

Draft Meeting Notes

Agriculture Workgroup Meeting

June 20, 2013

USFWS

Annapolis, MD

AgWG Action Items and Decisions

RECOMMENDATION: The Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG) recommends that the proposed Agricultural Conservation Outcome under the Water Quality Goal heading be removed from the draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement. The AgWG believes that the existing 2017 and 2025 Water Quality WIP Outcomes in the draft document are sufficient, and incorporating a single outcome for agriculture does not represent equity between the sectors. The AgWG also wishes to note that the proposed Agricultural Outcome is currently listed under the Water Quality 2017 WIP Outcome in the draft document outline, which is inconsistent in timeline with the original Chesapeake Bay Executive Order goal based on 2025.

AgWG Action Items and Decisions

- **DECISION:** AgWG Members approved the above recommendation to remove the agriculture outcome from the draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement
- **ACTION:** Transparency ad hoc group will define programmatic constraints, reword 'site-specific', and clarify recommendation #2 to state that QA/QC can be internal or external
- **ACTION:** AgWG members will review the draft verification matrix: [posted here](#), and report back with any comments by 7/3/13

AgWG Action Items and Decision

ACTION: Ag Modeling Subcommittee will convene their first meeting, and will report back to AgWG in July with the immediate work items (achievable in 2013) noting any barriers or gaps

AgWG Notes

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

AgWG Notes

- **Draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement**

- Mark Dubin, Agriculture Workgroup Coordinator, reviewed new agricultural language being proposed for the draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement under development by the Management Board. The language was adapted from the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order, and commits to implementing new conservation practices on 4 million high priority agricultural acres by 2025. The Management Board is requesting the Agriculture Workgroup's recommendation on the proposed language.

AgWG Notes

- **Draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement**

- MD: Cost analysis was done at the Federal level and 4 million was chosen based on Farm Bill, note the challenge of moving responsibility to the states
- Coordinator: USDA has 1 million acres currently implemented, concern with new farm bill that there would not be sufficient funds
- EPA: clarified that this was not an attempt to transfer responsibility to the state
- NGO: If there is an ag outcome it should come from full partnership, doesn't quite fit in this document
- DE: WIP estimations was based on expected farm bill, already attempting to make up this difference
- NGO: Note that the Ag outcome doesn't address human health aspect of WQ goal. After this outcome is approved, AgWG will be asked to develop management strategies

AgWG Notes

- **Draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement**
 - MD: This ‘outcome’ was closely tied to federal funding
 - NGO: Outcome was tied to particular piece of legislation, not an overall goal
 - NGO: Emphasize that this is a federal goal
 - NGO: What is this workgroup’s outcome for 2025? Start at the WIPs.
 - NGO: AgWG would like to now begin to define outcomes and strategies

AgWG Notes

- **Draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement**
 - Coordinator summarized written comments from the jurisdictions: Recommend that outcomes exist for all sectors.
 - MD: Note that WIPs were created after this outcome was written.
 - NGO: Recommend going back to Ag's task, which is to reduce nutrients and sediment by a certain amount (which is an actual outcome).
 - NGO: Ask MB to remove this outcome, allow time for AgWG to draft new. Not ready for public comment in 7 days.
 - EPA: If possible to develop more detailed outcome based on WIPs, WIPs are very flexible but this agreement is meant to last a long time. Should not hold the jurisdictions to these outcomes into the future.

AgWG Notes

- **Draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement**
 - MD: Overall WQ goals include the WIP outcomes in their definition, recommend removing the specific Ag outcome because it is already covered.
 - NY: If an ag specific element is needed, refer to ag portion of WIPs.
 - NGO: Seems out of place to focus on Ag without outcomes for other sectors as well.
 - NGO: More specificity needed to assess where those 4 millions acres are.
 - Coordinator: In EO, the 4 million acres are defined as those with highly erodible soils.
 - NGO: Maps available defining the location of these acres.

AgWG Notes

RECOMMENDATION: The Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG) recommends that the proposed Agricultural Conservation Outcome under the Water Quality Goal heading be removed from the draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement. The AgWG believes that the existing 2017 and 2025 Water Quality WIP Outcomes in the draft document are sufficient, and incorporating a single outcome for agriculture does not represent equity between the sectors. The AgWG also wishes to note that the proposed Agricultural Outcome is currently listed under the Water Quality 2017 WIP Outcome in the draft document outline, which is inconsistent in timeline with the original Chesapeake Bay Executive Order goal based on 2025.

