

Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

Aug 24th, 2017

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

AgWG Interim Conference Call Minutes

Meeting materials: [Link](#)

Actions & Decisions:

DECISION: The AgWG approved the AMS recommendations for crop removal, including a disclaimer in the documentation noting that if states have more specific data on crop removal, that they would be able to submit that in place of these general recommendations during milestone periods.

DECISION: The AgWG approved AMS recommendations with regard to modifications to reporting the stream exclusion BMP.

DECISION: The AgWG approved the AMS recommendation to change soil P uncertainty (standard deviation) from 25 to 50 for West Virginia's AgriAnalysis samples in Berkeley County.

ACTION: The AgWG will inform the WQGIT that the workgroup considered potential alternatives for the applicability of APLE and soil P data, and after considering these alternatives did not reach consensus on a resolution.

DECISION: The AgWG accepted the E3 scenario changes as presented for cover crops, with the modification that commodity crops will have a normal planting date. All other proposed changes were accepted as presented, and the AgWG will move forward with these recommendations to the WQGIT during their 8/28/17 meeting.

DECISION: The AgWG will hold a one-day meeting on Wednesday, September 20th in Keedysville MD.

Welcome, introductions, roll-call, review meeting minutes

Workgroup Chairs

- Roll-call of the governance body
- Roll-call of the meeting participants
- Announcements

Recommendations from the Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee

C. Dell, M. Johnston

Curt Dell, USDA AMS Chair, and Matt Johnston, UMD AMS Coordinator, presented on the recommendations of the AMS with regard to the USDA crop nutrient tool removal data, and changes to stream exclusion stocking rates for the Phase 6 modeling tools.

Discussion:

- Crop removal values:
 - Greg Albrecht explained that some AMS members had suggested that pasture removal rates be lower than the mechanically harvested hay removal rate. A decision was made at the AMS meeting to be consistent across pasture and hay ground. Jim Cropper then

followed up to reaffirm the logic of representing pasture yields in a more nuanced way. The revised approach reduces pasture removal down to 2 tons dry matter per acre.

- Matt Johnston noted that the AMS had to make assumptions on the wet tons per acre, and have now broken out specific crops based on how that assumption was made.
- No concerns or comments were raised on adjusting the values for pasture.
- For other minor crops, the AMS set the removal rate as 80% of the crop uptake goal.
- No questions or comments were raised regarding the proposed AMS changes on crop removal.
- Ken Staver: Regarding the assumption of 80%, that won't be particularly accurate for some things, so there should be some mechanism down the road that acknowledges that this change was done strictly for modeling purposes.
 - Matt Johnston replied that such a disclaimer could be included in the documentation.
 - States would have the option to submit additional data on crop removal, which would be subject to review. These additional data would be incorporated into the model during milestone periods.
- Stream exclusion recommendations:
 - The AMS asked if the AgWG would concur with the AMS recommendation of using 17.6 AU/1,000 linear feet for exclusion fencing practices (down from 22 AU/1,000 ft).
 - Jason Keppler: Are we able to report animal type along with animal units?
 - Matt Johnston: Yes, you can use animal type, but the default is livestock.
 - Tim Sexton motioned to approve the recommendations as-is. Seconded by MDA.
 - Dave Montali: So if a state has history in acres, then this will apply a 35 foot width?
 - Matt Johnston: Correct, and this probably won't fix the problem that we see in WVa.
 - Dave Montali: In future milestone periods, could a state evaluate and come up with a wider width?
 - Matt Johnston: I think the general consensus is that the NEIEN appendix is open for review every 2 years. So not only could you develop a state-wide default and have that approved, but you could change the way you report things.
- West Virginia soil P data uncertainty values:
 - West Virginia requested the uncertainty value of their soil P data from AgriAnalysis be changed from 25 to 50 in Berkeley County.
 - Motion to approve this change from PA and NY.
 - New York noted that they are interested in pursuing a similar approach to their soil P data.
- Sunset the AMS as of September 1, 2017:
 - Greg Albrecht: It seems there are still moving parts with soil test P, so I wonder if we may be tasked with more thought.
 - Request tabled until the September meeting.

