

MAEAP ADVISORY COUNCIL (AC) MEETING NOTES

September 10, 2012

1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Ken Blight Farms & Marengo Township Fire Station

Albion, Michigan 49224

Present:

Tom Coon, Scott Piggott, Jamie Clover Adams, Paul Zugger, Max Benne, Jeffrey Zimmer, Lauri Elbing, Melissa Higbee, Ernie Birchmeier, Allen Krizek, Michelle Napier-Dunnings, Phil Korson, Jim Scott, Lori Phalen, Tim Boring, James Clift, Brian Geerlings, Jim Johnson and Ken Blight

Resource Staff:

Josh Appleby, Jan Wilford, Emily Ries, Heather Throne, Beth Stuever and Heather Casteel (Scribe)

Welcome, Review/Approval of Past Minutes and Around the Horn

- Scott Piggott began the meeting at 1:08 p.m. by thanking Ken Blight for the farm tour, and everyone for being present, with a special thanks to MDARD Director Jamie Clover Adams for attending.
- Attendees introduced themselves around the table.
- Scott asked if there were any suggested changes to the draft meeting minutes from the AC meeting on July 9. Hearing none, the meeting minutes were approved.

Around the Horn

- Ken Blight reported that he had a great time this past weekend on the Bay Sail, organized by Amy Gilhouse from the Lenawee Conservation District. The event focus was water quality monitoring.
- Melissa Higbee reported that the Shiawassee Conservation District had their annual Ag tour last Thursday, September 6th.
 - 89 people attended with multiple legislators.
 - Tour was on a MAEAP verified farm. The farm owners shared the changes made to their farm to meet MAEAP standards.
- Lauri Elbing reported that she will be attending the 8th Annual Great Lakes Restoration Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, September 11th through the 13th.
- Jan Wilford reported that the last four weeks have been exciting for MAEAP and provided a handout (attached) that listed a description of new contacts and their interest.
- Emily Ries reported that Blaine and Kim Baker have been awarded the MFB Ag Ecology Award and Dan Busby has been awarded the Ecology Champion Award.
 - Scott Piggott reported there were 40+ applications for the Ag Ecology Award and each story was a joy to read.

Task Force/Committee Reports

MAEAP Communications Workgroup

- Heather Throne reviewed the attached handout.
- Heather asked for input in the following areas:
 - Kroger's has suggested putting MAEAP signage next to the milk case, including consumer based brochures or handouts.
 - Not all farms that supply Kroger's are MAEAP verified. Concern was expressed regarding potential MAEAP verification mandate.
- Discussion about expectations of the MAEAP logo brand.
- Kroger's has offered to pay for the displays in all its stores. They requested consumer based brochures. They offered marketing advice for brochure development. Brochures would be a MAEAP expense.
- Suggested to develop a separate MOU for corporations, with different stipulations from farms that want to use the MAEAP brand.
- A general brochure targeting consumers is highly recommended.

Livestock System

- Ernie Birchmeier (Livestock System Co-chair) reported that the Livestock System (LS) Subcommittee continues to move forward.
 - LS Subcommittee meets next Tuesday, Sept. 18th, 2012.
 - Ernie has asked that as we work towards the 5000 verifications, please keep in mind the economic stress that farmers face as they deal with weather related crop damage and high feed cost.

Farmstead System

- Jeff Zimmer (Farmstead System Chair) reported that the Farmstead System (FS) Subcommittee did not meet last summer, as they wanted to wait until fall.
- Jeff has scheduled the FY 2013 meetings, proposed projects, and reviewed his handout. (attached)
- Discussion followed regarding variance for isolation distance for wells. MDARD reported that they have assigned a staff person (Michelle Crook) who will work with DEQ on specific situations that do not meet the isolation distance work sheet guidance but warrant consideration.

Cropping System

- Allen Krizek, (Cropping System Chair) reported that the Cropping System (CS) Subcommittee did have an electronic discussion about fumigation questions.
 - Subcommittee decided to leave them in the Standards documents but only as new educational questions.
- Allen has scheduled the Cropping System Subcommittee meetings to follow all of the Farmstead System Subcommittee meetings, due to the number of members that are on both subcommittees.
- Allen also reported that he has added training for developing fumigation plans during the November 2012 technician Kick-Off.

Water and Environmental Quality Monitoring Subcommittee

- Lauri Elbing reminded the group that she had provided the preliminary report of the Water & Environmental Quality Monitoring at the last AC meeting.

