

## Wetland Workgroup Meeting

Thursday, September 14, 2017

1:00 – 1:45PM

### Conference Call Only

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#### Attendees:

Erin McLaughlin, MD DNR (Co-Chair)	
Amy Jacobs, TNC (Co-Chair)	
Jeremy Hanson, VT	
Jeff Hartranft	Mark Biddle, DNREC
Greg Noe, USGS	Denise Clearwater, MDE
Chris Spaur, USACOE	Neely Law, CWP

#### Action Items:

**1. Members vote to Approve EP members:**

**\*\*Margot will send email requesting responses by end of next week – 9/22\*\***

**All members must respond, non-responses will be counted as supporting**

#### Updates:

- \* **Amy:** project re: completing 50 acres wetland protection NRCS WRE easement; 30 acres of restoration
  - o Demonstrating different methods of restoration w/o impacting drainages from neighboring landowners
    - Methods include: ditches to wetland swales, 2 stage ditches, weirs, shallow excavation

#### Welcome New Staffer: Margot

Originally from northern VA, and went to school at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Studied conservation biology and life sciences communications. Spent the past year in Washington state working with salmon in the field. I'm very excited to be back in my home watershed working with an awesome organization.

I am happy to talk more about my life sciences communications degree if any of you want to email me directly.

#### Review Expert Panel Charge and Schedule: Erin / Jeremy

- \* Review of previous WEP: defined land uses, wetland restoration BMP
- \* New panel to recommend loading and effectiveness estimates for wetland rehabilitation, enhancement and creation BMPs

- VT has resources to facilitate additional panels
- CWP and TNC proposal was selected for funding to lead and support the EP
- August 30 – SOW distributed to workgroups, GITs and advisory committees for feedback
- Context: WQGIT BMP protocol (process and expectations), charge (tasks and requests), SOW (game plan + timeline)

**Review List of Proposed Panelists:** Discussion from Neely Law

\*For further details see attached\*

Neely Law (CWP) – panel chair, Facilitate discussions

Kathleen Boomer (TNC) - Continuity from past panel

Jeanne Christe (Association of State Wetland Managers) - Permitting and regulations

Greg Noe (USGS) - scientist

Erin McLaughlin (MD DNR) - Continuity from past panel, wetland and WQ classifications

Solange Filoso (Chesapeake Biological Lab) - Biogeochemistry

Denice Wardrop (PSU) - Nutrients and wetlands

Scott Jackson (UMASS) - Extension professor, wetland assessment protocols, wetland permitting

Steve Strano (NRCS) - Continuity from past panel, NRCS practice standards

Rob Roseen (Waterstone Engineering) - Nutrient crediting, stormwater BMPs

Ralph Spagnolo (EPA R3) - Continuity from past panel, represent EPA

\* Feedback from reviewers:

- Dianne McNally (WQGIT): further considerations to evaluate potential tradeoffs and provide feedback on which practices may or may not be desired; recommended EPA region 3 reps (Ralph Spagnolo) and regulatory point of contact (Carrie Travers)
  - Response: panel will consider these issues when looking at ancillary benefits, unintended consequences, and qualifying conditions
- John Schneider (DNREC) and CBP staff (Kristin Saunders, Scott Phillips): review should be expanded to include PCBs
  - Response: scope of BMP protocol limits recommendations to N, P and sediment; if ancillary benefits are found, PCBs will be added to the panel report
    - Chris Spaur – asking for background about PCB transformations, accumulations etc.
    - Neely response: PCBs accumulate in sediment so likely wetlands might be a sink, could have high concentrations
    - Greg Noe: yes – PCBs sorb tightly to sediment, and potentially accumulate in wetlands
    - Denise Clearwater: word of caution about turning wetlands into treatment facilities; not the best for aquatic resources
      - Will the panel start recommending the specific enhancement type of projects that they would like to counting for credit?

