

# MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Michigan Pork Producers Association  
3515 West Road  
East Lansing, Michigan 48912

## MEETING NOTES OCTOBER 24, 2011

### **Present:**

Max Benne, Elaine Brown, Tom Coon, Lauri Elbing, Shelly Hartmann, Melissa Higbee, Sam Hines, Jim Johnson, Allen Krizek, Scott Piggott, Gary Trimner, and Paul Zugger

### **Resource Staff:**

Josh Appleby, Heather Casteel (scribe), Jennifer Eyde (scribe), Joe Kelpinski, Emily Ries, Heather Throne, Natalie Rector, and Tom Young

### **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING NOTES**

Tom Coon welcomed everyone to the meeting and Council members re-introduced themselves. The notes from the August 30, MAEAP AC Meeting were reviewed. Paul Zugger noted a correction to his comment under the 'Future Direction of the Council' agenda item; delete "given that it is very MAEAP specific" and correct the notes to read, "...given that MAEAP is very important to Great Lakes issues." The notes were approved with the correction noted.

**Action:** Jen will correct the August 30, MAEAP AC Notes, redistribute to the AC, and post on MDARD's website.

### **AROUND THE HORN**

Jim Johnson reported that Director Creagh will be presenting to the Governor and Budget Director Nixon this week. Under this administration, directors from the departments are each given an opportunity to discuss specific budget issues. Director Creagh will be discussing MAEAP and the need for funding for verifiers and technical assistance in the field to get to 5,000 verifications by 2015.

In celebration of the 1,000<sup>th</sup> MAEAP verification, Larry and Annette Lee had a photo opportunity with the Governor on Friday, October 21.

Allen Krizek reported that new copies of the Bulletins and Standards have been published by MSU Extension and shipped out. The MSUE Bookstore has them online; search Livestock A Syst at [bookstore.msue.msu.edu](http://bookstore.msue.msu.edu). Paul Z. suggested posting this link on the MAEAP website.

Scott Piggott reported that the EQIP subcommittee will be meeting on Friday, October 28. EQIP uses a ranking tool to determine who receives EQIP dollars. Scott is proposing to increase value of points for farms that are MAEAP verified.

Concerns about the Lake Erie Basin; people want to do something to help. The challenge is nutrients in the Lake Erie Basin resulting in green algae blooms. Can't point finger at a suspect and make it go away. Getting farms verified helps with rate and timing. Might be interesting crosswalk showing how MAEAP can help, by showing NMP numbers, and "what didn't happen"

because of MAEAP. Suggested soil erosion models that show how soil did not erode. Suggestion that we provide one sheet of information on MAEAP so that the general citizen would see a connection to the value of practices being MAEAP verified.

Emily Ries reported that MFB will be having their annual state meeting in Grand Rapids at the end of November through beginning of December. There will be four sessions with MAEAP highlighted as one of them. Topics for the MAEAP session will include; top barriers to becoming MAEAP verified, fuel storage standards, first step instruction, etc., and also a questions/answers segment. MFB will be awarding prizes to three MAEAP verified farmers that are also MFB members. MFB insurance agents will meet to discuss providing a MAEAP verified incentive.

#### **REVIEW COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 14**

On September 14, the Commission adopted the revised standards and verification protocol, as recommended by the AC. The Commission expressed great appreciation for the AC's work moving the program forward. The systems committees were very effective at getting the work done in an efficient manner and providing the Commission time to review.

#### **REVIEW CHARGE PROVIDED BY DIRECTORS CREAGH AND WYANT**

On October 12, Commissioner Coe sent a letter to all MAEAP partners and AC asking for their continued engagement in MAEAP and inviting them to come together on November 1, to discuss the future of the program and the charges as set forth by Directors Creagh and Wyant.

**Plan to Reach 5,000** – The overall plan to reach 5,000 verifications must include a communication and marketing plan.

**Regional Teams** – What is the role of the regional teams and how are they a part of the strategy to achieve 5,000 verifications?

**Water Quality Monitoring (wqm)** – The Council discussed expected outcomes from a wqm program; identifying the outcomes of MAEAP to better define if the standards are working, identifying gaps where it is not working and/or areas that still need to be addressed.

Tom suggested having Dr. Rozeboom or Dr. Bartholic address the council in an effort to better understand wqm. Paul suggested forming a workgroup, with a more scientific background, that understand the application process. The group also discussed developing a one-pager on the benefits of MAEAP that would explain to the general citizen the benefits from having more MAEAP verifications.

Josh Appleby reported that funding through a GLRI grant is being implemented in the Macatawa Watershed with the goal of having all farms in that watershed MAEAP verified. The grant provides \$600,000 in cost share to farmers to implement practices. Volunteer water quality monitoring is part of the monitoring program.

The Council discussed forming a workgroup to work on drafting an outline of how the AC will fulfill the charge of recommending to the Director what a wqm program would look like; priorities, procedures and protocol for the program, as described under Public Act 2, section 8713a.

The work of the Water Quality Monitoring Workgroup will be included in the annual report to the Director in March 2012.