- Lauri asked Director Jamie Clover Adams for review and comment on the Executive Summary pages of the draft report.
- The annual report outlined work group activities through September 30th.
- Lauri reviewed the timeline and previous reports and schedules.

Verification and MDARD Staffing

- Jan reviewed verification numbers (handout attached).
 - The AC discussed the numbers.
 - Michelle Crook has completed the interviews for our new MAEAP Engineer.
 - MAEAP will have 36 full time MAEAP conservation district technicians for FY2013.

AG Commission Standards Update & September Activities

- Jim Johnson reported that the recommended Standards will be reviewed by the Ag Commission on September 12. Approval is anticipated.
 - This is the second year that the AG Commission will go through the process.
 - Binders have been provided to the AG Commission that have the Standards documents and redline/strike out summary of changes.
 - Allen added that we are prepared with changes to the MSU publications, (A*Systs), pending Ag Commission approval.
 - Allen thanked the committee for the work they have completed to get us to this point.

Annual Report

- Jan Wilford reported that the Annual Report will include activities through end of September.
 - Report covers the period of April 2011 through the end of FY 2012.
 - Jan will compile the report and will send to the AC Co-Chairs and then to the AC for review before providing to Director Clover Adams.

Director Jamie Clover Adams

- Jamie Clover Adams said she appreciates the work the AC has done, and thanked the Council.
- Jamie explained how she has been asking for help to reach the Governor's goals, including reaching 5000 new MAEAP verifications by the end of 2015. MAEAP efforts demonstrate that voluntary programs get results.
- Jamie also said her intent is to attend an AC meeting once a quarter.

Regional Environmental Assurance Teams

- Jim Johnson read section 8709 of PA of 2011, House Bill No. 4212, which outlines regional environmental assurance teams.
- Jim suggested that we could involve a local level of individuals, farmers, etc., to be part of the team, and increase MAEAP awareness.
- Jim suggested that the Regional Environmental Assurance Teams address environmental issues that are important to fisherman, outdoorsman, etc.
- Lauri Elbing volunteered to help with a pilot. Ernie Birchmeier also volunteered, along with Melissa Higbee and Phil Korson.

- ****ACTION ITEM**** Heather to send list of names to Lauri Elbing.
- ****ACTION ITEM**** Group will convene prior to November 13th, and will update and provide a progress report at the next AC meeting.

Public Comments

- Next AC meeting will be on Tuesday, November 13th, 2012.
- ****ACTION ITEM**** AC should look at their calendars for the second Monday of every other month, to host a 2013 AC meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made by Scott Piggott, seconded by Phil Korson, and meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Casteel

Next AC meeting:

Tuesday, November 13th, 2013

1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Host: Tom Coon, AC Co-chair, MSU

MSU Pavilion

Meeting Room A

4301 Farm Lane Road

East Lansing, MI 48824

MAEAP Contacts August 2012

MAEAP staff discussed the program with Shaun McKinney, USDA NRCS from Portland, OR, working on a national Water Quality Index and interested to know more about MAEAP.

MAEAP staff discussed the program with the following individuals from the Utah Department of Agriculture & Food: Thayne Mickelson, Conservation Commission Executive Director, Ray Loveless, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator and others. They are interested in developing a livestock program that could be used for livestock operations that do not discharge into surface waters.

MAEAP staff discussed the program via conference call with Brad Redlin, Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program Manager, Minnesota (MN) Department of Agriculture, and the MN Water Quality Certification Program Advisory Committee. The Committee's role is to provide diverse and substantive input in an advisory capacity to the MN Commissioner of Agriculture on the development and implementation of a water quality program. The program is the product of a state-federal partnership formalized January 2012 through a Memorandum of Understanding that includes the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

MAEAP staff discussed the program with Bill Berry, Communications Specialist for the National Association of Conservation Districts. Bill is compiling an article that features various states' work with "certainty programs" and their connectedness to conservation districts.

MAEAP staff discussed the program with Eric Nost, a graduate student at the University of Kentucky, who is currently an intern with the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC). At the OEC, Eric is researching alternative mechanisms for funding a statewide expansion of OR's pesticide stewardship programs and is investigating MAEAP as a model for them to use.

MAEAP staff discussed the program with the SOM Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs (LARA). They have a special interest related to the Bureau of Health Systems (BHS) to look at programs where the department or agency have worked with the industry to build better communication, relationships, and a partnership.

