

BMP Verification Ad-Hoc Action Team

Meeting Agenda

August 13th, 2021

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Meeting materials: [link](#)

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Decision: The BMPVAHAT approved the July [meeting minutes](#).

Action: Vanessa Van Note, EPA, will verify the decision made in the WTWG about the inclusion of CTA practices in the CAST model and distribute the information to the group.

Action: Vanessa Van Note, EPA, will determine what process currently exists for approving verification approaches and reach out to the jurisdictions to identify what information needs to be clarified.

Action: Please email Vanessa Van Note (VanNote.Vanessa@epa.gov) with any additional information on what jurisdictions have done to address capacity building obstacles (outside of self-certification from farmers, remote sensing projects, and statistical sampling) **by COB Friday, September 3rd**.

Action: Please email the BMPVAHAT leadership by **COB Friday, September 3rd** (VanNote.Vanessa@epa.gov; Elliott.Kellner@mail.wvu.edu; jason.keppler@maryland.gov; pickford.jacqueline@epa.gov) if you have information about extending credit duration of grass buffers, would like to request a next step for this item, or have requests for how the MD data should be analyzed.

Welcome, Introductions, Roll Call, Jason Keppler, MDA (Co-Chair)

- Welcome & Roll Call of participants
- **Decision:** The BMPVAHAT approved the July [meeting minutes](#).
 - [James Martin](#) asked for an update about the CTA Action Item from the July meeting. [Olivia Devereux](#) mentioned that CTA has always been reportable, states just have to make sure it's not reported in other sources to avoid double counting.
 - **Action:** Vanessa Van Note, EPA, will verify the decision made in the WTWG about the inclusion of CTA practices in the CAST model and distribute the information to the group.
- **Announcement** – Back-Out and Cut-Off due to Land Use Update from WTWG, *Vanessa Van Note, WTWG Coordinator*
- **Announcement** – Wetland Restoration, *Vanessa Van Note (Coordinator)*
- **Announcement** – Decision to extend the credit duration of Forestry Practices, *Sally Claggett, USGS*
 - [James Martin](#) suggested bringing the entire original recommendation to the WQGIT and presenting the concerns raised. If there's disagreement at the WQGIT, then solely focus the decision on the practices that we really need. [Lisa Beatty](#) requested that the concerns raised by the group are backed up with data.

- **Announcement** – Compiling Solutions to Verification Challenges Effort, *Vanessa Van Note (Coordinator)*
- **Announcement** – Offline Conversations to assist in elevating the data sharing issue, *Vanessa Van Note (Coordinator)*
- **Announcement** – Next Meeting's Agenda Item, *Vanessa Van Note (Coordinator)*
- **Next Meeting: Friday, September 10th, 9:00 am to 11:00 am**

A Broader Programmatic Discussion, All.

The group continued their discussion from last month focusing on the broader programmatic issues of verification. The following questions were addressed: *How have states overcome the challenge of not being able to locate NRCS/federally funded practices? Should states be responsible for federally funded practices? Which BMPs are the most difficult to locate? What are the proper channels for these discussions that have not already been identified?*

Link to Jamboard:

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1BSSfqOH4B-EINx7WU0rdQhBdVWQIDhsGBoLur7Ipk84/edit?usp=sharing>

Discussion

James Martin: The issue is not the type of practices or how the practices are grouped, but rather, that most states have aggregated data for most of those practices. The issue is about whether the practice is annual or nonannual. The non-annual are the ones that we can't find because the data is aggregated.

Vanessa Van Note: I understand. I also want to see if every practice within the aggregated data is an issue for every state, or if some states have different ways to address specific practices within the aggregated data.

James Martin: I think the finding and reporting of state practices are an entirely different issue than federally funded practices and data sharing.

Lisa Beatty: I agree. If we're putting effort towards solving federal funded issues with NRCS and stuff, then listing practices is kind of a tertiary work. The real issue is that we don't know where they are, not what type of practices they are.

