



**Chesapeake Bay Program  
Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)  
Conference call  
Thursday, September 3, 2015**

**Minutes**

Summary of Action and Decision Items:

**ACTION:** Matt and Ted will send an email to the WTWG asking for their consensus on the Phase 5.3.2 Nutrient Management Expert Panel report. If no comments are received by COB Thursday, September 10, the full report will be considered approved by the WTWG.

**ACTION:** Matt will send out an email to the WTWG asking for review and approval of the proposed Phase 6 default land use groups by COB Thursday, September 10. If no feedback or objections are received, the proposed default land use groups will be considered approved by the WTWG.

**ACTION:** Matt will send an email to the WTWG as a reminder to submit all data on construction acres.

Nutrient Management Panel report Review – Chris Brosch

Chris provided a recap of the panel's recommendations for all three tiers of nutrient management, and explained the decision by the Ag Workgroup to approve only the nitrogen efficiencies for Tier 2 and Tier 3.

**Decision Requested:** The WTWG was asked to approve the report and technical appendix with the understanding that the AgWG previously approved the Tier I efficiencies and the Tier II and III efficiencies for nitrogen only.

**Discussion:**

- Chris Brosch (VT, VA DCR): In Virginia, there are several farms that span a county or two. Because of the nature of those farms being physically disconnected, they would be reported separately even if they are in the same plan.
- Ted Tesler (PA DEP, WTWG Chair): I know that from a program standpoint, the tier 2 fits in well with what we're doing. Tier 3 is largely voluntary, but when it is done, it is done by large operators with significant acreage. Because Tier 3 is a voluntary practice, I'm concerned about how we are going to get that in the door, maybe through a cooperative agreement?
  - Brosch: We would love to work with you on that, we have made some headway on the public providers. We know they are doing this service on planned and non-planned nutrient management plans.
- Matt Johnston (UMD, WTWG Coordinator): I would guess some fields are still in Tier 1, and I would ask states to describe in their QAPP's how they break out the 3 different tiers.
- Johnston: Can we make the jurisdictions' reporting easier, so everyone only reports their acreage once?
  - Brosch: Yes, we can update the NEIEN appendix and Scenario Builder to make reporting a little simpler.
- Tesler: Is there a manure incorporation panel?
  - Brosch: Yes, they will have a recommendation for the Phase 6 Watershed Model.

- Tesler: I like that manure incorporation is part of the Nutrient Management recommendations, but I recognize there may be separate efforts that we would need to track.
- Tesler: In terms of approval, are we just approving the portions of the report that were approved by the AgWG, or the entire report as originally written?
  - Johnston: I have spoken to Lucinda Power (WQGIT Coordinator) and Rich Batiuk (EPA, CBPO) about this process. The AgWG had consensus around Tier 2 nitrogen but not Tier 2 phosphorus, but we are reviewing the report in its entirety and forwarding any concerns we have to the WQGIT, and they will consider our decision as well as the AgWG's decision.
- Tesler: Chris, could you give more detail on the issues related to Tier 2 phosphorus?
  - Brosch: Following lack of approval in the fall of 2014, the Nutrient Management expert panel was asked to go back and find new literature to support a more robust recommendation. We went back and found some new literature and some gray literature related to tier 2 nitrogen and everyone seemed happy with the extra efforts. For phosphorus however, we had dried up our literature searches and so we were going to rely on manure incorporation benefits. Some incorporation of surface applied manure has a benefit, but manure incorporation of phosphorus can yield additional phosphorus runoff in areas where erosion occurs, which didn't surprise the panel. So we discounted the rate the best we could, then we discovered a paper that used the SWAT model to run various simulations from various farms just outside the watershed. There was about a 25% reduction of phosphorus in the SWAT model, which we felt was the best we were going to do since we had exhausted the literature search. We adjusted the 25% with the same procedures as the other tiers from nitrogen. We got some feedback based on an eastern shore research study that did not document that same level of reduction, but one of the panelists, Ken Staver (UMD), was involved in that eastern shore study and recognized it was a concern, but said he was still comfortable with the recommendations of the Panel. The other opposition to the Tier 2 phosphorus recommendation stemmed from the distrust in using a model to inform a model. The benchmark for tier 2 phosphorus is a 6.6% reduction, which is only a little higher than adjusted manure incorporation benefit, so now I think some folks have settled on opposing the tier 1 phosphorus recommendation instead of the tier 2.
- Tesler: I understand it is a challenge, and I have never seen this level of scrutiny put into a panel report, and I frankly think it is unfair.
  - Brosch: I think we are all better for the process we went through in the fall, but I have concerns over the new objections raised this time around.
- Tesler: Is there agreement on consensus approval for this report?
  - Tesler: I personally am fine with the entire report, and Pennsylvania would approve this report as written.
  - Johnston: I think we are limited by the number of participants on the call today. Do we need to send this out over email to make sure all parties have had a chance to review this report? We can say no one on the call had any issues.
    - Tesler: I am fine with that approach.
- Mark Dubin (UMD, AgWG Coordinator): We would like to be able to present this report to the WQGIT on Sept 14<sup>th</sup>. If you can you bring your recommendation to that meeting, it would be appreciated.
  - Tesler: I think we can definitely do that.
  - Johnston: I think we can ask for comments by next Thursday.

