

Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

Draft Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2014
9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

ACTIONS & DECISIONS

DECISION: AgWG members approved the March 13, 2014 workgroup meeting minutes.

ACTION: A small team of AgWG representatives will meet early next week to respond to the verification committee's recommendations and provide a working draft by the May 9th deadline. Due to this deadline, nominations as well as volunteers to serve on this team are due to Emma by noon on 5/2.

ACTION: AgWG members are requested to provide comments on the [PLS recommendations](#) posted on today's meeting page to Jim Glancey by Wednesday, May 7th.

ACTION: AgWG members are requested to provide comments on the [Manure Technologies Subgroup report](#) to Mark and Emma for the subgroup to consider in preparation for the next AgWG meeting.

ACTION: The AgWG will schedule a separate meeting between USDA-NASS representatives and the Agriculture Modeling Subcommittee and other interested parties.

ACTION: The AgWG will schedule a separate meeting to discuss verification in the next month.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Confirmation of Co-Chairs

- Mark Dubin, Agriculture Workgroup Coordinator, announced that the WQGIT confirmed the nomination of Kristen Saacke Blunk and John Rhoderick as Agriculture Workgroup Co-Chairs on April 14, 2014.

3. Workgroup Meeting Minutes

- The Agriculture Workgroup Co-Chairs introduced the draft minutes from the March 13, 2014 workgroup meeting held at the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Officer in Annapolis, Maryland for review and approval.
- VA motioned to approve the March 13 minutes
 - VA second
 - All were in favor

DECISION: AgWG members approved the March 13, 2014 workgroup meeting minutes.

4. Trends in Phosphorus Generated by Broilers Based Upon PLS Data

- Matt Johnston, Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee Coordinator, described trends found in the data provided by the PLS for broiler populations, litter volumes and phosphorus concentrations. This analysis was recently conducted at the request of the Poultry Litter Subcommittee to help understand the impact of incorporating the trends in the Phase 5.3.2 modeling tools.
- AgWG members noted that the analysis focuses on the trends in data
 - NGO: Noted that trend data is what is used in the model.
- NGO: Note that the lag time is a factor in increasing loads
- NGO: Recommend noting that the decrease in population may be related to growing larger birds. Also emphasize the benefits from phytase.
- The increase in phosphorus concentration may be due to decreased house clean out frequency
 - In the current model, poultry litter is represented "as excreted", so it averages out over multiple years.
- EPA: It is important to note that everyone here is interested in getting the best available data in the model. There is, however, a timing issue with getting changes made in time for Phase 6.0.

5. Poultry Litter Subcommittee Status Report

- Jim Glancey, Poultry Litter Subcommittee Chair, presented a status report on the development of recommendations by the Subcommittee for use in the partnership's phase 5.3.2 modeling tools. The subcommittee is seeking comments and suggestions from the membership at this time.
- NGO: Why change just the population, which would give all states a decrease, when nutrient pollution is increasing?
 - PLS members recommend that this is a better way to present population changes based on best available data.
 - VA: The current PLS recommendations keep most of the existing parameters, and adjust population, while keeping the same data source (the Census of Agriculture) and refining the trend.
 - NGO: Note that changing population without changing the other parameters may lead to a dramatic decrease.
 - Because the 2012 Census of Agriculture will be available very soon, the changes may be less dramatic.
 - The annual NASS number trend has tracked closely with the 5 year Census of Agriculture numbers in the past
 - NGO: Consider addressing all parameters in Phase 6.0 instead.
- What is the status of the external panel?
 - Frank Coale will coordinate this effort for the final report.
- PLS requests comments from the AgWG by May 7th

ACTION: AgWG members are requested to provide comments on the [PLS recommendations](#) posted on today's meeting page to Jim Glancey by Wednesday, May 7th.

