

Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP)

The position of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission is that Districts are given authority under the North Carolina Administrative Rules (15A NCAC) to approve contracts on previously established operations that are causing a water quantity problem as a result of current activities related to agricultural activities. Previously established operations are those that are established one or more years prior to the date of application for cost share assistance. For livestock operations, the one-year period begins when animals are on site. For cropland, the one-year begins when the first crop is planted (seed in the ground).

Districts are prohibited from approving:

- Contracts on agricultural operations that are not established, and therefore, do not have a water quantity resource concern.
- Contracts on new operations. New operations are those that were established less than 1 year prior to the application date.

Expanded operations are allowed under AgWRAP if there is a water quantity resource concern.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Commission recognizes the possible need to provide assistance to not-yet established and newly established operations. Districts are authorized to provide technical assistance to applicants of new operations to help ensure the proper design and installation of practices that protect water quality and increase efficiency and availability. For ACSP, if the District determines that cost share assistance is needed to address a water quality problem on agricultural land that was established less than 3 years prior to the date of cost share assistance application or on an operation that has expanded, the application can be presented to the Commission. For AgWRAP, if the District determines that cost share assistance is needed to address a water quantity problem on agricultural land that was established less than 1 year prior to the date of cost share assistance application, the application can be presented to the Commission. The Commission reserves the authority to approve contracts on new or expanded operations on a case-by-case basis.

Operations that met standards that were in effect at the time of the start-up or expansion, but are now out of compliance or will be out of compliance with a new law, regulation, standard, or permit condition or is not in compliance with a policy or official guidance, are eligible for cost share assistance regardless of when the operation was established or expanded. These contracts will be approved by the Division on a case-by-case basis. The District submitting the contract for approval must fully justify the water quality or quantity need and provide a clear citation to the specific cause for the operation now being out of compliance or out of conformity.