

# **Accomack County Plan**

## **Delmarva Conservation Corridor**

### **Agriculture Vitality, Conservation and Profitability**

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**RESOLUTION**

**To Approve the Accomack County Conservation Corridor Plan**

WHEREAS, Accomack County, Virginia is a major agricultural production area in the State of Virginia with an annual farm gate of over \$140 million; and

WHEREAS, Accomack County is the number one corn, soybean, wheat and tomato producing county in the State of Virginia and the number one county in acreage of land in Agricultural and Forestal Districts; and

WHEREAS, Accomack County is located in an environmentally sensitive area that is located between the Chesapeake Bay, the nation's largest estuary, and the Atlantic Ocean; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress stipulated in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 that all actions by landowners in a Conservation Corridor Plan must be voluntary and that a plan could be submitted by a local governing body; and

WHEREAS, Accomack County is proud and supportive of its agricultural heritage and current agricultural and forestal industries; and

WHEREAS, Accomack County desires to take an active leadership role in conserving and preserving its agricultural and forestal industries and natural resources and the protection of private property rights.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Accomack County Board of Supervisors does vote to participate in the Delmarva Conservation Corridor Project and does hereby adopt the Accomack County Delmarva Conservation Corridor Plan as submitted by the county-appointed Delmarva Conservation Corridor Committee.

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Accomack County Board of Supervisors recognizes that this is a pilot program and that changes can be made in future years regarding project needs as so stipulated by citizen input.

Adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of June 2003.

ACCOMACK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory L. Duncan, Chairman

## Summary of Proposed Plan

### **The Accomack County Delmarva Conservation Corridor**

If funding is approved, the responsible administering authority of this plan shall be the Accomack County Board of Supervisors through a created Board called the Accomack County Board of Agriculture. Support staff to this Board will be provided by Virginia Cooperative Extension, Accomack County Unit Office. No portion of the funds requested for this plan will be used for administrative costs of this committee. The plan was developed by the Accomack County Delmarva Conservation Corridor Committee. This committee was appointed by the Accomack County Board of Supervisors.

The plan contains background information on Accomack County, a situational analysis of the current state of agriculture, forestry and natural resources in the county, the plan itself, funding requests and minutes of meetings held related to the plan.

This is a first year request for the plan and does not attempt to cover all areas of need. Since it is a pilot program, the program will be expanded to other areas of need based upon citizen and leadership input and other methods of public participation.

Seven projects are included in the plan. The projects and amount of funds requested are as follows:

<u>Project</u>	<u>5-Year Funding Request</u>
I. Farmland Preservation	\$ 500,000
II. Soil and Water Conservation: Irrigation and Water Quality	\$7,750,000
III. Agriculture Infrastructure	\$7,065,000
IV. Soil and Water Conservation: EQIP Programs	\$5,250,000
V. Rural Development/Water Quality: Elimination of Outdoor Privies	\$7,500,000
VI. Migrant Housing for Farmworkers	\$5,000,000
VII. Aquaculture Infrastructure	<u>\$ 754,840</u>
<b>Total Funding Request (5 Years)</b>	<b>\$33,819,840</b>

Accomack County is unlike any other county on Delmarva. Significant differences even exist between it and Northampton County, Virginia. Accomack County is farmer friendly and has a local governing body receptive to agricultural and forestal needs. A significant amount of local resources are already committed to the industry. Landowners benefit from a reduced rate of taxation on real estate by participating in the Agricultural and Forestal Districts Program. The county also has a farm friendly tax on agricultural farm machinery. The county has an Agricultural Research and Extension Center that serves the largest horticultural area in the state. Numerous support agencies and grower

groups necessary for long term survival of the industry exist. Also located in the county is the Eastern Shore Farmer's Market, a \$2.3 million facility built by the state and run and managed by a cooperative of local farmers.

In order for agriculture to survive and for the Delmarva Conservation Corridor to function properly, Projects I, II, III, IV and VI are a necessity. Project V is a rural development and water quality issue. Project VII is in the area of aquaculture as affected by water quality. The areas of funding request have been studied and are well researched. Additional information can be provided upon request.

The Accomack County Conservation Corridor Committee would like to thank those responsible for the opportunity to develop and present this plan.

