

**Nominations Criteria for Forming a Technical Review Panel:
Evaluation of an Agricultural Functional Equivalent (FE) BMP Recommendation Proposal by
the Maryland Department of Agriculture**

**Sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership's Agriculture Workgroup
November 19, 2013**

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership's Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG) has recently received a technical proposal report from the Maryland Department of Agriculture to define and represent within the Chesapeake Bay Program models functional equivalent agricultural conservation practices. The AgWG is currently soliciting nominations for a multi-state Technical Review Panel to evaluate the proposal for partnership consideration. The panel membership being formed will be composed of twelve technical experts regarding agricultural practice standards and specifications being implemented in the six-states within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Six panel members are being sought to represent each of the six USDA-NRCS offices within the watershed, and six panel members representing the state agricultural agencies or associated conservation district personnel.

Technical Review Panel Charge:

To complete a review of the Maryland FE Recommendation Report for Non-Cost Shared agricultural BMPs, the panel will:

- Review and provide comment on proposed FE BMP definitions, especially the technical comparisons between specific USDA-NRCS Conservation Practice (CP) Standards and Specifications, and the proposed functional equivalent BMPs.
- Review and provide comment on the proposed FE comparisons with state regulations and permit requirements addressing specific BMPs included in the recommendations for each of the six Chesapeake Bay watershed jurisdictions.
- Review and provide comment on proposed FE verification worksheets to be used by field personnel to allow accurate documentation and verification of practices for reporting to the CBP models.
- Provide a technical review report to the AgWG as soon as feasible for consideration during the workgroup's review of the Maryland FE BMP Recommendation Report.

The Chesapeake Bay Program partnership is developing but has not completed full guidance for verification of BMP's at this time, thus the panel's suggestions many need to be adjusted to meet that guidance when provided.

Recommended Knowledge's, Skills and Abilities of proposed panel members:

The skills set of the panel members should include one or more of the following:

- Technical experience and knowledge skills of the USDA-NRCS Technical Guide Standards and Specifications developed and implemented by one or more NRCS state offices.

- Technical experience and knowledge skills in designing, installing and/or approving the 14 NRCS practices that are represented in the Maryland Non Cost Shared/FE practices recommendation report.
- Technical experience and knowledge skills of state agricultural regulations and permit requirements applicable for the specified BMPs included in the recommendation report for one or more Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions.
- Technical experience and knowledge skills necessary to review the Maryland FE BMP definitions, evaluation criteria, proposed practice life spans, and can determine that, if approved, the FE BMPs would provide equivalent water quality and resource protection on an annual basis per CBP model BMP definitions.

Activities for Setting up Panel:

- 1) Advertise for panel member nominations.
- 2) Pre-selection of review group and proposed panel chair by AgWG Chair Frank Coale and Coordinator Mark Dubin.
- 3) Coordinator will contact nominees to determine if willing and able to serve.
- 4) Approve panel members at December 12, 2013 AgWG Meeting.
- 5) Provide panel members with materials for review:
 - Panel Charge and Timeline
 - Maryland FE BMP recommendation report
 - 14 MD NRCS Standards and Specifications
 - MDA Verification Manual
 - Table 2 from Submission Document with CBP definitions
 - Other CBP materials as needed.
- 4) Set up initial meeting of panel members for briefing by Maryland Department of Agriculture.
- 5) Complete review and develop technical panel report.
- 6) Provide recommendations to the AgWG for approval.