

AWQPF Tech Subgroup

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, June 14, 2016 – Illinois Dept. of Ag, FFA Room, Springfield, IL, 9:30 pm – noon

Conclusions and Next Steps

9:30 – 11 am	<p>SURVEY UPDATE – Mark Schleusener, NASS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Survey content is finalized and it's expected that they will make the July 1 mailout. NASS and University of Illinois have approved the survey. It will capture 2011 and 2015 information.➤ Stakeholder publicity is in place and a press release is ready. The survey will be sent to a random selection of farmers that have more than 100 acres of corn and soybeans. They expect to have a 70% total response rate.➤ The resulting dataset will live with NASS. <p>AGENCY REPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Kim Martin and Natalie Prince reported that FSA have finished 2011 data and 2015 is in progress.➤ They will report data for 2011 by 1. county 2. percentage of county that is in priority watershed and 3. state total and for 2015, can present crop total by 1. county 2. priority watershed and 3. state total. They will also report winter wheat information. See "ag pub specs" for more information.➤ Buffers planted and wetlands enrolled from IDNR will be added to FSA data.
11 am – noon	<p>NEXT STEPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Compiling and storing data: Illinois EPA and IDOA should compile and store the data initially and have PWG and/or AWQPF decide long term. For now, all data and survey results should be sent to Warren Goetsch and Trevor Sample.➤ Reporting multiple data sources and methods: Different data sources will both be presented. They measure different yet complementary metrics. A description of the data will be included. This will ensure continuity for future reports.➤ Nutrient removal calculation: We will skip this step at this point. If PWG wants it, then it can be a research question.➤ Report writing and timeline:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Agency data deadline = Aug 1, 2016.○ Survey data will come = Dec 2016.○ Data from 2011 and 2015 will be put into report that will come out July 2017.○ The purpose of the report is to show whether approach is demonstrating some level of progress.➤ Pub Spec table: Eliana Brown will draft a pub specs table and send it around for approval.➤ Interaction with other groups: Tech Subgroup representative to give report during full AWQPF meeting on September 27. Bring question of data storage Policy Working Group and/or AWQPF.

➤ **Future meeting:** Thursday, December 8, 2106.

In attendance: Kim Martin, Farm Service Agency; Natalie Prince, Farm Service Agency; Mark Schleusener, USDA-NASS; Warren Goetsch, Illinois Department of Agriculture; Steve Chard, Illinois Department of Agriculture; Kevin Rogers, Illinois Department of Agriculture; Trevor Sample, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; Mike Chandler, Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Lisa Beja, Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Eric Gerth, USDA-NASS; Brian Miller, Illinois Water Resources Center; Eliana Brown, Illinois Water Resources Center; Katie Hollenbeck, Illinois Water Resources Center; Ashley Rice, Illinois Water Resources Center; Lyndsey Ramsey, Illinois Farm Bureau; Liz Hobart, Growmark

Brian Miller: The purpose of this meeting is to look at reports and pull together our information. There are two sheets that we are passing around, one is the agenda and the other one has a list of measures on it. The last part of meeting is where we go from here. Hopefully we can get this accomplished and put ourselves out of business. We would like to do some introductions. First, Mark Schleusener will give us an update on the survey. The survey covers about 11 measures of the list. Others cover 4-6 measures. We will have to have a discussion about combining information.

Introduction

Mark Schleusener: Here is what we have done. I got approval from NASS. The university had to get approval. There are verbiage changes. Funding arrangements were finalized. I have spoken with people doing copying, folding, etc. in St. Louis and we now have a project code. We plan to mail out July 1. The next thing is to get responses from producers. All the corn growers, etc. have a plan for promotion.

Warren Goetsch: Do you know when? I haven't talked to Becky this week. Do they have a press release ready?

Lyndsey Ramsey: Yes, we have one ready, dated July 1. It's together.

Mark Schleusener: Can I see it? I will be on Farm Bureau Radio and should know the press release.

Brian Miller: On the measures, are all of these still the ones you have in the questionnaire? Is there some where we have overlap? Do we want to talk about now? We will have all of your numbers, etc.

Mark Schleusener: The answer is yes, I think so. At this point in time, if we forgot something, we are going without it.

Warren Goetsch: All of this stuff here is covered in the survey. And we will end up reporting what we have. I think we just report both. Both will give us understanding of what is out there.

Mark Schleusener: Generally, I think you report both statistics.

Brian Miller: Aimed at 2011 and 2015?

Mark Schleusener: What did you do in 2011, what did you do in 2015? What is your level of knowledge on bioreactors, etc.?

Warren Goetsch: Would folks mind going into details?

Mark Schleusener: If part of this meeting is to delve into details, I should make copies to pass out.