6. Manure Treatment Technology Subgroup Report

- Kristen Hughes Evans, Manure Treatment Technology Subgroup Chair, introduced the subgroup's draft recommendation report for consideration by the workgroup. The report defines the new proposed comprehensive BMP, and provides a prioritized approach to developing the diverse categories of technologies included within it. The intention of the report is to assist the workgroup in establishing a future expert review panel with an appropriate scope of work or "charge" based on the input received from the partnership. This presentation begins the workgroup review process on the draft recommendations, and the subgroup is seeking comments and suggestions from the membership in preparation for a draft final recommendation report to be provided at the next workgroup meeting.
- NGO: The thermochemical category may need to be broken into further categories to account for variation between types.
 - This recommendation can be included for the expert panel to consider.
- EPA: Will the expert panel be breaking these technology categories into subcategories?
 - These guidelines can be included in the recommendations to the expert panel.
- Will the verification guidance be included in the expert panel considerations?
 - Yes, all panels will be asked to consider verification as part of their reports once they are approved and available by the partnership.
- Clarification: The technologies not in scope of work would be evaluated and captured in other panel evaluations such as animal waste storage, manure injection, nutrient management, etc.
- Recommend that the atmospheric emissions component could be captured from other external sources by the panel vs. recreating information internally.
- Recommend capturing the variation across the geographic and temperature differences as well as other structural, permitting, and management issues.
- Ask for comments to be sent to Emma and Mark for the subgroup to consider in preparation for the next AgWG meeting

ACTION: AgWG members are requested to provide comments on the [Manure Technologies Subgroup report](#) to Mark and Emma for the subgroup to consider in preparation for the next AgWG meeting.

7. Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is soliciting proposals to restore the habitats and water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributary rivers and streams.
- Proposals are due May 15th
- <http://nfwf.org/chesapeake/Pages/2014-chesapeake-rfp.aspx> for more information

Lunch

8. Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee Update

- Curt Dell, Agricultural Modeling Subcommittee Chair, presented the subcommittee priorities in intended Scenario Builder revisions for the Midpoint Assessment. The AMS will present their recommendations on agricultural land uses for the Phase 6.0 Chesapeake Bay Program models at the June AgWG meeting for review and potential recommendation to the Land Use Workgroup.
- Recommend analyzing the fertilizer data by nutrient species to represent differences in volatilization.
 - Matt: The fertilizer data is broken out by species, so this analysis could be done.
 - Volatilization of inorganic fertilizer currently occurs in the watershed model (related to moisture levels)
- Mark noted that the Agriculture Workgroup is responsible to recommending The LUWG has asked for comments on the Phase 6.0 land uses. LUWG will be deferring to AgWG on the Land Uses classification of ag land uses.
- Olivia has talked with representatives from NASS who are willing to present to the AgWG or to the AMS.
 - Recommend having NASS present to AMS and invite other AgWG members to the meeting.

ACTION: The AgWG will schedule a separate meeting between USDA-NASS representatives and the Agriculture Modeling Subcommittee and other interested parties.

9. FE Technical Review Panel Update

- Bob Ensor, Chair of the FE Technical Review Panel, provided an update on the activities of the panel in reviewing the agricultural BMP Functional Equivalent (FE) recommendation proposal presented by MDA to the workgroup. As a result of the panel discussions, the original MDA proposal is being adapted to reflect the panels' suggested modifications. One change is the adoption of the term Resource Improvement (RI) vs. FE.
- The subgroup will meet again on May 8th to review the remaining practices, and plan to present their conclusions to the AgWG in June.
- Members noted concern with the communication and verification aspects given the name change and relation to NRCS standards.
 - Following discussions with representatives from NRCS, they prefer that the names be changed. NRCS does not want their standards confused with other standards.

- These Resource Improvement practices have shorter lifespans.
- Not all Resource Improvement practices are currently credited. These practices would require a panel review just like all other practices, and until then will be used for planning purposes only.
- Why were liquid animal waste systems eliminated:
 - Because there were very few occurrences of these practices. Field offices didn't feel comfortable reporting something that was high hazard if it was not completely up to NRCS standards.

