

Agricultural Burning Practices & Research Task Force #95 Meeting Summary

DATE: June 9, 2015

LOCATION: Department of Ecology Eastern Regional Office, Spokane WA.

<u>Members Present</u>		<u>Representing</u>
Karen Wood-Chair	Air Quality Program	Department of Ecology
Larry Cochran	Grower	Conservation Districts
Jay Penner	Washington Association of Wheat Growers	Agricultural Community
Matt Holmquist (Alternate for Gary Pruitt)	Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency	Eastern Washington Local Air Authorities
Don Potts	WA. Dept of Agriculture	WA. Dept. of Agriculture
Dan McCarthy	Okanogan Horticultural Association	Agricultural Community
Bill Johnston	Washington State University	Academia, (Crop & Soil)
Michael Ingham	Alfalfa Seed Industry	Agricultural Community
<u>Members Absent</u>		
Michael Bush	WSU Extension	Academia, (Tree Fruit)
Sverre Vedal	University Of Washington	Public Health

Introductions, Announcements

The 95th Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force (Task Force) meeting was held on June 9th, 2015 at the Department of Ecology's Eastern Regional Office in Spokane, Washington. The Task Force meeting began with the introduction of Task Force members and guests.

The June meeting of the Task Force is normally reserved for hearing research project proposals. The Task Force recommends which projects they would like to fund and the amount of funding they would like to provide. Lastly, the Task Force considers revising, amending, and approving the Best Management Practices, (BMP's) for the upcoming year.

Research Presentations

The Task Force received a final report from one research project.

*Straw Management and Crop Rotation Alternatives to Stubble Burning:
Assessing Crop Rotation and Weed Management Options*

The Task Force also heard presentations from three researchers with proposals to conduct research responding to Ecology's Request for Research Proposals of up to \$140,000 in research proposals

The presentations were, in order:

1. *Development and Evaluation of Lignin-Lime Soil Amendment Produced from Wheat Straw Harvesting and Pulping*
2. *Straw gasification with bio-char as an alternative to open field burning of straw*
3. *Alternatives for Managing Wheat Straw: Assessing Soil Water Storage, Micronutrient Status and Removal, and Weed Management*

Presentations and Final Reports are available online at:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research.htm>

Task Force Recommendation

The Task Force recommended funding one of the research proposals above.

Alternatives for Managing Wheat Straw: Assessing Soil Water Storage, Micronutrient Status and Removal, and Weed Management had a total cost of \$64,633. The Task Force recommended attempting to obtain the indirect fee waiver with Washington State University and having the researcher use the extra funds thereby available to him to add one aspect of inquiry into his proposed scope of work.

The Task Force recommended not funding the other two proposals.

The Task Force recommended issuing another Request for Research Proposals in 3-6 months for the amount of the funds remaining from the available \$140,000 after accounting for the contract presumably issued to the approved proposal.

BMP's

One of the required activities at the June meeting of the Agricultural Burning Task Force is either to modify or reconfirm the existing Best Management Practices (BMP's), and to institute new BMP's.

There were two clauses added to the non-cereal grain BMP related to burning of Conservation Reserve Program acreage. These changes were accepted by the Task Force unanimously. The Task Force also voted unanimously to retain the existing Cereal Grain BMP, Spot Burn BMP, Bale Burn BMP, and Pile Burn BMP as written through June 30, 2016.

The BMP's are available at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/BMPAginfo.htm>

Other Business

Gary Pruitt, the representative on the Task Force for Eastern Washington local air authorities, has resigned. Karen Wood suggested that the three agencies, the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency, the Benton Clean Air Agency, and the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, work together to decide who should next represent them.

Kary Peterson of Ecology offered that Ecology surveyed the Conservation Districts which issue permits for Ecology about whether the revenue they derive from issuing burn permits covers their costs. Ecology has received answers from four conservation districts, all of them affirming that the revenue is sufficient to cover the costs.

Public Comment

Cara Hulca, the manager of the Adams Conservation District, expressed her appreciation for the inquiry previously mentioned about whether the Conservation Districts were deriving sufficient money from permit receipts to cover their costs. She would also appreciate continuing future inquiries in case the receipts don't continue to cover the costs of permitting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting (Meeting #96) of the Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force will be on Tuesday, November 10th, 2015, from 10am to 4pm in Spokane, Washington.