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**Chesapeake Bay Program
Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)
Meeting Minutes**
Thursday, July 1, 2021
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Calendar Page: [Link](#)

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Decision: The WTWG approved the June meeting minutes.

Action: The technical appendix for 2020 Progress will be sent to the WTWG for their review.

Action: Jess Rigelman will discuss the changes to the NEIEN appendix at the August WTWG meeting (this includes Bill Keeling's proposal to add some BMPs). All NEIEN submissions are due no later than August 31, 2021.

Action: WTWG signatory members can begin casting votes post-meeting. The voting period for at-large members will be open till July 2021. Confirmation of at-large members will occur in August.

Action: Mark Dubin will come back to the group to address Hillandale's data, if any, in Ag Census.

Action: Vanessa Van Note will provide the questions raised on Hillandale to Jeff Sweeney and Mark Dubin for them to address.

Action: The WTWG will bring Gary Shenk to a future WTWG meeting to discuss how the Hillandale data would impact the model.

Action: Hilary Swartwood will send out the presentation on additional back-out proposals (grass buffers and septic connections). WTWG members should review and provide questions prior to the August WTWG meeting.

Agenda

10:00 AM – **Introductions and Announcements** – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC

- Approval of June Meeting Minutes – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC
 - Decision:** The WTWG approved the June meeting minutes
- BMP Verification Ad Hoc Action Team – Vanessa Van Note, EPA
 - *Next Friday at 9 AM is the BMP Action Team meeting where they will discuss partial credit. They have also been working on credit duration. The FWG approved extending the credit duration for forestry practices to 15 years.*
- Forestry Credit Duration Extension Decision – Vanessa Van Note, EPA
- Update on 2020 Progress- Jeff Sweeney, EPA
 - *Final version of 2020 Progress is not yet available.*

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- *James Martin*: in VA's response we suggested changes to take a more statistical approach to the analysis.
 - *Jeff Sweeney*: We could probably do that. I was planning to look at other techniques, particularly because of this annual variability. It would be great to have any input from you as well.
 - *Vanessa Van Note*: Jeff would you like us to send out the technical appendix to this group for them to start reviewing?
 - *Jeff Sweeney*: yes, that would be great. Let me send you the word version.
 - *Bill Keeling*: I would like to propose adding some BMPs to that technical appendix. I will send them to Jess, and we can discuss it at the August meeting.
 - *Jess Rigelman*: Vanessa if you could add me to the agenda to discuss all the minor changes to the NEIEN appendix, that would be great.
 - *Olivia Devereux*: just a reminder that all changes/ additions to the NEIEN appendix are due August 31st, 2021.
 - **Action**: The technical appendix for 2020 Progress will be sent to the WTWG for their review.
 - **Action**: Jess Rigelman will discuss the changes to the NEIEN appendix at the August WTWG meeting (this includes Bill Keeling's proposal to add some BMPs). All NEIEN submissions are due no later than August 31, 2021.
- Other announcements
 - *Norm Goulet*: just a heads up that next month's call will interfere with a modeling WG call.

10:15 AM – Review of Voting Process and At- Large Nominee – Vanessa Van Note, EPA

Vanessa Van Note will review the voting procedures for at-large members and each nominee will give a brief (1-2 minutes) overview of why they would be a good addition to the WTWG. Confirmation of at-large members will occur at the August meeting.

Discussion:

The at-large nominees gave brief introductions and overviews of why they would be good additions to the WTWG. Vanessa reviewed the voting procedures: voting will occur post-meeting, through a survey poll, which will be sent to the signatory members.

Action: WTWG signatory members can begin casting votes post-meeting. The voting period for at-large members will be open till July 2021. Confirmation of at-large members will occur in August.

10:45 AM – Hillandale Layer Data – Vanessa Van Note, EPA, Jeff Sweeney, EPA, and Mark Dubin, UMD

Update on the status of the Hillandale Layer Data for two PA counties. Will discuss challenges/benefits with each source of available data and explain the differences between the Ag Census and the NASS Annual Survey.

Discussion:

Bill Keeling: I am curious how we are going to add these animals and not affect the calibration?

Jeff Sweeney: We ran this by Gary Shenk and that it's all about this time critical period before 1985. If you want, we could discuss with Gary why putting this in the calibration years is okay.

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Greg Sandi: this will offset inorganic fertilizer and increase fertilizer in other states as well

Jeff Sweeney: We've been cutting those layers off at adamas county. This will affect manure and fertilizer applications however we don't know what that effect is yet. You can't transport more manure out of a county than what's being generated.

Jess Rigelman: manure being transported out of the county would increase leaving the county.

Greg Sandi: in some ways that could affect PA's manure as well. It could end up being a positive for MD.

Jess Rigelman: we won't know that till we get those number into CAST 2021 and run it.

Mark Dubin: Norm, did I address your questions of distance for the transport. It involved both operations that Hillandale manages. But there are additional operations being run by contractors. It will be a matter of what Hillandale is doing and what the contractors are doing and how they are transporting it.

Norm Goulet: At this point we are so late in the games with Phase 6, shouldn't this be something we resolved in Phase 7?

Bill Keeling: that makes more sense. For me this seems like it would fundamentally change any river segments. For Phase 7 they want to go sub HUC 7, and counties already have trouble getting to the current scale.

Mark Dubin: I don't think those decisions have been made yet, although I agree with you that this could be a problem.

