

AWQPF Technical Subgroup Meeting 7/17/18 1:00 – 3:00pm

In attendance: Trevor Sample, Illinois EPA; Lauren Lurkins, IFB; Kris Reynolds, AFT; Dan Schaefer, IFCA; Eric Gerth, USDA-NRCS; Kim Martin, FSA; Doug Bailey, FSA; Clay Bess, PCM; Warren Goetsch, Illinois DOA; Caroline Wade, TNC; Mark Schleusener, NASS; Eliana Brown, Illinois Extension; Kate Gardiner, Illinois Extension; Lisa Merrifield, Illinois Extension

- Committee Charge Reminder
 - Determine the best way to share and aggregate BMP implementation data across agencies (so we can track our progress in accomplishing the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy).
 - Determine what BMP implementation parameters will be tracked (e.g. cover crops, wetlands, buffer strips, etc.) and how it will be aggregated (e.g. per watershed, statewide, lump practices into categories like edge of field, etc.). This includes identifying future data parameters required from producer surveys or transect surveys to track progress in accomplishing the NLRs.
 - Assess existing BMP implementation data availability over time to advise the policy work group as they select a BMP implementation baseline year. *The subgroup may want to update this charge since the Policy Working Group has already selected a benchmark year.*
- Hypoxia Task Force BMP Tracking
 - Key Base Parameters of practice data by NPS Measures Workgroup
 - Likely available: State, County, HUC_8 watershed, Practice Name, Funding Source, Program, Applied Amount, Practice Unit, Applied Date, Cost Share Funding Expended
 - Likely available depending on source: HUC_12 watershed, practice code
 - Likely able to assume value based on collected data: Sunset Date, Total Project Costs, Water Quality Benefits, Practice Category, Pre-Implementation Land Use, Areas Treated, etc.
- Land Measures Reporting
 - FSA (Cover Crop, CRP Wetland, CRP Buffers, Perennial/energy crop Reporting)
 - Use cover crop data for 2017 only, not 2016, using the new way of reporting because it provides better information. There are now 4 categories for cover crop reporting: small grasses, cereal grasses, brassicas, and broad leafs
 - CLU Data available, similar to 2015 with exception of cover crops. Can match by HUC, county, state and within that do cover crop, CRP, wetlands buffers, etc. Want to make sure they understand how to pull that data. Will be broken up by HUC_8 watersheds.
 - Good chance there are more cover crops out there than are being reported.
 - Perennial/Energy/Pasture will be included.
 - NRCS (EQIP, CSP, ACEP)
 - EQIP: 2016 practice data was included in large Hypoxia Task Fork Spreadsheet that was used for 2009-2015 practice data in the last Biennial Report.- Will check if headquarters will be releasing similar data for 2017. Otherwise, practice-specific data may not be available, but annual funding levels will be. Don't have ability in IL to pull by watershed, just by county. The summary data at the end of

the year is statewide. Will try to get the 4-5 practices NLRS is reporting on at county level and will figure out the best way to pull the information. If they can't get that information, there's always the aggregate IL data. Will also check what was considered a buffer.

- CSP: Reported in statewide acres and will have that at the end of the fiscal year.
- ACEP: Reported by acres on a statewide level.
- Need 2016 and 2017 data for the next Biennial Report. FY18 data will be available also, so might want to include that. Need acres treated as well. MRBI, NWQI, RCPP, etc. data will all be available for 2018.
- Look for NREC bioreactors – could show up on NRCS data. We would like to know acres treated too.
- Based on how the NRCS software is set up, it's easier to pull information on money and funding rather than specific practices.
- IDNR (CREP)
 - Will have the same information up through 2017. Not sure if there have been any changes since there wasn't funding in 2016. Hopefully by the next report, it'll go up a little bit.
- IEPA (319)
 - Updates through 2017 on 319 practices, including conservation tillage, cover and green manure crop, filter strip, nutrient management, etc. Will include N and P removal estimates.
- 2019 NASS Survey (NASS)
 - NASS survey going out in January 2019, with results available in May 2019. Will have acres fertilized using a MRTN strategy. NASS will follow the reporting format that was used on the first Biennial Report.
 - Response rate will continue to be an issue. Farmers are tired of answering so many questions.
 - Another random selection for farmers. Sent out 1,900 last time, smaller sample this time of 1,100 due to a smaller budget. There will be two mailings plus one phone follow-up. We are excluding farms of 5,000 acres and up, as well as 100 acres and down to get the middle people. Also excluding fruit orchards.
- NGOs
 - IFB
 - IFB can provide bioreactor information, they have grants that come from the bottom-up. Whenever IFB installs BMPs, Lauren sees more of them afterwards. For example, she's seeing more woodchip bioreactors and thinks that by the end of the year, they'll have several to talk about. IFB will provide bioreactor information by county to protect farmer privacy and can probably provide the closest town.
 - IFCA
 - Agrible was working on a project for Jean, but then they were bought and now retailers don't want to work with Agrible because their parent company is their competition. Jean's hopeful we could have something in place for this fall tracking fall applications. If you look at semi loads to

a fertilizer retailer, you can pretty much predict when the fertilizer season starts and peaks. They have a meeting Wednesday in Bloomington with Agrible and the Board of Directors, so they will have more information after that.

- TNC
 - If TNC has data, they will provide it. They don't do a whole lot on direct implementation in the agriculture space, or if they do it's usually with partners. They do bigger projects and urban stormwater projects.
 - We have two projects going on that could provide information about cover crops and tillage using satellite data. The IL – specific project is farther ahead, but we also have cover crops for the whole state and tillage for Macoupin, Vermillion, Upper Sangamon headwaters by Lake Bloomington.
 - AFT
 - Not much beyond education and outreach information. All BMP data will be captured through NRCS MRB/RCP. Have soil transect information for watersheds and county. Working with retailers in Upper Macoupin watershed for data – acres of N in fall, things like that.
 - Precision Conservation Management
 - Laura is confident she can get data, depending on what you want to consider as a change. Can get that by county and watershed.
- Organization Narratives
 - If it didn't change, we can leave it. If any group has an update, put something together and send it to IllinoisNLRs@gmail.com by December 31, 2018.
 - Resource Reporting
 - Staff time, BMP Cost Share program expenditures
 - Spreadsheets Due July 31, 2018 and January 31, 2019
 - Outreach Reporting
 - Outreach, Field Days, Workshops, Conferences
 - Spreadsheets Due July 31, 2018 and January 31, 2019
 - Timeline for Biennial Report
 - The subgroup recommended having the next Biennial Report released at the Farm Progress Show August 2019.
 - Would like more outreach to spread the word on NLRs Biennial Report.
 - Recommendation will be taken to the Policy Working Group.

Next Steps

- All reporting data due December 31, 2018.
- Eric Gerth to check if HQ is releasing EQIP spreadsheet for 2017 and what qualified as a buffer.
- Take Biennial Report release date recommendation of August 27, 2019 to the Policy Working Group.