

**North Carolina Agriculture Cost Share Program Review Summary  
(January, 2015)**

County	<u>Alexander</u>	Date of Previous Review/Report	<u>2009</u>
District Staff Name(s)	<u>Leslie Meadows, Pamela Bowman</u>	Date	<u>January 30, 2015</u>
NRCS Staff Name(s)	<u>Lee Holcomb</u>		
Division Representative(s)	<u>Ken Parks, Rob Baldwin</u>		
Additional Participants	<u></u>		

Questions	Division Findings				Division Comments	District Plan of Action Required		SWCD Plan of Action	Proposed Timeline for Implementation	Division Response to Plan of Action (date)
	Commendation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	No Concerns/ Not Applicable		Yes	No			
<b>Section 1: Application Procedures and Tracking Progress (BMP Implementation and Payments)</b>										
Questions in this section focus on how the district advertises the program, how applications are developed, how contracts are developed, how funds are tracked and how the board approves each.										
When do you schedule your board meetings?				X	The board meets every fourth Thursday of the month at 8:30 a.m.		X			
How do you notify the public of the board meeting schedule and does it adhere to the Open Meetings Law?				X	Notices are posted on the county website calendar. It is also posted on the district office door.		X			

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When do you develop a conservation plan for a potential applicant?				X	The technician works with the district conservationist and talks to applicant getting there information and planning a site visit. They also work with getting them to sign up with either EQIP or state cost share.		X			
How do you assess the resource concerns on the farm to determine if a BMP is needed and feasible?				X	The technician talks with the applicant to see what the resource concern is and look at the specific issue or if something else is a concern. The cost is evaluated after the site visit depending on what BMP is needed.		X			
Are applications reviewed and approved by the Board as a separate action item?				X	Yes		X			
Are application decisions/motions recorded in the board minutes?				X	Yes		X			
Because applicants are limited when applying for incentive BMPs, how does your district track the applications for incentive BMPs? Is your district using the self-certification form provided by the division to track incentive BMPs?				X	The district does not have any contracts for incentive at this time, but is aware of the required self-certification form.		X			
Please describe how the district tracks applicants who are applying for multiple incentive BMPs or consecutive incentive BMPs.				X	The district does not have any contracts for incentive at this time, but is aware of the required self-certification form.		X			
If multiple partners farm together, how does the district track individual applicants as one operation?		X			The district technician does not have any mechanism to track these. <b>Recommend</b> to have a spreadsheet to include these applicants.	X		The district technician will work on a spreadsheet to track multiple partners that farm together. We request that an example be provided if another county would be willing to share.	By the end of our PY 16 1 <sup>st</sup> batching period (July 31, 2015)	Plan of action accepted.
Once applications are approved, how do you develop a contract?	X				The district technician goes by the ranking order and funds that contract first. All information gathered is put in a contract and the applicant is told that the contract was ranked high and if the applicant wants to proceed the		X			

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					contract is entered in CS2 and then get the signatures and other documentation together. <b>Commendation.</b>					
Describe how the district reviews the contract with the applicant. Do you explain that work cannot begin until the contract is approved by the division?	X				Before the contract is signed by the applicant it is explained in detail to the applicant to not start work until the contract is approved by the division and how the process works for approval, etc. <b>Commendation.</b>		X			
What procedures do you follow for notifying the applicant that work can begin?	X				The technician gathers copies of the contract and other folder documentation and then calls the applicant they can start work after the contract is approved by the division. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled right before the contractor is ready to start also. <b>Commendation.</b>		X			
What information do you provide the applicant?	X				Copies of all contract forms are given to the applicant as a packet and these documents are explained again. This is either delivered to the applicant or they come by and pick it up at the office. <b>Commendation.</b>		X			
<i>Are contracts reviewed and approved by the Board as a separate action item?</i>				X	Yes.		X			
<i>Are contract decisions/motions recorded in the board minutes?</i>				X	Yes.		X			
Describe the district/board's procedure for approving supervisor contracts.				X	They are all ranked the same way and the NC-ACSP-1B is filled out and sent in for the SWCC meeting. The supervisor does not vote on the contract.		X			

