

EXPLORING AGWG ROLES IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & IMPLEMENTATION

OCT 17TH, 2019

BACKGROUND

- Approval of 2018 Farm Bill
- Finalization of Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans
 - Clear gaps in technical and financial assistance.
- Where do we go from here?

CONSISTENCY IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

KEY: DEPENDABLE BASELINE FUNDING & FLEXIBLE FUNDING DISPERSAL

- Efficient and effective use 2018 Farm Bill
- Seek common ground among CBP partners
- Cross-train all TA providers in technical and program/financial areas
 - Consistent messaging...



TA

Next Steps: Synthesis/aggregation of common TA gaps based on Phase III WIPs.

Proposal: Each jurisdiction provide a brief fact sheet based on common template (1-2 page) outlining gaps in Phase III WIPs for November 21, 2019 AgVWG meeting.

Follow-up: Facilitate discussion within AgVWG on how partnership can assist jurisdictions in addressing these gaps. Timeline: Early 2020.

ENHANCING NETWORK OF TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

KEY: PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

- Certification authority for private providers
 - Quality assurance
 - USDA-NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program
 - Increase *farmer* collaboration with
 - soil and water conservation districts (SWCD)
 - Technical Service Providers (TSP)
 - other consultants (e.g. certified crop advisors (CCAs), USDA-NRCS, Land Grant Universities, & NGOs)
 - More focused training for NGOs with specialized staff, civil and engineering firms, SWCDs
 - USDA-NRCS Technical Service Providers (streamlining approach)
- Diagram illustrating collaboration and training focus:
- Two orange arrows point from the text "Increase collaboration across TA providers" to the sub-points "soil and water conservation districts (SWCD)" and "Technical Service Providers (TSP)".
 - Two orange arrows point from the text "Increase collaboration across TA providers" to the sub-points "other consultants (e.g. certified crop advisors (CCAs), USDA-NRCS, Land Grant Universities, & NGOs)" and "USDA-NRCS Technical Service Providers (streamlining approach)".



Next Steps: Continue cross-jurisdictional conversation about training technicians to suit needs.

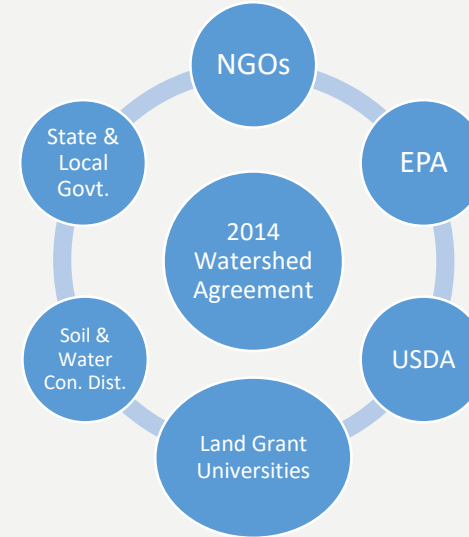
Proposal: AgWG inventory of existing training opportunities. Timeline: 2019-Early 2020.

Follow-up: Facilitate discussion within the AgWG on how partnership can assist the states in addressing training gaps in early 2020.

BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

KEY: COLLABORATION

- Seek common ground among CBP partners
- NRCS partnerships
 - RCPP
 - New opportunities?
- Increase state-level funding to support partnership initiatives
 - State legislative action



Next Steps: Increase collaboration between AgWG, NFWF, and other partner organizations providing TA and FA throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Follow-up: AgWG leadership and coordinator will strive to invite more partner organizations to the discussion table to better foster collaboration. Timeline: on-going.

CONSERVATION PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT & EXPANSION

KEY: FLEXIBILITY

- Communication within the AgWG:
 - Lessons from the field: Incentivizing implementation
- Efficient and EFFECTIVE use of funding:
 - Maximum nutrient and sediment reductions
 - Practices with economic benefit to farmers
 - Streamlining to accelerate implementation
 - WIP III Connection: Target funding → priority practices → priority areas
 - Flexibility: Commitment from USDA to be responsive to state requests for **flexibility**.
 - CRP/CREP buffer programs → public review period

Define



Next Steps: Continue communication within the AgWG related to federal and state strategies for providing assistance.



Proposal: AgWG sponsored workshop/discussion: Opportunities & approaches for fed/state/private funding. → Timeline: 2020; Invite partners to share successes and failures with the AgWG → Timeline: on-going.

Follow-up: Recruit volunteers for adhoc group to steer workshop; Initiate a regular “Lessons from the Field” component to AgWG meetings.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

KEY: WORKFORCE INCENTIVES & TRAINING

- State initiatives to broaden the reach of training opportunities.
- A market to absorb newly trained conservation professionals
- Land Grant Universities and two-year colleges
 - Two-years certification programs in conservation planning/policy



Next Steps: Invite states to talk to the AgWG about what they are currently initiating to provide technical training for the growing job market.

Proposal: Invite presenters from academic institutions across the Chesapeake Bay watershed to speak about current programming and future possibilities. Timeline: Early 2020.

Follow-up: AgWG inventory of existing workforce training options and compare with identified TA gaps.

CONCURRENT TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CHALLENGES TRACKING, REPORTING, & VERIFICATION

- Provide flexibility in documentation required for reporting of BMP implementation
 - Beyond Resource Improvement (RI) BMPs?
- Resource Balance
 - Does improved tracking and verification = better allocation of limited funds?
 - Does improved tracking and verification significantly tie-up funds for implementation?
 - Can tracking, verification, and implementation be streamlined within TA framework?
- Federal-state partnerships to streamline reporting of best management practices (BMPs)



Next Steps: Request state input on impacts of tracking, reporting & verification on technical assistance capacity.

Follow-up: Re-visit RI BMPs at future AgWVG meeting; Invite representatives from relevant state agencies and SWCDs to discuss streamlining TA with tracking, reporting, & verification.
Timeline: Late 2019-Early 2020