

Draft Meeting Notes

Agriculture Workgroup Meeting

September 26, 2013

Log Lodge

Beltsville, MD

AgWG Action Items and Decisions

DECISION: AgWG Approved the August AgWG minutes

ACTION: The Cover Crop, Conservation Tillage and Nutrient Management Expert Panels will address all recommendations from today's discussion before the October 3rd meeting, which is when they will request final approval from the Agriculture Workgroup.

AgWG Action Items and Decisions

DECISION: MDA will move forward with writing a functional equivalent BMPs report, using the technical approach presented today, for review by the Agriculture Workgroup at an upcoming meeting.

DECISION: Chris Brosch, VT-VADEQ will be added to the membership of the BMP Verification Management Plans Subgroup.

AgWG Notes

- Meeting convened at 9:30
- Welcome and introductions
- Meeting Notes
 - AgWG August meeting summary was reviewed and approved by members.
 - **DECISION: Approve August AgWG minutes**

AgWG Notes

Meeting Management

- Frank discussed the management and purpose of the meeting, and recognize the members of the Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG) and representatives of other WQGIT workgroups invited to the meeting.

AgWG Notes

Expert Review Panel Report Review Process

- Mark Dubin, Agriculture Workgroup Coordinator, provided an overview of the partnership review process for the initial Phase 5.3.2 panel report recommendations. Each panel has identified areas of future work that they will be addressing in their upcoming Phase 6.0 recommendations. Therefore the recommendations presented today are intended to be interim.
 - Today's meeting will focus on the presentations from each panel as well as questions and answers from the audience.
 - The expert panels will address any recommendations from today's discussion before the October 3rd meeting, which is when they will be requesting final approval from this group.
 - They will present to the Watershed Technical workgroup on October 7th and the Water Quality GIT on October 15th.

AgWG Notes

Panel Report Presentations

- Coordinator: The three agricultural BMP expert review panel chairs, with assistance from the respective panel members and supporting staff, will provide in-depth presentations today on the interim draft recommendation reports for addressing Phase 5.3.2 CBP modeling modifications for 2013. The audience will be invited to ask questions, provide comments, and suggest potential adjustments after each panel presentation. All panel report recommendation decisions from the AgWG will be addressed during the October 3rd meeting of the workgroup.

AgWG Notes

Poultry Litter Subcommittee

- Mark provided a brief update on the development of poultry production data recommendations for consideration by the workgroup in late October.
 - The group met recently and is intending to provide their recommendations to the AgWG in October.
 - The data submitted will include litter volume and nutrient concentrations for broilers in several states
 - The report will also include an alternate method for calculating population on an annual basis.

AgWG Notes

Cover Crop Panel

- Jack Meisinger, Cover Crop Panel Chair, presented an overview of the panel approved report.
 - The cover crop panel has recommended the addition of new species, which will receive a nitrogen credit that will be calculated relative to rye.
- CBPO: Recommend listing the species of grass that are eligible for the legume + grass and forage radish + grass mixtures.
- DE: Will states be reporting the species of grass present in the mixture?
 - VA: Recommend giving states the option to report individual species.
 - Meisinger: A default value could also be defined.

AgWG Notes

Cover Crop Panel

- NGO: Has the panel considered an earlier planting date category?
 - Meisinger: The panel discussed the possibility of defining a late summer planting date for the next report.
 - It would be possible to establish an additional category for the earliest planting.
 - NGO: Recommend that other cover crops not necessarily change exactly as rye does.

AgWG Notes

Conservation Tillage Panel

- Wade Thomason, Conservation Tillage Panel Chair, presented the panel approved report.
 - The Panel recommends a high residue, minimum disturbance practice, with a minimum of 60% crop residue cover required.
 - This conservation tillage BMP is in addition to the existing conservation tillage BMP. It is a stackable version of continuous no-till, and does not replace the existing continuous no-till BMP.
- Recommend using CTIC method transect surveys or remote sensing to track this BMP

AgWG Notes

Nutrient Management Panel

- Chris Brosch, Nutrient Management Panel Chair, presented the panel approved report.
 - The Panel recommends changing nutrient management from a land use change BMP to an efficiency BMP.
 - The efficiencies assigned to Tier 1 of Nutrient Management are 5-9.25% for nitrogen and 8-10% for phosphorus. The higher number is for row crops and the lower number is for hay with and without manure, pasture, alfalfa, and nursery.
 - The Panel recommends that this BMP be reported annually as the number of active plans.