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Is it documented in the Board minutes that the supervisor abstained from discussing his/her own contract and from voting?				X	Yes.		X			
What technical assistance do you provide during the BMP installation process to ensure the BMP is installed by the contract deadline?				X	The technician goes and meet with them after the work has started and checks on the progress and reminds the cooperators of what is needed to stay on track with installation. The technician also calls and send emails to check the status of the BMPs.		X			
How do you track the Commission's interim performance milestone? One-third of the work must be completed within 12 months of division approval.				X	The technician uses a whiteboard to track the 1/3 <sup>rd</sup> deadline for contracts. This is also tracked on the computer spreadsheet.		X			
Is the district recording 6-month extensions in the board minutes?				X	Yes. Looked good.		X			
What documentation do you include in the contract file that certifies that the BMP was inspected and is installed to the standards and specifications?				X	The technician writes when and who did the inspection in the 6 notes and if there is an "as built" design then there will be notes on it and it is also recorded in in the 6 notes.		X			
Are BMPs measured then certified before the request for payment is approved? How is this documented?				X	Yes and it is documented in the notes.		X			
Are receipts received and reviewed for CSP BMPs that are based on actual cost?	X				Yes. Looked good. <b>Commendation.</b>		X			
Are request for payments reviewed and approved by the board as a separate action item?				x	Yes.		X			
If the BMPs are not installed by the end of the third program year per Commission policy, how does the district request a one-year extension?	X				The district technician talks with the cooperator to see if they are going to finish the BMP. If they are, then the technician puts together a letter from the board to request to be on the Commission agenda and then once it is approved the technician calls the cooperator to inform them the		X			

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					extension was granted. <b>Commendation.</b>					
Are payment decisions/motions recorded in the board minutes?	X				Yes. <b>Commendation.</b>		X			
<b>Section 2: Spot Checks and Compliance Issues</b>										
Questions in this section focus on how the district reviews BMPs for compliance and how maintenance and/or non-compliance issues are addressed.										
Who participates in annual spot checks? When are they conducted?				X	The spotchecks are done in the Spring around April or May. The board members are asked who can participate and usually just one supervisor participates and it takes about two days. Leslie, Pamela, Lee the DC and a supervisor participates.		X			
How does the district select which contracts to spot check?				X	A spreadsheet is used with all the active contracts. Numbers are written down and put in a container and drawn out randomly and the number drawn is the number that is used to select the 5% of contracts.		X			
Are all BMPs under the waste management category spot checked for the first five years after installation? This applies to all farms that fall under the thresholds that are regulated by DWQ.				X	The waste management contracts are highlighted in the spreadsheet if they fall in that first five years.		X			
How does the district review five percent of all waste utilization plans?		X			The district does not have a spreadsheet to track these. <b>Recommend</b> to create a separate spreadsheet to check these plans.		X	The district staff and Board believe this is unnecessary, since we already spot check all waste management contracts for 5 years. We request that the spot check policy be clarified if this is required. The policy now states "5% of all nutrient management BMP contracts" instead of plans. We currently only have waste plans and no nutrient management plans		Plan of action accepted.
How does the district notify the NRCS area office (for ACSP contracts) or division (for CCAP contracts) to conduct spot checks on lands owned or operated by a district, county, division or NRCS employee or district supervisor? This includes CPOs, revisions, supplements or repairs.		X			The technician is not aware of this, but will work with Lee the DC and let him know if the district has any of these and let the NRCS area office know. <b>Recommend</b> to work with Lee the DC to start making sure this is being followed.	X		The district technician will update the DC when such a project is contracted and when it is completed and will follow up with the NRCS Area Office to set up a spot check in the first year. For CCAP, the district technician will contact the Division for a spot check within the first year. Separate tabs will	This process will be followed when these projects are completed.	Plan of action accepted.

