

Procedure for Conducting Division of Natural Heritage, DNH Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluations using the Conservation Application Suite

Districts are responsible for completing and retaining DCR Natural Heritage Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species search documentation for acreages affected by Best Management Practices installed or implemented through the VACS Program. These evaluations will be referred to as a “DNH Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species (RT/E) Evaluation”. While it is required that a RT/E Evaluation be conducted when a BMP is being installed with state financial support (either cost-share or tax credit), the impacts of BMP installation on RT/E species should be considered in **any planning process**. The RT/E evaluation procedure contained in this document applies when Districts are considering BMPs and associated components for either VACS funding or tax credit approval.

Users of the Conservation Application Suite will digitize the components of BMPs as they are planned. If these components are considered to be ground-disturbing, a spatial query will be run to identify any potentially impacted documented RT/E species within 100 ft of the ground-disturbing component and Natural Heritage predicted suitable habitat species models intersecting the ground-disturbing component. When a potential impact is identified, a review should be conducted by the Division of Natural Heritage (DNH). The following instructions are designed to aid the District user in the process of determination of a RT/E “hit” as well as in the creation of files and maps required for DNH review.

- The Conservation Application Suite contains a layer of generalized spatial RT/E data provided by DNH and predicted suitable habitat summary.
- When BMP components are digitized in the Conservation Application Suite, the user should generate a Resource Concerns Report by clicking on the Resource Concerns tab. The system performs a spatial query for any documented RT/E resources which fall within 100 feet of a ground-disturbing BMP component and/or predicted suitable species habitat models intersecting the ground-disturbing BMP component. The result of the query is documented in the spatial data section of the component on the Components tab and in the Resource Concerns Report.

If a potential impact is detected and a documented RT/E and/or suitable habitat species model “hit” is found on the Resource Concerns Report (as seen in the image below), a review by DNH should be initiated by submitting the project through the [Natural Heritage Data Explorer](#).

Department of Conservation and Recreation - Division of Natural Heritage

Rare Species and Natural Communities [Link to DCR Guidelines](#)

Site Name	Site Type	Site Description	B Rank	B Rank Significance
▶ SOURS RUN - RUNION CREEK - SHOEMAKE	SCU	Bedrock/boulder/rock bottomed rivers throu	B2	B2 - Very high

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Predicted Suitable Habitats [Link to DCR Guidelines](#)

Grid Code	Species Count	Species Common Name
▶ 816	1	Madison Cave Isopod
▶ 829	2	Madison Cave Isopod Wood Turtle
▶ 478	1	Wood Turtle

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The user must generate both a polygon shapefile and a USGS BMP location map to be submitted to DNH with the request for review. The Conservation Application Suite allows the user to generate and export a polygon shapefile “bounding” the ground-disturbing components as illustrated in the two images below.

DCR Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation

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Main Plans ASA Complaints Administration Reports Support My Account Welcome, jennifer.edwards Logout

Dashboard > Contracts > 09-20-0185 > SL-6W (ID: 380340)

Contract: 09-20-0185 (Cookie Monster)
 Practice: SL-6W: Stream Exclusion with Wide Width Buffer and Grazing Land Management
 Fields: none
 Acres in Practice: 0.00
 Grouping: Structural

General **Export Bounding Polygon of Ground Disturbing Components**
 Farms And Fields
 Measurements
 Map BMP
 Programs
 CEF
 Verifications
 Spot Checks
 Form Letters
 Payments
 Related Instances
 Resource Concerns
 Components
 Attachments
 Legacy Map

Save BMP

Linear Component Totals

Type	Planned	Computed	Actual Units
Fence (1)	Yes	1721.32	1721.32 Feet
Pipeline (4)	Yes	3993.67	3430.99 Feet

Components

Type	Required	Status	Calculated Measurement	Actual Measurement	
Fence #19520	Yes	Planned	1721.320 feet	1721.320 feet	Delete
Pipeline #19521	No	Planned	1497.320 feet	934.640 feet	Delete
Pipeline #19522	No	Planned	870.810 feet	870.810 feet	Delete
Pipeline #19523	No	Planned	1124.650 feet	1124.650 feet	Delete
Pipeline #19524	No	Planned	500.890 feet	500.890 feet	Delete
Water Well #8056	No	Planned			Delete
Water Well #8060	No	Planned			Delete
Watering Facility #8057	No	Planned			Delete
Watering Facility #8058	No	Planned			Delete
Watering Facility #8059	No	Planned			Delete
Watering Facility #8061	No	Planned			Delete