Federally Funded BMP Challenges

James Martin: In VA we don't have issues with annual NRCS practices because they don't require outyear reverification. Our issue is with any multiyear practice that requires outyear verification.

Alana Hartman: I will add that Access Control and Fencing is an entirely different category. Those practices are cumulative, not annual. We can't count them in the first place because we don't know if they're installed near a stream, so it's kind of a different level of not knowing the data.

Jason Keppler: You bring up a good point that only a subset of those practices are actually eligible for reporting through NEIEN. Not being able to distinguish between perhaps interior fencing or non-stream inclusion fencing if the federal data simply reports 382, which is the generic fencing standard. Also an ongoing issue is that supporting practices are reported as well. NRCS practice codes are bundled together and in essence we could get double or triple counting of environmental benefit because of how those are categorized.

Vanessa Van Note: Alana, for WV, do you not have as much problem with the annual NRCS practices?

Alana Hartman: Yeah I'd say that's true. As long as we can just report what NRCS told us happened that year then we're okay. I agree with James that we should focus on cumulative practices.

Alana Hartman (in chat): Delayed answer to Vanessa's introductory questions on this topic: here are the "cumulative" (not "annual") NRCS-reported (aggregated) BMPs that WV receives from Olivia and that WV actually reports, and that WV would NOT be able to verify & keep in the model once their lifespan is reached: LAND BMP TAB: Prescribed Grazing

LAND BMP TAB: Roof Runoff Structure

LAND BMP TAB: Streambank and Shoreline Protection

LAND BMP TAB: Tree/Shrub Establishment

LAND BMP TAB: Watering Facility

ANIMAL BMP TAB: Heavy Use Area Protection

ANIMAL BMP TAB: Waste Storage Facility (Poultry, Livestock)

FSA TAB: CP22 Riparian Buffers

(we do have a different method to gather more locationally-specific FSA riparian buffer data; have sometimes been able to gather more locationally-specific data on the Waste Storage Facilities as well)

Vanessa Van Note: Jason, how would the double counting happen? Because they're bundling or because they're reporting separately?

Jason Keppler: There could be a primary practice that's installed and a number of supporting practices that go along with it. Olivia might be able to explain better.

Olivia Devereux: What tends to happen is the Bay Program counts every practice on the ground. NRCS tracks via conservation needs. NRCS would have a waste management system, liquid solid waste separator and maybe a few other practices that make up the system. So all of those get mapped separately to the Bay Program as animal waste management system, and get counted as four, when it really was all part of one conservation need or one system. From the NRCS side, they know what the components are as the main practice, but it doesn't translate to the Bay Program because we're counting items on the ground.

Jason Keppler: Verification could certainly help clean that data up and potentially prevent double/triple counting.

Kate Bresaw: PA would agree that the issue is really those cumulative practices, anything that's not an annual practice.

Clare Sevcik: DE agrees with that.

Vanessa Van Note: I know forest buffers are a big issue in DE, are there other practices?

Clare Sevcik: There are others too, but riparian forest buffers and grass buffers are probably our biggest ones. We don't have the point data for these practices.

James Martin: In VA, I think one of the reasons NRCS installed forest buffers are high on the list that are high dropping out are because we've hit the 10 year anniversary of the CREP program. So we had a huge amount of forest buffers installed and then now they're all dropping out because of the 10 year credit duration.

Vanessa Van Note: Alana, in WV, you mentioned you don't have as big of an issue with CREP buffers.

Alana Hartman: Instead of using the aggregated report (the first tab), we use the FSA tab with the CP22 practice on it. Or we have also been using a reporting form that the counties fill out when they submit their monthly reports and they put how many acres of buffers installed. We've been using that to track CREP buffers. Then we enlisted the help of FSA to give us more details. So as long as we have help from them, it's helped a lot.