Lauri Elbing volunteered to chair the workgroup; other members to include Scott Piggott, Paul Zuger, and James Clift. Bob Pigg, from MDARD, and Bill Creal were also recommended as possible members. Lauri will also ask another staff member from TNC and Tom Coon will recommend staff from MSUE to participate.

**Action:** Tom Coon will send to Lauri the names and contact information of staff from MSUE to participate on the WQM Workgroup.

**Action:** Jen Eyde will send Bob Pigg's contact information to Lauri.

**Action:** The Water Quality Monitoring Workgroup will develop an outline of recommendations as to how the AC should proceed with providing recommendations to the Director.

**Action:** Lauri will organize a Water Quality Monitoring Workgroup meeting and send date to Heather Casteel to be shared with the AC.

**Funding** – Jim reported that he suspects not much will be known regarding the budget for MAEAP until the spring of 2012.

**Role of Partners and the Council** – This topic will be addressed at the November 1, MAEAP Partnership Meeting.

## **PLAN OF WORK TO MEET THE CHARGE**

### **Role of Standing Committees/Workgroups**

**GAAMPs Committee** – 2011 GAAMPs are scheduled to be approved at the December Commission Meeting. The GAAMPs Committee will meet again in the spring to begin the next annual review process.

### **System and Verification Committees**

**Livestock Committee** – Gary Trimner reported that the Livestock Committee has been meeting regularly and are working on addressing the "parking lot issues".

**Cropping Committee** – Allen Krizek reported that the Cropping Committee is waiting to have the 2011 GAAMPs approved before addressing the "parking lot issues", as changes to GAAMPs can also affect the standards. Jim Johnson stated that the draft GAAMPs usually do not have many changes that are made in process; no reason to delay for them.

**Farmstead Committee** – Shelly Hartmann and Josh Appleby reported that they will be scheduling a meeting to begin addressing the "parking lot issues".

Allen Krizek recommended that committees should also be looking at the educational questions.

Jim Johnson suggested asking for feedback to address roadblocks at the MFB December annual meeting.

**Verification Workgroup** – Jim Johnson reported for Jan Wilford. The Verification Protocol document was adopted by the Commission at the September 14, meeting. The Attorney General's Office confirmed that the Administrative Procedures Act would apply when a farmer calls for a re-verification prior to the expiration date and the verifier cannot inspect until after the expiration date. The farmer would not be considered as lapsed.

The Attorney General's Office also confirmed the Rogers Hearing process would apply in situations where MAEAP verification is being revoked; treated the same as a license. The farmer must be given a notice and opportunity for a hearing and the hearing must be held.

**Communications Workgroup** – Emily Ries reported that the Communications Workgroup has been sending representation to annual meetings to recognize farmers that have been MAEAP verified and the workgroup has also been reconnecting with farmers that are to be re-verified.

Additionally, the workgroup has been reaching out to the 10,000 plus farmers that have taken the educational classes and following up with them on the next steps in becoming MAEAP verified.

The MAEAP website is in the process of being transferred to MSU. The content will be the same but it does need a more user friendly face for non-farmers.

### **Review of November 1, Partner Meeting Agenda**

Jim Johnson reported that Commissioner Coe sent a letter to the MAEAP partners asking them to come together on November 1 for an update on MAEAP and to discuss how to move forward as a group.

Jim reviewed the tentative agenda with the group.

### **Discussion**

The group agreed that Representative Daley and Senator Hune should share their passion behind MAEAP and the importance of becoming MAEAP verified. Tom and Scott will review the details provided under Public Acts 1 and 2.

Lauri suggested using this opportunity to ask partners for input on the formation and role of the regional action teams. Scott suggested adjusting the agenda so that Director Creagh would address partners just prior to the Moving Forward session. Director Creagh will re-enforce the fact that the partnership is at the core of the initiative - legislation codified the program only; the power of the program is the work of the partners.

Key points addressed at the meeting to include; partnership engagement, defining the relationship between the AC and the partnership, and contributing towards communication.

Jim asked the group to use personal contacts to assist in getting partners to attend the meeting.

**Action:** Jen will send list of partners to the group.

**Action:** The group will assist in calling partners to encourage attendance at the meeting.

**Action:** MDARD will follow up with outcomes of the partnership meeting to attendees, as well as to those that could not attend.

### **Proposed Structure for Managing Partner Resources**

Funding for general communications for MAEAP is set up with MFB. In the past, if any money is left at the end of the fiscal year, it is rolled over for use in the next year. Scott proposed the continuation of this process. Additionally, MFB will contribute \$2,500 to the fund. The Council agreed to continue the process.

**APPROVAL OF GOVERNING PRINCIPLES DOCUMENT**

The Council reviewed the “Operations Principles” document and voted to adopt.

**NEW BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

No additional business or public comment.

**NEXT MEETING AND MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2012**

A list of tentative meeting dates for 2012 was circulated to the Council. The Council agreed to meet on the second Monday of every other month, beginning January 9.

**Action:** Jen will send out the 2012 schedule of meeting dates to the Council and ask for sponsors for the meetings. Jen will have the meeting schedule posted on MDARD’s MAEAP website.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Casteel and Jennifer Eyde  
November 9, 2011