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Watering Facility #8058	No	Planned			Delete
Watering Facility #8059	No	Planned			Delete
Watering Facility #8061	No	Planned			Delete

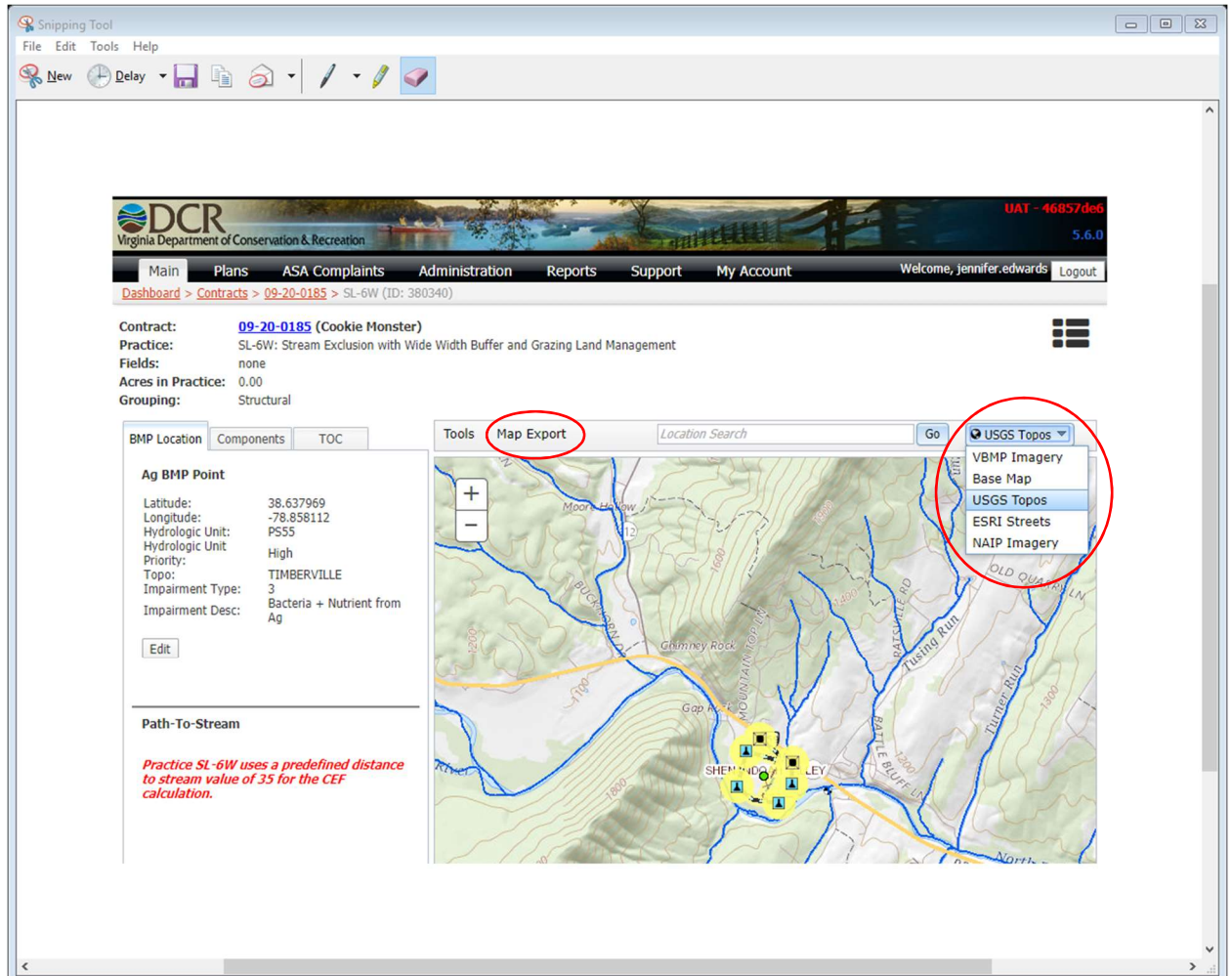
Export Bounding Polygon for All Ground Disturbing Components

This will export a bounding polygon representing the buffered extent for all ground disturbing components associated with the BMP.

Save to BMP as an Attachment

Export Cancel

- Next, the user should generate a USGS topo map showing the location of ground-disturbing components and the potentially impacted species.