Olivia Devereux: What other BMPs does WV track outside of USGS data?

Alana Hartman: Animal waste management systems. Not sure we'll be able to keep doing that. The only reason we could find those is because we had good relationships with the producers. It was a one time effort.

Olivia Devereux: I think the real solution is working on data sharing agreements to better manage these practices. Maybe between state agencies within a state.

State Funded BMP Challenges

James Martin: With state funded practices, we have the data and know where the practices are so we're able to verify them. But it does require additional manpower/resources, so the biggest challenge is one of capacity-building to accelerate implementation and, in contrast, to ensure previously installed practices are able to be verified. Trying to strike the balance between resources put towards implementation vs reverification. We don't have enough resources to do both to the extent that we want.

Lisa Beatty: We have the same issue in PA. Even our Chair 3 and 4 counties writing their county-wide action plans (CAPs), they don't have the manpower to go out and re-verify these practices. They continually ask for assistance with that, be it financial or logistical to help with the actual on the ground TA.

Clare Sevcik (in chat): Delaware also faces a similar issue. We do not have the manpower and must rely on the implementing partners to go out and verify.

Vanessa Van Note: Has any state found a way around this issue of manpower? Producer-driven type surveys, or remote sensing?

James Martin: In VA, we tried to implement a statistically based sample approach to assess failure rate/verification, but ran into challenges with data reporting in that case. Instead, we're still using a random draw of practices as a sample and reporting it as a practice by practice basis. So the practices that aren't picked are likely to fall out of the system.

Jason Keppler: How would jurisdictions be able to report that statistical approach to NEIEN? Let's say 80% of the practice still meets the standard. How would they show that 20% of those were not reportable?

James Martin: If you had a 100 acres of the practice, you would report 80 acres of the practice still in place and 20 not in place. So you'd apply that statistical finding, the 20% failure rate, to every practice in that universe of practices. You'd report both the passing fraction and failure fraction of each BMP. Which raises issues with the BMP identifier, but that gets into database issues. Olivia might be able to explain better.

Jason Keppler: So that would be the jurisdiction's responsibility to adjust the numbers when they submit? Not the Bay Program?

James Martin: Right. We'd include failure rates with each of the practices in our QAPP. Then the Bay program would apply those failure rates to the data when they move it from NEIEN to CAST. It wasn't a viable option as I recall.

Matt English (in chat): The statistical approach can also lose geographic resolution since you don't know where BMPs are still functional.

Dana York: We talked about farmers being able to self-certify or have TA people do the certification. Has that happened in any states?

James Martin: The closest example I could think of is the PA Farmer Survey. We tried to replicate that in VA. We gather data from farmers through online or mailed surveys and use that data, once spot-checked, as reportable BMPs regardless of when they were installed.

Lisa Beatty: The BMP framework doesn't give detailed information on things like remote sensing. So if we wanted to start doing that, it would have to go through the Bay Program to get approval before

we do that. We don't want to spend the time, effort, and money to implement remote sensing if the Bay Program won't accept it.

James Martin: Has the partnership even decided what the acceptable confidence interval or some other kind of standard? Until we know what standard our data is held to, how do we set up those standards?

Ted Tessler: There were standards in the TetraTech white papers as a result of PA's survey work. The AgWG looked at those over/underdetection rates and Mark Dubin helped us with that.

Lisa Beatty: But it hasn't moved forward beyond that. Any state would be wary to implement a program when there is no guidance on specifications.

James Martin: I think the fear is that if we set standards, then they need to be applied consistently. There are a lot of other inputs beyond our data that go into our models.

Dana York: I thought developing a methodology for verification is something that this group would do.

Rebecca Hanmer (in chat): In discussion of remote sensing: FWG has given priority to assessing when forest/trees can be detected reliably by remote sensing (Iris Allen's work-MD DNR) -- for the purpose of remote sensing as THE verification method for grown trees/forest. So you first have to establish practices that can be assessed reliably by remote sensing. Could that be a task of this group?

