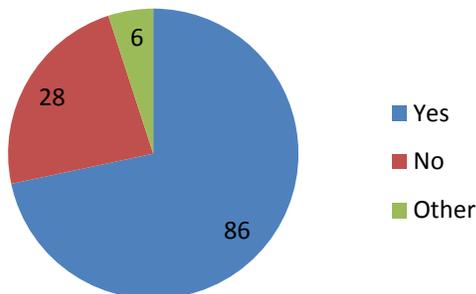


Cost Share Committee: Technical Assistance Survey Results

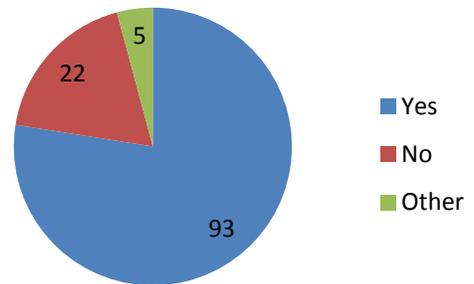
From February through May, the Cost Share Committee of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission conducted an online survey to gather information on how districts view technical assistance funding for local positions. This survey was conducted because demand has been greater than the available funds for many years, and the deficit between supply and demand continues to grow over time. This fiscal year (2013-2014), districts requested over \$3.4 million in funding, while only \$2.4 million was available for allocation. The committee did not have an agenda or certain objectives they hoped to achieve through this survey. The goal of the survey was to obtain input from districts before discussion begins on how to best distribute the limited funds available, including possible revisions to Agriculture Cost Share Technical Assistance Rule 02 NCAC 59D .0106.

Below is a summary of the 120 responses received, and approximately half of the respondents are willing to review draft rule revisions. Some recurring comments include the consideration of funding technical positions at the actual 50% level, with a set minimum and maximum (if needed). This would ensure more equitable distribution of limited funds. Additional suggestions focused on using other methods for measuring an employee's performance such as completing training plans/programs instead of just relying on cost share funds contracted and expended.

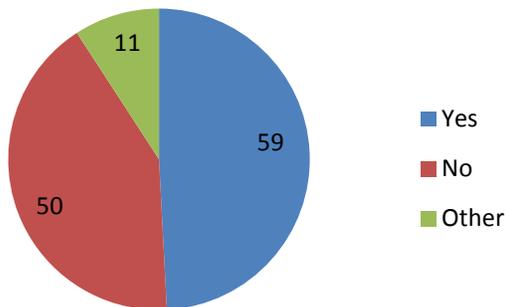
Current allocation methodology results in an equitable distribution of limited funds



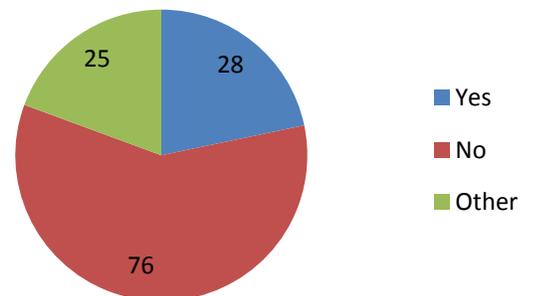
Continue to place priority on funding one position per district regardless of workload



