

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM LAND USE WORKGROUP

Conference Call Meeting Summary

August 21, 2017

10:00AM-11:00AM

Meeting Materials:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/land_use_workgroup_interim_conference_call_august_21_2017

ACTION: Peter Claggett will provide the LUWG with information on the breakouts of acreages by state that will be affected by the proposed changes to the Phase 6 land use turf grass classification. Workgroup members should contact Peter Claggett (pclagget@chesapeakebay.net) with questions as soon as possible.

If workgroup members have a major objection to implementing the changes, they need to note this before the September 1 deadline, preferably via email to Lindsey Gordon, Peter Claggett and Karl Berger.

Call Overview:

Karl Berger noted that this call was arranged quickly on a very tight schedule to address this issue by a deadline of Sept. 1. After going through a roll call, he noted that the workgroup would not be making an official decision on Peter Claggett's proposed revision to the turf classification scheme because too few members were able to participate.

Minimizing Over-classification of Turf Grass – P. Claggett, USGS

Mis-labelling and/or mis-interpretation of local land use data have caused the misclassification of herbaceous lands within some large parcels as 100% turf grass. Rules agreed to by the LUWG, Federal Facilities Team, and WQGIT for large federal lands and parks (>1000 acres) have also caused the classification of large extents of herbaceous lands as 30% turf grass (50% turf grass on federal lands and parks between 10-1000 acres) which jurisdictions have raised concerns about. Overall, the classification of herbaceous lands as part turf grass on federal lands and parks only represents less than 1% of all turf lands (~200,000 acres / 3.2 million acres).

During this call, Peter Claggett will present an approach that will minimize the misclassification of herbaceous lands as turf grass, classifying them instead as either cropland, pasture, or mixed open. The method involves imposing different reclassification rules on contiguous patches of turf grass within and outside Census Urban Areas & Urban Clusters.

Discussion:

- Concerns were raised about the over-classification of turf grass in the Phase 6 land use. Because of decision rules for herbaceous lands at the parcel level, parcels with very large areas may be mis-classified as turf grass. As such, errors in turf grass classification are primarily manifested as large, contiguous, patches that are classified as 100% turf grass. In total, 6% of the turf grass universe would be fixed using the proposed methodology.
- Karl Berger asked where the mis-classifications are clustered, geographically.
 - Peter Claggett replied that most are in PA and VA. Of 106,000 acres that are 100% turf grass (potentially mis-classified from land use), roughly 2/5 are in PA and 2/5 in VA.
- There are two proposed changes regarding turf grass:
 - **Change #1-** Agreement on a set of post-processing rules that apply to patches of 100% turf
 - **Change #2-** Amending federal parkland classification rules for herbaceous.
- Peter Claggett explained the proposed methods for **Change #1**: The turf grass areas that would be potentially modified are at least 20 acres of 100% turf grass, do not intersect golf courses, and are not sinuous strips of turf grass running through residential areas. In order to reclassify the turf to crop or pasture, the patches must intersect the NASS Cropland Data Layer; otherwise, they would get classified as mixed open. This method captures about 3% of turf grass. Fixes to this problem will primarily impact PA and VA.
- The other mis-classification is a result of rules implemented on federal lands. Peter noted that to address this mis-classification, the workgroup will have to consider a change in the model rules. Fixes to this issue will primarily impact West Virginia.
- Peter noted that unless there is individual inspection across the land use, commission errors will likely be present in the final dataset. However, the total acreage of these errors is quite small in the final product.
- The potential changes to land use would not affect MD counties in terms of the Watershed Model, except in instances where spatially explicit land use below the LRSEG scale is required.
- Karl Berger asked if any call participants had concerns on making the changes suggested by Peter Claggett with regard to large patches of 100% turf grass (**Change #1**).
 - Travis Stoe noted that he would like to discuss this issue further, but did not anticipate any significant objections being raised by PA.
 - Bill Keeling could not participate on behalf of VA, but cited concerns about changing the VA crop, pasture, turf, and mixed open classifications. Peter Claggett replied that these corrections would adjust changes that were implemented by the CBP model over top of VA's mapped data.
 - Norm Goulet asked why the CBP model over-rode Virginia classifications from the beginning? Peter replied that this was to maintain consistency in rules of the model, and that certain areas where parcels were residential were classified as crop even though they were not agriculture.
 - No other significant concerns were raised.

- Peter described the proposed changes to the federal parkland herbaceous classification method (**Change #2**). Initially, these lands were 50% turf and 50% mixed open for areas under 1,000 acres. For areas over 1,000 acres, herbaceous areas were 30% turf, 60% mixed open, and 5% each of crop and pasture. Peter noted that 30% of 1,000 acres of more was likely a severe over-estimation of the total amount of turf grass, and proposed an alternative:
 - For federal lands over 1,000 acres, assume the herbaceous is 85% mixed open, 5% turf grass, 5% crop and 5% pasture
 - For median properties (10-1,000 acres), reclassify to 30% turf grass and 70% mixed open.
 - Karl asked if these rules had been tested on federal properties where there is ground-truthed data. Peter replied that it would be difficult to do this analysis given time constraints.
 - Norm raised concern about completely eliminating turf from the federal lands, citing Quantico, which has a significant amount of turf grass on their facility.
 - Sebastian Donner agreed with Norm's suggestion, proposing leaving 5% turf grass in the largest federal facilities.
 - Discussion on the size of the impact to DC. George Onyullo requested information on how many acres would be affected by this change.
- These changes will produce new crop, pasture, turf grass, and mixed open datasets for the Phase 6 land use.
- Karl Berger asked about next steps. Peter replied that he will provide state-by-state breakouts of the acreages being changed with these methods, and what those acres will be changing to. This information will be provided by the end of this week (8/25/17). Peter will then brief the WQGIT on the proposed changes during their 8/28/17, and absent any significant objections, these changes will be implemented. Karl Berger noted that he does not believe a couple of days is sufficient for getting LUWG feedback on these changes, so the presentation to the WQGIT will not include an official recommendation from the workgroup, which he will note in an email to WQGIT chair James Davis-Martin.

ACTION: Peter Claggett will provide the LUWG with information on the breakouts of acreages by state that will be affected by the proposed changes (#1 and #2) to the Phase 6 land use turf grass classification. Workgroup members should contact Peter Claggett (pclagget@chesapeakebay.net) with questions as soon as possible.

-If workgroup members have a major objection to implementing the changes, they need to note this before the September 1 deadline, preferably via email to Lindsey Gordon, Peter Claggett and Karl Berger.

Next meeting:

Wednesday, September 6th – Face-to-Face 10:00 – 3:00 PM
Joe Macknis Memorial Conference Room ('Fish Shack')
Chesapeake Bay Program Office
410 Severn Avenue Annapolis MD 21403

Participants:

Name	Affiliation
Karl Berger	MWCOG
Peter Claggett	USGS
Lindsey Gordon	CRC
George Onyullo	DC DOEE
Lori Brown	DE DNREC
Shannon McKenrick	MDE
Steve Stewart	Baltimore County MD
Rob Hirsch	Baltimore County MD
Travis Stoe	PA DEP
Justin Shafer	Norfolk City VA
Sebastian Donner	WV DEP
KC Filippino	HRPDC
Norm Goulet	NVRC