DECISION: The AgWG approved the AMS recommendations for crop removal, including a disclaimer in the documentation noting that if states have more specific data on crop removal, that they would be able to submit that in place of these general recommendations.

DECISION: The AgWG approved AMS recommendations with regard to modifications to reporting the stream exclusion BMP.

DECISION: The AgWG approved the AMS recommendation to change soil P uncertainty (standard deviation) from 25 to 50 for West Virginia's AgriAnalysis samples in Berkeley County.

Discussion of applicability of APLE for soil P across land uses

A. Mulkey

The AgWG received a report-out from the ad hoc group formed by the Workgroup to continue discussions on potential recommendations regarding the use of APLE for soil P across land uses in the Phase 6 modeling tools. The ad hoc group held a multi-hour conference call on Monday, August 21st in preparation for offering recommendations to the Workgroup to address partnership review comments as per the request from the WQGIT.

Discussion:

- Alisha Mulkey summarized that a small group met to discuss the potential use of APLE in the Phase 6 model. The conversation was framed such that equity concerns were a long-term request, and discussion focused more on data quality concerns. There were no new recommendations as a result of this discussion, and consensus could not be reached in the small group.
- Mark Dubin noted that the charge from the WQGIT was to continue discussions and evaluate potential alternatives. Since there are no viable alternatives at this time, he proposed returning to the WQGIT on Monday, August 28 and informing them of the lack of the AgWG recommendations.
 - Alisha Mulkey and Lindsay Thompson will attend the WQGIT August 28th Conference Call to present the AgWG outcomes during the fatal flaw comments discussion.
- Jim Cropper asked if the discussion included any of the changes in APLE made to pasture by Dr. Pete Vadas.
 - Gary Shenk: I think we already had the latest version; Andrew Sommerlot contacted Dr. Pete Vadas, who confirmed that we have the version with the pasture changes you noted.

ACTION: The AgWG will inform the WQGIT that the workgroup considered potential alternatives for the applicability of APLE and soil P data, and after considering these alternatives did not reach consensus on a resolution.

Phase 6 E3 and No Action Scenario

J. Sweeney and M. Dubin

Jeff Sweeney, EPA-CBPO, and Mark Dubin, UM, reviewed refinements to the revised DRAFT Phase 6 agricultural E3 and No Action Scenario based upon the August 17th meeting. Comments to the cover crops and manure incorporation/injection BMPs in the E3 scenario were due to Jeff Sweeney and Mark Dubin, CC Loretta Collins by noon Tuesday August 22nd. Per request of the WQGIT on July 24th, the Workgroup has been asked to provide a final Phase 6 agricultural E3 and No Action Scenario for presentation to the WQGIT on August 28th. The WQGIT request included a Workgroup review of the implementation levels for BMPs and possible geographic limitations of Phase 6 E3/ No Action BMPs. Refinements for the following Phase 6 E3/ No Action BMPs will be specifically discussed: manure incorporation, manure injection, and cover crops.

Discussion:

- Ken Staver asked how dry poultry litter would be treated under this scenario, considering the fact that it is not injectable.
 - Matt Johnston: Traditionally, we've always thought about conservation tillage and then other practices – assume high tillage implementation, then you know how much area you have available for either injection or incorporation.
 - Jeff Sweeney noted that E3 operates at the state scale, so manure is not confined to county boundaries.

