

Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

January 17, 2019

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

AgWG Conference Call

[Meeting materials](#)

Summary of Actions & Decisions

Please note: while limited Chesapeake Bay Program partnership meetings continued to be held, no partnership decisions could be made by any groups facilitated by the CBP during the partial federal government shutdown due to the absence of EPA and other federal agencies.

ACTION: The meeting minutes from the Nov 18th conference call were approved.

ACTION: In light of the retirement of Bobby Long, the AgWG welcomed Jay Marshall, DCR, as the new alternate signatory member for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ACTION: Please send At-Large member nominations to Loretta Collins (lcollins@chesapeakebay.net) cc: Allie Wagner (wagner.alexandra@epa.gov).

Welcome, introductions, roll-call, review meeting minutes

Workgroup Chairs

- Roll-call of the governance body
- Roll-call of the meeting participants
- Loretta Collins noted that due to the lapse in federal funding, the CBPO office is closed. Federal employees are not working, but grantees (UMD folks, staffers, etc.) are still working from home.
- ACTION: The meeting minutes from the Nov 18th conference call were approved.

Prioritization Update

Matt Monroe

The AgWG Chair updated the Workgroup on prioritization items.

Farm Bill Update

Marel King

Marel King, CBC, reviewed the relevant components of the 2018 Farm Bill passed by the U.S. Congress in December.

Implementation

- The new bill includes increases in funding and some changes in guidelines for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and CRP/CREP programs. Climate and soil health-smart provisions are embedded in language in EQIP and CSP programs.
- Marel King noted the legalization of hemp farming, there are mixed reviews on this from a conservation perspective.
- Matt Monroe: This Farm Bill is great news for the Bay Watershed.

- Marel King: We had a lot of support from our congressmen on this Bill.

Expert Panel Update

Expert Panel Chairs

Chairs and coordinator of on-going AgWG BMP Expert Panels provided progress updates.

Innovation

- Agricultural Ditch Management: The Chair, Ray Bryant from USDA-ARS, is furloughed causing a delay with this panel for now.
- Cropland Irrigation: The final draft report was sent out to the AgWG and posted to the website yesterday. There is a scheduled webinar/public meeting on January 24th. This meeting will most likely be postponed due to the partial federal shutdown. The requisite 30-day partnership review/feedback period will likely need to be extended, as well. Updated information will be shared with the partnership as soon as possible.

At-Large Nominations

Loretta Collins

Loretta Collins, UMD, discussed the nomination process for 2019-2020 AgWG At-Large Governance member vacancies.

- There are 6 vacant spots opening and we are hoping to have more than 6 nominees to have a variety of representation. The original deadline for nominations was January 18th, but due to the partial federal government shutdown, this deadline will be extended. Expect an email with an updated deadline.
- ACTION: Please send at-large member nominations to Loretta Collins (lcollins@chesapeakebay.net) cc: Allie Wagner (wagner.alexandra@epa.gov).

New Business

All

- New VA signatory representation.
 - Tim Sexton introduced Jay Marshall.
 - Tim Sexton will educate him on the model, expert panels, etc.
 - Clint Gill made a motion to approve, Frank Coale seconded.
 - ACTION: In light of the retirement of Bobby Long, the AgWG welcomed Jay Marshall, DCR, as the new alternate signatory member for the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- Briefing on federal government partial shutdown on AgWG and Chesapeake Bay Program
 - Thank you for your patience. The Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) in Annapolis is a federal office space operated by EPA and has been impacted by the partial federal government shutdown. The office has been closed since Dec 31st. Many of our federal partners are prohibited from engaging in any work-related functions. Many contractors with CBPO are also on furlough. Grantees, such as UMD & VT (and other universities) and CRC (employer of most CBPO staffers) continue to work, but must do so remotely. Access to some networks and technology operated from CBPO is not available.
- February meeting: The February meeting has been changed to a conference call, and the face-to-face meeting will be rescheduled in March.

- Jill Whitcomb noted that PA In the Balance, led by Penn State, is coming up in the beginning of February.
- Jeremy Daubert noted that dairy industry has been struggling. VA is down, and cow numbers are down nationwide. Unfortunately, there has been no turn around in the dairy market.
 - Matt Monroe: WV is down to few dairies as well.
 - Jeremy Daubert: The Farm Bill looks hopeful, but even with 80% cost share, dairies can't pay the extra 20%.

Next meeting: Conference Call on Thursday, February 21st, 2019, 10 AM - 12 PM

Meeting Participants:

Matt Monroe	WV DA
Loretta Collins	UMD
Allie Wagner	CRC
Clint Gill	DDA
Adam Lyon	MDA
Jill Whitcomb	PA DEP
Cindy Shreve	WV DA
Tim Sexton	VA DCR
Jay Marshall	VA DCR
Marel King	CBC
Frank Coale	UMD
Gary Felton	UMD
Jeremy Daubert	VT
Ken Staver	UMD
Paul Bredwell	U.S Poultry and Egg
Jeremy Hanson	VT
Mark Dubin	UMD
Emily Dekar	USC
Jim Cropper	Northeast Pasture Consort.
Ron Ohrel	Mid-Atlantic Dairy Assoc.
Tom Dunlap	VA SWCD