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								be added to our current spreadsheets to track this.		
The North Carolina Statute 02 NCAC 59D.0107(f) states "If the technical representative of the district determines that a BMP for which program funds were received has been destroyed or has not been properly maintained, the applicant will be notified that the BMP must be repaired or re-implemented within 30 working days. For vegetative practices, applicants are given one calendar year to re-establish the vegetation" How does your district notify individuals that have destroyed or mismanaged a BMP?				X	The technician called the cooperater to ask about the compliance issue and then a letter was sent as a follow-up to notify the cooperater that he was out of compliance and gave him 30 days to get back in compliance. The technician visited the site and then came back in compliance.		X			
How are supervisors notified of BMPs that are found to be destroyed or mismanaged at any time throughout the year?				X	They are notified at a board meeting.		X			
When does the district provide a written notice that the BMP must be repaired or re-implemented within 30 working days? (Vegetative practices have to be reestablished within one calendar year.) Is a copy of the notification kept with the CPO?				X	This is done after the next board meeting and a copy is kept in the CPO.		X			
If the BMP was not repaired or re-implemented, was repayment requested? Please provide documentation.				X	Yes, but the BMP was repaired and put back in compliance.		X			
Is the district notifying the division of non-compliance and resolutions?	X				Yes. The district does a very good job of notifying the division of any non-compliance BMPs and tries to resolve them immediately. <b>Commendation.</b>		X			
<b>Section 3: Record Keeping</b>										
Questions in this section focus on how funds are managed and accounted for, maintaining proper design and job approval authority, as well as disclosure forms.										
How does the district track BMP funds?				X	The district uses a spreadsheet to track contracts and BMP funds.		X			
How does the district use the division on-line (website) reports?				X	The district technician uses them to help keep track of their contracts with the division.		X			

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How are your BMP funds audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit? Was the BMP audit form completed and notarized?				X	The audit is done by matching funds to the online reports and are done by the district technician and the date of the last one was done July 24, 2014. It was completed and notarized.		X			
How are technical assistance funds tracked? Are they audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit?				X	Leslie tracks the TA funds. Yes, they are audited by Leslie as an internal audit of the district checking account. The last internal audit was done 7/24/2014. The county finance office did an audit by Martin, Starnes and Assoc. and December 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2014 was the last audit.		X			
Who in the office is funded by Cost Share Technical Assistance (TA) from the State?				X	Pamela is the only person funded in the office by cost share funds.		X			
How are operating funds tracked? Are they audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit?				X	Leslie tracks the operating funds. Yes, they are audited by Leslie as an internal audit of the district checking account. The last internal audit was done 7/24/2014. The county finance office did an audit by Martin, Starnes and Assoc. and December 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2014 was the last audit.		X			
How are matching funds tracked? Are they audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit?				X	Leslie tracks the matching funds. Yes, they are audited by Leslie as an internal audit of the district checking account. These funds are kept in the district checking account.		X			
How much time is spent on cost share program (ACSP, CCAP, AgWRAP) contracts and BMP implementation? How is that tracked?				X	75% or more is spent on the cost share programs and it is tracked on Pamela's calendar as well as the TA timesheet.		X			
Is proper job approval authority (JAA) documented for each technical and cost share position?		X			The technician does not have any JAA. <b>Recommend</b> the district technician to work with the district conservation on getting job approval authority.		X	The district technician will work with the DC to obtain JAA for the common practices utilized in the district. NRCS Area 1 engineer, Jake Stokes, has sent Pamela a template JAA spreadsheet to use for requesting JAA for engineering practices.	The district technician will work with the DC to submit for JAA in the next few months and in the future as 2-3 projects of	Plan of action accepted.

