

Draft Meeting Notes

Agriculture Workgroup Meeting

May 9, 2013

Chesapeake Bay Program Office

Annapolis, MD

AgWG Notes

- Meeting convened at 9:30
- Welcome and introductions
- Meeting Notes
 - AgWG April meeting summary was reviewed for member approval. NGO motioned to approve, second by MD, all yea.
 - **DECISION: Approve April AgWG minutes**

AgWG Notes

- **Poultry Litter Subcommittee update**
 - Jim Glancey, PLS Chair, provided an update on the progress of the panel in addressing comments from the workgroup on state level data for poultry litter nutrient concentrations, litter production volumes, and poultry population calculations.
 - MD: Are there recommendations for the 5.3.2 model and will population be part of them?
 - Glancey: Panel is working on the population question, the Ag modeling workshop may discuss this as well

AgWG Notes

- **Poultry Litter Subcommittee update**
 - Chair: When will the panel report be ready for AgWG approval?
 - Glancey: Depends on what the report will need to include
 - Coordinator clarified that the data templates will need to be part of the report
 - Chair: AgWG will help provide comments to the subcommittee and help them get report up for approval by the WQGIT

AgWG Notes

- **Poultry Litter Subcommittee update**
 - USDA noted that the 5.3.2 update is due soon, AgWG should give clear direction to the subcommittee for timely submission
 - MD requested a report template be provided to the subcommittee, so that they follow the correct format
 - Chair reviewed the next steps needed and timeline for the report to be approved by the partnership
 - **DECISION: PLS will present their first draft of recommendations at the June 13th AGWG meeting**

AgWG Notes

- **Poultry Litter Subcommittee update**

- Glancey: population recommendations would not likely be a part of this initial draft, would follow soon after
- Chair recognized the amount of work completed by the subcommittee
- DE: When will the PSC/EC find out about this report?
- Coordinator clarified that occasionally decisions move from WQGIT to Mgmt Board, however there may be presentations made to the Principal Staff Committee
- PLS meeting to be scheduled the first week of June.
- NGO: Noted the importance of communication with the public

AgWG Notes

- **Urban Stream Restoration Panel Update**
 - Mark Dubin, AgWG Coordinator, provided an update on the WQGIT review of the Urban Stormwater Workgroup's Urban/Non-Urban Stream Restoration panel recommendations which is on the agenda for the GIT conference call on May 13
 - The non urban recommendations will take effect for the Ag sector until Ag specific recommendations are developed

AgWG Notes

- **Cover Crops Panel update**

- Jack Meisinger, Panel Chair, provided an update on the progress of the panel, and discussed the panel's approach to developing recommendations for the Phase 5.3.2 modeling suite to meet the WQGIT 2013 approval timeline.
- PA: Should rye and wheat be combined if their efficiencies are similar enough?
- Meisinger: At this point rye has a higher efficiency than wheat
- Chair: Request that the panel report back at June AgWG meeting, and present the report in July

AgWG Notes

- **Conservation Tillage Panel update**
 - On behalf of Wade Thomason, Panel Chair, Mark provided an update on the progress of the panel, including the panel's approach to developing recommendations for the Phase 5.3.2 modeling suite to meet the WQGIT 2013 approval timeline.
 - MD: Why was stacking not allowed?
 - Coordinator: Panel discussing this issue currently. CNT will be addressed in panel's Phase 5 recommendations
 - MD: How will data collection and verification be addressed with this panel's recommendations?
 - Coordinator: Data collection and verification would not change at this time with phase 5 recommendations since a partnership approved method is not available. For Phase 6.0 newer verification methods that could be phased in are being discussed with the panel.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural Projection Methods**
 - Matt Johnston, NPS Data Analyst, presented the results of the jurisdictional selection on three potential options to develop short-term agricultural projection methods for both crops and livestock. Matt discussed the next steps in implementing the voted on double exponential smoothing method to support the jurisdictional 2015 Two-Year Milestones goal development and annual agricultural projections.
 - Projections are used both for progress and state's Milestones

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural Projection Methods**
 - MD: If states have production numbers could they be used instead of these projections?
 - CBPO: Intent is to count actual changes on the ground, not a change in how things are counted. If production numbers are calculated differently, there will be a jump in data that doesn't represent a change on the ground. If a state has agency data representing a change on the ground, the trend information can be used.
 - DE: How is specific data from the 5 year Ag census used?
 - CBPO: Crops and animal types by county.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural Projection Methods**
 - DE: Can the annual NASS reports be used?
 - CBPO: The current method is data by county and by animal and crop. The annual NASS data is represented by state scale vs. county. However, state level data representing a trend can be incorporated.
 - **DECISION: AgWG members approved the majority vote by the jurisdictions for the exponential smoothing short term forecasting method**
 - Coordinator noted that the disadvantage of not using the 2012 Ag Census data when available is that it would affect the Milestone goals.
 - CBPO clarified that goals are stated in pounds rather than percentage.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural Projection Methods**