# **Plan for the Delmarva Conservation Corridor: County of Accomack**

## **Agriculture Vitality, Conservation and Profitability**

### **Overview**

Criteria for the Delmarva Conservation Corridor Demonstration Plan was included in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. The bill established the right of a local governing body to enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Secretary of Agriculture to administer the plan for their locality. The Accomack County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to appoint a committee to study the project and make recommendations. As a result, the Accomack County Conservation Corridor Plan was developed. It was approved by the Accomack County Board of Supervisors on June 18, 2003.

### **Introduction**

Accomack County, Virginia is located on the Delmarva Peninsula. It is bordered to the north by Somerset and Worcester Counties, Maryland; to the south by Northampton County, Virginia; to the east by the Atlantic Ocean and to the west by the Chesapeake Bay.

Economically, agriculture is the county's number one industry. In 2001, the total farm gate was \$140,116,506. According to the latest Census of Agriculture, there are 268 farms, 92,452 acres of land in farms, 104,715 acres of land in timber and the average age of the farmer is 56 years.

Accomack County is the number one corn, soybean, wheat and tomato producing county in the State of Virginia and the number one county in acreage of land in Agricultural and Forestal Districts with a total of 74,674 acres. The county is number four in terms of farm income in the State of Virginia. The largest type of livestock produced in Accomack County is poultry with over 32,000,000 broilers produced annually, which is 10% of Virginia's production (for further information, see Addendum I, Accomack County Agriculture).

Because it is located between the Chesapeake Bay, the nation's largest estuary, and the Atlantic Ocean, Accomack County is environmentally sensitive. Creeks and streams drain directly into these water bodies and, as a result, how the land is used and treated can directly affect water quality. The careful and conscientious use of the land and its resources is important if good water quality is to be maintained. The County of Accomack is also a major flyway for many types of birds, it has a diversified wildlife base, several types of endangered species and a significant timber industry.

## **Situational Analysis**

The purpose of this section is to assist the reader in understanding the industries of agriculture and forestry in Accomack County in order to assist in decision making concerning fund request. Included in this section are a profile of agriculture, a listing of infrastructure supporting the industries, an explanation of Agricultural and Forestal Districts, local government support of agriculture, regulations affecting the industries, current status of federal programs in the county and situation concerning the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center which is located in the county.

### I. Profile of Agriculture

A statistical breakdown of crops and livestock produced in Accomack County in 2001 and their economic value is provided (see Addendum I).

### II. State, Local and Federal Support Agencies for Agriculture in Accomack County are as follows:

- A. Accomack County Farm Bureau
- B. Association of Virginia Potato and Vegetable Growers
- C. Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center
- D. Eastern Shore Farmer's Market
- E. Eastern Shore Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Council
- F. Eastern Shore Nurserymen's Association
- G. Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District
- H. USDA Farm Service Agency
- I. Virginia Cooperative Extension
- J. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- K. Virginia Division of Forestry
- L. Virginia Employment Commission

### III. Agricultural and Forestal Districts

The Agricultural and Forestal District Program is a state program that was passed by the Virginia General Assembly and adopted in Accomack County on March 9, 1980. Its purpose is to encourage the development and improvement of agricultural and forestal lands for the production of food and other agricultural and forestal products and to conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands as natural and ecological resources. By adopting it as a matter of policy, the local governing body recognized the industries of agriculture and forestry as viable segments of the area and state's economy and also as economic and environmental resources of major significance. A landowner who participates in this program agrees to use the land only for agricultural or forestal use for the length of the contract. In return, he receives certain benefits from the community that serves as a protection to the industry such as the right to farm, prevention of condemnation, the building of new roads and also a special tax rate based on the income potential of the land for farming and forestal purposes, called land use. Tax break value to landowners was \$362,665 in 2002.

