

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](mailto: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](mailto: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 2020 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](mailto: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 29<sup>th</sup> Principals' Staff Committee Meeting (5 min)**

Kelly Shenk

The CBP Principals' Staff Committee met for a [special meeting on Aug 29<sup>th</sup>](#) 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](mailto: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 2020 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 15<sup>th</sup>** - 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](mailto: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*