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Bill Worrell  
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**Clinch Valley Soil and Water  
Conservation District**

131 Highland Drive, Suite B

Lebanon, VA 24266

Phone: (276) 883-5987

[www.cvsxcd.org](http://www.cvsxcd.org)

**We work with the people who work the land.**

**VA Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share (VACS) Program**

**Clinch Valley SWCD Priority and Secondary Considerations – PY 2025**

**Approved 6/13/24**

- Participation shall be determined by meeting definitions set forth in 2025 VACS BMP Manual

**PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS (In No Particular Order)**

1. Priority consideration must be given first to those candidates in the highest ranked hydrologic units. Refer to Table 1 for a list of Russell County Hydrologic Units and associated AG NPS Stream Impairment – Derived from Virginia’s 2022 Agricultural NPS Assessment Rankings. Descending priority would be given to those in lower ranked units.
2. Candidates for cost-share or tax credit approval located within or upstream of an identified impaired stream segment shall be prioritized for funding of practices that reduce the identified pollutant. Refer to Table 1 for a list of Russell County Hydrologic Units and associated AG NPS Stream Impairment.

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Table 1 – 2022 Russell County Hydrologic Units & NPS Status

VA Hydrologic Unit	Ag Nitrogen UAL	Ag Phosphorous UAL	Ag Sediment UAL	Nitrogen Order	Phosphorous Order	Sediment Order	Sum of Orders	Ag Rank	CEF Ag Priority Points
BS09	4.532	0.309	0.633	41	81	725	847	LOW	12.1
TC05	5.156	0.333	0.510	95	125	532	752	LOW	12.5
TC07	4.728	0.286	0.437	56	54	370	480	LOW	13.0
TC08	6.924	0.365	0.466	306	197	424	927	LOW	11.7
TC09	4.928	0.309	0.634	75	84	726	885	LOW	11.9
TC10	5.387	0.352	0.755	123	171	873	1167	LOW	10.6
TC11	5.864	0.378	0.738	182	230	853	1265	LOW	10.1
TC12	5.619	0.358	0.419	149	185	335	669	LOW	12.9
TC13	7.007	0.402	0.431	313	286	364	963	LOW	11.5
TC14	6.283	0.402	0.639	231	288	734	1253	LOW	10.2
TC15	6.458	0.451	0.644	252	391	744	1387	LOW	9.5
TC16	7.025	0.447	0.755	315	382	872	1569	LOW	8.7
TC17	6.587	0.325	1.026	268	109	1088	1465	LOW	9.2
TC18	6.492	0.424	0.489	256	336	474	1066	LOW	11.0
TC22	7.142	0.422	0.936	328	330	1034	1692	LOW	8.1
TC28	7.658	0.424	0.503	371	334	507	1212	LOW	10.4
TH30	4.767	0.267	0.738	61	43	854	958	LOW	11.5
TH32	5.476	0.336	0.619	132	139	712	983	LOW	11.4
TH42	4.647	0.296	0.607	45	61	697	803	LOW	12.3
TH43	5.075	0.315	0.593	87	93	675	855	LOW	12.0

- Participants applying for BMP funding on fields that are at least 1/3 HEL (Highly Erodible Land) soils.
- Applicants for cost-share or tax credit approval to implement BMPs that are included in an approved VA Resource Management Plan will also receive priority consideration.

Priority Considerations will be addressed first by Clinch Valley Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) to determine if a request should be considered for approval. The district will then evaluate the practice according to the following *Secondary Considerations* adopted.

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## **SECONDARY CONSIDERATIONS (In No Particular Order)**

1. Applications for cost-share will be ranked by their Conservation Efficiency Factor (CEF), typically lowest to highest. If higher-ranking projects include improving upon or maintaining of existing conservation practices it can be prioritized for funding (e.g., the CCI suite of practices) once all other Secondary Considerations are reviewed.
2. Applicants located on or directly adjacent to the "Clinch River Proper" will be prioritized to receive funding.
3. Applicants located on or directly adjacent to the "Copper Creek Proper" will be prioritized to receive funding.
4. Priority will be given to "new" VACS Program participants. A "new" applicant is defined according to the VACS Program Manual as an individual/entity that has not received cost-share funds from the VACS Program within the last 5 years.
5. Applicants that have not implemented and/or maintained funded VACS projects will be rated at a lower priority than applicants that are either "new" participants or are applicants that have successfully implemented and maintained their conservation practices.
6. If a producer is found to be in violation and treatment is needed to help the willing producer to comply with the Agricultural Stewardship Act (ASA), they will receive priority over other applicants taking into consideration their CEF. If a producer is not willing to comply and has received a corrective order from the Commissioner of Agriculture based upon a founded ASA complaint, they are ineligible to receive any cost-share.
7. If a producer has not maintained previous practices installed with cost-share funds or has not paid a bill pertaining to rented equipment from the District in the last 5 years, as determined by the Board of Directors, their application will not be prioritized for funding.
8. If a producer has received a corrective order pertaining to VA Erosion and Sediment Control Law and have not acted upon it, they are ineligible to receive any cost-share.
9. Clinch Valley SWCD will work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) on "Piggyback" projects whenever/wherever possible. VACS program eligibility and funding consideration will coincide with NRCS applications and ranking periods. Piggyback applicants must complete a Clinch Valley SWCD VACS application at the same time as the NRCS application, and no work pertaining to the potential project must have commenced.
10. TMDL Grants - If match funds are needed for a particular TMDL Grant for which Clinch Valley SWCD is approved for, and a potential VACS practice located within that TMDL watershed could serve as that match, that project could be prioritized for funding.

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## ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. Clinch Valley SWCD reserves the authority to override any or all Secondary Considerations where a severe water quality problem exists.
2. The following VACS sign-up periods have been established: **Round #1: May 1 – May 31;** **Round #2: June 1 – June 30;** **Round #3: July 1 – July 31.** **Round #4: August 1 – October 31.** Only if funds have not been allocated will a fifth-round sign-up be considered, which would run from **November 1 – April 30.**
3. The VACS Program will be available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or political affiliation. No eligible person will be refused a VACS Cost-Share Program application for any reason.