

Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

Meeting Summary

January 30, 2014

9:30 AM to 2:30 PM

ACTION ITEMS & DECISIONS

DECISION: Members approved the 11/7 and 12/12 Agriculture Workgroup minutes.

ACTION: Emma Giese and Mark Dubin will share the WQGIT's draft governance with AgWG members at the February 13th meeting along with a clear process outlined for selecting the new AgWG chair.

ACTION: Curt Dell will work with Mark Dubin to develop some questions on the CEAP report for AgWG to request of NRCS representatives.

ACTION: The Poultry Litter Subcommittee will provide their report to AgWG members once all members are in agreement on the report content.

ACTION: The Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee requested AgWG members help identify additional sources of soil test data and crop uptake efficiency information to guide the subcommittee's next steps. Send recommendations to Curt Dell, Matt Johnston and Emma Giese.

ACTION: Mike Stanton (MDA) will coordinate compilation of the high priority interim BMPs from each state's WIP. The compiled list will be provided to AgWG members for review by Feb 6th.

ACTION: Roy Hoagland and Marel Raub will assist Mark Dubin in finalizing the verification guidance document before the February 13th meeting.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. AgWG Meeting Minutes

- Frank Coale, Agriculture Workgroup Chair, introduced the draft minutes from the November 7 and December 12, 2013 workgroup meetings held at the USDA BARC Log Lodge for review and approval.
 - VA motion, MD second to approve both sets of minutes.

DECISION: Members approved the 11/7 and 12/12 Agriculture Workgroup minutes.

3. Agriculture Workgroup Nomination Update

- After over four years of serving as the chair of the Agriculture Workgroup, Frank announced his decision during the December workgroup meeting to step down as chair in early 2014 once a new chair has been selected.
- Frank reviewed the list of nominees.
- How will the workgroup vote on the new chair?
 - Chair: the workgroup attempts to work by consensus, however some situations require a vote.
- Recommend using an anonymous poll to narrow the field of candidates.
- The WQGIT will be discussing governance guidelines at their February 10th meeting, which will apply to workgroup decision making.
- Mark and Emma will have either a survey or a voting protocol prepared at the beginning of the February 13th meeting.
- What is the term of chairmanship?
 - Currently there is no term limit; however the workgroup can choose to establish term guidelines.

ACTION: Emma Giese and Mark Dubin will share the WQGIT's draft governance with AgWG members at the February 13th meeting along with a clear process outlined for selecting the new AgWG chair.

4. USDA CEAP Report Update

- Frank discussed plans to schedule a special partnership meeting with USDA on the latest Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) report. There has been no response from NRCS yet.
- Recommend setting this meeting up soon.
- Recommend developing some questions to ask of NRCS, so that they have a clearer outline of what they are being asked to present.
 - Curt Dell will develop some questions and circulate amongst the workgroup
- Suggest Gary Shenk be available at this meeting to respond to questions about the comparison between CEAP and the Bay Model.

ACTION: Curt Dell will work with Mark Dubin to develop some questions on the CEAP report for AgWG to request of NRCS representatives.

5. Agricultural Management Plans Subgroup Update

- Dave Kindig, AMPS Chair, provided an update on the activity of the subgroup in developing a verification protocol recommendation for agricultural management plans.
 - The subgroup has begun going line by line through the revised matrix and come to group consensus on which verification methods management plans will be eligible for.

- Members noted that some of the BMPs listed at the top of the matrix, may change based on expert panel recommendations.

6. Manure Treatment Technology Subgroup Update

- Emma Giese: The Manure Treatment Technologies subgroup has met twice since their last update to AgWG.
 - They have considered recommendations from AgWG and are working to further define and rank the categories of manure technologies as suggested.
 - They will be meeting next in early February.

7. Ag Functional Equivalent Recommendation Report Update

- Emma Giese: The FE technical review panel held their first conference call yesterday afternoon.
 - Materials are being mailed to panelists for their review. An in person discussion will be held to review the manual line by line in March.
- PA: Why was the nomination period for this panel extended?
 - Based on recommendations from AgWG to have district representatives and others on the panel.
- The panel members are posted on today's calendar page.

8. Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee

- Curtis Dell, Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee chair, updated the workgroup members on AMS recent activities and progress.
 - AMS is continuing to review sources for fertilizer data.
 - AMS has developed an initial draft of Phase 6.0 agricultural land uses
 - AMS has a tight timeline in order to finalize all recommendations for Scenario Builder.
- PA noted the added complexity with more land uses to choose between.
- AgWG members agreed with the approach to land uses presented by the Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee.
- Dana requested that AgWG members assist AMS with sources for soil test data and crop uptake efficiencies.

ACTION: The Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee requested AgWG members help identify additional sources of soil test data and crop uptake efficiency information to guide the subcommittee's next steps. Send recommendations to Curt Dell, Matt Johnston and Emma Giese.

9. Poultry Litter Subcommittee Report Update

- Jim Glancey, Chair of the Poultry Litter Subcommittee, provided an update on the subcommittee's development of a draft recommendation

report on model data inputs for representing commercial poultry production in the CBP models.

