## AAFM DRAFTED LANGUAGE H.525 – 5/3/2019 4/25/2019 AAFM PROPOSED CHANGES IN GRAY 5/2/19 COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OPTIONS IN YELLOW

1	* * * Soil Conservation Practice and Payment for Ecosystem Services Working
2	Group * * *
3	Sec. 4. SOIL CONSERVATION PRACTICE AND PAYMENT FOR
4	ECOSYSTEM SERVICES WORKING GROUP
5	(a) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall convene a Soil
6	Conservation Practice and Payment for Ecosystem Services Working Group to
7	recommend financial incentives designed to encourage farmers in Vermont to
8	implement agricultural practices that exceed the requirements of 6 V.S.A.
9	chapter 215 and that improve soil health, enhance crop resilience, increase
10	carbon storage and stormwater storage capacity, and reduce agricultural runoff
11	to waters. The Working Group shall:
12	(1) identify agricultural standards or practices that farmers can
13	implement that improve soil health, enhance crop resilience, increase carbon
14	storage and stormwater storage capacity, and reduce agricultural runoff to
15	waters;
16	(2) recommend existing financial incentives available to farmers that
17	could be modified or amended to incentivize implementation of the
18	agricultural standards identified under subdivision (1) of this subsection or
19	incentivize the reclamation or preservation of wetlands and floodplains;
20	(3) propose new financial incentives, including a source of revenue, for
21	implementation of the agricultural standards identified under subdivision (1) of
22	this subsection if existing financial incentives are inadequate or if the goal of

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1	implementation of the agricultural standards would be better served by a new
2	financial incentive; and
3	(4) recommend legislative changes that may be required to implement
4	any financial incentive recommended or proposed in the report.
5	(b) The Soil Conservation Practice and Payment for Ecosystem Services
6	Working Group shall consist of persons with knowledge or expertise in
7	agricultural water quality, soil health, economic development, or agricultural
8	financing. The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall appoint the
9	members that are not ex officio members. The Working Group shall include
10	the following members:
11	(1) the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee;
12	(2) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee;
13	(3) the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or designee
14	(4) a representative of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board;
15	(5) a member of the former Dairy Water Collaborative;
16	(6) a representative from the Farmer's Watershed Alliance at least three
17	farmer's watershed alliances;
18	(7) a representative from the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition;
19	(8) a representative from the Connecticut River Watershed Farmers
20	Alliance
21	(9) a representative of the Natural Resources Conservation Council;

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1	(10) a representative of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics of
2	the University of Vermont;
3	(11) a representative of the University of Vermont (UVM) Extension;
4	(12) at least two members of the Agricultural Water Quality Partnership;
5	(13) a representative of small-scale, diversified farming; and
6	(14) a member of the Healthy Soils Initiative.
7	(c) The Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee shall be the
8	chair of the Working Group, and the representative of the Vermont Housing
9	and Conservation Board shall be the vice chair.
10	(d) On or before January 15, 2020, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and
11	Markets shall submit an interim report that summarizes the progress of the
12	working group in preparing the report required by this section to the Senate
13	Committee on Agriculture and the House Committee on Agriculture and
14	Forestry. On or before January 15, 2021, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food
15	and Markets shall submit the final report required by this section including the
16	findings and recommendations of the Soil Conservation Practice and Payment
17	for Ecosystem Services Working Group regarding financial incentives
18	designed to encourage farmers in Vermont to implement agricultural practices
19	that improve soil health, enhance crop resilience, and reduce agricultural
20	runoff to waters to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the House
21	Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.

21 <u>Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.</u>