- Neely: former panel provided values for restoration BMP, but limited in qualifying details. Moving forward, trying to distinguish between BMP types that result in credits
- Denise: looking for more specifics; which practices should be tracked – i.e. start monitoring credits for invasive?
- Jeremy: hard to distinguish practices that could be in multiple categories. Panel trying to id potential practices. BUT probably not possible for an exhaustive list, but hopefully provide clarification to move forward.
- Denise: who will do the literature search?
  - Neely: TNC + others to look at more recent research.
  - Denise: suggestion: most systems working on are still natural. Don't limit search to restoration studies, include natural systems studies.
- Point added to Charge related to ancillary benefits (potential application to PCBs)
- Sara Diebel (DoD): tidal and nontidal practices; wetland enhancement and rehabilitation in developed settings not just ag
  - Response: charge explicit to address ONLY non-tidal; potential future panels to look at tidal
  - Response: most acres will likely be in rural and ag
  - \*no changes in charge of SOW from these comments

**Action Item: Members vote to Approve EP members:**

**Outcome: \*\*request responses by end of next week – 9/22\*\***

**Send out email to prompt – disclaimer of no response = approval**

- \* Schedule:
  - Post approval: schedule conference call with panel
  - Schedule public stakeholder forum (public present research and/or ask questions etc.)
  - Further closed panel meetings to work on recommendations
  - Develop recommendations and deliver report **within 12 months**

**GIT Funding Update: Margot**

- \* GIT Funding meeting was held at the end of August
- \* 2017 Funding available - \$829,674
  - Funded 14 projects including 2 HGIT proposals
- \* Priority 1: Targeted Outreach for Wetland Protection and Restoration (Mitch Hartley)
  - Under Black Duck Action Team / Wetland Workgroup
  - Aiming to pilot targeted outreach approaches that increase wetland protection and restoration efforts on private lands

- Interested in using NRCS funding of wetland protection and restoration that is underutilized in the Bay currently
  - Plan to incorporate projects from past GIT funding including: Black Duck Decision Support Tool, Landowner attitudes survey, and targeted outreach materials
  - 30-hr/week contractor to conduct research based outreach to evaluate various landowner interest and enrollment in NRCS and other programs
- \* Priority 2: Development of Citizen Scientist SAV Monitoring Protocol and Certification Program, and Review of Statutes and Regulations that Protect SAV in the Chesapeake Bay (Brooke Landry)
  - SAV outcome
  - Overall SAV goal to shift focus from restoration to monitoring and protection
  - Current proposal moves toward that goal in 2 parts
  - Component 1: Development of citizen scientist SAV monitoring protocol and collector certification program
    - Facilitate expansion of monitoring in the Bay into an integrated and coordinated bay-wide effort
    - Supplement the aerial surveys by VIMS
  - Component 2: Examine Bay state statutes and regulations that protect existing SAV
    - Analysis to determine if regulations adequately protect SAV so Bay-wise SAV restoration goals are achievable
    - Potential to make recommendations for further SAV protections
- \* Next Steps:
  - Project leads will be refining scope
  - CBT issuing RFPs to seek bidders
  - Project commencement expected January 2018

#### **Outreach Subcommittee Update:**

- \* Current GIT funded project: wetland website to lead landowners and service providers to restoration programs
- \* Contractor has been performing research, compiling information for website, and interviewing landowners that have restored wetlands to develop videos and case studies for the website –
- \* Currently scheduling 2 meetings this fall to receive updates from the contractor and provide feedback. If anyone is interested in joining the outreach subcommittee, please contact Margot.

#### **Next Steps: Amy**

- Margot sent out a survey to all Wetland Workgroup members to seek input on how we want to move forward, content for meetings, and group structure. Contact Margot if you would prefer to have a phone call to relay responses.
- \* Looking for new members to lead group for one year term. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone please contact Margot. Amy and Erin are also happy to talk about their experiences, time commitment etc.

**Adjourn – 2:00 pm**

**Post-meeting note:** No additional votes or feedback was submitted via email.

**DECISION:** The membership and charge for the Wetland Rehabilitation, Enhancement and Creation BMP Expert Panel was approved.

Tentative 2017 Meeting dates

Nov 16

Each of these meetings will take place from 1-3pm in CBP Conference Room 305, conference line: 866-299-3188, code: 267-985-6222.