

Agriculture Workgroup
Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2022
10:00 AM-12:00 PM
[Meeting Materials](#)

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Decision: The AgWG approved the [meeting minutes](#) from the August AgWG call.

Action: Reach out to Jake Reilly (jake.reilly@nfwf.org) with any questions about the NFWF Ag Networking Forum and/or Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction (INSR) Grants for 2023.

Action: A survey will be sent out to the AgWG voting membership (signatories + at large) to rank nominations for the Phase 7 Ag Modeling Team. Results will be confirmed at the October AgWG meeting.

Action: Reach out to Loretta Collins (lcollins@chesapeakebay.net) with any questions or comments on forage/winter cover presentation.

Action: Please review the [presentation and options on a path forward](#) concerning the May 2022 proposal for NRCS Soil and Water Conservation Practices. The AgWG will vote on a path forward at a future meeting.

Introduction

10:00 **Welcome, introductions, roll-call, review meeting minutes**

Workgroup Chair

- Roll-call of the governance body
- Roll-call of the meeting participants- *Please enter name and affiliation under "Participants" or in "Chat" box*
- **Decision:** Approval of [minutes](#) from the August AgWG call

Implementation

10:05 **2022-2023 Ag Networking Forum and INSR Grants (10 min)**

Jake Reilly

Planning is in motion for NFWF's watershed-wide networking forum in November. Jake Reilly, Director of Chesapeake Bay Programs, provided a quick update. NFWF is seeking proposals on emerging topics related to conservation efforts in the ag sector for the forum. Additionally, NFWF is seeking applications for [Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction \(INSR\) Grants for 2023](#).

Action: Reach out to Jake Reilly (jake.reilly@nfwf.org) with any questions about the NFWF Ag Networking Forum and/or Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction (INSR) Grants for 2023.

CBP Assignments/Data & Modeling

10:15 **Report out of August 29th Principals' Staff Committee Meeting (5 min)**

Kelly Shenk

The CBP Principals' Staff Committee met for a [special meeting on Aug 29th](#) to discuss a path forward for CAST-21. Kelly Shenk, EPA, reported on decisions and next steps.

Discussion

Ken Staver: So there are multiple attacks on this fertilizer question? Who will be doing what?

Kelly Shenk: The Management Board will discuss and decide that today.

10:20 **Agricultural Data Inputs (10 min)**

Tom Butler

Tom Butler, EPA, reviewed nominations for the Phase 7 Agricultural Modeling Team (AMT) and the confirmation/voting procedures.

Discussion

Leon Tillman: Single primary for USDA or is there consideration for separate agencies?

Tom Butler: It depends what the agwg votes on and decides.

Kristen Saacke Blunk: Only the voting members of the agwg will decide, correct?

Tom Butler: Yes, just signatory and at-large members.

Action: A survey will be sent out to the AgWG voting membership (signatories + at large) to rank nominations for the Phase 7 Ag Modeling Team. Results will be confirmed at the October AgWG meeting.

Accounting & Reporting

10:30 **PA Cover Crop Pilot Study (35 min)**

A. Cook, M. Dubin

Aaron Cook, PSU, and Mark Dubin, UMD, returned to the AgWG to further discuss the *Cover Crop Enhancement Pilot Project*. PA DEP is working with PSU to match existing data from producer surveys and roadside transect surveys to enhance tracking and reporting of cover crop implementation in PA counties. The process and preliminary findings were presented followed by discussion. A full analysis is expected for the October meeting, as well as an ask for consensus approval of the method from the AgWG.

Discussion

Jeremy Daubert: What time of year did you do the transect surveys?

Mark Dubin: One in the Fall after harvesting, and then one in late Spring.

Leon Tillman: Will this lend to improving verification for cover crops? Or is this just filling in data gaps?

Mark Dubin: We're looking at this in multiple ways. Opportunity for filling in data gaps but also for QA/QC of verification data.

Jeremy Daubert: Is this sustainable to do every year cost and capacity wise?

Mark Dubin: On the transect side, there's a budget in PA that goes towards this. We aren't hiring full time employees for this so it's typically cost effective. We plan to do a cost analysis of the process once we finish this to see if we can better automate the process as well.

Matt Royer: Nothing has been formalized yet about how often this would be done in PA. We'd have to talk with PA to confirm resources. I believe we're looking at doing this every other year in each county.

Mark Dubin: These two surveys are operating independently of one another. In the future we'd be looking at coordinating these two efforts.

11:05 **Forage Acres Updates (15 min)**

Loretta Collins

Loretta Collins, UMD, provided a review and next steps on the questions raised regarding forage acres representation in CAST and incentivizing winter cover on ag land uses.

Discussion

Dave Graybill (in chat): Loretta, I would be happy to chat on dairy systems and the fall crops planted for planned harvest in the spring. They are a more complex double crop situation because

of weather, soil types, manure handling, and manure storage options to name a few that are available to farms across the watershed.

Action: Reach out to Loretta Collins (lcollins@chesapeakebay.net) with any questions or comments on forage/winter cover presentation.

11:20 Crediting NRCS practices (20 min)

L. Tillman, V. Van Note

In [May](#), the AgWG endorsed proposed changes to the Phase 6 NEIEN appendix for select NRCS practices identified as mapping to Soil and Water Conservation Plans in the Phase 5 NEIEN appendix. The proposed changes would shift these practices from “draft” to “release” status so that they could receive pollutant reduction credit towards the TMDL. Final approval of changes in the NEIEN appendix was requested at the [August WTWG](#) meeting, however the WTWG expressed concerns related to the crediting of the individual practices. Leon Tillman, USDA-NRCS, and Vanessa Van Note, WTWG Coordinator, summarized WTWG feedback. Three options concerning a path forward were presented for AgWG consideration.