Agricultural and Forestal Districts located in Accomack County and their acreage as of June 2000 are as follows:

<b>District</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Atlantic	8,254
Bell Neck	5,043
Cashville	1,408
Craddockville	4,546
Davis Wharf	915
Greenbush	1,923
Hacks Neck	614
Hallwood	2,676
Horntown	1,471
Joynes Neck	1,770
Leemont	4,201
Modestown	9,916
Mutton Hunk	442
New Church	11,201
Painter	2,163
Parramore Island	6,992
Pungoteague	4,906
Scarboroughs Neck	1,920
Shields	840
Tasley	1,871
Wattsville	1,602
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>74,674</b>

IV. Local Government and Agriculture

The local governing body in Accomack County and its residents in recent years have actively recognized the economic and environmental importance of the industries of agriculture and forestry by supporting certain basic programs in the county beneficial to the industries. In addition to the Agricultural and Forestal Districts Program adopted by the local governing body, they have also adopted land-use tax for property located outside of Agricultural and Forestal Districts. The property must be at least five acres in size and be used for agriculture and forestry. The total value in the tax savings to owners of agricultural and forestal land from the land-use tax both inside and outside the districts was estimated to be \$362,665 in 2002. The county has also adopted a reduced personal property tax rate for farm equipment and compared to personal property for other industries, the economic benefit to Accomack County farmers in 2002 was \$250,124. To support the building of a State Farmer's Market by the State of Virginia valued at \$2.3 million, a county agency, the Accomack County Industrial Development Authority, recently donated 44 acres of prime industrial development property valued at \$280,000 (2003) to the State of Virginia and a local farmer cooperative. The total value of these three programs to the farm community is at \$892,789. In addition, the State of Virginia invested \$2.3 million to build the Farmer's Market which is located at Melfa, Virginia in Accomack County.

V. Regulations Mandated by Local, State and Federal Government that Impact Accomack County Agriculture and the Family Farm

<b>Program</b>	<b>Type Regulation</b>	<b>Comments and Cost to Grower*</b>
Pesticide Applicator Certification	State, Federal	Must buy study manual, take test, recertify every two years.
Irrigation Water-Use Permits	State	May be required to do pump and other tests, must record and report water use, may have to buy meters. Cost can be in the thousands.
Poultry Waste Management	State, Federal	Must file and use nutrient management plan.
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Act	Federal	Cost varies per grower.
Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act	State	Must file reports with state and follow water quality management plan. Cost varies per grower.
Hazard Communication Standard Act	Federal	Cost to train workers and provide required information, etc.
Community Right to Know (Sara Title III)	Federal	Cost to keep records and provide information to government.
Worker Protection Standards for Agricultural Pesticides	Federal	Cost to educate and protect field workers and handlers. Cost varies greatly per grower.
Endangered Species Pesticide Use Restrictions	Federal	Cost unknown.
Groundwater Reductions	Federal	Cost unknown.
Special-Use Permits for Pesticides	Federal	Cost varies depending on time and data needed.
Swampbuster	Federal	Cost unknown.
Field Worker Sanitation Regulations	State	Must provide toilets and running water in the field.
OSHA	Federal	Cost to educate workers and comply with safety regulations.
Farmworker Housing	Local, State, Federal	Guidelines enforced by regular inspections by local Health Department and other agencies.
Immigration and Reform Central Act of 1986	Federal	Must complete and verify Form I-9 for all workers.
Wage and Hour	Federal	Must pay minimum wages as prescribed by federal law.
Nontidal Wetlands	State, Federal	Cost of permitting, mitigation, etc.

\*In addition to cash expense for most programs, cost also involves grower time, transportation and communication costs at his or her expense.

VI. Status of Current Federal Programs in Accomack County

<b>Program</b>	<b>Present Funding Situation</b>
<b>Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation</b>	
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	Adequate
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	Adequate
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)	Adequate
Farmland Protection Program (FPP)	Planning funds needed, no program exists <b>(a need)</b>
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	<u>No funding (a need)</u>
Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA)	<u>No funding (a need)</u>
Conservation Security Program (CSP)	New program yet to be finalized
Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)	Funding adequate
Conservation of Private Grazing Lands (CPGL)	Not applicable
Community Food Security Grants	No funding <b>(a need)</b>
Locally Produced Foods for Schools	No funding <b>(a need)</b>
<b>Rural Development</b>	
Value Added Agricultural Market Grants	Funding adequate
Farmworker Training	Funding adequate but program underutilized
Rural Strategic Investment Program	Funding adequate
Rural Business Investment Program	Funding inadequate <b>(a need)</b>
Rural Business Opportunity Grants	Funding adequate
Funding for Rural Development Backlogs Program	Funding adequate
Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant Program	Funding adequate