Norm Goulet: I thought the state verification programs were entirely up to the state, they would include it in their QAPP and then EPA/Bay Program would approve it. That's what VA did with the statistical analysis. Why wouldn't that be applicable now?

James Martin: That was the original verification plan reviewed by that initial group. Dana York and others in that group reviewed each of the jurisdiction's original verification plans. QAPP documents what you're doing, but I don't think it is intended to make requests for new approaches. Lisa was saying that it seems like a lot of work to develop a plan like that for it to ultimately be rejected. Having some guidelines and standards for framing that out might be a good effort from this group or another.

Norm Goulet: I agree with that.

Vanessa Van Note: Have any states successfully submitted remote sensing as an alternative or new approach to verification?

Jason Keppler: MD has been using remote sensing for our cover crops and it's worked out really well for us and our staff. We've been partnering with USGS and USDA to develop processes that will help us with verification. But it's just for an annual practice, not a structural practice.

James Martin: So you're eliminating the initial inspection then? Not the verification inspection?

Jason Keppler: Right.

James Martin: That makes sense. The challenge is classifying how it was planted, when it was planted, fertilized, etc.

Jason Keppler: Absolutely. It does require additional elements.

Dana York: I agree that EPA should definitely be hands-on about what is acceptable.

Vanessa Van Note: I was hoping that MD could walk us through how you got that approved as part of your program?

Jason Keppler: We started this process in 2007/2008. We haven't requested approval from EPA. We just intend to update our QAPP to let them know what we're doing. Our partners have given multiple presentations to the partnership, including the AgWG.

Vanessa Van Note: Can PA explain the process they went through for the producer survey/what the development looked like for that?

Mark Dubin: Through the AgWG, we worked with TetraTech and did analysis reports on a number of cover crops implemented by the partnership. One of those was the Potomac watershed remote

sensing pilot white paper, which got approval from the AgWG. There were also specific white papers produced in the AgWG where we developed some confidence levels for jurisdictions to use for remote sensing.

Ted Tessler: For the Potomac pilot, the issue was that NRCS held that data and we got aggregated reports. And it had to replace everything in our data set, so it kind of dumbed down our data.

Vanessa Van Note: Has there been a state that has submitted a new approach that has been rejected after putting time/resources into it?

Mark Dubin: Through the AgWG there has been a number of suggestions/pilots there. Penn State producer survey. I can't think of anything that was denied though. Everything has been in a cooperative nature, just making adjustments through partnership review.

Ted Tessler: We were only able to report 5 practices from that work unfortunately.

Norm Goulet: From a USWG perspective, anything new on verification would come from the expert panel that works on the BMP. It gets a little more complicated in the urban sector when it comes to regulated vs unregulated urban practices. But the EP process incorporates the requirement for verification needs. USWG hasn't looked at verification of existing/current BMPs that I can remember.

Curtis Dell (in chat): Originally, EPA (Rich B.) planned to organize a panel of stats experts to advise states and evaluate any statistical sampling states planned to use for data they report. Sounds like this probably didn't happen.

James Martin (in chat): @Curtis that did happen. VA statistical design and standards were reviewed and endorsed by the statistical experts.

Emily Dekar (in chat): I believe that NY's statistical sampling process was also endorsed by EPA.

James Martin (in chat): But, like the original Verification Review Panel, the statistical support experts have since sunsetted.

Rebecca Hanmer (in chat): FWG changed its RFB verification technical guidance in 2018 -- to relate verification more to USDA contract administration processes for determining RFBs are planted, and are being maintained. This revision was in response to State issues with access to USDA-funded practices, as discussed today. The revised guidance was adopted by the FWG and sent to the WQGIT for its approval.