10. Cover Crop Updates

- Jack Meisinger, Cover Crops panel chair, provided an update on the status of the panel. USDA and UMD are in the process of hiring their post-doc to assist with modeling for both the Cover Crops and Conservation Tillage panels. They will be making a final hiring selection soon.
- The Cover Crop panel will be holding a conference call to collect calibration data in preparation for this person to begin modeling.
- Phosphorus and sediment literature data sources are not available for cover crop efficiencies, which is why the modeling information will be needed.
- Other options are to work through TetraTech or Virginia Tech for additional modeling support.
 - It has a person with SWAT experience and some APEX experience.

11. Nutrient Management Updates

- Chris Brosch, Nutrient Management Panel Chair, announced that the Nutrient Management Panel has developed a matrix to break Tiers 2 and 3 into component practices that contribute to nutrient and sediment reduction. This is the first step toward defining an efficiency for Tier 2
- NM plans to provide Tier 2 recommendations later this year.

12. Agricultural BMP Draft Verification Guidance

- Rich Batiuk, Chair of the BMP Verification Committee, presented the BMP Verification Review Panel's review of the draft agricultural verification guidance documentation and the panel's recommended jurisdictional verification protocol design table with supporting explanatory narrative.
- The Verification Panel recommended focusing verification efforts on the BMP's that are present in the largest percentages (based on WIP priorities for example).
- The verification committee has asked the AgWG to form a small group of people to get a recommendation based on the feedback received. The material is due May 9th. However, everything will come back to the AgWG for their final approval.
- Members noted concern about conservation districts having to focus on verification rather than implementation.
 - Clarification: The guidance was not intended to encourage jurisdictions to check every BMP.
- NGO: Is the AgWG supposed to provide the recommendations to the verification methods that work the best?

- Yes, describe the types, methodologies, and recommendations.
- TetraTech: Recommend understanding whether the BMP can be verified visually or if jurisdictions need records. (Leave the cost-shared and other information out to simplify.)
- Chair noted that if the "who" was not required in the guidance that would simplify the matrix. The existing matrix contains much of the needed information.
 - AgWG can say "landowner or jurisdiction" to describe the "who".
- Roy: The panel did not understand the matrix, recommend including it as an appendix not as the central piece.
- The current verification guidance is missing the frequency or the amount of verification.
- Kristen: AgWG will identify a small team to respond to the recommendation. Group will have a discussion early next week.
- Recommend the visual vs. the records needed types of BMPs to simplify the process.
- Panel requested the simplified guidance version.
- Will the Agriculture Workgroup have the opportunity to review these documents before they are distributed to other groups?
 - The documents will be shared with AgWG members.
 - Members recommended scheduling an AgWG meeting to discuss verification before June.

ACTION: A small team of AgWG representatives will meet early next week to respond to the verification committee's recommendations and provide a working draft by the May 9th deadline. Due to this deadline, nominations as well as volunteers to serve on this team are due to Emma by noon on 5/2.

ACTION: The AgWG will schedule a separate meeting to discuss verification in the next month.

Adjourned

Next Meeting: June 19, 2014

Participants:

Mark Dubin, UMD
 Glenn Carpenter, USDA-NRCS
 Paul Bredwell, U.S. Poultry and Egg
 John Rhoderick, MDA
 Matt Johnston, UMD
 Lyndsay Dodd, MASCD
 Olivia Devereux, Devereux Environmental Consulting
 Chris Brosch, VT-VADCR
 Jen Nelson, Resource Smart LLC
 Rachel Melvin, MDA
 Emma Giese, CRC

Kristen Saacke Blunk, Headwaters LLC
Kelly Shenk, EPA
Nick DiPasquale, EPA
Connie Musgrove, UMCES
Marel Raub, CBC
Larry Towle, DDA
Dana York, Green Earth Connection
Robin Pellicano, MDE
Fred Samadani, Environmental & Water Resources Management Consulting
Andy Yost, WVDA
Tim Sexton, VA-DCR
Dave Kindig, VA-DCR
Steve Taglang, PA-DEP
Pat Stuntz, Campbell Foundation
Jim Glancey, UD
Rich Batiuk, EPA
Steve Dressing, TetraTech
Don Meals, TetraTech
Jack Meisinger, USDA-ARS
Jason Keppler, MDA
Curt Dell, ARS