Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)
Meeting Agenda
April 17th, 2025
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Meeting Materials

Virtual Meeting Information
Meeting Link: **Join the meeting now**
Meeting ID: 255 026 759 588
Passcode: 2MvGxh
Phone: +1 202-991-0477,,999598303# US
Calendar page: https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/agriculture-workgroup-meeting-april-2025-2

Workgroup Areas of Focus

Accounting & Reporting ● Implementation ● Innovation

Data & Modeling ● CBP Assignments

Intro & Announcements

10:00   **Welcome, roll call, review meeting minutes – 5 minutes**
Kathy Brasier, AgWG Chair
- Roll call of the governance body
- Roll call of the meeting participants - *Please enter name and affiliation under "Participants" or in "Chat" box*
- **Decision requested:** Approval of minutes from the March AgWG meeting.
- **Decision requested:** Approval of final methodology guidance for remote sensing verification of tillage BMPs.

Innovation/Data & Modeling

10:05   **Independent Review Presentation: PA DEP Remote Sensing BMP Verification Pilot Project - 75 minutes (presentation, discussion, and vote)**
Aileen Molloy & Brian Pickard, Tetra Tech

At last month's AgWG meeting, Tom Howard of Resolve Hydro presented the draft guidance for remote sensing-based verification of tillage BMPs. This document was the subject of a third-party (Tetra Tech) review to determine how closely the proposed guidance aligns with the existing Chesapeake Bay Program remote sensing-based BMP verification guidance. This review was finalized and shared for the workgroup's consideration on 4/3 and is intended to provide an independent assessment of the tillage-specific guidance for interested parties to consider, and ultimately support partnership decision-making around the approval of the proposed guidance.

This month, the Tetra Tech team will present their findings to the workgroup, sharing the key elements of their review. Pennsylvania will be given the opportunity to provide a brief response. The floor will then open to all AgWG participants for discussion, at which point all questions, comments, and/or concerns can be raised. Finally, voting procedure will be reviewed and a vote to approve the proposed guidance document will be held.

Vote Requested: "The AgWG approves as proposed the final methodology guidance for remote sensing verification of tillage BMPs."

AgWG Planning

11:20 **AgWG Planning Update – 30 minutes (presentation and discussion)**
Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator

The update on the AgWG planning process scheduled for the March meeting was moved to April to provide additional discussion time for another agenda item. This month, Eric will provide an overview of a document capturing AgWG areas of interest, synthesized from the presentations given and discussions held through the initial part of the workgroup's planning effort (10-2024 – 02-2025). This document can be considered a preliminary draft of the plan that will guide the group's work through 2026. Next steps in the planning process will be shared and a request will be made of the group to provide input on the document's contents ahead of our May meeting.

Wrap-up

11:50 **New Business, Announcements & Updates**
- **Agricultural Modeling Team**
  - ο Tom Butler, AMT coordinator, will share recent AMT activities.
- **Agricultural Advisory Committee Kickoff Update**
  - ο The AAC held its kickoff meeting on March 27th, 1-4pm. Meeting materials can be found here. Eric will provide an overview of the meeting and next steps assigned to the AAC members.
- **Beyond 2025 Update (2025 WIP, soil health outcomes)**
  - ο 2025 WIP Outcome – The Management Board reached consensus agreement at their 3/27 meeting to update the 2025 WIP outcome. The Water Quality Goal Implementation Team serves as the outcome lead for the 2025 WIP outcome and was delegated the responsibility of recommending draft outcome language to be considered for the "update". The WQGIT has prepared this form to solicit feedback from all parties interested in participating in the process of updating the outcome language. The form also provides an excellent overview of the steps that have been taken to arrive at this point, as well as the limited information available regarding next steps in the outcome updating process.
  - ο Soil Health Outcome – The soil health outcome discussion continued at the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team meeting on 3/24. Eric Hughes summarized the AgWG's March 20th discussion on the outcome and listed some of the workgroup members' key questions, comments, and concerns. WQGIT members generally felt

similarly to the AgWG members about the introduction of soil health as a new outcome. The outcome, framed as non-ag-specific, was ultimately championed by STAC at the 3/27 Managment Board meeting. The Management Board voted at its April 10th meeting to refer the outcome "back to GIT" for further discussion; at this time, it is unclear to which entity (GIT or otherwise) the soil health outcome will be referred.

- **April CAST Webinar: Agricultural BMPs for a Healthy Ecosystem**
  - ο The April CAST Webinar will take place on April 17th at noon. The topic of the April CAST Webinar is agricultural BMPs and their role in supporting a healthy ecosystem. Cover crops, conservation tillage, pasture management, and other soil health related CAST practices will be spotlighted. The webinar will discuss variations in these practices across multiple agricultural land uses and show the ways in which CAST can be used to comprehend the impact of these practices.
  - ο To view past CAST Free Training Webinars and to access the virtual meeting information for the upcoming webinar, click here.
- **NFWF Chesapeake WILD Grants Program Request for Proposals (RFP)**
  - ο NFWF, in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Chesapeake Bay Program, is now accepting proposals for the Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense (WILD) grants program. The request for proposals can be accessed here. Proposals are due by noon on Tuesday, May 13, and an informational webinar can be accessed on the program page.
  - ο For additional questions, contact Jake Reilly (jake.reilly@nfwf.org) or Tori Sullens (tori.sullens@nfwf.org).
- **Expanding Agroforestry Project Cycle 2 Funding & Application Extension**
  - ο The Expanding Agroforestry Project (EAP), led by the Nature Conservancy, offers incentive payments and financial/technical assistance to eligible farmers for the establishment of agroforestry plantings. This project seeks to increase the acres of agroforestry plantings and the adoption of agroforestry practices including alley cropping, windbreaks, and silvopasture. Additional information can be found on the program webpage.
  - ο The application can be accessed via the following link. The deadline has recently been extended for the Incentive Payment Program Application cycle to Friday, April 18th, 2025.
- **Other Announcements?**
  - ο Send to Caroline Kleis (Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov) for inclusion in "Recap" email.

12:00   **Adjourn**

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 15th, 10:00AM-12:00PM

Acronym List
AgWG- Agriculture Workgroup
AMT- Agricultural Modeling Team (Phase 7)
BMP – Best Management Practice
CAST- Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (user interface for the CBP Watershed Model)

This meeting will be recorded. Sharing of recordings is not permitted due to current EPA policy.

CBP- Chesapeake Bay Program
CBPO- Chesapeake Bay Program Office
CBW-Chesapeake Bay Watershed
CTIC – Conservation Technology Information Center
CVN – Conservation Validation Network
EPA - [United States] Environmental Protection Agency
FSA – Farm Service Agency
MLRI – Modeled Load Reduction Indicator
NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service
NFWF – National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
ORISE – Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education
PADEP – Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
PSC – Principals' Advisory Committee (CBP)
PSU- Penn State University
SWCD – Soil and Water Conservation Districts
WQGIT- Water Quality Goal Implementation Team
UMD - University of Maryland
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture
USGS – United States Geological Survey
USFS – United States Forestry Service