

**MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM  
(MAEAP) ADVISORY COUNCIL (AC) FEBRUARY 7, 2022**

**1:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Dr. Ron Bates, MSUE

Zoom Meeting/97076138111

**WELCOME AND ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

Dr. Bates welcomed the group and asked for any additional agenda items/

No additional agenda items.

Meeting began at 1:03 p.m.

**MAEAP REAUTHORIZATION AND LAKE ERIE ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN – JOE KELPINSKI**

Joe reported that we received a four-year cycle to keep it out of election years.

MAEAP will be going to a two-year standard change process, we will maintain doing them yearly for 2022 and 2023, then we will hope to jump to the alternate approval.

Thanks to the group for all of their work on these things.

DAP webinar and Adaptive Management Plan (AMP), DAP has been released two years ago, while adaptive plan will be released shortly. Joe described the background on the DAP, and now the AMP and how they relate. AMP is working with MAEAP, and we will see how that goes for us. We have to move the needle and reduce loadings or regulations will just get tougher.

Discussion on how programs that aid farmers for water quality and monitoring.

**CREP UPDATE – JOHN SWITZER**

John Switzer has been working on CREP for a year or more to get compliance and up-to-date current situation to open back up for CREP. Waiting to get the final word back from attorneys.

Another part of this process was that 2005 process environmental assessment needs work and updating. Will work behind the scenes on a new environmental assessment process. Can take into account new information and things we have learned to make some tweaks to it to make it a better process.

The new environmental assessment will develop behind the scenes, we have been told it may be any day now. Focus is to get the agreement in place, then working on the assessment, may be a few more months down the road to completion.

**ORGANIZATION OF MAEAP STANDARDS AND COMMITTEES – JOSH APPLEBY**

Josh Appleby reported that historically we have had multiple assessments; Cropping (four versions, including Greenhouse), Farmstead, Livestock, and Forest, Wetlands, and Habitat.

Josh provided examples of the past process of bringing 5 assessments to the farm to go through with producers.

As the program has matured, and we are now developing a new database, we want to combine the assessments. We are making efforts to consolidate all of the assessments, aside from the Forest, Wetlands and Habitat. Josh shared his screen to demonstrate how many sections there are in the assessments.

Suggested to develop a task force, consisting of five or six people with mixed members, that are willing to volunteer to meet weekly until this is done, working through the reorganization. Again, all we did was a consolidation. Understanding that there will be no changes to the standards themselves, but to help reorganize the standards to one unification document.

No standards will be changed, we will save that for next year.

This is just reorganizing the order of the questions.

Discussion on still operating by system, rather than a complete farm verification and requirements.

**MOTION: MELISSA HIGBEE MOVED TO HAVE THIS NEW GROUP BRING BACK  
THE UNIFIED ASSESSMENT TO THE AC FOR APPROVAL, DEAN LETTER  
SECONDED, ALL AYES SAY AYES (12), HEARING NO NAYS, MOTION CARRIED.**

**VERIFICATION UPDATE – JOE KELPINSKI**

Joe Kelpinski reported that 33 new verifications, right now with a goal of 500 new, and 56 reverifications, with a goal of 550 for FY22.

**DATABASE UPDATE – JOE KELPINSKI**

Joe Kelpinski reported that the unified assessment tool is well under way. This conversion inside the database, will help reporting and collecting the data required. Expecting to be done with database development by May, but now it will be pushed to first or second week of August. The work is supposed to be finished by First of April. By end of fiscal year, we should be able to start generating reports for partners, technicians, and producers.

**MAEAP COMMUNICATIONS WORKGROUP – MEREDITH SMITH AND EMILY REINART**

Meredith Smith reported that the focus of the workgroup will be to bring in more farmers into the program. A referral program is being developed. The farmers already involved, may want to get an incentive for referring MAEAP to a neighbor. MFB gives a farm discount, MI Wheat provides one for wheat farmers, MI Corn also has an incentive, asking if partner groups would be interested in offering promotions.

Social media, Facebook ads, pandora ads, etc. Ad radio is being looked at.

Try to think outside of the box to pull in new producers.

Meredith said they will bring back the MAEAP newsletter to the program.

If there are any suggestions for the workgroup, please send an email to [Smithm10@michigan.gov](mailto:Smithm10@michigan.gov).

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Hearing no public comment, meeting adjourned at 2:34 P.M.