Brian Miller: Here is your timeline. <points to screen>

Mark Schleusener: This is old information. Mailings go out in July 1. Phoning is scheduled August 15-September 1. Editing and data analysis is in October. Preliminary results are on December 1.

Warren Goetsch: What about the second mailing response rates?

Mark Schleusener: We expect to receive half that, so 20% total. There may be response bias issues. For non-response bias, we might get these different people, getting a full sample population. For the telephone calls, we might get a 10% response. We have 1,900 surveys going out. We have some data but the sample is aimed at producers with greater than

100 acres. Not orchard and veggie growers. We will reach out to corn and soybean growers primarily because these people are doing these things.

Brian Miller: What is the role of the University?

Mark Schleusener: They are funding it. Data goes to the University. We will get results at the state level. Individual farm results cannot be disclosed.

Brian Miller: So the data lives with you?

Mark Schleusener: Correct.

Brian Miller: Kim and Natalie are up.

Natalie Prince: We have 2011 data done. We are not all the way finished with 2015. I have a watershed map. For 2011, we have watershed level data. There might be a little more acreage than what is in the watershed. A lot of these watersheds do not encompass a whole county. But we included the whole county. We can eyeball a percentage but that would be an estimate too.

Warren Goetsch: Is it possible to come up with percentage?

Eric Gerth: You can take the percentage of watershed acres divided by total county acres, but it is still a general estimate.

Mark Schleusener: The issue probably only occurs if we are doing the watershed level. If we do the state total, than we don't have the problem.

Lyndsey Ramsey: The NASS survey was state level.

Mark Schleusener: I thought that was the strategy. It is almost all aimed at state level numbers.

Warren Goetsch: We ended up doing state level because cost was so prohibitive. We will take what we can get.

Brian Miller: The group felt if we could get watershed data, then covers a lot of practices.

Trevor Sample: You are stating facts, just showing a percent of watershed for this county. For a county, say there are 3,000 acres of a watershed and watershed covers 3% of county. Divvy up percent and that way you aren't making something up.

Natalie Prince: We have 2015 crops at CLU level. I think we will be able to look at CLU and clip better to the watershed.

Trevor Sample: 2011?

Natalie Prince: We don't have it down to CLU level.

Trevor Sample: Nobody is going to question this. This is how it is and this is how we did it.

Brian Miller: Differences between 2011 and 2015?

Natalie Prince: For the 2011 date, we have county totals. Every crop is reported by county, huge spreadsheets. For 2015 reports are CLU by county by land unit. Do you just want county and state info for things?

Trevor Sample: Watershed level eventually.

Natalie Prince: I have field levels for some data. Wheat was planted at 1, 5, and 7.

Brian Miller: For 2011, there is some guessing but were able to get to watershed?

Natalie Prince: If it touched a county, I took the whole county total.

Brian Miller: How do you want to do it?

Natalie Prince: I took county watersheds, if it touched the watershed; I took the whole county total, but will be more precise in 2015.

Lyndsey Miller: This is a baseline. Give them what you have by county.

Trevor Sample: To do it by watershed, give a percentage.

Brian Miller: The danger is you might overestimate in 2011.

Natalie Prince: Yes, since I've given the whole county total.

Mark Schleusener: No one should make comparisons of 2011 to 2015 by watershed level.

Lyndsey Ramsey: In 2015, continue to report by watershed and county.

Natalie Prince: We will want county total.

Warren Goetsch: County for both years, state for both years, and from 2015 on, broken down to watershed totals?

Brian Miller: For 2011: we have county, state, and percent of county in priority watershed, and for 2015: we have county, state, and priority watershed.

Natalie Prince: Total is by "cover crop," not broken down by crop.

Mark Schleusener: We need to be careful when we say cover crop. Winter wheat is harvested for grain and also is a functional cover crop.

Natalie Prince: Then we would get back into reporting by crop instead of cover crop.

Mark Schleusener: Tabulation is not the hard part. What are we trying to represent or what are we trying to say?

Natalie Prince: Other crops besides winter wheat? Radishes, etc.? We decided to go by use instead of individual crop.

Mark Schleusener: Teasing that out from database is not simple.

Natalie Prince: Going forward we will be able to catch it, but not by crop. We are reporting as cover crop in four categories. These four categories as cover crop, even in the future, it will be reported.

Lyndsey Ramsey: What are the categories?

Natalie Prince: Cereals, legumes and other grasses, brassicas and other broad leaves, and mixtures.

Mark Schleusener: Let me go get a document.

Brian Miller: For cover crops in the database?

Natalie Prince: Intended use, green manure, left standing, etc. In 2011 we left intended use as cover only, green manure.

Brian Miller: Should it be comparable?

Natalie Prince: It should be. Intended uses will be best way to compare it.

Brian Miller: Wheat as independent column? Is pasture included in perennial energy column?

Natalie Prince: Yes.