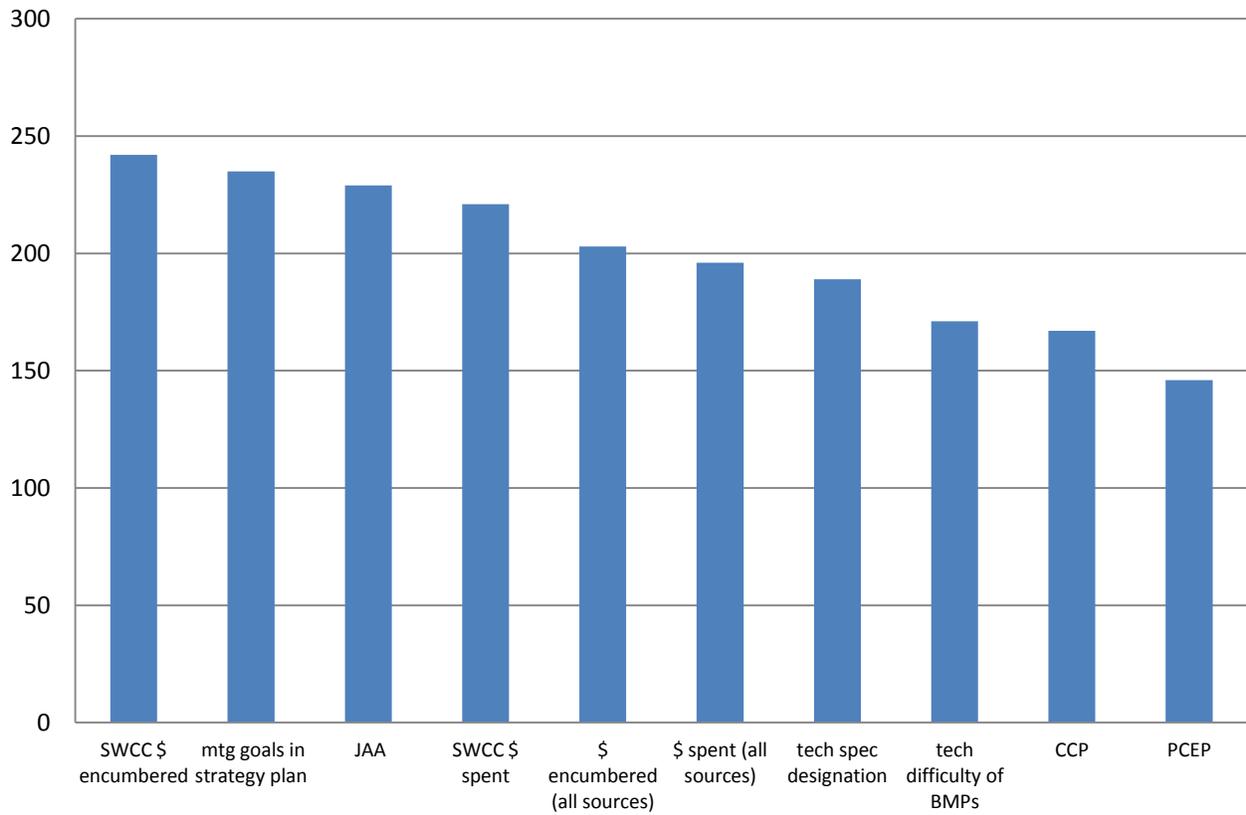
Should TA funding be linked to demonstrated technical capabilities of employee?



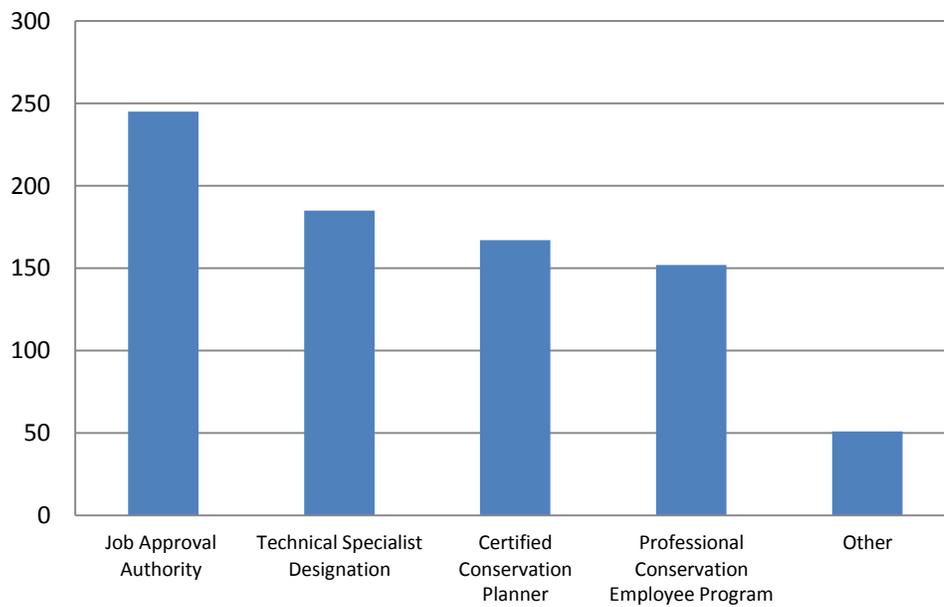
Should every technical employee receive the same TA allocation regardless of salary, experience and capabilities?



