

October 21, 2015

Good Afternoon Program Partners,

The Chesapeake Bay Program's Principle's Staff Committee (PSC) has requested each of the partnership's program organizational bodies, including sector workgroups, to develop and submit for approval a consensus-based governance protocol to address potential partnership decisions where full support from all participants is not able to be obtained. Following the guidance provided by the PSC and the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT), the Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG) developed a draft consensus-based governance and membership structure, which was submitted to the WQGIT for review and approval. On October 13, 2015, the WQGIT approved of the submitted AgWG membership structure as part of the consensus-based governance protocol.

The approved governance membership structure for the AgWG consists of eight (8) signatory governance members with eight (8) alternatives representing each of the six (6) states, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and US EPA. A representative for Washington D.C. was not included as there are no significant agricultural lands within its boundaries. In addition, there are another twelve (12) at-large governance members representing five broad categories, bringing the total to 20 governance members.

The AgWG is currently seeking partnership nominations for the twelve (12) at-large governance members with identified alternates as per the workgroup's approved governance structure. The five broad categories of at-large representation being requested for nominations include academic, agri-business and agricultural industry, conservation districts, conservation and environmental non-governmental organizations, and USDA. In nominating representatives, the scope and purpose of the AgWG should be considered in selecting the best candidates for the selected positions.

AgWG Scope and Purpose

The charge of the Agriculture workgroup is to provide expertise and leadership on development and implementation of policies, programs, and research to reduce pollutant loads delivered from agricultural lands and animal operations to upstream waters and the Chesapeake Bay. The Workgroup reports to the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT). Functions include:

- Provide a forum for discussion, exchange of information, and evaluation between federal, state, and local agencies, conservation districts, universities, agri-business, and the corporate sector on sustainable and/or cost effective agricultural production systems that benefit water and air quality.
- Provide recommendations on the prioritization of federal and state technical and financial resources on specific practices in priority watersheds.
- Provide technical expertise and leadership to support the development and implementation of agricultural elements with the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, Watershed

Implementation Plans (WIPs), two-year milestones, and tracking and reporting mechanisms that support an adaptive management approach towards Bay restoration.

- Coordinate with the WQGIT's Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG) to identify, define, and incorporate pollutant reduction and conservation practices on agricultural lands and animal operation into the Chesapeake Bay Program decision support system. Provide data and support for the WQGIT and Technical and Support Services.

The nomination period for at-large governance members is now open, and nominations are requested to be submitted along with a short C.V., resume, or bio addressing the nominee's background in agriculture to Workgroup Coordinator Mark Dubin (mdubin@chesapeakebay.net) and Workgroup Staffer Lindsey Gordon (Gordon.Lindsey@epa.gov) by no later than COB November 6, 2015.

The Workgroup plans to confirm nominations for governance membership during their November 19th monthly conference call from 10 AM – 12 PM. All nominee information will be posted prior to the November 19th on the AgWG calendar event page, as they become available.

Please contact either Mark Dubin or myself if you have any further questions.

Regards,

Lindsey Gordon