

Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

Meeting Summary

December 11, 2014

9:30 PM to 3:00 PM

4-H Center College Park, MD

Calendar Page: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/S=0/calendar/event/21229/>

ACTIONS & DECISIONS

DECISION: Agriculture Workgroup members approved the November 6th, and November 13th meeting summaries. The November 21st meeting minutes will be approved next month with suggested edits.

ACTION: AgWG members will encourage potential applicants to submit proposals for the Virginia Tech RFP for performing agricultural land use loading rate non-published data literature search.

DECISION: AgWG members approved the proposed method for Phase 6.0 agricultural expert panels. The strawman proposal will be filled out in more detail based on the AgWG's 12/11 recommendations.

ACTION: The University of Maryland AgWG technical support position announcement will be shared with the AgWG members as soon as it is posted.

DECISION: The Agriculture Workgroup will hold quarterly face-to-face 2 day meetings in 2015, with monthly conference calls scheduled in between. The meeting schedule and locations will be shared with the workgroup once dates and venues are confirmed.

MINUTES

1. Welcome, Introductions, Review Meeting Minutes

- The Agriculture Workgroup Co-Chairs introduced the draft minutes from the November 6th and November 13th workgroup meetings for review and approval.
- VA motion to approve the November 6th joint conference call minutes
 - MD second.
 - There were no objections.
- VA motion to approved the November 13th working meeting minutes
 - NGO second.
 - There were no objections.
- The November 21st meeting minutes will be approved next month with suggested edits.

DECISION: AgWG members approved the November 6th, and November 13th meeting summaries. The November 21st meeting minutes will be approved next month with suggested edits.

2. Workgroup Updates

- The workgroup Co-Chairs reviewed workgroup updates:

- Cover Crops Expert Panel Report Approval
 - Conservation Tillage Expert Panel Report Approval
- Nutrient Management Expert Panel Report. Chris Brosch met with WQGIT and AgWG chairs to talk about possibility of amending the report to reach consensus on Tier 2. Agreed to hold three months of meetings in 2015, to further elaborate on the report. A new panel would be convened to develop Phase 6.0 recommendations.
- MASCD recommend outlining the process for comments moving forward.
- Chair: One piece of the discussion was to have the communications office help with the communication so that the Expert Panel can focus on their recommendations.
- Brosch noted that there wouldn't be much duplication of effort. The 5.3.2 work will help build toward Phase 6.0 work. Panel may subdivide Tier 1 and Tier 2 into different components in Phase 6.0 for example. Both the 5.3.2 and the Phase 6.0 panel will have a new clear charge with specific questions to answer.

3. Virginia Tech Project Updates

- Jeremy Hanson, Virginia Tech Project Coordinator, reviewed the [RFP](#), which was released on December 8th for performing a literature search for non-published agricultural data and research reports. The effort will assist Tetra Tech in identifying references for the development of Phase 6.0 land use loading values.
- Jeremy noted that this effort is on a parallel track as the TetraTech work, and the two efforts will have slightly different timelines.
- The stakeholder meeting with the new Manure Treatment Technologies Panel, is scheduled for December 15th near Baltimore. More information is available at: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/22245/>

ACTION: AgWG members will encourage potential applicants to submit proposals for the Virginia Tech RFP for performing agricultural land use loading rate non-published data literature search.

4. STAC Response Letter

- Mark Dubin, Workgroup Coordinator, reviewed a proposed letter of response to the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). STAC has contacted each of the CBP workgroups who have previously utilized STAC financial support for workshops and conferences, to provide a description on how the findings are being incorporated into the workgroup's decision making and actions.
- Frank asked whether the workgroup would rather have the response letter from the current chairs.
- Workgroup members decided to keep the letter with Frank Coale's name because he was the chair at the time the STAC letter was written.

5. Agricultural Assistant Position Update

- Mark will provide an update on the development of a new agricultural assistant position recently funded by EPA to provide additional support to the workgroup and its BMP expert panels.

- Some funding will be available to support travel for guest speakers. Some funding will also be available to support the BMP Expert Panels.
- Once the position announcement is available, it will be shared with AgWG members for distribution.

6. Delaware's Crop Residue Transect Survey

- Based on the lack of current information to correctly report acreages of agricultural Conservation Tillage and the new High Residue BMP, federal, state and local agencies with the assistance of the University of Delaware launched a new crop residue transect survey in early 2014. Marcia Fox and Tyler Monteith with DNREC gave an overview of the new project, the results of the 2014 survey, as well as future plans to expand the survey for cover crops.
- Recommend seeking grant funding for other states to help them launch similar programs.
 - Workgroup members suggested an application to USDA-NIFA.
- Is DE able to share their software with other states?
 - Yes, the software is free.
- Recommend DE conduct economic analysis of this project.