AgWG Notes

Nutrient Management Panel

- NGO: Recommend addressing the manure overspreading issue.
 - Brosch: The panel was unable to address this given the limitations of a Phase 5.3.2 update, could be addressed in the upcoming Phase 6.0.
 - DE: Recommend a quick resolution to this problem.
- MD: How will verification be addressed?
 - Brosch: The panel is open to suggestions regarding verification, however have not been charged with this task yet.
- Chris clarified that the panel is recommending states report their active plans on an annual basis.

AgWG Notes

Nutrient Management Panel

- NGO: Request that the sequencing for this BMP be explained to the group before asking for approval next week.
 - MDA: Request some examples of how the sequencing will work.
- NGO: What happens to the BMPs currently applied on the Nutrient Management land use
 - Brosch: They will be applied on non Nutrient Management acres.
- VA: Recommend keeping the order of BMP sequence as close as possible to how it is now (i.e. Nutrient Management BMP would be first in the sequence)

AgWG Notes

Nutrient Management Panel

- NGO: Recommend a better understanding of what the surface loss is.
 - CBPO: The model does consider both surface and subsurface loss.
- Coordinator noted that as of next week, only minor adjustments can be incorporated. Requests for major changes may exclude the reports from review
 - Brosch: All edits must go back to the panel.
 - Chair: Will distribute the second draft reports to everyone as soon as possible before the next meeting.

AgWG Notes

Maryland Agricultural BMP Assessment Update

- Dana York, Green Earth Connection, LLC, gave an update of the technical review of Maryland Department of Agriculture's functional equivalents as introduced during the July and August meetings.
 - MDA's format could be used by other states in the future to report functional equivalent practices.

AgWG Notes

Maryland Agricultural BMP Assessment Update

- NGO: Request clarification for why these functionally equivalent BMPs do not have to go through the same panel review process as other proposed BMPs.
 - Coordinator clarified that MDA will be submitting a written report, similar in scope to the other BMP panel reports, which will then need approval from the Agriculture Workgroup and the Watershed Technical Workgroup. In this case the Agriculture Workgroup can decide whether or not an expert panel is needed to address the issue.
 - Dana noted that most of the practices would be reported as conservation plans, not as individual BMPs.

AgWG Notes

Maryland Agricultural BMP Assessment Update

- NGO: Motion to create a small group to report back in one month whether to require functionally equivalent BMPs to have an expert panel or whether the AgWG can make the decision.
 - VA: Second.
 - 6 in favor, 11 against, 6 abstain.
 - Motion failed.

AgWG Notes

Maryland Agricultural BMP Assessment Update

- Dana: Motion to move forward with writing the report for review by this group, using the technical approach presented today.
 - NGO: Second.
 - CBPO: Note that states can count and report functionally equivalent BMPs without them being incorporated in the model until the partnership decides to approve or disapprove.
 - 16 in favor
 - 1 oppose
 - 6 abstain

DECISION: MDA will move forward with writing a functional equivalent BMPs report, using the technical approach presented today, for review by the Agriculture Workgroup at an upcoming meeting.

AgWG Notes

BMP Verification Management BMP Subgroup

- Frank announced the members forming an Agriculture Workgroup subgroup to begin developing BMP verification protocols for the "Management BMPs: Plans" category included in the Verification Matrix.
 - The workgroup voted to adopt the draft version of the matrix presented during the July 11th meeting, which does not currently provide information on management plan type BMPs.
 - Chair clarified that these protocols will apply specifically to plans.

AgWG Notes

BMP Verification Management Plans Subgroup

- UMCES: Recommend that Chris Brosch be added to the membership of this group as chair of the Nutrient Management panel
 - Chris accepted.

DECISION: Chris Brosch will be added to the Membership of the BMP Verification Management Plans Subgroup

- NGO: Note the need for supporting documentation to accompany the verification matrix.
 - Coordinator: Draft document to be available in November.

AgWG Notes

Manure Treatment Technologies Panel

- Frank announced the members forming an ad hoc subgroup to develop a scope of work prior to the formation of a new panel addressing manure treatment technologies.
 - According to the current workgroup prioritized list of BMP evaluations, the new BMP representing manure treatment technologies is next in line to be evaluated through an expert review panel.

AgWG Notes

- Adjourned at 3:30PM
- Next meeting: Thursday October 3, 9:30-3:30 at the Log Lodge