VII. Status of Eastern Shore Research and Extension Center, Painter, Virginia by Dr. Henry P. Wilson, Director/Professor

History

The history of the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center can be traced to the late 1890's when a group of truck (vegetable) growers and marketers in the Norfolk area formed the Southern Produce Company. Soon thereafter, they purchased land in the Norfolk area. In 1907, following discussion with the Virginia State Board of Agriculture, the Virginia

Experiment Station at Blacksburg, and the United States Department of Agriculture, a vegetable research center at Norfolk was established. At this time, the USDA assumed the responsibility for salaries and the state began operations. In 1920, the state assumed the operations of the station and placed it under the administration of the Department of Education.

By 1912, it was realized that research of a similar nature was needed on the Eastern Shore and on February 13, 1913 land was leased near Tasley for this undertaking. In 1918, the Eastern Shore Station was moved from Tasley to another leased farm just south of Onley where it was located until 1955. During those years, staff would take the ferry to the Eastern Shore to conduct research in this important vegetable area.

On January 1, 1956, the Eastern Shore research activities were moved to the present location near Painter, on state-owned land, a purchase made possible by funds appropriated by the General Assembly in 1954. Money was made available for construction of an office and laboratory building, a garage, shop, storage building and a residence for the farm manager. Since then, additional buildings were constructed and include a greenhouse with attached head-house, a vegetable grading building, a sweet potato curing and storage facility, additional offices and laboratories were added to the main building, and most recently, housing for graduate students.

A change in affiliation and administration of the station occurred when the Virginia General Assembly approved a "Memorandum of Agreement" which made the station a part of Virginia Tech, the Land Grant Institution in Virginia, effective July 1, 1985. This administrative structure continues.

#### Research and Extension Focus

The primary focus of this station has always been to support this major vegetable production area of Virginia through research and Extension activities. Six full-time faculty work to enable the sustainability of production in the areas of soil fertility and plant nutrient management, horticulture, entomology, plant pathology, and weed science. Research also addresses the rotation crops of importance to the region, plasticulture, and potential alternative crops with potential economic significance.

In addition to faculty, staff have included a team of research supervisors, farm manager, secretaries, farm laborers, a mechanic, and a custodian. In recent years, six to eight graduate students annually have conducted research leading to their M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at this facility.

### Faculty and Staff

In 1985, six faculty and fifteen staff were employed at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center. As a result of not replacing faculty and staff who have left as a result of retirements and deaths, only four faculty and 7.5 staff are currently employed, thus reducing by nearly 50% the salaried personnel at this station compared with earlier years.

### Operating Budget

As a result of funding cuts at the state level, the operating budget is approximately 47% below the level of two years ago. For this reason, the number of hourly employees and available funds to support research and Extension activities is reduced. Even with these reductions, the dedicated funds to the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center exceed 50% of the needs.

Number faculty positions on paper	6
Number faculty positions currently funded and filled	4
Number faculty positions in need of funding	2
Additional new faculty positions needed (Agricultural Engineer)	1
Number support staff positions on paper	15
Number support staff positions filled	7.5
Number staff positions in need of funding	7.5
Additional new support staff positions needed	1
Percent of budget cut by state over last 2 years	47%
Number graduate students	8

## **Plan Specifics**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the Accomack County Board of Supervisors that in the adoption of this plan:

- I. All actions by landowners are to be voluntary.
- II. There will be no adverse effects on land that is not enrolled or a participant in this plan.
- III. For any part of the plan attempted, sufficient staffing will be obtained in order for the program to be a success.
- IV. Land affected by this program will have a high conservation value. Because of the county's strategic location between the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay, it is recognized that all land is of high conservation value. It is also recognized that because of the county's location between two large metropolitan areas, most land is also of high economic value.
- V. Greater benefits may result from conservation programs amassed than through individual program application.

### **Vision**

The vision of the Accomack County Delmarva Conservation Corridor Plan is to preserve and promote viable agricultural and forestal industries without negatively impacting air, water, lands and wildlife. Private property rights will be preserved and controlled and compatible economic development allowed. Good relations will be maintained among urban-rural sectors. This will be accomplished through use of state of the art and innovative soil and water conservation principles and practices, wise land use management, protection of important natural resources and the creation of opportunities for economic diversity and new businesses. An adequate infrastructure will be maintained to support affected industries.

