Soil and Water Conservation Commission Cost Share Committee
December 12, 2012: 8:30am
Draft Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Charles Bass, Julie Henshaw, Jennie Hauser, Vicky Porter, Brian Lannon, Davis Ferguson, Brian Chatham

Guests: Kelly Ibrahim, Ken Parks, Lisa Fine, Pat Harris, Tom Hill, David Williams

Information items

1. Commission actions

At the November meeting, the commission approved all recommended revisions to the following policies in the District Board of Supervisors Roles and Responsibilities section of the cost share programs manual. These policies are available online:
http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/Manual.html

- District boards' responsibility in technical and financial assistance distribution
- District supervisors requirements for cost share programs
- District supervisor use of cost share program funds
- Supervisor involvement in spot checks for cost share program contracts
- Commission advisory to districts on secondary employment (commission added new 1. Conflict of Interest f)

The commission also approved the recommended revisions to the following forms:
http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/Forms.html

- Commission Member Contract Addendum (NC-CSPs-1A)
- Supervisor Contract Addendum (NC-ACSPs-1B)

Action items

1. Approval of November 2012 meeting minutes – minutes approved by consensus
2. Draft program accountability policy revisions for consideration: The committee reviewed each of the following policies. Revisions are available using in both track changes and clean copies at: http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/commission/cost_share_committee.html
    a. Program year due dates
    b. Program review policy
    c. Accountability measures for cost share program contracts
    d. Canceled funds from cost share program contracts
    e. Cancellation for cost share contracts in unresolved pending status

f. Cost share program match

- Delegation request has to be a separate action by the Commission. Should be done at the same time in the agenda, but would require two votes – 1 for the delegation, 1 for the policy revision.
- Draft a google form document for districts to request the use of match, and notify division if funds are awarded.

g. Criteria for extension of previous program year contracts
h. Interim performance milestones in cost share contracts
i. Policy addressing approval of cost share applications, contracts and requests for payments
j. Prohibition of post-approval of contracts
k. Refunded funds from cost share program contracts
l. Renovation of an expired BMP
m. Revision
n. Special requests - financial
o. Supplements
p. Cost share contracts on government owned properties

The committee recommends presenting ½ of the policies (a-i above) in this section of the manual at the January commission meeting. The committee will present the remaining policies (j-p and the spot check policy) at the March commission meeting.

At the next committee meeting we will review the revision and supplements policies (items m and o above) and a new draft strategy plan policy.

3. Review of technical assistance survey description, timeline and online survey

This item was not reviewed due to time constraints. Please review the introductory language and draft timeline below. At the next meeting, this will be the first item on our agenda, so that information can be shared with districts at their spring meetings.

Cost share program rules are being reviewed and revisions will be developed for rulemaking in the next year. Prior to drafting any revisions to existing rules, the commission would like your feedback through this survey. This will provide good information at the start of this process. We look forward to working with you on this rule revision.

Timelines:

- Present survey and need for district responses at the 2013 spring meetings – in division or commission report – whichever is given.
- Districts complete surveys by May 15th – this will provide time for districts to meet to discuss survey responses even in the busy planting season.
- The commission will receive updates on the number of responses received at their meetings during the comment period (March and May commission meetings).
- Responses will be compiled, and the Cost Share Committee will meet in July to discuss responses and prepare draft rule revisions. Recommendations will be presented at the following commission meeting.

- The commission will initiate the rule making process following their approval of draft revisions.
- In addition, the survey announcement and reminders will be distributed on the district listserv and in the regional coordinators monthly reports.
    - Ask for time at one of their upcoming staff meetings to work staff to provide follow up and stress the importance of district responses in this process.

The information provided in this survey will help the Commission's Cost Share Committee draft revisions to the Agriculture Cost Share Technical Assistance Rule, 02 NCAC 59D .0106. This rule can be found online at: http://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac.asp?folderName=\Title 02 - Agriculture and Consumer Services\Chapter 59 - Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

A summary of how TA funds are prioritized is below: N. C. Agriculture Cost Share technical assistance funds may be used for each full time equivalent (FTE) technical position with the district matching at least 50 percent of the total. Priorities for funding positions shall be assigned based as follows:
(1) Subject to availability of funds and local match, provide support for one FTE technical position for every district. Priority for funding positions beyond one FTE per district shall be based on the following parameters:

(A) Whether the position is presently funded by program technical assistance funds.
(B) The number of program dollars encumbered to contracts in the highest three of the previous four completed program years
(C) The number of program dollars actually expended for installed BMPs in the highest three years of the most recent four-year period for which the allowed time for implementing contracted BMPs has expired as reported in the NC Agriculture Cost Share Database.

Additional questions for the survey

- Do you support using the PCEP OC's proficiency template for technical employees?

4. Set next meeting date: doodle poll for last two weeks of January

5. Agenda items:
    a. Noncompliance policy and contract language – Jennie and Kelly will work on drafting revisions and present at a future meeting.