- Chair: Asked for a motion to approve the recommendation
- NGO motion, DE second, all aye

- **DECISION: AgWG Members approved the recommendation to remove the agriculture outcome**

AgWG Notes

- **Tetra Tech Technical Assistance Contract**
 - Mark Dubin, Agriculture Workgroup Coordinator, and Steve Dressing, Tetra Tech, provided an overview of the new EPA-CBPO technical assistance contract in relation to the workgroup and associated review panels.
 - NGO: Will the TetraTech work being done as a result of EPA/CBF agreement be overseen in Annapolis?
 - EPA: This is a separate TetraTech contract that will be administered in Philadelphia.
 - VA: Will the expert panel chairs be involved in drafting the technical directives?
 - Coordinator: Meetings will be set up with chairs next week to discuss the draft TDs.

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, and the Transparency Subgroup’s recommendation on defining "Transparency" when applied to NPS BMP verification.
 - NGO: Object to recommendation #3 of the transparency language.
 - MD: Note that this definition is for all non-point source sectors.
 - NGO recommend deleting “transparent at the most site specific scale that conforms with legal and programmatic constraints,” because data is not site specific, it is aggregated.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Guidance**
 - NGO: Note that this is a definition of transparency, not a requirement that all verification reaches this level of transparency.
 - NGO: Concern that this definition of “site-specific” will limit the data accepted.
 - NGO: Did the ad hoc group come up with examples for what is meant by site-specific?
 - Chair: Site-specific can be limited by legal and programmatic decisions.
 - NGO: Suggest a footnote that defines “site-specific”.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Guidance**
 - EPA: Recommend “finer scale” rather than “site-specific”.
 - NGO: Realistic to ask for finest scale possible?
 - Chair: Fits in with programmatic constraints, which could be financial and resource constraints.
 - NGO: Recommend definition of legal and programmatic in footnote.
 - Chair: The two items needing further discussion are “site-specific” and the legal and programmatic definition?
 - MD: Recommend removing “site-specific”.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Guidance**

- PA: Recommend review of definition of independent QA/QC procedures under (2).
- NGO: Who is the 3rd party?
 - Chair: Could be internal or external.
 - NGO: Add wording on Quality Assurance Project Plan.
 - MD: Recommend including definition of independent.
- EPA: Note that somewhere a definition needed to explain how this will be implemented to collect data.
- NGO: Suggest including as much information about transparency up front, rather than including everything in the background document.

ACTION: Transparency ad hoc group will define programmatic constraints, reword 'site-specific', clarify recommendation #2 to state that QA/QC can be internal or external.

AgWG Notes

- **Agricultural BMP Verification Matrix**

- Frank led a partnership discussion on the draft agricultural BMP verification matrix based on the guidance received from the BMP Verification Committee, the Transparency Subgroup, and the work of an ad hoc verification subgroup.
- Chair clarified that the ad hoc group will compile comments received by July 3, for presentation to AgWG on July 11.
- MD: Recommend drafting the guidance document for review at July meeting.

ACTION: AgWG members will review draft matrix, report back with any comments by 7/3/13.

AgWG Notes

- **Expert Review Panel Updates**
 - On behalf of the panel chairs, Mark provided a brief update on each of the four expert panels
 - NGO: Is the Cover Crop panel considering commodity cover crops?
 - Coordinator: Both commodity and traditional cover crops are included in the panel's responsibilities.
 - MD: Does the Cover Crop panel intend to have recommendations before the AgWG in time for 2013 progress?
 - Coordinator: yes

AgWG Notes

- **Expert Review Panel Updates**

- NGO: Are the 5.3.2 recommendations from the NM Panel going to be implemented in time for 2013 progress? When will voluntary data for 2013 be submitted?
 - VT: Panel will be looking at model runs to determine where to apply tier one and tier two BMPs
- NGO: Will states have time to respond to new Nutrient Management definition?
 - VT: There is an existing definition of nutrient management, however the panel is working to revise the definition. Once the panel has an approved definition, it will come to this workgroup and to the WQGIT for approval.
 - Coordinator clarified that there are jurisdictional representatives on the panel as well.

