Responses to Comments Received Regarding the Forest Buffers Expert Panel Report

Submitted to the WTWG on 08072014

Q1: How should a jurisdiction report a buffer that has 300 ft on one side of the stream and 300 feet on the opposite side of the stream?

A1: There are two ways this can be reported.

1) You could report the length and width. Let's assume the length on BOTH sides of the stream is 300 feet and the width on BOTH sides is 100 feet. You should report the BMP name of "Forest Buffer Double" AND the length as 600 feet and the width as 100 feet.
2) You could report the total acres. Let's assume the length on BOTH sides of the stream is 300 feet and the width on BOTH sides is 100 feet. This results in a total 60,000 square feet, or 1.38 acres. You should report the BMP name of "Forest Buffer Double" AND the acreage as 1.38 acres.

Q2: Does this report only apply to agricultural buffers?

A2: Yes. The report does not address urban buffers.

Q3: Can a jurisdiction report acres as a measurement name for any type of buffer?

A3: Yes. The appendix will be edited to reflect this.

Q4: Tables 1,5 and 6 in the report would benefit from footnotes explaining the upslope acreage benefits. Could these footnotes be added?

A4: Yes. Footnotes will be added to this tables to describe the upslope acreage benefits.

Q5: NRCS does not report buffer widths for 390 projects (Riparian Herbaceous Cover), and the 390 criteria does not specify that the practice must be 35 feet wide. Should these practices continue to receive the full 35 foot grass buffer credit?

A5: It was the panel's understanding that NRCS implements 390 projects only with widths of at least 35 feet. This is why 390 practices have historically received credit in the Watershed Model as grass buffers, and the panel feels that credit is valid and should continue. The report and technical appendix will be edited to describe that acres meeting the 390 practice standard are considered Grass Buffers.

Q6: Tables 1, 5 and 6 in the report list slightly different physiographic province names than those used by the Watershed Model. Can these names be changed to match those used by the Watershed Model?

A6: Yes. The names in the tables will be adjusted so they reflect the physiographic names used by the Watershed Model.

Q7: Should the additional 4% denitrification benefit be applied to any stream with managed buffers, or only lower order streams? Did the panel find science that would support a benefit for higher order streams?

A7: The panel designed the 4% denitrification benefit based upon research on 1st to 5th order streams and feels it is applicable to these types of streams. Additionally, the panel understood that 1st to 5th order streams represent more than 90% of the stream segments within the CB watershed, meaning that almost all streams should be eligible for the 4% denitrification benefit.