Vanessa Van Note: Maybe we can work as a group to standardize the approval process. My only concern is that everything up to this point is the source sector purview. The BMPVAHAT did not alter the purview or the guidance from the source sectors. Up until this point, I thought the process was going through the source sector and then submitted to the QAPP for EPA review. Mark, is there any kind of identified process for approval to make sure that they aren't wasting time or resources on projects that might be rejected?

Mark Dubin: My understanding was that the source sector WGs were the key entity in promoting or reviewing verification methods. From the ag side, we have brought up a lot of options and provided guidance.

Lisa Beatty: I'm hearing both that it's up to the states to create their verification program and report it in the QAPP, but also hearing that we want preapproval for the verification methods. Can EPA provide some written guidance on this before we start a new verification path? We're collaborating with you, but collaborating with a reviewing entity needs to be clear. EPA/CBP is a reviewing entity that can reject our submissions so if there's not clear expectations then it causes issues.

Vanessa Van Note: Norm, are you saying that QAPPs don't need to be reviewed?

Norm Goulet: No, the QAPPs are reviewed by EPA. There are two paths - which is dependent on if we're talking about existing or new BMPs. New BMP verification guidance is included through an expert panel process. For existing BMPs - the method by which you are verifying gets complicated. There has been no clear guidance on how that happens. My suggestion was to put it in your QAPP and that's how it would be approved.

Lisa Beatty: I'm asking for clearer expectations.

Jeff Sweeney: The BMP Verification Framework document explains all of this. It outlines how to go about submitting a different approach to verification.

James Martin: I don't think it's very clear in the document.

Jason Keppler: Maybe we can make this a separate agenda item for a future meeting.

Norm Goulet (in chat): If it is a partnership document can the partnership change the document

Lisa Beatty (in chat): Like we said at the beginning of this process jurisdictions have the BMP framework needs to be reviewed, digested at a higher level, and if needed be amended. When is this process going to happen?

James Martin (in chat): I think the answer to Norm's question is YES, the Partnership may revise, change, or cancel the Verification Guidance. But the decision would require consensus up through the PSC.

Note: On August 24th, 2021, Pennsylvania provided additional notes to clarify their perspective on the Broader Programmatic Discussion. See "[Additional Notes](#)" below.

Action: Vanessa Van Note, EPA, will determine what process currently exists for approving verification approaches and reach out to the jurisdictions to identify what information needs to be clarified.

Action: Please email Vanessa Van Note (VanNote.Vanessa@epa.gov) with any additional information on what jurisdictions have done to address capacity building obstacles (outside of self-certification from farmers, remote sensing projects, and statistical sampling).

Partial/Diminishing Credit, *Vanessa Van Note, EPA, Coordinator, All.*

The group did not have time to discuss partial/diminishing credit. Further discussion will happen offline in preparation for the September meeting.

Note: On August 24th, 2021, Pennsylvania provided additional notes to clarify their position on Partial/Diminishing Credit. See "[Additional Notes](#)" below.

September Decision Requested: The BMPVAHAT will be asked to vote to develop an official report/proposal for Partial Credit.

Introduction to Grass Buffers, *Vanessa Van Note, EPA, Coordinator.*

The "Grass Buffers Credit Duration Discussion" PowerPoint was presented to the group. The presentation included arguments for and against the extension of the credit duration for grass buffers. A decision will be requested at the September meeting.

September Decision Requested: The BMPVAHAT will be asked to vote on the extension of the credit duration for grass buffers.

Discussion

Lisa Beatty (in chat): If the WQGIT approves the increase the Forestry WG's recommendation and other work groups from increasing buffers credit duration from 10 years to 15 years, then will the CREP or other federal buffers that states do not know their location credit duration will also be extended from 10 to 15 years?

Jason Keppler (in chat): Lisa, yes that is my understanding.

James Martin (in chat): What do you mean when you say "Reported" is that what Jurisdictions report to NEIEN, what is submitted through NEIEN to CAST, or what is credited in CAST?

