

Meeting Minutes
September 19th, 2019
11:30 AM-1:00 PM
Conference Call

Workgroup Areas of Focus

Accounting & Reporting • Implementation • Innovation

Data & Modeling • CBP Assignments

Summary of Actions and Decisions:

- **Decision:** The AgWG approved the meeting minutes from June and July.
- **Action:** Loretta Collins will review past meeting minutes from the Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee to seek justification for the current N fixation rates for crops associated with the N fixation rate fix for the “other haylage” crop category. Results of this search will be sent out to the AgWG with a request for approval to the proposed adjustment to the N fixation value for the other haylage, silage, and greenchop crop category by **Oct 4th**.
- **Decision:** The AgWG approved the recommendation from the jurisdictional members to revisit the discussion regarding soil amendments in the watershed model in two years.
- **Action:** Please review the BMP Expert Panel Report for agricultural ditch management practices and provide feedback to **Jeremy Hanson** (jchanson@vt.edu) by **Monday, October 7th**.
- **Action:** The AgWG will receive notification when the public comment period opens for rules guiding FSA’s CRP/CREP programming. This is expected sometime later in the fall. The AgWG coordinator will seek further guidance on how federal vs. state rules are considered and applied.

Welcome, introductions, roll-call, review meeting minutes

Workgroup Chairs

- Roll-call of the governance body
- Roll-call of the meeting participants
- **Decision:** The AgWG approved the meeting minutes from June and July.

Data & Modeling

N Fixation Model Input Update (20 min)

Gary Shenk

Gary Shenk, USGS, explained error in annual nitrogen fixation inputs in the Phase 6 watershed model and an updated adjusted N fixation rate was proposed to replace the current value.

- Amanda Barber noted that an alfalfa mixture may also be a grass mixture. Potentially, the N fixing category below may be a wash.
 - Loretta Collins: The alfalfa is in the legume category because it’s primarily leguminous. Those are two mixes that lean different ways in other vs. legume categories.
- Loretta Collins noted that this will impact “other hay” and “double cropped land.”
- Dave Graybill clarified that if we approve 33.26, it would replace the 175 currently highlighted in the fixation column.

- Chris Brosch: Is it reasonable to use higher math to arrive at a different number than the pasture number? My preference is to keep these values as close to each other as possible. I propose 30.24, which is 20% of the haylage value.
 - Loretta Collins: If the pasture value is 30.24, are we splitting hairs by creating the 32.26 value?
 - Chris Brosch: We need documentation on where the number came from. I know we have looked back through the decision documentation and it is quite sparse.
 - Dave Graybill: The PSU Agronomy guide for alfalfa says stands greater than 50% are not contributing residual N higher than 120 lbs. The numbers in the weighted column I agree with Chris to drop to 30.24.
- Greg Albrecht: Are there documents that have this conversation archived?
 - Loretta Collins: I have Matt Johnston's files archived, as well as staffer meeting minutes. I can look through that to find the documentation. It seems like 20-40 lbs range is defensible and was based off conversations with workgroup members.
- Gary Shenk: These are maximum fixation numbers based on the amount of available N. The AMS assumed there is only 45 lbs of residual N available in the field. We could never get more than 70% of these numbers in the model.
 - Chris Brosch: Residual N is a different concept than N fixation.
 - Gary Shenk: N fixation is decremented by the amount of available N from what is in the soil (45 lbs set) or what is applied as plant available N.
 - Chris Brosch: Residual N is a relatively maximum amount of N in the soil, because crops have already done their job. Total fixation is cumulative over time.
 - Chris and Gary can discuss more offline.
- Greg Albrecht: As a rough guide, how much of fixed N from a perennial mostly grass crop would make it to edge of stream?
 - Gary Shenk: 15-20%. More than manure, less than atmospheric deposition, and about the same as fertilizer.
- Ken Staver: Changing the N fixation only goes down 0.03 lbs per acre. Why is that?
 - Gary Shenk: Most of those acres may be made of other crops than other haylage. Other haylage contains many other categories in addition to other hay. There is not much of this crop in Delaware to begin with.
 - Loretta Collins: I can dig into this data more today and look into that.
 - Ken Staver: The effect is a subcategory in this category, specifically for NY.
 - Greg Albrecht agrees.
- Chris Brosch: I move to accept the pasture land rate of 30.24.
 - Frank Schneider: I second the motion.
 - Ken Staver: I think there was logic to why we separated these out.
 - Kristen Saacke-Blunk: I have concerns about cherry picking pieces of information to accept and others to disregard. This could set a bad precedent.
- **Action:** Loretta Collins will review past meeting minutes from the Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee to seek justification for the current N fixation rates for crops associated with the N fixation rate fix for the "other haylage" crop category. Results of this search will be sent out to the AgWG with a request for approval to the proposed adjustment to the N fixation value for the other haylage, silage, and greenchop crop category by **Oct 4th**.

