accordance with the NRCS Nutrient Management conservation practice (code 590) criteria.
- iii. Ability to apply the concepts and principles contained in the NRCS Introduction to Water Quality Course, or equivalent.
- iv. Skill in using erosion and risk assessment tools commonly employed in planning and risk assessment activities (phosphorus risk assessment, nitrogen risk assessment, and Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE2)).
- v. Skill in using planning and decision support tools commonly employed in planning manure management systems (MMP, nutrient application planning, and using appropriate setbacks).
- vi. Ability to apply the concepts and principles contained in the NRCS Nutrient and Pest Management Considerations in Conservation Planning Course, as it pertains to nutrient management, or equivalent.

CNMP Specialist Training

Feed Management

Feed Management – This is an optional element to include when helping to manage the farm nutrient balance. The following is required:

- i. The feed management plan element of the CNMP will be prepared and signed by a feed management specialist who is a professional animal scientist, independent professional animal nutritionist, or other professional who is proficient in animal diet technologies.

Pest Management Certification

The following training and State certification are required for **Pest Management Certification**:

1. Successful completion of "NRCS Conservation Planning Modules One through Five" or equivalent.
2. Successful completion of the "NRCS Introduction to Water Quality Course" or equivalent.
3. Successful completion of the pest management tracks of the NRCS "Nutrient and Pest Management Considerations in Conservation Planning" course or equivalent.
4. Review of work completed demonstrating skill in using the Windows Pesticide Screening Tool (WIN-PST) and/or other appropriate pest management environmental risk screening tools by a Certified Conservation Planner that has Pest Management Certification or higher level specialist.
5. Review of a conservation plan demonstrating skill in developing the pest management component of a conservation plan based on the State Pest Management (FOTG Practice Code 595) conservation practice standard.
6. Successful completion and maintenance of the Virginia Commercial Pesticide Applicator Certification, Category 10. New planners should visit the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) at <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/index.shtml>. First-time planners will be required to take the core course and exam.

Prescribed Burn Policy

Training Requirements

- A. Prescribed Burning Certification – Conservation planners must have successfully completed 16 hours of Prescribed Burn Awareness training to provide planning assistance and general information on the conservation practice standard Prescribed Burning, Code 338. Certification by the Virginia Department of Forestry as a certified prescribed burn manager can be a substitute for this requirement.
- B. NRCS Conservation Planners are encouraged to appropriately recommend the use of prescribed burning as part of the planning process, but will not, under any circumstances, write the burn plan that is required by the Virginia Conservation Practice Standard 338 (Prescribed Burning).
- C. The burn plan must be written by a VA Certified Prescribed Burn Manager. Even if employees have taken the Virginia Department of Forestry Prescribed Burn Manager course, they are still not to write the plan.
- D. The required Certified Conservation Planner Prescribed Burn Awareness course will train on appropriate use of burning, but will not cover more advanced topics.
- E. Employees are allowed and encouraged to participate in prescribed burns coordinated by other public agencies, but they must not serve in a leadership role.

Field Review

Field Review - Candidates who wish to be a Certified Conservation Planner or an NRCS-approved CNMP planner must complete at least one field reviewed plan with the ASTC-FO or designee and complete the minimum requirements. This is the final step in the certification process which will determine the planner's ability to demonstrate competency the planning process and plan development. See General Manual Title 180, Virginia Part 409 for specifics on this policy.

Wetlands Certification Policy

- A. NRCS has several responsibilities related to the conservation of wetlands. It is the policy of NRCS to protect and promote wetland functions and values in all NRCS planning and application assistance.
- B. NRCS may provide technical assistance to determine the extent of wetland impacts, develop alternatives for compensatory mitigations for unavoidable impacts, and prepare technical data and designs required for permit applications. NRCS will not furnish final designs or help to implement the project until the client has obtained all necessary permits and agrees in writing to provide compensatory mitigation for wetland functions that will be lost as a result of the proposed activity. NRCS will terminate all technical and financial assistance related to an activity that affects wetlands if the client does not obtain the necessary permits or implement appropriate compensatory mitigation.
- C. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) specifically identifies wetland as a required consideration in determining the significance of impacts. The NRCS-CPA-52 Guide Sheets for Virginia wetlands provide the procedure for determining if there is a potential impact and to refer sites the Area Wetland Team Leader if a wetland determination is needed.
- D. Certified wetland determinations must be completed by a qualified NRCS employee, as determined by the SRC. Qualified employees (i.e., agency experts) must meet all of the following criteria:
 - 1. Have completed all the required training, including update courses.
 - 2. Have the appropriate job-approval authority.
 - 3. Have demonstrated proficiency in making certified wetland determinations.
- E. The SRC is responsible for maintaining a roster of agency experts, by training and experience, who have demonstrated the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct wetland determinations and delineations, scope and effect evaluations, functional assessments, minimal effects evaluations, mitigation planning, and mitigation easements. The roster will be filed in Section III of the FOTG, "Legislated Programs, Job Approval Authority" - http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/VA/Wetland_JAA_Jun_2014.pdf

Engineering

- All engineering practice designs and installations will be certified by a Virginia registered PE.
- NRCS engineering policy for Non-NRCS Engineering Services can be found in NEM505
- The Virginia NRCS amendment to NEM505 can be found at

<http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/RollupViewer.aspx?hid=31396>

Key Virginia NRCS Contacts

(804)287-1691

- John A. Bricker , State Conservationist
- Chad Wentz, State Resource Conservationist
- Mathew Lyons, State Conservation Engineer
- Barry Harris, Resource Conservationist
- Chris Lawrence, Cropland Agronomist
- J. B. Daniel, Grassland Agronomist
- Jeffray Jones, State Biologist
- Ron Wood, Resource Conservationist (TSP Contact)

Certificate of Completion

After viewing the State Specific Training module, please print and sign the completion certificate on the following slide.

The certificate is your acknowledgement that based on the information provided in this module, you have the proper knowledge, skills and ability to conduct planning in this state.

Send the signed certificate to the State TSP Coordinator. Copy the below link to your browser for a list of State TSP Coordinators.

<https://techreg.sc.egov.usda.gov/RptStateContact4Admin.aspx>



STATE SPECIFIC TRAINING MODULE COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

I, _____, hereby verify I have viewed and understand the content of
TSP Name
the Virginia State Specific Training Module and affirm I have the knowledge, skills and ability
to conduct conservation planning services in that state.

TSP signature

Date

Non-Discrimination Statement

Non-Discrimination Policy

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

To File an Employment Complaint

If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html

To File a Program Complaint

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9419, by fax at (202) 690-7442, or email at program.intake@usda.gov

Persons with Disabilities

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.), please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish, or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers.

All Other Inquires

For any other information not pertaining to civil rights, please refer to the listing of the USDA Agencies and Offices.