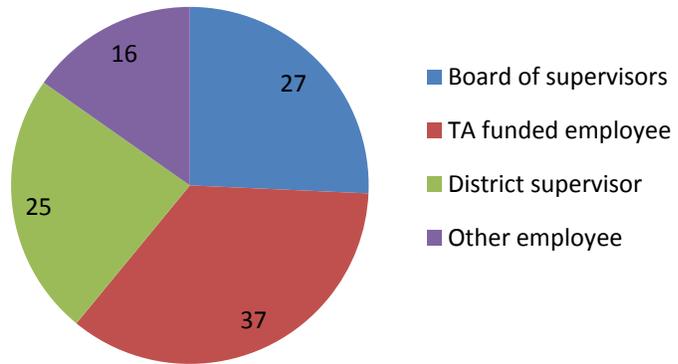
If tiered system is used, how to determine amount above base funding



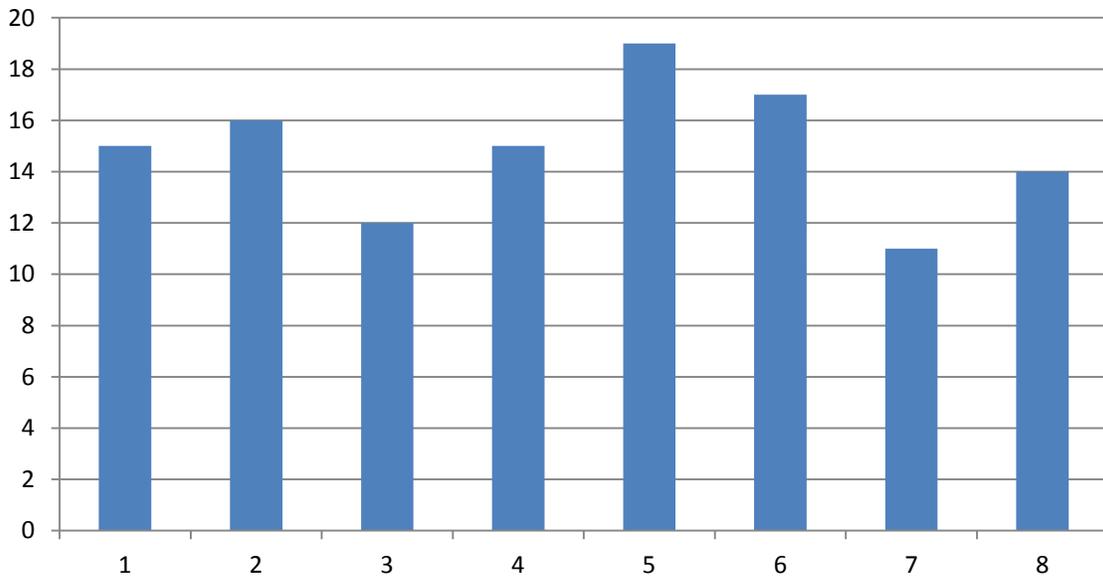
How to determine technical capability of employees



Survey respondents



Responses by NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Area



The next steps are to begin reviewing the rules using the survey responses as guidance. Draft revisions to the Agriculture Cost Share Technical Assistance Rule 02 NCAC 59D .0106 will be completed in the coming months, shared with interested parties, and presented for consideration at future commission meetings.