ACTION: Matt and Ted will send an email to the WTWG asking for their consensus on the Phase 5.3.2 Nutrient Management Expert Panel report. If no comments are received by COB Thursday, September 10, the full report will be considered approved by the WTWG.

#### Phase 6 BMP Land Use Groups – Matt Johnston

Matt provided an overview of the default land use groups upon which BMPs will be placed in the Phase 6 Model. The WTWG was asked to review the last and approve it over email following the meeting.

#### **Discussion:**

- Tesler: So does this distribute automatically?
  - Johnston: It does not roll over on to pasture, it is 100% into row crop as the default unless you report acres onto pasture. This is one rule for all scenarios.
- Tesler: So what happens if you report more acres than there are row crop available?
  - Johnston: In that case, you would have excess acres. It is helpful to divvy those up.
- Tesler: That helps me strive to get the right data. I am a little concerned about how to manage situations where we don't have information on the specific land use, because we would worry if we start to see cutoff.
  - Johnston: And we are not sure yet how that will work out with the defaults, but we will see that after October 1.

ACTION: Matt will send out an email to the WTWG asking for review and approval of the proposed Phase 6 default land use groups by COB Thursday, September 10. If no feedback or objections are received, the proposed default land use groups will be considered approved by the WTWG.

#### Phase 6 and 2015 Progress Submission Questions – Group

All members are encouraged to bring forward questions about the Phase 6 and the 2015 Progress submission process.

#### **Discussion:**

- Johnston: If you submitted revised data to NEIEN in the last 30 days, you will have new reports for those to look over in the next several days. Are there any overall questions on submissions?
  - None were raised.
- Johnston: There is example xml code posted on today's meeting calendar page to show the difference between the two agency codes. The first code is the high level schema that labels your xml. What was added for Phase 6 is that we needed to know if your BMP is going on federal land, and if so, what agency. So there are agency codes for every BMP. Please check that your xmls are working in this format because we have seen a lot of errors with that so far.

#### 2015 Progress Reminder and NEIEN Appendix Roll-Out – Ted Tesler/Matt Johnston

Ted provided a calendar with due dates for 2015 Progress reporting and Matt reviewed changes to the Phase 5 NEIEN Appendix.

## Discussion:

- Johnston: The September 11 and October 9 deadlines may slip because we missed August 31 deadline. These are all written into the grant guidance. We are trying to finalize actual acres in each year for the Phase 6 Watershed Model, so we need to get that data in on construction acres as soon as possible.

ACTION: Matt will send an email to the WTWG as a reminder to submit all data on construction acres.

- Johnston: From October 6 through the first/second week of December I will be out of the office, and Sucharith Ravi (UMCES, CBPO) and Jeff Sweeney (EPA, CBPO) will be answering questions and helping you with 2015 progress submissions.
- Johnston: We have a Phase 5 NEIEN appendix and a Phase 6 NEIEN appendix on the calendar page. Most changes are on our end, in columns discussing procedures, but those shouldn't really impact your historic data or 2015 progress submissions. I would like to point out in the Phase 5 appendix, in the efficiency for nutrient management, we have put in tier 2 nitrogen, tier 2 nitrogen and phosphorus, tier 2 phosphorus and tier 3 nitrogen as discussed today. Until that is approved through the partnership, all of those practices are only mapped to tier 1. You can submit it now though for each of those tiers.
  - Tesler: I think that is clear, and a very good idea.
- Tesler: On historic land use and some of the disturbed acres back through time, didn't that already exist within the model?
  - Johnston: There was an effort in the past to gather some data on harvested forest and construction but it was clear that it was very incomplete. There was a ratio calculated based on Maryland and Virginia data, which carried through until we asked states to start providing that data explicitly and we are trying to improve that ratio this time around.
- Tesler: I don't know that our guess would be any better than what you are doing now.
  - Johnston: That is ok, but we want states to report what they have and we will calculate a ratio just for the years that we don't have any data.

## Adjourn

### List of Confirmed Call Participants

Member Name		Affiliation
Ted	Tesler	PA DEP
David	Wood	CRC
Matt	Johnston	UMD, CBPO
Greg	Sandi	MDE
Mark	Dubin	UMD, CBPO
Chris	Brosch	VT, VA DCR
Alana	Hartman	WV DEP