Sally Claggett (in chat): Since 2008 and again in 2014, CBP has recommended that grass buffers have efficiencies reviewed. Review of Riparian Grass Buffers was tagged on to expert panels for forest buffers and did not receive sufficient treatment per se.

James Martin: Were these inspections in year 11 or year 11-50? How old were the practices inspected here?

Jason Keppler: Elizabeth might be able to answer that better. I think it's independent of the life span of the BMP. If partnership is interested, we can further categorize the data based on age.

Elizabeth Hoffman: The majority of these that are beyond their credit life have installation dates in the 1999-2001 range.

James Martin: I wonder if the inconsistency in compliance inspections can be related to the date it was installed. I do think if the goal is using this data to decide credit durations, then we need to look at it by year rather than by practice.

Matt English (in chat): I agree with James that knowing the age of these practices impacts this decision. My decision is different if 36% of BMPs are meeting standards at 11 years vs 36% meeting standards at 25 years.

Alana Hartman: How hard is it to find the acres that were reported?

Elizabeth Hoffman: They work with the district for location. They have access to really good data.

Alana Hartman: Do you think there were ever fences? There are other grass buffers that would be counted as exclusion with grass buffers, which would probably be more obvious, right?

Elizabeth Hoffman: We have the exclusion with grass buffers tracked separately, so those aren't shown here.

Gary Felton: Of those 2500 practices inspected, had all of them already exceeded their credit duration?

Elizabeth Hoffman: Yes.

Matt English: Looking at this data makes me wonder about partial credit after 10 years and whether it would be helpful for folks that don't have that resolution of data.

Vanessa Van Note: Matt, what do you think is the greater benefit of partial credit as opposed to just extending the credit duration?

Matt English: I think it would be more accurate.

Norm Goulet: This group has argued that the contract duration should be the credit life, and now it seems we're arguing something different.

Vanessa Van Note: Does anyone want to add a compelling reason for why we should consider extending the credit duration of these practices?

Lisa Beatty: Is this a decision that we want to bring to the AgWG? Or we don't want to continue to pursue this?

Vanessa Van Note: Any decision we make would go to WQGIT, not the AgWG. But we still want feedback from the AgWG if they have any. Elliott and I went to the AgWG last month and we got little to no feedback at all.

Lisa Beatty: Within our group we should think about if we want to a) pursue this further to the GIT b) leave it as is or c) ask AgWG for input?

Loretta Collins: I would propose tabling this discussion to the next meeting.

James Martin: I haven't heard anyone step up to advocate for this change. Who is advocating for this change?

James Martin: I will also raise the concern of backing out this BMP and the LU data picking up this grass buffer. It's more of a WTWG issue though.

Ruth Cassilly (in chat): Would it be an option to extend the RI practice credit durations to 10 years to coincide with the NRCS practices, since it seems that the RI practices show a relatively high rate of retention?

Action: Please email the BMPVAHAT leadership by **COB Friday, September 3rd** (VanNoteVanessa@epa.gov; Elliott.Kellner@mail.wvu.edu; jason.keppler@maryland.gov; pickford.jacqueline@epa.gov) if you have information about extending credit duration of grass buffers, would like to request a next step for this item, or have requests for how the MD data should be analyzed.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting Chat

From Norm Goulet to Everyone: 09:11 AM

My concern is not limited to Urban

From Alana Hartman, WVDEP to Everyone: 09:19 AM

Question about "compiling solutions to verification challenges effort," announcement: is that ongoing, or did a deadline pass for providing input?

From Ted T to Everyone: 09:28 AM

PA has a pilot project with USGS and NRCS to explore CTA practice reporting.

From VANESSA VANNOTE to Everyone: 09:29 AM

I will follow up on this with you, Ted.

