

# **THE NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL WATER RESOURCES ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**District Information**

**October 1, 2014**

# Agenda

- Purpose and goals of the program: DIP
- Cooperator requirements: eligibility
- Allocations
- Cost share forms
- District Allocations
- Best management practices
- Regional application process for new pond construction and pond repair/retrofits
- Process for requesting technical assistance
- Questions

# Purpose of AgWRAP

AgWRAP was established through S.L. 2011-145 to assist farmers and landowners in doing any one or more of the following:

- Identify opportunities to increase water use efficiency, availability and storage;
- Implement best management practices (BMPs) to conserve and protect water resources;
- Increase water use efficiency;
- Increase water storage and availability for agricultural purposes.

# FY2015 AgWRAP Annual Goals

1. Conduct a competitive regional allocation process for selected AgWRAP BMPs.
2. Allocate funds to soil and water conservation districts for all BMPs.
3. Implement Job Approval Authority Process for AgWRAP BMPs.
4. Conduct training for districts.

*More detailed information is available in the Fiscal Year 2015 Detailed Implementation Plan:*

<http://www.ncaqr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/AgWRAP/Tools.html>

# Cooperator Requirements

- The agricultural water definition, from Protecting Agriculture Water Resources in North Carolina Strategic Plan (February 2011), determines eligibility for AgWRAP.

*Agricultural water is considered to be any water on farms, from surface or subsurface sources, that is used in the production, maintenance, protection or on-farm preparation or treatment of agriculture commodities or products as necessary to grow and/or prepare them for on-farm use or transfer into any form of trade as is normally done with agricultural plant or animal commerce. This expressly includes any on-farm cleaning or processing to make the agricultural product ready for sale or other transfer to any consumer in a usable form. It does not include water used in the manufacture or extended processing of plants or animals or their products when the processor is not the grower or producer and/or is beyond the first handler of the farm product.*

# Cooperator Requirements *(continued)*

- Applicants must provide the district office a copy of one of the following documents to demonstrate eligibility:
  - Farm owner or operator's federal tax Schedule F (form 1040) or an equivalent form for the most recent tax year showing the owner or operator's profit or loss from farming.
  - Farm sales tax exemption certificate issued to the farm owner or operator by the Department of Revenue.
  - Forest management plan for forestland actively engaged in the commercial growing of trees as defined in G.S. 105-277.2(6).

# Cooperator Requirements *(continued)*

- Applicant must have an adjusted gross income in each of the previous two years that is less than \$250,000, unless 75% or more of this adjusted gross income is derived directly from farming, ranching, or forestry operations
- Operations must have been in existence for more than one year
- Expansions to existing operations are eligible for the program.

# Cooperator Requirements *(continued)*

- The percent cost share for all BMPs is 75%.
  - Limited resource and beginning farmers and farmers enrolled in Enhanced Voluntary Agriculture Districts are eligible to receive 90% cost share.
- The contract maintenance period for all practices, excluding agricultural pond sediment removal, is 10 years.
- Soil and water conservation districts can adopt additional guidelines for the program as they implement AgWRAP locally.
- Must have a conservation plan – the landowner record of decisions – required attachment in CS<sup>2</sup>.

# Allocation of FY2015 funds

- \$1,477,500 - \$1M is non-recurring
- Pilot program approach continues while rule making is underway
- Due to the high cost of some of the program's eligible best management practices, and the limited funding for the program, the Commission awarded two allocations for AgWRAP.
  1. Competitive regional application process for new pond construction and pond repair/retrofits: 55% of available BMP funding ~\$805,600
    - [Agricultural Water Supply/Reuse Pond](#)
    - [Agricultural Pond Repair/Retrofit](#)
  2. District allocations: 45% of available BMP funding: \$662,169
    - All AgWRAP BMPs

# Contract Timeline

- District allocation contracts must be submitted by June 3, 2015
- Two batching periods for regional applications:
  - November 7: January Commission Meeting
  - February 11: March Commission Meeting
- All FY2015 BMPs must be installed by June 30, 2017

# Forms

- Form requirements are the same for all cost share programs and are available in CS<sup>2</sup>.
- All AgWRAP contracts require the [Adjusted Gross Income Self-Certification form](#)

<http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/Forms.html>

# **DISTRICT ALLOCATION**

Information

# District Allocation Parameters

- Number of farms (20%)
- Acres of agriculture (20%)
- Agriculture water use (20%)
- Agriculture receipts (10%)
- Population density (30%)

# Best Management Practices

- [Agricultural Water Supply/Reuse Pond](#)
- [Agricultural Pond Repair/Retrofit](#)
- [Agricultural Pond Sediment Removal](#)
- [Agricultural Water Collection and Reuse System](#) - NEW
- [Baseflow interceptor \(streamside pickup\)](#) - NEW
- [Conservation Irrigation Conversion](#)
- [Micro-Irrigation System](#)
- [Water Supply Well](#) - REVISED
  - [State water supply well ranking questions](#)- REQUIRED
  - Can it be combined with other programs?