### **Goals**

- I. Promote the vitality and profitability of agricultural, forestal and seafood industries.
- II. Maintain, improve and conserve the environmental integrity of natural resources.
- III. Preserve private property rights, allow for controlled and compatible economic development, maintain necessary support staff infrastructure and encourage friendly rural-urban relations.

## **Project I: Farmland Preservation**

**Objective: To promote the wise use and conservation of agricultural and forestal lands in the County of Accomack.**

Strategy: The County of Accomack will develop staff infrastructure essential to the wise use and conservation of agricultural and forestal land. Staff, as advised by a committee of affected landowners and citizens, will investigate the need and feasibility of establishing a farmland preservation program. A system will be developed for recording and tracking all currently preserved land in the county including that which is local, state, federal, and privately owned. This system will also include land with recorded conservation easements for preservation and environmental purposes. This information will be used with other statistical information gathered through landowner surveys, public information meetings, study committees and other forms of information gathering to make recommendations to the local governing body for a farmland preservation program. Once a plan is approved, attempts will be made to obtain funding for a program from local, state, federal and private resources. Throughout this process, Accomack County agrees to continue supporting the Agricultural and Forestal District concept and land-use tax for qualifying agricultural and forestal land.

Funding Requested: \$100,000 (annually) or \$500,000 (5 years)

50% Matching local dollars and source: \$362,665 (annually) or \$1.81 million (5 years) – County land-use tax incentive for agricultural and forestry lands

Potential funding source: Farmland Preservation, etc.

Administering local agencies: County of Accomack, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Department of Planning, Building and Zoning

## **Project II: Soil and Water Conservation – Irrigation and Water Quality**

**Objective II: To promote the efficient use and conservation of water resources used for agricultural purposes.**

Strategy: Accomack County farmers will be encouraged through state of the art engineering practices to develop irrigation water resources and irrigation water application systems that conserve water, promote water quality and prevent soil erosion. Farmers will conform to state permitting guidelines for developing water resources and water application systems including the recording of water use, monitoring requirements, the installation of water meters and the use of pump tests when required. Existing irrigation systems will adopt state of the art engineering standards. New and existing irrigation and drainage systems will be established and maintained in order to assure good environmental stewardship, water quality and conservation of water resources

Funding Requested: \$1.5 million (annually) or \$7.5 million (5 years) plus staffing request of \$50,000 (annually) or \$250,000 (5 years)

50% Matching local dollars and source: Farmers will cost share

Potential funding source: EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) and/or AMA (Agricultural Management Assistance Program), add Virginia to program since Maryland and Delaware already qualify, discretionary funds

Administering local agencies: Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District, Farm Service Agency, Virginia Cooperative Extension

### **Project III: Agriculture Infrastructure**

**Objective: To upgrade, maintain, re-establish and add new resources to agriculture infrastructure essential to the long-term vitality and profitability of agricultural and forestal industries.**

Strategy: The staff at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center will be returned to full operational status. An agricultural engineering position will be added to the staff at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center to support the agricultural industry as related to farm drainage systems, water supply resource development and management, the use of plasticulture, water quality research, and the proper use and development of new irrigation systems. A one-time grant of money to the research station will be invested and set up as a revolving fund in order to make monies available to the Research and Extension Center to conduct research in areas as identified as priority areas essential for industry vitality and environmental stability and improvement. This research may include, and is not limited to, research as related to the development of new and environmentally friendly cropping systems, alternative specialty crops, farm diversification programs, tools for pest management, engineering and water quality information as related to use of water resources, the use of global positioning systems, etc. The concept of block grants from this fund to scientists based on program area will be explored by use of a local committee.

This committee will be composed of the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center Advisory Committee (5 members) and its Director, representatives of the Association of Virginia Potato and Vegetable Growers, the Eastern Shore Farmer's Market Board of Directors, Accomack and Northampton County Farm Bureaus and ex-officios from Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The committee's responsibilities will be to establish needs for specific types of research needed, criteria for grant requests, reporting requirements, etc. It will also serve as the grant approving committee with funds administered through an account set up through the Eastern Shore Farmer's Market Cooperative. This cooperative

has full time staff and is bonded and audited by certified public accountants on an annual basis.

The Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Painter, Virginia is recognized as a horticultural and agronomic crops center that currently serves a horticultural industry on the Eastern Shore that is the number one production area in the state. It serves an area that produces 75% of the state's fresh market vegetables. The research work done at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center is important to the long-term water quality and conservation of natural resources in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, a national treasure. It is so essential to the survival of agriculture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia that for agriculture to exist, it must exist. The efficiency and vitality of the area's economy is directly proportional to the vitality of this facility.

Funding Requested: Staffing - \$665,000 (one-time grant), revolving operational fund - \$6.4 million (one-time grant) Total: \$7.065 million

Matching local dollars and source: State dollar input at Research Station – \$1.1 million (annually), Accomack County Farm Machinery Tax Credit to farmers - \$250,124 (annually). Remainder of Accomack County Land-Use Tax Credit to farmland and forestry landowners - \$262,665 (annually) or \$8,063,945 (5 years)

Potential funding source: Discretionary funds or other source

Administering local agencies: Created committee, Eastern Shore Farmer's Market Cooperative

## **Project IV: Soil and Water Conservation – EQIP Practices**

**Objective: To utilize needed and efficient soil and water conservation production and management practices in agriculture and forestry that reflect good environmental stewardship and maintain viable agricultural and forestal industries.**

Strategies: Accomack County farmers will install and utilize needed Best Management Practices and various soil and water conservation practices including those related to forestry as available under the federal EQIP program and identified as priority needs by a committee consisting of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors, Eastern Shore Farm Service Agency County Committee, local Extension Agent, County Forester and other committee members as so determined appropriate by these organizations. Examples of practices that might be included are waste storage facilities, vegetative buffer strips, nutrient management agrochemical mixing facility, chiseling and subsoiling, recordkeeping and irrigation. Emphasis will be placed on grouping a number of practices as a package with one payment made to producers for type of package developed. The use of a tiered payment system will be utilized with packages approved for more than one year of use and rates of payment differing upon

degree of package utilization over a given period of time. The committee will also have the authority to group individual practices into individual packages and time periods and to set rates and any requirements as related to cost share. The maximum amount of cost share will be 75%.

Funds Requested: \$1,000,000 (annually) or \$5,000,000 (5 years), plus staffing request of \$50,000 (annually) or \$250,000 (5 years)

25% to 50% Matching dollars and source: Farmers, Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District, local and state budget

Potential funding source: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), discretionary funds

Administering local agencies: Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District/Farm Service Agency

## **Project V: Rural Development/Water Quality: Elimination of Outhouses**

**Objective: To prevent direct discharge of waste effluent into soils and water courses and thus improve water quality. To enable low-income residents of Accomack County to obtain safe drinking water from groundwater resource supplies.**

Strategy: Approximately 404 households in Accomack County have outdoor toilets. Affected households will have installed septic tanks, drain fields and appropriate household facilities according to state and local Health Department regulations.

Funding Requested: \$1.5 million (annually), \$7.5 million (5 years)

Matching local dollars: For toilets, current program funded through Planning District Commission at \$750,000 per year or \$3.75 million over 5 years. Request waiver of remaining match.

Potential funding source: Rural Development programs, discretionary funds

Administering local agencies: Accomack County Health Department, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission

## **Project VI: Migrant Housing for Farmworkers**

**Objective: To upgrade and construct new migrant housing for farmworkers. To install public telephones at migrant worker housing units. To improve the health and care of the migrant population.**

Strategy: Grants of 50% to 75% will be made to farmers to maintain, improve and build new migrant housing. Emphasis will be placed on compliance with local, state and federal housing codes. Frequent inspections by Virginia OSHA and the Accomack County Health Department will be made to assure continued compliance for all new and existing housing. Public telephones will be installed at migrant worker housing units. Criteria will be developed to administer this program by the Department of Environmental Services, Accomack County, the Accomack County Health Department, the Association of Virginia Potato and Vegetable Growers, the Eastern Shore Farmer's Market Cooperative, the Eastern Shore Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Council and Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Funding Requested: \$1 million (annually) or \$5 million (5 years)

Matching dollars and source: Grower cost/share and contribution of time and expense of agencies and growers for project