From Me to Everyone: 09:33 AM

Link to Calendar Page:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/bmp_verification_ad_hoc_action_team_conference_call_august_2021

From Clare Sevcik (DNREC) to Everyone: 09:49 AM

Delaware also faces a similar issue. We do not have the manpower and must rely on the implementing partners to go out and verify

From Matt English (DC) to Everyone: 09:58 AM

The statistical approach can also lose geographic resolution since you don't know where BMPs are still functional

From Me to Everyone: 10:01 AM

Link to Jamboard:

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1BSSfqOH4B-EINx7WU0rdQhBdVWQIDhsGBoLur7lpk84/edit?usp=sharing>

From Alana Hartman, WVDEP to Everyone: 10:05 AM

Delayed answer to Vanessa's introductory questions on this topic: here are the "cumulative" (not "annual") NRCS-reported (aggregated) BMPs that WV receives from Olivia and that WV actually reports, and that WV would NOT be able to verify & keep in the model once their lifespan is reached: LAND BMP

TAB: Prescribed Grazing

LAND BMP TAB: Roof Runoff Structure

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FSA TAB: CP22 Riparian Buffers

(we do have a different method to gather more locationally-specific FSA riparian buffer data; have sometimes been able to gather more locationally-specific data on the Waste Storage Facilities as well)

From Rebecca Hanmer to Everyone: 10:08 AM

In discussion of remote sensing: FWG has given priority to assessing when forest/trees can be detected reliably by remote sensing (Iris Allen's work-MD DNR) -- for the purpose of remote sensing as THE verification method for grown trees/forest. So you first have to establish practices can be assessed reliably by remote sensing. Could that be an task of this group?

From Curtis Dell to Everyone: 10:20 AM

Originally, EPA (Rich B.) planned to organize a panel of stats experts to advise states and evaluate any statistical sampling states planned to use for data they report. Sounds like this probably didn't happen.

From James Martin to Everyone: 10:22 AM

@Curtis - That did happen. VA statistical design and standards were reviewed and endorsed by the statistical experts.

From Emily Dekar - Upper Susquehanna Coalition to Everyone: 10:23 AM

I believe that NY

NY's Statistical Sampling Process was also endorsed by EPA

Sorry - hit enter before I was done typing.

From James Martin to Everyone: 10:23 AM

But, like the original Verification Review Panel, the statistical support experts have since sunsetted

From Rebecca Hanmer to Everyone: 10:24 AM

FWG changed its RFB verification technical guidance in 2018 -- to relate verification more to USDA contract administration processes for determining RFBs are planted, and are being maintained. This revision was in response to State issues with access to USDA-funded practices, as discussed today. The revised guidance was adopted by the FWG and sent to the WQGIT for its approval.

From Norm Goulet to Everyone: 10:35 AM

If it is a partnership document can the partnership change the document

From Lisa Beatty, PA DEP to Everyone: 10:35 AM

Like we said at the beginning of this process jurisdictions have the BMP framework needs to be reviewed, digested at a higher level, and if needed be amended. When is this process going to happen?

From James Martin to Everyone: 10:40 AM

I think the answer to Norm's question is YES, the Partnership may revise, change, or cancel the Verification Guidance. But the decision would require consensus up through the PSC.

From Lisa Beatty, PA DEP to Everyone: 10:40 AM

If the WQGIT approves the increase the Forestry WG's recommendation and other work groups from increasing buffers credit duration from 10 years to 15 years, then will the CREP or other federal buffers that states do not know their location credit duration will also be extended from 10 to 15 years?

From Jason D Keppler -MDA- to Everyone: 10:41 AM

Lisa, yes that is my understanding

From James Martin to Everyone: 10:42 AM

What do you mean when you say "Reported" is that what Jurisdictions report to NEIEN, what is submitted through NEIEN to CAST, or what is credited in CAST?

From sally claggett, usfs to Everyone: 10:49 AM

Since 2008 and again in 2014, CBP has recommended that grass buffers have efficiencies reviewed. Review of Riparian Grass Buffers was tagged on to expert panels for forest buffers and did not receive sufficient treatment per se.