<http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/AgWRAP/BMPs.html>

*Please submit information about other practices. They can be considered as a district BMP or for inclusion into future program years eligible practices.*

# Best Management Practices

- Agricultural Water Collection and Reuse System - NEW
- Baseflow interceptor (streamside pickup) - NEW
- Water Supply Well - REVISED
  - State water supply well ranking questions- REQUIRED

# **NEW PONDS & REPAIR/RETROFITS**

Regional allocation information

*This will be a separate topic for a teleconference in several weeks  
once applications are in process.*

# Goals for regional allocation

- Fund a minimum of one pond & pond repair/retrofit per geographic area: Coastal Plain, Piedmont, Mountain
- Goal to distribute funding for projects among a variety of agricultural sectors:
  - Aquaculture
  - Field crops
  - Forestry
  - Fruit and vegetable
  - Green industry
  - Livestock and poultry (for forages and drinking water)

# Cost caps

- Actual costs of \$20,000 (75%) or \$24,000 (90%) for pond installation
  - \*90% cost share available for limited resource farmers, beginning farmers and those in EVADs
- Cost share for private PE design is available – ranges based on type of pond and hazard classification
- Division engineering support is also an option for landowners; but designs won't be started until applications are funded

# Draft regional pond ranking criteria

- What is the increase in percent of water demand provided by proposed pond?
- What is the surface water drinking water assessment area susceptibility for the proposed pond or pond repair/retrofit location? <http://149.168.87.14/pws/>
- What is the ground water drinking water assessment area susceptibility for the proposed pond or pond repair/retrofit location? <http://149.168.87.14/pws/>
- What water conservation measures are on the management unit currently?

# Draft regional pond ranking criteria *cont.*

- Has a 401/404 exemption, permit or determination of no permit required obtained?
- Is an engineering design complete?
- Is farm enrolled in a VAD or an EVAD?
- Is farm under a conservation easement?

# How to apply?

- Complete an application:

[http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/AgWRAP/regional\\_applications.html](http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/AgWRAP/regional_applications.html)

- Basic application information
- Site characteristics (Technical recommendation requires JAA signature)
- Conservation planning considerations (requires field office signature)
- Cooperator acknowledgment and submittal (requires cooperator, landowner and district board chair signature)
- Map
- Outputs of water needs assessment tool
- District letter of support recommending this project for regional competition and funding consideration – list all applications in priority order (include a reason for each application)
- Optional attachments
  - 401/404 exemption, permit or determination of no permit required.
  - Sealed Professional Engineer design for this pond.

# How to apply?

- Upload application materials through [Sharepoint](#) (how to directions are available)
- Applications will be reviewed by division staff, presented to the AgWRAP Review Committee, recommendations will be sent to the Commission for action

# Requesting Technical Assistance

- Division staff is available to provide needed technical assistance to implement AgWRAP and address conservation practices associated with the program.
- Types of assistance available include but are not limited to engineering services for site evaluation and design, soil interpretive services for site evaluation, and assistance with sediment removal planning
- If you would like assistance:
  - Complete the [Technical Assistance Request Form](#)
  - Email to [SWC\\_Tech\\_Assistance@ncagr.gov](mailto:SWC_Tech_Assistance@ncagr.gov)
  - Once the form is reviewed, the request will be assigned

<http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/tech/index.html>

- Online narratives available & many pond planning and design materials are available at:  
<http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/tech/onlinedesigntools.html>

# For more information or to share suggestions

- Policies and BMPs

Julie Henshaw [julie.henshaw@ncagr.gov](mailto:julie.henshaw@ncagr.gov)

(919) 715-9630

- Technical assistance and Job Approval Authority

Natalie Woolard [natalie.woolard@ncagr.gov](mailto:natalie.woolard@ncagr.gov)

(252) 948-3902

<http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/costshareprograms/AgWRAP>