- TetraTech and the subcommittee have reviewed the draft PLS report.
- A revised draft based on comments from the jurisdictions will be available on Monday, and the committee will meet next Wednesday to discuss the revisions.
- A draft for review will be available for the February 13th AgWG meeting.
- The subcommittee will be asked to approve the report prior to submission to the AgWG.
- Once the subcommittee is finished with the report, AgWG will discuss at a workgroup meeting. There will be concurrent review with the independent review panel at the same time. The independent review is expected to take one month. Comments from independent review and from AgWG will be provided back to the subcommittee for them to address. Then the report will move through the partnership approval process.

ACTION: The Poultry Litter Subcommittee will provide their report to AgWG members once all members are in agreement on the report content.

10. Virginia Tech Technical Assistance Priorities

- Frank announced the new technical assistance resource from Virginia Tech soon to be available to the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership, including the Agriculture Workgroup and its panels and subcommittees. The Virginia Tech assistance will supplement and enhance that already being provided by Tetra Tech to the partnership.
- AgWG and the other workgroups have been asked to submit priorities to be considered for VT assistance. Frank reviewed the AgWG existing BMP priority list, and asked for recommendations from the workgroup on how to proceed.
 - MDA noted that there's no way to credit manure injection/incorporation, which is currently listed among the priorities. Recommend revisiting the priorities.
 - Recommend revisiting the interim BMPs in jurisdictional WIPs to determine the high priorities.
 - Recommend an outside panel of experts to review the accuracy of data in the model.
 - Recommend starting with a list of BMPs in the WIPs
 - WV: The Agricultural Stormwater management BMP, in the current queue is important to WV.
 - CBC: Recommend that sediment data for cover crop expert panel be a priority.

- Recommend that sediment loss modeling in cover crop systems be a priority.
 - Recommend inventorying agricultural practices in the WIPs and compare with the existing recommendations to determine the priorities
 - MD: Recommend focusing on the BMPs with existing data, so that the panels have data to inform their recommendations.
- Frank requested a few volunteers to put together a list of interim BMPs in the state WIPs. Any overlapping practices are most likely high priority.
 - The list will be compiled in a few days for group review.
 - Mike Stanton from MDA volunteered to contact each state for their top WIP priorities. The top priorities will be compiled and shared with AgWG members.

ACTION: Mike Stanton (MDA) will coordinate compilation of the high priority interim BMPs from each state's WIP. The compiled list will be provided to AgWG members for review by Feb 6th.

11. Agricultural BMP Draft Verification Guidance

- Frank presented the new draft verification guidance matrix and supporting documentation based on the recommendations received from the partnership's independent BMP Verification Review Panel. The new draft verification guidance package incorporates the previous protocol elements formerly proposed by the workgroup with the panel review modifications, and retains a to-be-determined section for addressing the management plan BMP category. The recommended guidance for this category is being developed separately by the Agricultural Management Plans Subgroup (AMPS).
- Additional content is needed to complete the verification guidance. Frank requested a few volunteers to work with Mark to finalize the draft verification guidance document.
 - Roy Hoagland and Marel Raub volunteered.
- Dana reminded the group that the verification review panel provided specific feedback to the AgWG on how to present the information.

ACTION: Roy Hoagland and Marel Raub will assist Mark Dubin in finalizing the verification guidance document before the February 13th meeting.

Lunch

12. Homeowner BMPs

- Tom Schueler, Urban Stormwater Workgroup Coordinator, presented on behalf of the workgroup their proposal for crediting Homeowner BMPs.
- MD: Would the verifiers have to be trained, what would the minimum qualifications be?
 - Tom: The recommendation requires trained individual to perform verification. Certification requirements are being developed.
- Recommend consulting these reports when AgWG considers functional equivalents and verification. Some of the concepts are applicable, such as the concept that the BMPs with the largest load reductions should be the most verified.

Adjourned

Participants

Frank Coale, UMD
Kristen Saacke-Blunk, Headwaters LLC
Matt Ehrhart, Stroud Water Research
Marel Raub, CBC
Steve Taglang, PA
Jack Meisinger, USDA-ARS
Patty Engler, NRCS
Lindsay Dodd, MD Association of Soil Conservation Districts
John Rhoderick, MDA
Mike Stanton, MDA
Dana York, Green Earth Connection
Emma Giese, CRC
Kim Snell-Zarcone, Conservation PA
Curt Dell, ARS
Bill Angstadt, DMAA
Hank Zygmunt, Resource Dynamics
Greg Sandi, MDE
Olivia Devereux, Devereux Environmental Consulting
Jim Baird, American Farmland Trust
Connie Musgrove, UMCES
Fred Samadani, Environmental & Water Resources Management Consulting
Robert Baldwin, DNREC
Tim Sexton, VA-DCR
Dave Kindig, VA-DCR
Chris Brosch, VT-VADEQ
James Davis-Martin, VA-DEQ
Steve Dressing, TetraTech
Tom Schueler, Chesapeake Stormwater Network
Roy Hoagland, Hope Impacts
Jim Glancey, UD