



Conservation Planner Certification Course Descriptions

Overview of Water Quality Resource Assessment

Overview of Water Quality Resource Assessment is comprised of a series of one-hour webinars that provide training in water quality processes and pollutants in agricultural settings. It focuses on assessment tools and approaches to address water quality resource concerns in the conservation planning process. This specific course is a review of basic water quality principles and provides an overview of the subsequent sessions focused on specific water quality topics.

This course is available in NRCS AgLearn and COVLC. Approximately 1.5 hours

Nitrogen Management and Concerns

This course provides a foundation in nitrogen chemistry, the nitrogen cycle and transport pathways, and the effects of excessive nitrogen in the environment. The course covers common assessment approaches and tools for evaluating nitrogen risk to surface and ground water and common practices to address excess nitrogen at a field level.

This course is available in NRCS AgLearn and COVLC. Approximately 1.5 hours

Phosphorus Management and Concerns

This course provides a foundation in phosphorous chemistry, the phosphorous cycle and transport pathways, and the effects of excessive phosphorous in the environment. The course covers common assessment approaches and tools for evaluating phosphorous risk to surface and ground water and common practices to address excess phosphorous at a field level.

This course is available in NRCS AgLearn and COVLC. Approximately 1.5 hours

Sediment Management

Although sediment is a natural component of the fluvial system, excessive sediment load can have deleterious effects upon aquatic life, increase water treatment costs, reduce reservoir life expectancy, and clog navigational waterways. In addition, because many pollutants including nutrients, metals, and organic compounds absorb onto sediment particles, contaminated sediment is a problem in many of the nation's waterways.

This course provides training in the nature of sediment in the fluvial system. It covers the causes of erosion, sediment entrainment, and pest and nutrient entrainment. The course also covers a review of assessment tools to evaluate sediment movement and common conservation practices to address excessive sediment in surface water.

This course is available in NRCS AgLearn and COVLC. Approximately 1.5 hours

Water Bodies

This course provides training in the characteristics of streams, lakes, and aquifers encountered in agricultural settings, and in identification of healthy and impaired water bodies. It introduces participants to several water quality assessment tools and their use in the conservation planning process.

This course is available in NRCS AgLearn and COVLC. Approximately 1.5 hours

Pest Management and Water Quality Implications

This course provides training in common pesticides and the impacts of their presence in water bodies. It provides an overview of fate and transport pathways and common practices to address pest management. The course also includes an introduction to WIN-PST.

This course is available in NRCS AgLearn and COVLC. Approximately 1.5 hours

Water Management

This course provides basic training in various methods of water management and their implications for water quality. It includes an introduction to irrigation and tile drain management practices to best protect surface and ground water quality. The course also includes an overview of salinity problems on agricultural land and water management practices to minimize salinity problems.

This course is available in NRCS AgLearn and COVLC. Approximately 1.5 hours

Pesticide Management Orientation or currently certified as in any category as a Virginia pesticide applicator

Provides the participant with a basic understanding of the science of nutrient and pest management and safety precautions. This course is provided through Virginia Tech online.

Virginia Water Concerns

This course will be led by the Department Of Environmental Quality to address needs related to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, water quality, wetlands, overview of state requirements, and Total Maximum Daily Loads. This course is available in COVLC

DCR Nutrient Management Soil Science, Soil Fertility and Crop Production School, or currently NMP-certified in Virginia

The DCR Nutrient Management course is taught in person by Virginia Tech professors and covers soil science, soil fertility, organic nutrient sources and crop production material. Students without previous

training in these subjects will find this session helpful in understanding how nutrients react and interact when applied to the soil. The session could be described as a mini-agronomy course.

This two-day course is offered twice annually. Information and registration can be found on the DCR Nutrient Management website.

Basic Soil Loss Calculations (RUSLE 2 or other approved method)

Basic introductory workshop will provide basic skills needed to calculate soil loss using the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation Version 2 (RUSLE2) or other approved method. RUSLE 2 estimates soil loss from sheet and rill erosion caused by rainfall on cropland, hay land, and pasture. In-person offered by NRCS/Contractor.

Perennial Stream Identification

This course provided both lecture and field components to teach on perennial stream determination methodology and associated regulations.

Classes are in-person and provided through a contractor. Virginia Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species Protection

Training will be done in person with our Department of Wildlife Resources and Division of Natural Heritage partners to inform participants what partner organizations do, what the concerns for agricultural best management practices and conservation planning are, and how to work with each organization to process "hits" from queries in the Conservation Application Suite.

Virginia Cultural and Historic Resources Protection

Department of Historic Resources (DHR) led in person training will inform participants of what the Department does, what the concerns for agricultural best management practices and conservation planning are, and how to work with DHR to process "hits" from queries in the Conservation Application Suite including VCRIS and ePIX.

Conservation Selling Skills

Training provided by a contractor that combines lecture, discussion, exercises and role-play practice sessions to enable professional conservation staff to more effectively achieve the goals of their organization and satisfy the needs of those we serve.

Virginia Agriculture BMP and Cost Share Program

DCR led training will provide introduction, overview, and operation information for the Virginia Agricultural Cost Share program and VACS Manual. Training will include a review of the guidelines and policies that are key to the operation of the VACS Program. There will also be a review of the most common BMPs across the state to assist with understanding practice specifications and the required qualifications to properly recommend, approve, deny, and implement practices effectively. (This training is not the annual VACS update trainings usually held in June)

This course is provided by DCR

DCR Conservation Planning Program (Forms, Processes, and Module User Training)

Multi day training designed to be a culmination of all the previous training. In this training, participants will get a thorough training of the Conservation Planning Module and have hands on use of the module developing a conservation plan. Participants will learn what to look for on the land, how to document the farm operation and resource concerns with the required conservation plan forms, and how to develop recommendations to create the DCR Conservation Plan. This training is the last step before creating a DCR Conservation Plan for review for Planner certification.

Classes are in-person and provided by DCR.