

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 7 of Chapter 2 of Title 2.2 a section numbered 2.2-220.3, relating to land conservation practices; information management.

[S 346]

Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 7 of Chapter 2 of Title 2.2 a section numbered 2.2-220.3 as follows:

§ 2.2-220.3. Development of strategies to collect land use and conservation information.

The Secretary of Natural Resources, with assistance from the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, shall establish and maintain a database of the critical data attributes for onsite best management practices implemented in the Commonwealth that limit the amount of nutrients and sediment entering state waters. The database shall document voluntary actions taken by the agricultural and silvicultural sectors and should enable the application of the collected data towards projections of progress towards Virginia's water quality goals by sharing the data with the appropriate federal or state agencies. To the extent possible or appropriate, the database shall (i) be uniform in content and format to applications in the other states of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, (ii) maintain the confidentiality of information, and (iii) use existing methods of data collection including reports to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency, soil and water conservation districts, and localities for the purpose of land use valuation. Any information collected pursuant to this section shall be exempt from the Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.).

2. That the Secretary of Natural Resources, by November 1, 2010, shall submit a report to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee on the establishment of the database and associated costs and responsibilities for its long-term maintenance.

3. That an emergency exists and this act is in force from its passage.