



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

July 1, 2025

Requesting the Use of Virginia Agricultural Cost Share for Grant Match

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) receives and reviews requests from various partners for letters of support or grant match for proposals being submitted to other organizations who are providing grant funding. DCR does not provide a cash match but can provide letters of support or in-kind match of state funds from the Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) Program. Letters of support and, pending availability, in-kind match may be approved for grant proposals with a purpose of improvement of water quality through reductions in pollution from nonpoint sources. The DCR Division of Soil and Water Conservation (DSWC) reviews and prioritizes match requests and assures that the approved match funding from VACS is not overcommitted in any given year.

This document describes the process of requesting a letter of support or the use of VACS program funds as in-kind match for federal or private grant proposals. The approved in-kind match is provided on a basin-wide basis (i.e. either Chesapeake Bay or Outside the Chesapeake Bay) and is not specific to a particular hydrologic unit, sub-watershed, county, District boundary, etc. The in-kind match commitment does not mean that the VACS program funds are set-aside to be spent on a particular project, for specific VACS best management projects (BMP), or to be spent only in a specific geographic area; the committed in-kind match is the amount of VACS program funds spent by SWCDs on approved practices. Most grant projects have a multi-year project timeline. Because of variability in state VACS funding from year to year, in-kind match commitments are typically only made for the first VACS Program Year of a grant proposal, however occasionally multi-year commitments are made.

There is a DCR request form to be submitted to request letters of support or in-kind match from VACS program funds. This form must be submitted at least twenty-one days before the letter of support or the letter of commitment of in-kind match from DCR is needed. The form asks questions about the grant project and project impact solely to assist staff in the decision-making process. Please know that this form is designed to serve the various types of requests that come to DSWC, however not all questions may be relevant to your proposal. All completed request forms will be considered. Requestors should submit the form and all associated inquiries to the DSWC Grants Manager. The DSWC Grants Manager will consult with Division programmatic staff who will review the request and make a recommendation to the Division Director to approve or deny the letter of support or in-kind match request based upon its water quality benefits, compatibility with VACS fund utilization requirements, programmatic compatibility and in-kind match funding balances. Once a decision is made, the DSWC Grants Manager will send a letter of commitment or denial signed by the DSWC Division Director. This letter will be sent via email to the applicant grant manager, unless otherwise requested. A copy of this letter will be maintained by both DSWC and DCR Finance.

DCR looks forward to partner opportunities to leverage state cost share funding for additional water quality improvement.