AgWG Notes

- **Expert Review Panel Updates**
 - NGO: Note that as a result of workshop discussions, the long term charge for the NM panel should include manure.
 - VT: Manure is currently in the charge to the panel, will take into consideration what was brought up at the workshop.
 - NGO: How will the NM panel address verification in its recommendations?
 - VT: The panel will respond to questions from the verification committee regarding the specifics.
 - PA: Recommend involving the jurisdictional NM program staff in the panel review process.
 - NGO: Will P-based nutrient management be included?
 - VT: For 5.3.2, P-based NM will be included in the tiers, it is a priority area for discussion.

AgWG Notes

- **Expert Review Panel Updates**
 - Coordinator: Poultry Litter Subcommittee data will go through a peer review process to be set up by Frank with scientists outside of the Chesapeake Bay region.
 - NGO: What is the timeframe for these recommendations?
 - Coordinator: 2013 progress.
 - NGO: Who is responsible for collecting mass volume litter data?
 - UD: Jurisdictions. In DE have been working with a broker to obtain new data, need for additional data across the watershed.
 - Bredwell: Willing to help with this data.
 - NGO: Will PA data be included?
 - UD: Once it is available, yes. Nothing available at this point.

AgWG Notes

- Lunch Break
- Meeting Reconvened
 - Mark acted in Frank's behalf for chairing the afternoon portion of the meeting.
- **2015 Agricultural Projection Update**
 - Mark provided an update on the workgroup's recommendation to the Milestone Workgroup and the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) for the 2015 projection on agricultural land use and production. The partnership's current schedule would omit developing the 2015 projections for the 2-Year Milestone goals with the benefit of the 2012 USDA Agricultural Census, due to be released in early 2014.

AgWG Notes

- **MDA Presentation:**

- MDA updated the AgWG on their proposed request to the WQGIT next month concerning the evaluation of 2013 Milestones by EPA.
- VA and DE also support MD's request to the WQGIT.

AgWG Notes

- **MPA Agricultural Modeling Workshop**
 - Mark and Jim Baird, Mid-Atlantic Director for the American Farmland Trust, reviewed the summary results and future modeling directions stemming from the agricultural modeling workshop held on May 22-23, 2013 at the University of Maryland's College Park campus. The **“Building a Better Bay Model; A Workshop for Agricultural Partners”** event was held to support the implementation of the workgroup's top two priority lead Mid-Point Assessment topics.

AgWG Notes

- **MPA Agricultural Modeling Workshop**
 - MD: Noted the value of having a broad spectrum of stakeholders present.
 - MD: Helpful to have the modelers explain things simply and consistently in each session.
 - NGO: Planning committee put a lot of thought into the process aspects of the workshop.

AgWG Notes

- **MPA Agricultural Modeling Workshop**
 - NGO: Noted the importance of managing expectations. Recommend keeping a real time version of the tasks on a spreadsheet (multi-year work plan) and referring to it at every AgWG meeting to review progress.
 - UD: Recommend considering a one-day follow up to the workshop with a specific group.
 - Coordinator noted that financial resources are not available to support additional workshops at this time. Could begin seeking.
 - MD: Consider a two year calendar accounting for these tasks and other partnership timelines.
 - USDA: Recommendation to focus on a few achievable tasks to demonstrate progress.

AgWG Notes

- **MPA Agricultural Modeling Workshop**
 - NGO: Recommendation to involve non AgWG members in the tasks.
 - NGO: Note need for a facilitator to manage these tasks.
 - Coordinator: Will proceed with using the task matrix to convey each of the recommendations from the workshop. Are there any additional comments or suggestions?
 - NGO: Recommend additional column to include a stakeholder lead.
 - CBPO: Noted the request and need to submit easily accessible data from the workshop participants.
 - Coordinator: The purpose of the follow-up meetings with the sectors will be to develop and implement methods to share data with the CBP models. It was not expected that the workshop itself would result in shared data at this time.
 - **ACTION: Ag Modeling Subcommittee to report back in July with the immediate work items (achievable in 2013) noting any barriers or gaps.**

AgWG Notes

- **Future Topics**

- MD: Requested a discussion on BMP functional equivalence at the July or August meeting.
- CBPO: Will present methods to incorporate yearly NASS data in July.

AgWG Notes

- Adjourned at 3:00pm
- Next meeting July 11th, 9:30-3:30