MAEAP staff was interviewed by a representative from AGree. AGree, based in CO, is a broad effort to drive positive change in the food and agriculture system by connecting and challenging leaders from diverse communities to catalyze action and elevate food and agriculture as a national priority (www.foodandagpolicy.org). AGree staff was interested to discuss one of their priority strategies, aligning agricultural production with environmental outcomes.

MAEAP Communications Workgroup Report

September 10, 2012

- **2012 Communications Plan**
 - **Verification Releases**—Monthly press releases targeted to county media for each new MAEAP verified farm, cross posted on the partnership website and on the MAEAP Facebook page. For June and July 49 verification releases went out and August verification releases will be going out yet this week.
 - **Partnership Communications Budget:** \$19, 201.53
 - **Outreach Materials:** MAEAP General Brochures, Livestock Progressive Planning Brochures, MAEAP Greenhouse Brochures, MAEAP Ornamental Nurseries Brochures, MAEAP Thank You Cards/Envelopes, 3 X 5 MAEAP Stickers, MAEAP Window Clings, MAEAP Bookmarks, and 11in. X 8.5in. MAEAP signs (Small Signs). Send a request for materials to Heather Casteel.
 - **Project Task Forces**
 - **Farm Audience** – Increase outreach to Michigan farmers to achieve 5,000 MAEAP verifications.
 - Create a tool kit for all partners: include customizable outreach materials, template for press release, promotional DVD, script for recognizing MAEAP farms at Annual Meetings, and a tip sheet for promoting MAEAP on Facebook and other social media channels.
 - Creating a TMDL Postcard Piece for the Livestock Committee.
 - **General Consumer Audience** – The goal is to increase local consumer awareness of the MAEAP brand with the hope to eventually integrate statewide. Many new ideas for promotion are coming to our workgroup:
 - **Restaurant Campaign** – Provide materials to restaurants who source food from MAEAP verified farms. “I support MAEAP verified Farms”
 - **Kroger Campaign** – highlight a MAEAP verified farm who supplies Kroger. Kroger would be willing to give us a display to sit next to the produce in all stores; we would need to provide a consumer focused brochure.
 - **Wineries of Old Mission Peninsula (WOMP) Event** (Spring 2013)
 - **Updating our current MOU/Branding Standards/Logo Use Guidelines**
- **Events**
 - **Ag Expo** (July 17-19) – The MAEAP booth gave away 20 spill kits; signage at partner booths.
 - **Breakfasts on the Farm** (October 6): John Schaendorf Dairy, Allegan
 - **MACD Kick-Off** (November)
- **Next MAEAP Communications Workgroup Meeting**
 - Scheduling for October

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
Farmstead System Subcommittee
Report to the MAEAP Advisory Council
September 10, 2012

1. Farmstead Subcommittee Meeting Schedule

- December 4, 2012 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
- January 10, 2013 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
- March 6, 2013 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- June 26, 2013 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

2. Proposed Projects

- a. Review/revision of FAS 112S, *Supplemental Risk Assessment and Tools*
 - i. *Proper Disposal of Dead Animals* worksheet.
 - ii. *Manure Storage Review* worksheets.
- b. Review/revision of E-2575, *Emergency Planning for the Farm*
 - i. Develop reference document for emergency responders.
- c. Develop Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures
 - i. Develop draft document.
 - ii. Identify funding source for printing (Wal-Mart – Missaukee County Conservation District).
- d. Address Roadblocks and Concerns with Other Subcommittees
 - i. Well isolation distances from manure storages
 - ii. Fuel storage isolation distances from surface waters
 - iii. Separation of human and animal waste disposal systems
 - iv. Acceptable backflow/backsiphoning prevention devices
 - v. On-farm transportation of portable toilets
 - vi. SARA Title III requirements – outreach and education.



Total MAEAP Verifications

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	As of August 28, 2012	Totals
Livestock	9	7	33	51	74	46	52	63	24	71	42	472
Farmstead		3	20	38	62	54	52	68	36	52	76	461
Cropping		1		19	41	17	19	16	56	20	101	290
Totals:	9	11	53	108	177	117	123	147	116	143	219	1223
Accumulative Total Verifications	9	20	73	181	358	475	598	745	861	1004	1223	
Livestock Reverification				2	7	23	9	11	28	35	27	142
Farmstead Reverification				1	3	12	23	23	44	54	83	243
Cropping Reverification				0	2	3	13	19	37	47	56	177
Totals:				3	12	38	45	53	109	136	166	562
Accumulative Total Reverifications				3	15	53	98	151	260	396	562	