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									the same type are completed.	
Do district supervisors complete supervisor forms when they have a financial interest in an entity requesting a cost share contract?		X			They have done this, but the district did not have any copies of these. <b>Recommend</b> to keep copies in the district files.		X	The district administrator will keep copies of these in the district files.	As soon as these forms are completed each year	Plan of action accepted.
<p><b>Section 4: Contract Reviews and Site Visits</b> Below is a list of the contracts the division reviewed. Spot checks were also conducted. Notes include recommendations and/or corrective action for contract files as well as the BMP. Contracts/BMPs are listed by contract number.</p>										
<p>Contract Number: 02-2007-004, 02-2008-001, 02-2009-001 Applicant Name: Harold Mitchell BMP: Stock Trail</p> 				X	<p>The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.</p> <p>The documentation in the file looked good.</p>		X			

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<p>Contract Number: 02-2010-004, 02-2013-801 Applicant Name: Brad Gilreath BMP: Poultry Drystack and Composter</p> 				X	<p>The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.</p> <p>The documentation in the file looked good.</p>		X			
<p>Contract Number: 02-2009-004 Applicant Name: Kent Herman, Supervisor BMP: Heavy Use Area, Stock Trail, Filter Strip, Stormwater Management</p> 		X	X		<p>The heavy use area needed some maintenance. <b>Recommend</b> scraping the heavy use area and adding more gravel added according to technical specifications.</p> <p>A <b>non-compliance</b> is given due to the drainage outlet pipe was clogged up and not functioning. The drainage pipe needs to be cleaned out and the outlet area stabilized according to technical specifications.</p> <p>The documentation in the file looked good.</p>	X		<p>Division engineer, Jeff Young viewed the site on 3/19/15 and sent a letter to the district recommending that the outlet area also be fenced out and the stormwater grate be covered. Kent has let the district technician know that he plans to perform the recommended maintenance on the HUA this summer after completing an adjacent concrete feed pad. The district handed a NOV letter to Kent on 3/30/15. Re-checks were completed on 4/9/15, 4/23/15, and 5/4/15. Kent has dug out the outlet of the pipe enough to allow positive drainage into the field. The area has been partially fenced out (20') and seeded, and the drop box has a solid cover on it and is covered with dirt as of 5/4/15. The district technician will follow up with the Division and send a "back in compliance" letter to Mr. Herman.</p>	<p>The letter will be sent as soon as the ok is received from the Division. If the Division requests additional measures, the district technician will follow up with the landowner right away.</p>	<p>Plan of action accepted.</p>

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Contract Number: 02-2008-004 Applicant Name: Ken Herman, Supervisor BMP: Poultry Spreader Body 				X	The poultry litter spreader body was functioning properly even though the truck was needing some repairs.  The documentation in the file looked good.		X			

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<p>Contract Number: 02-2008-501, 02-2010-501, 02-2010-502 Applicant Name: West Alexander Middle School BMP: Stormwater Wetland</p> 				X	<p>The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.</p> <p>The documentation in the file looked good.</p>		X			

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Contract Number: 02-2009-009 Applicant Name: Triple B Poultry BMP: Poultry Drystack 				X	The BMP was functioning properly and looked good.  The documentation in the file looked good.		X			

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<p>Contract Number: 02-2009-103 Applicant Name: Allen Guy BMP: Well, Pump, Tanks, Livestock Feeding Pad, Fencing</p> 		X			<p>The BMP was functioning properly, however, there was considerable erosion around the shelter of the feeding pad and the feeding pad needed scraping and more gravel around it as part of maintenance. <b>Recommend</b> the cooperators address maintenance and the erosion and runoff of the shelter by working with the local district for technical assistance and other possible BMPs.</p> <p>The documentation in the file looked good.</p>	X		<p>The district technician sent a maintenance needed letter to Allen on 3/20/15. NRCS DC, Lee Holcomb went with the technician to the site on 4/7/15 during the district's spot checks to help decide how the district can help address the issues. Allen was onsite, and options were discussed. He is waiting on the district for further advice. The district technician will continue to work with the DC to provide technical assistance.</p>	<p>We will try to provide further recommendations before our PY 16 1<sup>st</sup> batching period starts (July 1, 2015), so Allen can sign up for eligible BMPs during that batching period.</p>	<p>Plan of action accepted.</p>