Accounting for Soil Amendments (20 min)

Frank Schneider

Frank Schneider, PA State Conservation Commission, shared recommendations from the AgWG state leads on the issue of soil amendment (e.g., compost) application on agricultural land in the watershed. Soil amendments are not currently accounted for as a load source in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and the group was asked to consider their potential inclusion in future watershed models. This is a follow-up to a July AgWG action item.

Decision requested: The AgWG is asked to approve the recommendations regarding the status of soil amendments in a future watershed model.

- Frank Schneider: We decided that we may not need to look at these soil amendments further at this time. We would need an analysis on all amendments which may be difficult to achieve.
- Frank Schneider made a motion to table this discussion and take another look in two years.
 - Maryland seconds the motion.
 - No objections from other jurisdictions.
- Ken Staver: As an example, if manure goes into compost, then mushroom production, then is applied to a field, does that disappear and then come back?
 - Jason Keppler: My understanding is that any manure transported and being used for alternative uses is considered leaving the watershed and no longer land applied. That's where it stops being accounting for. Once it goes through a process such as growing mushrooms, it could be land applied in accordance with a nutrient management plan.
 - Frank Schneider: In PA it is the same. We need to do better accounting with commercial fertilizer.
- **Decision:** The AgWG approved the recommendation from the jurisdictional members to revisit the discussion regarding soil amendments in the watershed model in two years.

Overview of the Wetland Expert Panel Report (30 min)

Jeremy Hanson

Jeremy Hanson, VT, summarized the findings of the expert panel report which has been updated following partnership feedback. The report describes recommended nutrient and sediment reductions for nontidal wetland rehabilitation and creation. The panel was convened by the Wetland Workgroup and the presentation is for awareness of the AgWG. Under the current timeline WQGIT and Habitat GIT approval will be sought in November.

- Chris Brosch: Did you receive comments from DNREC?
 - Jeremy Hanson: No, I did not.
- **Action:** Please review the BMP Expert Panel Report for agricultural ditch management practices and provide feedback to **Jeremy Hanson** (jchanson@vt.edu) by **Monday, October 7th**.
- Jason Keppler: Has there been thought given to developing an RI process for wetlands?
 - Jeremy Hanson: That would be worth exploring. This workgroup could discuss and determine that.
 - Jason Keppler: Are reportable practices only the NRCS practices? Or is there opportunity for reporting outside of NRCS?
 - Jeremy Hanson: There is opportunity outside of NTCS that meet those definitions voluntarily.

New Business & Announcements (10 min)

- Ag Ditch Management Panel

- Action: Please review the BMP Expert Panel Report for agricultural ditch management practices and provide feedback to **Jeremy Hanson** (jchanson@vt.edu) by **Monday, October 7th**.
- Executive Council Meeting
- Upcoming Comment period for FSA CRP/CREP program
 - Ken Staver asked how we go about weighing in on both the state and federal level for the CRP/CREP program?
- Farm Bill and RFB Webinar Recording: [click here](#)

Next meeting: October 17th, Conference Call 10AM – 12PM

Meeting Participants:

Jason Keppler	MDA
Matt Monroe	WV DA
Loretta Collins	UMD
Allie Wagner	CRC
Chris Brosch	DDA
Clint Gill	DDA
Greg Albrecht	NY State Dept. of Ag and Markets
Amanda Barber	NY State Dept. of Ag and Markets
Frank Schneider	PA State Conservation Commission
Jerry Ours	WV DA
Cindy Shreve	WV DA
Jennifer Shuler	Bell & Evans
Adam Lyon	MDA
Elizabeth Hoffman	MDA
Kristen Saacke-Blunk	Headwaters, LLC
Ted Tesler	PA DEP
Jeremy Daubert	VT
Dr. Gurpal Toor	UMD
Ken Staver	UMD
Emily Dekar	USC
Barry Frantz	NRCS
Denise Coleman	NRCS
Ruth Cassilly	UMD
Jeremy Hanson	VT
Dave Graybill	PA Farm Bureau