From Matt English (DC) to Everyone: 10:55 AM

I agree with James that knowing the age of these practices impacts this decision. My decision is different If 36% of BMPs are meeting standards at 11 years vs 36% meeting standards at 25 years.

From Alana Hartman, WVDEP to Everyone: 10:56 AM

thanks for letting me ask basic questions - it's so interesting to know how people are succeeding in verifying and gathering data!

From Ruth T. Cassilly to Everyone: 10:59 AM

would it be an option to extend the RI practice credit durations to 10 years to coincide with the NRCS practices, since it seems that the RI practices show a relatively high rate of retention?

From Loretta Mae Collins to Everyone: 11:02 AM

I have to depart. Please keep Gary Felton and I in the loop regarding what comes of this discussion.

From Ruth T. Cassilly to Everyone: 11:03 AM

will do

From Norm Goulet to Everyone: 11:03 AM

agree

From sally claggett, usfs to Everyone: 11:03 AM

Buffers.

Participants

Jackie Pickford, CRC

Vanessa Van Note, EPA/CBPO

Jason Keppler, MDA

Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting

Loretta Collins, UMD/CBPO, AgWG Coordinator

Emily Dekar, Upper Susquehanna Coalition

Cassie Davis, NYSDEC

Lisa Beatty, PA DEP

Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA

Alana Hartman, MDP

Jennifer Walls, DNREC

Jeff Sweeney, EPA

Gary Felton, AgWG Chair

Mark Dubin, UMD

Jess Rodriguez, DoD/CBP
Clare Sevcik, DNREC
James Martin, VA DEQ
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Jennifer Starr, LGAC
Jess Rigelman
KC Filippino, HRPDC, co-chair LUWG
Sally Claggett, USFS
Clint Gill, DDA
Kate Bresaw, PA DEP
Norm Goulet, NVRC, Chair USWG
Ruth Cassilly UMD
Rebecca Hanmer, Chair Forestry WG
Dana York, Green Earth Connection
Matt English from DC present
Curt Dell, USDA -ARS
Ted Tesler, PA DEP

Additional Notes

8/24/2021 - PA Addendum to the Meeting Minutes

A Broader Programmatic Discussion - The group will continue their discussion from last month focusing on the broader programmatic issues of verification.

- How have states overcome the challenge of not being able to locate NRCS/federally funded practices?
 - Pennsylvania developed a geo-spatial centralized database, PracticeKeeper, to assist our conservation district staff with documenting and tracking existing and new implementation. Since there are Section 1619 provisions, and since conservation districts are cooperators with NRCS, they have been guided by DEP, with concurrence from the NRCS state office, to have the landowner sign the records release form when conservation district staff are documenting conservation plans and BMPs implemented with NRCS financial or technical assistance. Additionally, the conservation district staff who have job approval authority (JAA) from NRCS, are viewed like NRCS, so they must follow all federal rules and regulations, including NRCS standards, when implementing BMPs.
- Should states be responsible for federally funded practices?
 - No. However, if state funds are put toward practices (either through technical assistance or for cost-share of the project), those practices should be tracked by the state. In some cases, practices are put in place using multiple sources of funds, which could include NRCS dollars as well.
- Which BMPs are the most difficult to locate?
 - All of those funded by NRCS and not with any state dollars attached, which is, essentially, any structural agriculture practice.
- What are the proper channels for these discussions that have not already been identified?

- The Cooperative between USGS, NRCS, and EPA.

Partial/Diminishing Credit

PA previously voted Yes for the BMP Verification Ad Hoc to pursue partial credit, with the following additional comments:

- BMP Verification Ad Hoc Committee main time spent on the previously identified challenges surrounding the 1619/NRCS issues.
- Presentation of a science based methodology for partial credit.

Partial credit is a temporary solution to long-term challenges of the 1619 issues.