Potential funding source: Rural Development program and discretionary funds

Administering local agencies: Governing committee as stated above with administrative work handled through Eastern Shore Farmer's Market Cooperative

## **Project VII: Aquaculture Infrastructure**

**Objective: To conserve aquaculture natural resources and to promote the aquaculture industry by researching and implementing sound conservation and production methods as related to water quality and preventable environmental and man-made problems.**

Strategy: The Virginia Institute of Marine Science has a major laboratory on the Eastern Shore that is involved in the research and development of shellfish aquaculture. Research at this facility in past years has been conducted in the development of the hard clam aquaculture industry, the cultivating and selective breeding of oysters and clams, the use of non-indigenous oyster species, the effect of water quality on aquaculture and interaction associated with feeding activity by migratory shorebirds. Population increases in the area and more intensive farming methods both now and in the future have the potential to affect water quality as related to aquaculture.

As a result, funding is being requested to supplement underfunded existing projects and to initiate new research programs that are badly needed. Adequate funding of essential staff and research money is needed if this facility is to effectively operate as related to

needs of the industry and region. If funding is approved, a committee composed of aquaculture interest and local leadership groups will be appointed by the Board of Supervisors to oversee this program. The use of block grant funding for research projects will be investigated.

Funding Requested: \$150,968 (annually) or \$754,840 (5 years)

50% Matching local dollars and source: Dedicated state funds to this facility

Potential funding source: Discretionary funds, federal aquaculture programs

Administering local agencies: County of Accomack, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Virginia Cooperative Extension

### **Funding Summary**

<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>5-Year Funding Request</u></b>
I. Farmland Preservation	\$ 500,000
II. Soil and Water Conservation: Irrigation and Water Quality	\$7,750,000
III. Agriculture Infrastructure	\$7,065,000
IV. Soil and Water Conservation: EQIP Programs	\$5,250,000
V. Rural Development/Water Quality: Elimination of Outdoor Privies	\$7,500,000
VI. Migrant Housing for Farmworkers	\$5,000,000
VII. Aquaculture Infrastructure	<u>\$ 754,840</u>
<b>Total Funding Request (5 Years)</b>	<b>\$33,819,840</b>

Comments: All agencies in proposed funding transfers and distributions are agencies with full-time staff and are annually audited by professional accounting firms. Appropriate Memorandum of Agreements will be executed between affected agencies.

### **Endorsements**

- I. This plan endorses the proposal in the Northampton County Conservation Corridor Plan as related to the expansion of the Eastern Shore Farmer's Market by adding a wholesale seafood market.
- II. The plan endorses the proposal of Mr. Bud Malone, Extension Specialist at the University of Delaware at Georgetown, Delaware, who has proposed to establish a Poultry House Tree Shelter Belt-Outreach/Technical Assistance Program for the Delmarva Peninsula. The program will be conducted for the entire Delmarva Peninsula from Mr. Malone's Georgetown, Delaware office with cooperation from county agencies in affected counties including Accomack.

## **Chief Administration of Project – Accomack County Board of Agriculture**

If funding is approved, Accomack County will appoint a County Board of Agriculture representative of agricultural and forestal industries including agriculture ex-officio members. Support staff for this committee will be provided by Virginia Cooperative Extension, Accomack Unit Office. No portion of the funds requested for this plan will be used for administrative costs of this committee. Responsibility of the plan will rest with this Board with oversight authority by the Accomack County Board of Supervisors.

**Delmarva Conservation Corridor Plan Cooperating Agencies for the  
Initial Application Process are as Follows:**

Accomack County Government

Accomack County Farm Bureau

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission

Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center

Eastern Shore Farm Service Agency

Eastern Shore Farmer's Market

Eastern Shore Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Council

Eastern Shore Resource, Conservation and Development Council

Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District

Virginia Association of Potato and Vegetable Growers

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Virginia Division of Forestry

Virginia Employment Commission

Virginia Institute of Marine Science

**Approved by the Accomack County Board of Supervisors on June 18, 2003.**

Contact person as related to this document in Accomack County is James N. Belote, III, Senior Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Accomack Unit Office, 23203 Front Street, P.O. Box 60, Accomac, VA 23301 (Phone: 757-787-1361, ext. 14; Fax: 757-787-1044; e-mail: [jbelote@vt.edu](mailto:jbelote@vt.edu))