Jeff Sweeney: you're right Bill, the whole point of going through this exercise is to see if we can create a method that everyone is comfortable with for incorporating local data. I would really like to pursue this objective, even if the WGs decide to put on it till Phase 7, I want us to be able to do this quickly.

Greg Sandi: The way we do it, we have tried to incorporate local data, but if we have missed such a large affiliate like Hillandale, what others have we missed? I don't see how we will be able to incorporate by 2021 and be comfortable with the results that we are getting.

Ted Tesler: this may be the tip of the iceberg but there are reasons why these data are not included, and we would like to be able to incorporate this data. I think hybridizing the data might be one way to do that.

Bill Keeling: I am not opposed to including, but if we don't calibrate for the new data, I don't see how the loads don't increase.

Jeff Sweeney: I think it might be worth investigating how much manure transporting is being reported and why this wouldn't violate rules for Phase 6.

Greg Sandi: I think we need more information before we can decide to include it into the model. Until we can see the results, our management can't make a decision on this.

Norm Goulet: Would this impact the Conowingo WIP?

James Martin: my understanding is that it shouldn't affect the Conowingo WIP because the WIP only addresses the target reductions.

Jeff Sweeney: Conowingo WIP only addresses the Susquehanna, and Adams County straddles the Susquehanna and another river, so it depends on where the manure is being transported to.

Pat Thompson: I think this is really important for the program to incorporate because this is not only the largest CAFO in PA, but also the largest one in the Watershed.

Greg Sandi: I would like to know the manure transport aspect and what kind of offsets and BMPs are being applied to the current stream.

Pat Thompson: the obvious way is to use the facilities data, and if the concern is that the data isn't accurate, there are ways to verify that.

Olivia Devereux: do you know why they don't report to the ag census?

Pat Thompson: my understanding is that they do submit them every 5 years.

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Greg Sandi: we are no stranger to getting local data. My reservations are more about such a large influx of nutrients and changing the method/ data that already took us several years to include in the model.

Mark Dubin: As far as the data sources (NM, CAFO permits) some are public documents. There is no issue about accessing those documents. I think the discussion here is that if we are trying to go back through time, that's when it becomes a lot more difficult. I think moving forward it will be relatively easy.

Jeff Sweeney: is everyone okay if we still pursue this to see how we can do this best?

Greg Sandi: yes, I think continuing the effort is a good idea. As we move forward, we have to remember that it's not just us that has to understand this. I look forward to hearing from the other modelers to get their thoughts.

Dave Montali: I fully agree with a lot of these comments. My main concern is the time. Can we have time to communicate all this information in time for September 1, 2021.

Vanessa Van Note: What are the chances of being able to learn how Hillandale reports to the Ag Census.

Mark Dubin: I would be happy to do that and can come back with results of talking to them about how they report to the Ag Census

Loretta Collins: besides timing, I think it makes sense for the discussions to occur at this group. From a procedural piece, I think we need answers to the questions asked today before it comes to the AgWG. This is a really important issue, and it has an impact across the watershed. From a data perspective, this is a great example of the problems we have with Ag data, but it's really important that we have help from all our partners because the Bay Program can't do this alone. We rely on the Ag Census because it's a constant source of public data. If we are going to incorporate this data, then we need to make sure that we understand the precedent and have a method that can be used now and in the future.

Action: Mark Dubin will come back to the group to address Hillandale's data, if any, in Ag Census.

Action: Vanessa Van Note will provide the questions raised on Hillandale to Jeff Sweeney and Mark Dubin for them to address.

Action: The WTWG will bring Gary Shenk to a future WTWG meeting to discuss how the Hillandale data would impact the model.

11:15 AM – Additional Back- Out Proposals (Grass Buffers and Septic Connections) – Peter Claggett, USGS-LUWG Coordinator

Peter Claggett, if available, will walk the group through low vegetation and septic connections and answer any questions. If Peter is not available to attend, there will be a brief recap of last month's discussion along with time for the membership to come forward with outstanding questions on the issue.

Discussion:

Norm Goulet: why is this not a hard BMP?

Jeff Sweeney: what is described here is the default. Everything you say is right. We make decisions to come up with the default method to account for lack of hard data. Total septic loads make up 5-6% of the total load.

Cassie Davis: from what I remember this doesn't affect Phosphorous.

Action: Hilary Swartwood will send out the presentation on additional back- out proposals (grass buffers and septic connections). WTWG members should review and provide questions prior to the August WTWG meeting.

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12:00 PM – **Meeting Adjourn**

Next Meeting: August 5th, 2021, from 10:00 to 12:00 PM

Call Participants

Mat English, DOEE

Clare Sevcik, DNREC

Greg Sandi, MDE

Emily Dekar, USC

Bill Keeling, VA DEQ

James Martin, VA DEQ

Arianna Johns, WV DEP

Dave Montali, Tetra Tech

Jeff Sweeney, EPA

Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting

Kristin Wolf, PA DEP

Ruth Cassilly, UMD

Jessica Rodriguez, DoD

Kevin Du Bois, DoD

Norm Goulet, NVPC

Jackie Pickford, CRC

Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA

Jessica Rigelman, J7

Loretta Collins, UMD

Suchith Ravi, UMCES

Doug Austin, SEE EPA

Sarah Lane, UMCES

Ted Tesler, PA DEP

Lori Brown, DNREC

Lisa Beatty, PA DEP

Jennifer Walls, DNREC

Jordan Baker, HRG Inc.