Discussion

[ShoreRivers \(in chat\)](#): FYI- 620 underground outlet has a recommended efficiency form the Ag Ditch Management Panel.

[Elizabeth Hoffman \(in chat\)](#): 620 and other Ag Drainage Management practices are reported in different units compared to when reported for cross walking to SCWQP (AC treated vs linear feet) so the specific efficiency would credit accordingly is how I understand.

Action: Please review the options put forward concerning the May 2022 proposal for NRCS Soil and Water Conservation Practices. The AgWG will vote on a path forward at a future meeting.

11:40 USDA/EPA BMP Crediting Task Force (10 min)

Leon Tillman

Earlier this year USDA [announced additional investments](#) in conservation assistance. Part of that investment will go to a new federal Task Force on Crediting Chesapeake Bay Conservation Investments. Leon Tillman, USDA-NRCS, provided a quick overview of the expected plan for the task force.

Discussion

[Greg Albrecht](#): Addressing aspect of efficiently counting but not double counting?

[Leon Tillman](#): We'll be keeping with scientific integrity and CBP decisions, not looking to circumvent the double counting issue.

11:50 New Business & Announcements (5 min)

- **Management Board Meeting Sep 15th** - Discussion on PSC CAST Recommendations from 2:15 – 3:15pm
 - [Meeting Webex Link](#)
 - Meeting Number: 120 002 2821
 - Password: cmGau8Vm6f3
- **Animal Mortality Expert Panel Technical Appendix**
 - Most recent draft technical appendix available [here](#)- CBPO working through revisions based on feedback. Update expected for October WTWG meeting.
 - Contact Jeremy Hanson (hansonj@chesapeake.org) with questions/comments.
- **ASA, CSSA & SSSA International Annual Meeting: Nov 6-9**

- Baltimore, Maryland
- More information here: <https://www.acsmeetings.org/>
- July 12 – Abstract submission deadline
- Oct 3 - Early registration deadline
- October 14 – Standard registration deadline
- **GIT Funding Project:** Mapping Pasture and Hay
- **CBP Press Release (9/14/22):** [Water quality throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed shows mixed results.](#)
- **Other Announcements?** - send to Jackie Pickford (Pickford.Jacqueline@epa.gov) for inclusion in “Recap” email

11:55 **Review of Action and Decision Items (5 min)**

12:00 **Adjourn**

Next Meeting:

Thursday, October 20: 10AM-12PM, Call-in Zoom

Meeting Participants

Jackie Pickford, CRC
Loretta Collins, UMD-CBPO
Jeremy Daubert, VT
Kathy Braiser, PSU
Clint Gill, DDA
Greg Albrecht, NY
Seth Mullins, VA DCR
Cindy Shreve, WVCA
Kelly Shenk, EPA
Leon Tillman, NRCS
Dave Graybill, Farm Bureau
Jenna Schueler, CBF
Ken Staver, UMD
Paul Bredwell, US Poultry & Egg
RO Britt, Smithfield Foods
Emily Dekar, Upper
Susquehanna Coalition

Tim Rosen, ShoreRivers
Matt Royer, PSU
Gurpal Toor, UMD
Mark Dubin, CBPO/UME is
Helen Golimowski, Devereux
Consulting
Cassie Davis, NYS DEC
Tom Butler, EPA CBPO
Kristen Saacke Blunk,
Headwaters LLC
Matt Monroe, WV Department
of Agriculture
Matt Kowalski- Chesapeake Bay
Foundation
Carlington Wallace - ICPRB
Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA
Ruth Cassilly-UMD CBPO

Leah Martino EPA Region 3
Karl Blankenship, Bay Journal
Lisa Beatty PA DEP CBO
Grant Gulibon, PA Farm Bureau
Kate Bresaw, PA DEP
Aaron Cook, Penn State
University
Alex Echols, Keith Campbell
Foundation for the Environment
Jennifer Walls, DNREC
Marel King, CBC
Lisa Duriancik, USDA NRCS
Vanessa Van Note, EPA/CBPO
Jeff Sweeney, EPA/CBPO
Lisa Duriancik, USDA-NRCS

****Common Acronyms**

AgWG- [Agriculture Workgroup](#)

AMT- [Agricultural Modeling Team](#) (Phase 7)

BMP- Best Management Practice

BMPVAHAT- [BMP Verification Ad Hoc Action Team](#)

CAST- [Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool](#) (user interface for the CBP Watershed Model)

CBP- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)

CBPO- Chesapeake Bay Program Office (houses EPA, federal partners, and various contractors and grantees working towards CBP goals)

CBW-Chesapeake Bay Watershed

CRC- [Chesapeake Research Consortium](#)

EPA- [United States] Environmental Protection Agency

NEIEN- National Environmental Information Exchange Network

NFWF- [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#)

PA DEP- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

PSC – [Principals’ Advisory Committee](#) (CBP)

PSU- Penn State University

STAC- [Scientific & Technical Advisory Committee](#)

TMDL- Total Maximum Daily Load

WQGIT- [Water Quality Goal Implementation Team](#)

WTWG- [Watershed Technical Workgroup](#)

UMD- University of Maryland

USDA-ARS- United States Department of Agriculture-*Agricultural Research Service*

USDA-NASS- United States Department of Agriculture-*National Agricultural Statistics Service* USDA-NRCS- United States Department of Agriculture-*Natural Resources Conservation Service*