

Agricultural Burning Practices & Research Task Force #106 Meeting Summary

DATE: November 6, 2019

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

<u>Members Present</u>		<u>Representing</u>
Dave Knight- Chair	Air Quality Program	Department of Ecology
Dan McCarthy	Okanogan Horticultural Association	Agricultural Community
Troy Henderson	Whitman County Public Health Department	Public Health
Larry Cochran	Washington Association of Conservation Districts	Conservation Districts
Scott Steinbacher	WA. Dept of Agriculture	WA. Dept. of Agriculture
<u>Jay Penner</u>	Cereal Grain Industry	Agricultural Community
Mike Buckley	Alfalfa Seed Industry	Agricultural Community
Julie Oliver	Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency	Eastern Washington Local Air Authorities

Introductions, Announcements

The 106th Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force (Task Force) meeting was held on November 6th, 2019, 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 November meeting is reserved for hearing an annual burning summary and scoping changes to the Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Agricultural Burn Program Annual Review

Daniel Matsche, from Ecology's Eastern Regional Office, presented information on how agricultural burning proceeded in 2019. The acreage of field burning has remained steady at about 105,000 acres per year for the past several years, while the tonnage of pile burning has been increasing, and is now at about 60,000 tons for the year. Much of the tonnage increase is due to the Poplar Plantation near Burbank, Washington (which is being shut down by the end of this year) resulting in a spike of debris to burn. There should be no burning there after January 1, 2020 from the Poplar Plantation, which will no longer exist. There were 8 complaints about agricultural burning in 2019, and 48 complaints about general outdoor burning in Ecology's jurisdiction. Matsche also discussed Industrial Hemp field and pile burning in Washington resulting from Hemp oil production, and how this type of burning could increase in coming years.

Vote on Best Management Practices for Agricultural Burning

The task force voted unanimously to accept the Best Management Practices (BMPs) without change through June 30, 2020.

Scoping possible changes to BMPs

The Task Force had a discussion about the possibility of the need for changes to a BMP, or a new BMP for industrial hemp, and the possibility of modifying the definition of the end of the Spring season for the purpose of agricultural burning from June 30th to an earlier date to allow for burning earlier in the year when air ventilation conditions are better, and before the onset of fire safety burn bans, which are usually instituted around July 1st. The Task Force decided to request Ecology staff to gather more information on both of these issues and report back at or before the next meeting.

Set Meeting Schedule for 2020

The next meeting will be held June 3rd, 2020 at a location to be decided in Dayton, Washington. The meeting after that will be held on November 4th, 2019, in Spokane Washington.