Lunch

7. Milestones Update

- Jeff Sweeney discussed the impacts that the 2012 Census of Agriculture data will have on milestones and progress. View Jeff's write-up [here](#).
- Has the yield data been updated as well?
 - That has not been part of our protocol until now. AgWG can consider whether they would like to make a recommendation to update yields.
 - CBPO will run the effect of updating yield data and share the results with the AgWG.

8. Expert Panels Phase 6.0

- At the recommendation of Jack Meisinger, Cover Crops Panel Chair, the workgroup recommended the formation of an ad hoc subgroup during the November 13th workgroup meeting. The subgroup was charged to consider the suggestions provided by Jack and develop a comprehensive recommendation on the Phase 6.0 Expert Panel process for future and existing panels, including the Cover Crops, Conservation Tillage and Nutrient Management expert panels. Kristen reviewed the [subgroups' discussions and recommendations](#) for workgroup consideration.
- Jeremy noted that the list of panelists in this proposal does not exactly match what is called for in the BMP protocol.
 - Chair: We will clarify the panelist list to match the BMP protocol.
- Chris Brosch recommended that AgWG members talk about who would serve on the subgroup, and how potential panel member expertise would be evaluated by that subgroup.

- Jeremy Hanson noted the importance of identifying a panel chair at the early stage, so that they can build their team of panelists.
- Brosch: It will be important to discuss engagement with panel nominees to ensure good participation.
- Brosch: Note that there does not need to be full jurisdictional participation on the expert panels. Get widespread expertise instead.
- Chair: The subgroup recommended that discussions of implementation would take place at a public stakeholder engagement session.
- Jeremy Hanson: How many panels' travel costs might be supported under the new UMD agreement? Just thinking ahead about what the capacity might be once the new Co-Coordinator is on board and everything is in place.
- Brosch: Motion to approve this proposal for Phase 6.0 AgWG expert panels, understanding that following AgWG approval, a more formal write-up will be completed.
 - Larry Towle: Second.
 - There were no objections.

DECISION: AgWG members approved the proposed method for Phase 6.0 agricultural expert panels. The strawman proposal will be filled out in more detail based on the AgWG's 12/11 recommendations.

9. 2015 Agriculture Workgroup Meetings

- In order to maximize efficiency for all participants, the co-chairs of the Agriculture Workgroup propose quarterly two-day, face-to-face meetings in place of the current monthly schedule starting in 2015. For non-quarterly meeting months, abbreviated conference calls or webinars would be held to address time-critical action items.
- The [proposed face-to-face quarterly meetings](#) would be held in rotating areas of the Bay region that would maximize personal engagement in all states, and to the extent possible, provide as central a meeting location as possible. Quarterly meetings would better enable the workgroup to attract guest speakers, as well as enable field tours of new technologies, production management systems, or university research projects. It would also be an opportunity for the AgWG to improve communication and visibility across the agricultural sector, and potentially convene field-based meetings with producers and other stakeholders.
 - Note there are frequent meeting conflicts with other CBP meetings.
 - MASCD: Keep meeting locations as central as possible. Choose dates that match well with our major deadlines.
 - MDE: State employees need 3-4 week notice and a draft agenda to get travel approval, so set these up as far in advance as possible.
 - Check conflicts with the modeling workgroup, which also meets quarterly.
 - Workgroup members had no objections to a quarterly meeting schedule.

DECISION: The Agriculture Workgroup will hold quarterly face-to-face 2 day meetings in 2015, with monthly conference calls scheduled in between. The meeting schedule and locations will be shared with the workgroup once dates and venues are confirmed.

Adjourned

Participants

Member	Affiliation
Kristen Saacke Blunk (Co-Chair)	Headwaters LLC
John Rhoderick (Co-Chair)	Maryland Department of Agriculture
Mark Dubin (Coordinator)	UMD
Lauren Torres	Delaware Department of Agriculture
Jason Keppler	Maryland Department of Agriculture
Greg Albrecht	New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
Gary Flory	Virginia DEQ
Tim Sexton	Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Bill Keeling	Virginia DEQ
Chris Brosch	Virginia Tech/VADCR
Curtis Dell	USDA Agricultural Research Service
Jack Meisinger	USDA Agricultural Research Service
Glenn Carpenter	USDA NRCS
Susan Marquart	Pennsylvania NRCS
Emma Giese, Staff	Chesapeake Research Consortium
Jeremy Hanson	Virginia Tech
Jeff Sweeney	EPA
Kim Snell-Zarcone	Conservation Pennsylvania
Bill Angstadt	Delaware Maryland Agribusiness Association
Fred Samadani	Environmental & Water Resources Management Consulting
Roy Hoagland	Hope Impacts
Lindsay Dodd	Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts
Jim Cropper	Northeast Pasture Consortium
Frank Coale	UMD
Jack Frye	CBC
Steve Dressing	TetraTech
Robin Pellicano	MDE
Marcia Fox	DNREC
Tyler Monteith	DNREC
Ben Coverdale	DDA