Brian Miller: Trevor, are you suggesting it be lumped there?

Warren Goestch: The whole purpose is to provide ground cover, harvested or not, it is providing cover. If we want to reflect the fact that producers are putting something out there, I don't see a column for corn or soybeans.

Trevor Sample: Land use coverages every year? Or are we breaking it up?

Natalie Prince: Cover crops have to be destroyed. They cannot be harvested to be counted as cover crop.

Brian Miller: Not trying to blend with cover crop. From a nutrient reduction strategy, it can be counted.

Eric Gerth: Trevor is looking at systems. What resource concern are you addressing? For winter wheat, are we recognizing it as a soil erosion strategy? What is purpose of cover crop out there? It is a lot more complex than plugging into one category or another. The big picture, is it a positive or negative to overall water quality. But there is value. More crops in rotation, soil health improved.

Brian Miller: Does the group feel that it is valuable to create extra column for winter wheat?

Trevor Sample: If it is not hard to pull out, do it.

Natalie Prince: State and county totals for winter wheat.

Brian Miller: Are you okay with pasture, etc.?

Trevor Sample: Yes, we were okay with it last time.

Brian Miller: CRP?

Trevor Sample: We went through that last time too and that's what we picked.

Brian Miller: Are those other columns; are those comparable from 2011, 2015, to 2017?

Natalie Prince: They are all fine, they're all CRP practices. These are county totals.

Lyndsey Ramsey: CLU data?

Natalie Prince: We'd have to look.

Lyndsey Ramsey: State, county, and CLU level should all be the same.

Natalie Prince: I used county totals and queried it out by watershed.

Lyndsey Ramsey: 2011 has state, county, and watershed, not by CLU.

Natalie Prince: Yes.

Lyndsey Ramsey: Okay for 2011, we have state, county and watershed percent. 2015 is CLU.

Natalie Prince: Yes.

Brian Miller: Measure 10?

Natalie Prince: CRP practices.

Eliana Brown: I'm creating an updated table to capture this level of specificity. There might be a term for this?

Mark Schleusener: We call it "publication specifications" or "pub specs".

Brian Miller: Should we move forward? Should we talk about these tables?

Trevor Sample: I made my map from whatever was included from the University, but I can reach out further for the bioreactors. I would have to look at the years to tease it out.

Brian Miller: We are about to move to procedures moving forward.

Warren Goetsch: At risk at aliening FSA, do we have it all in one place, which practices you provided?

Brian Miller: Going forward, a nuts and bolts question that we thought of. Who is compiling/storing data?

Mike Chandler: We had stuff for Measure 10.

Lisa Beja: We have everything from both reporting periods, by HUC, we will add to Natalie's data. There is no overlap. Their database doesn't report any more. On two columns you'll have buffers planted?

Eliana Brown: By county, watershed, and state total?

Lisa Beja: Yes.

Brian Miller: Okay, now where does this go to? It should probably go wherever report is going to be written. I think we are down to this discussion.

Trevor Sample: It hasn't been discussed.

Warren Goetsch: To start, IEPA and Ag should initially hold the data. And we should probably have the Ag Water Quality Partnership Forum or Policy Working Group figure that out.

Brian Miller: Send one copy to Trevor and one copy to Warren, since there are two copies. And then it will be on the agenda for the whole Ag Water Quality Partnership Forum meeting.

Warren Goetsch: You will accumulate it before you send it?

Mike Chandler: It makes the most sense.

Eliana Brown: Does make sense to finish the table and send it out to everyone to make sure everyone agrees? I will send it out to you and put it in the record.

Natalie Prince: When do I need to send it to you?

Eliana Brown: PWG meeting is August 30 and the AWQPF meeting is September 27.

Warren Goetsch: I'd like it as soon as possible so others don't have to worry about it.

Natalie Prince: I didn't know if I needed to get it done ASAP.

Warren Goetsch: I'd like to see this side come together before NASS does in July.

Brian Miller: Would August 1 be reasonable?

Natalie Prince: Yes.

Warren Goetsch: Hopefully this will be done in a 6 month period or less.

Trevor Sample: Do you want this to come out in the report in July?

Warren Goetsch: It is all to be put in that first report around July 1.

Brian Miller: We are on the hook to do a 2017 report, published in 2018.

Warren Goetsch: I'm thinking we are going to have a report that would come out July 2017 that will have the 2011 and 2015 information. Then you'll have a July 2019 that will have 2011, 2015, and 2017. There will be a one to two year lag because of timing.

Trevor Sample: Does data go to Amy or to me?

Brian Miller: Mark, you will send data to the same two places, IEPA and Ag. Next, measures with two sources, will they be reconciled?

Warren Goetsch: Mark will be providing some information about cover crops, but will be coming at it in a different perspective. We should just explain from whence the data came. Just explain where data came from.