- Jason Kepler: So we're assuming rye as the species of choice in these scenarios for cover crops?
 - Mark Dubin: Correct – it's the most efficient cover crop.
 - Jason Kepler: We face a challenge with the supply of rye seed, and I don't want to suggest that we alter this number, but I would like an acknowledgement of this.
- Chris Brosch: I remember that commodity cover crops were going to be grown as wheat, not rye.
 - Tim Sexton: In our research plots, rye was by far the most efficient cover crop.
 - Matt Johnston: There are actually only 3 commodity cover crops, and we don't differentiate them between species any longer, following the Phase 6 panel.
 - Ken Staver: Commodities are a production crop managed a certain way.
- Chris Brosch brought up concerns regarding cover crops following a soybean crop.
 - Mark Dubin: Cover crops timing for early, standard, and late are based on frost dates for each particular areas. Early planting would be a pretty short period of time, so I think the panel already takes into account the variability of timing.
 - Chris suggested modifying the recommendations for cover crops to reflect proposed changes to aerial-seeding and timing.
- Clarification that modifications to cover crops for northern PA would cover PA growth region 1.
- Jeff will add clarity to the E3 spreadsheet regarding cover crops, and tillage and incorporation. This revised version will be taken to the WQGIT on 8/28/17 pending AgWG consensus.
- Tim Sexton motioned to accept the E3 scenario as presented for cover crops, with the modification that commodity crops will have a normal planting date. Included in this motion was that all other proposed changes would be accepted as presented, and the AgWG will move forward with these recommendations to the WQGIT during their 8/28/17 meeting.
 - Chris Brosch requested clarification that traditional cover crops at 61% is early planted rye.
 - Ken Staver recommended modifying commodity crops to cover normal planting dates. Jason Kepler agreed.
 - Ken Staver noted that ground-driven methods are dependent on planting date, and that there are instances where early planting can't be achieved no matter effort or expense.
- Greg Albrecht noted that you wouldn't have manure incorporation on soybeans in NY, and therefore perhaps shouldn't be considered.
 - Mark Dubin noted that the expert panel report does include soybeans as an eligible land use, and therefore is applied to the watershed.

DECISION: The AgWG accepted the E3 scenario changes as presented for cover crops, with the modification that commodity crops will have a normal planting date. All other proposed changes were accepted as presented, and the AgWG will move forward with these recommendations to the WQGIT during their 8/28/17 meeting.

September Quarterly Meeting Update

L. Collins

Loretta provided an update on the current agenda and plans for the Workgroup's September Quarterly Meeting scheduled to be held at the University of Maryland's Western Maryland Research and Education Center. The Workgroup's opinion will be sought on potentially shortening the meeting to one day.

- Interim BMP approval for the Ag Stormwater and Nursery capture and re-use.
- Update on swine and turkey population data.
- Expert panel updates

- Update and report-out on Phase 6 review process
- Loretta proposed that this meeting be condensed to one-day.
- Greg Albrecht requested the meeting be held on Wednesday, September 20th in order to avoid conflicts with other meetings.

DECISION: The AgWG will hold a one-day meeting on Wednesday, September 20th in Keedysville MD.

Next meeting: September 21st Face-to-Face Quarterly Meeting at the Western Maryland Research and Education Center (WMREC) in Keedysville, MD

Participants:

Name	Affiliation
Lindsay Thompson	DE-MD Agribusiness Assoc.
Loretta Collins	UMD
Mark Dubin	UMD
Lindsey Gordon	CRC
Amir Sharifi	DC DOEE
Clint Gill	DDA
Chris Brosch	DDA
Brittany Sturgis	DE DNREC
Alisha Mulkey	MDA
Jason Keppler	MDA
Robin Pellicano	MDE
Greg Sandi	MDE
Frank Schneider	PA DEP
Greg Albrecht	NYS
Tim Sexton	VA DCR
Bobby Long	VA DCR
Dave Montali	WV DEP
Kelly Shenk	EPA
Frank Coale	UMD
Ken Staver	UMD
Jim Cropper	Northeast Pasture Consortium
Ron Ohrel	Mid-Atlantic Dairy Assoc.
Jeremy Hanson	VT
Bill Angstadt	Angstadt Consulting
Curt Dell	USDA-ARS
Gene Yagow	STAC
Matt Johnston	UMD
Gary Shenk	USGS
Jeff Sweeney	EPA
Kim Snell-Zarcone	Choose Clean Water Coalition