- CBPO: Group is recommending that the Ag Census data be used starting in 2014, is the recommendation to adjust 2007-2012 data as well?
- Chair: If the data affects past interpolated data, it should be adjusted
- CBPO clarified that it is possible to change past data points, but not past progress reports.
- NGO noted the importance of using the best possible data, and to address the issue of not meeting a goal because the goal changed: better communication .
- NGO motion to recommend using 2012 Ag census data to full extent when available to guide the technical movements of the partnership, DE second. All yea.
- **DECISION: AgWG recommends using 2012 Ag census data to the full extent when it is available.**

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee**
 - Matt provided an update on the establishment of the new Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee under the oversight of the Agriculture Workgroup. The subcommittee will be providing technical modeling assistance to the associated panels, as well as to the workgroup for the Phase 6.0 model development.
 - A representative from NY has joined the group
 - Subcommittee will have their first meeting in June following the workshop

AgWG Notes

- **Building a Better Bay Model: A Workshop for Agricultural Partners**
 - Mark provided an update on the agricultural modeling workshop scheduled to be held on May 22-23, 2013 at the University of Maryland's College Park campus. **The event will support the implementation of the workgroup's top two priority lead MPA topics.**
 - Sector leads and facilitators are all now part of the planning group
 - Over 80 individuals have registered for the workshop, and early registration closes on Monday May 13

AgWG Notes

- Break for lunch

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Guidance**
 - Frank and Mark discussed guidance received from the BMP Verification Committee regarding the development of agricultural BMP verification protocols. The deliberations of the Committee's Transparency Subgroup concerning the definition of "transparency" when applied to NPS BMP verification was also discussed.
 - NGO: Raised concerns regarding changes to transparency document, noted that it does not represent group consensus at this time.
 - Coordinator clarified that the transparency definition applies to all nonpoint source practices (all non-permitted practices).

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Guidance**
 - NGO: Document should include requirement for a public review component.
 - Chair clarified that the intent was to allow review from any outside source.
 - **ACTION: Transparency definition: Change 'an' to 'any'**
 - NGO: Clarify whether transparency definition was intended to be Ag specific?
 - Chair: By request of the verification committee, the definition was adapted to apply across various nonpoint source sectors
 - NGO: Are other sectors represented?
 - Coordinator clarified that the subcommittee was formed with multiple sector representatives in mind.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Guidance**
 - Coordinator clarified the three levels: data collection, reporting and synthesis
 - **ACTION: Transparency definition: change ‘data generation’ to ‘data synthesis’**
 - NGO: Note that the subcommittee report should have consensus within the subgroup before being approved by AgWG.
 - NGO: Request that the sentence in background referring to Clean Water Act be clarified.
 - Chair: Sentence will be moved to emphasize that point sources are covered elsewhere and not addressed in this document.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Guidance**

- MD: What is independent QA/QC in the definition?
- Chair: An independent structure, internal or external
- PA: Recommend indicating that independent does not necessarily mean a third party.
- NGO: Recommend keeping the definition concise.

ACTION: Edits will be sent back to subgroup with 7 day review period, the subgroup will provide a consensus statement to the AgWG for approval

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Matrix**

- Frank led a partnership discussion on continuing the development of the draft agricultural BMP verification matrix based on the guidance received from the BMP Verification Committee.

ACTION: ‘Decision agriculture’ to be moved from ‘Management BMPs Practice’ to ‘Management BMPs Plans’

- USDA: Note that categories are not final, they will change as new BMPs are added
- Chair clarified that new BMPs will be added as they are approved

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Matrix**
 - For the (3 far right) columns; scientific defensibility, accountability and transparency, AgWG will define values based on each of the 4 types of BMPs.
 - Note that the matrix will be accompanied by additional documentation.
 - NGO: Request illustrative examples in the documentation.
 - NGO: Are the three far right columns necessary?
 - Coordinator: Purpose of the document is to provide the jurisdictions with guidance for developing programs, AgWG previously decided to include these additional definitions.

AgWG Notes

- BMP Verification Matrix
 - Coordinator recommended reconvening a small focus group to define values for scientific defensibility, accountability and transparency.
 - NGO: Is it possible for this to be completed within the same timeframe as the transparency subgroup?
 - Chair: Recommend moving both groups ahead in parallel.
 - NGO: When reporting back to the group include the rationale in addition to the matrix values.
 - NGO: Recommend presenting an updated version of the narrative along with the matrix values.
 - NGO: Should high/med/low be a yes/no instead?
 - Chair: For transparency could be a yes/no, scientific defensibility should be a scale.

AgWG Notes

- BMP Verification Matrix
 - NGO: Definition of ‘scientific defensibility’ should be complimentary to principle 2 (from steering committee) of scientific rigor.
 - **ACTION: Review the two definitions for compatibility**
 - **ACTION: Subgroup will meet to fill in the far right of the matrix.**
 - NGO: Record the rationale behind decisions.
 - Chair: Will be recorded.
 - NGO: 80% issue?
 - Coordinator: Will include in the support documentation.

AgWG Notes

- Chair: Roy Hoagland volunteered to chair the June 13th meeting when Frank will be absent.
(Note: Due to the AgWG meeting being later rescheduled to June 20th, Frank was available to Chair the meeting)
- Coordinator: Agenda will involve verification and panel reports

AgWG Notes

- Review meeting notes
- Adjourned at 3:00pm
- Next meeting June 13th, 9:30-3:00
 - <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/19183/>