Brian Miller: Report two sources and if it is fairly close, fine, and if it is different, explain the different methods of obtaining the data.

Warren Goetsch: I think Mark's survey will give us information on how much information people know about a certain thing. They are not measuring the same thing, but both providing information on the practice. Or conversely, everyone knows about them and that's why we have such a high adoption rate.

Brian Miller: The next question was about calculating actual load observed in the stream. There was some discussion.

Trevor Sample: We should be able to do it, but I don't know if we have the capacity to do it. We don't have that site specific info. We would have to make broad assumptions. What is the outcome of nutrients saved? I don't know if we can do that at this point.

Lisa Beja: I don't know if we have science assessment tools that we need to account for everything happening on the land.

Trevor Sample: Based on what we are reporting, we should be seeing reductions of this.

Brian Miller: All states are trying to calculate it. Ohio, Indiana, etc. are hoping to say if estimates are on or off. Do we want to skip this step?

Trevor Sample: For now, we should skip the step.

Lyndsey Ramsey: We should see what survey results say first.

Trevor Sample: What about a crude estimate of soil erosion and what we saved? It has to be done at the practice level.

Lisa Beja: We do that, too, for all of our practices. It takes a lot into account.

Brian Miller: The group says let's not do this now. It is more of a research question if the Policy Working Group pushes this question. There is lots of USDA money out there for this kind of research.

Trevor Sample: I think we wait to see what the Policy Working Group wants. Let's be responsive to see what they want.

Brian Miller: Who will write the report and what is the timeline? NASS people in July 2017? The next question is regarding a face to face meeting and follow up. So the question here is if we are dissolving after this meeting, do we need to come back together and if so, when? The next reports are July 2017 and July 2018. When would it be the right time to come back together and talk about stuff again?

Trevor Sample: Draft the report and send it out to somebody and talk about the draft report.

Warren Goetsch: Or what about the first week in December? We have a meeting so Mark can go over results of survey.

Mark Schleusener: There will be some reaction to the report change. What should we be measuring? Should we do the same thing or be forced to adapt and adjust?

Warren Goetsch: If we did something around the first week in December, we would know what worked and what didn't work because if there is something we need to think about and change the earlier we can contemplate the changes, the better.

Mark Schleusener: I think it's good to have something to react to.

Eliana Brown: The Nutrient Monitoring Council meeting is on December 6. The second week is open.

Mark Schleusener: December is awkward. Schedule it. Things that don't get scheduled get delayed. Things that get scheduled get done.

Eliana Brown: Let's schedule it now. Tuesday, December 13 or Thursday, December 8.

Mark Schleusener: Feels like either one is fine. Thursday the 8th suits me.

Brian Miller: Do we have continuity and consistent data?

Trevor Sample: We will look at it before we put it all together.

Brian Miller: Are there other things that we need to talk about? Any questions?

Mark Schleusener: Who is the audience? Who wants to look at it and what are they looking at?

Trevor Sample: The Policy Working Group first.

Warren Goetsch: From the ag perspective, environmental groups – non regulatory volunteer program is working. The ag sector is making advances to adopt nutrient loss reduction. Federal agencies are another audience to determine that this approach is working. This is supposed to confirm or deny that this approach is working and that we are showing some level of progress. BMPs are being adopted and water quality will improve.

Lyndsey Ramsey: What is our obligation to send it to the hypoxia task force, etc.?

Trevor Sample: Just put it out there and say that it is done. There is no real request for certain information.

Warren Goetsch: Right now there is no rule.

Trevor Sample: It is based on the Stoner Memo.

Lyndsey Ramsey: The Policy Working Group and some environmental groups created the benchmark and want to meet more interim goals. The environmental groups will be looking at results.

Liz Hobart: They want to quantify.

Trevor Sample: The interim is there.

Lyndsey Ramsey: We need a baseline first.

Mark Schleusener: We will make it slightly different based on the report.

Lyndsey Ramsey: There will be some reaction to report.

Brian Miller: You are on track or ahead.

Lyndsey Ramsey: They are always looking for a silver bullet. They want to use data from the survey and legislatures can propose a new law. They will do lots of different things that use our results to put regulations in place.

Trevor Sample: We will be looking to the Urban Stormwater Working Group and other groups for their results too.

Brian Miller: There is a team committee technical committee of the hypoxia task force that measures what the states are doing.

Liz Hobart: Think throughout the Midwest. There are a lot of commonalities and a lot of differences. Ohio is focused on phosphorus and we are focused on nitrogen. There are differences based on topography, soil, etc.

Trevor Sample: It is almost all the same practices.

Mark Schleusener: That's what works.

Brian Miller: If someone has a really great idea, then that's what we will use. That will conclude the meeting for today. Thank you everyone for your hard work.