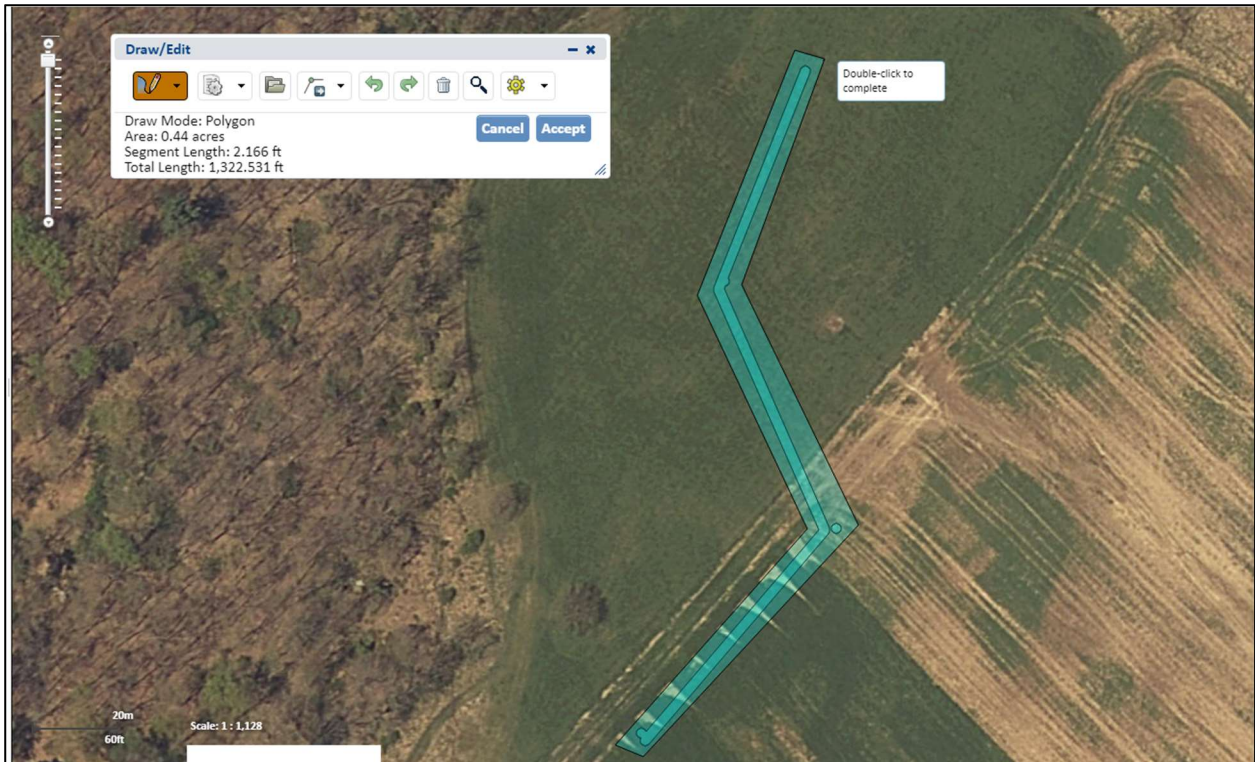
- The District user will upload the shapefile and attach the BMP map export when submitting a request for an environmental review via the [Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer](#). This review by DNH will also provide feedback regarding natural heritage resources including karst resources and recommendations for avoiding and minimizing impacts from the proposed BMP activities.

Uploading shapefile to Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer

When creating a project on the Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer and uploading the related shapefile, you may receive an error regarding multi-part polygons. If this is the case, you must use the toolbar within the Data Explorer to draw a single polygon encompassing all components in the project.

- On Map page, click Create Project. In the toolbar, click the folder icon labeled Upload Shapes. Choose your zipped shapefile that you downloaded. Click Accept.

- At this point, if you get an error regarding multi-part polygons, you must draw a single polygon containing all the separate components on the map. Click on the Draw Shape button and choose Draw Polygon. Draw a single polygon that encompasses all the components in the BMP. DO NOT draw a large shape. Draw this polygon as close to the existing shapes as possible. When you complete this polygon, your original components will become hidden, leaving only a single polygon. Click the Accept button once you have drawn the single polygon outlining your ground-disturbing components.



DNH Review Request

Requests for reviews should be submitted through the [Natural Heritage Data Explorer](#) website using the created shapefile and the attached BMP map in the instructions above. A response will be provided by DNH within 30 calendar days.

For questions about submitting a request to DNH, please contact Rene' Hypes, Project Review Coordinator at Rene.hypes@dcr.virginia.gov or (804) 371-2708.