

# Agricultural Burning Practices & Research Task Force #114

## Meeting Summary

DATE: June 7, 2023

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting held on Teams

### **Members Present, Affiliation, Representing**

Karin Baldwin (Chair), Air Quality Program, Department of Ecology

Larry Cochran, Washington Assoc. of Conservation Districts, Conservation Districts

Scott Windsor, Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, E. Wash. Local Air Authorities

Karen Lewis, WSU Extension, Academia (Tree Fruit)

Scott Steinbacher, WA Dept of Agriculture, WA Dept of Agriculture

Mike Buckley, Alfalfa Seed Industry, Agricultural Community

### **Members Absent, Affiliation, Representing**

Bill Johnston, WSU Crop and Soil Science, Academia

Dan McCarthy, Okanogan Horticultural Association, Agricultural Community

Chris Skidmore, Whitman County Public Health Dept, Public Health

Jay Penner, Washington Association of Wheat Growers, Agricultural Community

### **Introductions, Announcements**

The 114th Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force (Task Force) meeting was held on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, via Teams online. The Task Force meeting began with the introduction of Task Force members and guests. New Chair Karin Baldwin introduced herself to the Task Force members and guest, followed by everyone else introducing themselves.

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. The Task Force also considers revising, amending, and approving the Best Management Practices, (BMP's) for the upcoming year.

### **Research Presentations**

The Task Force heard a presentation from researchers with a report on research conducted in the 2021-2023 period using funds awarded by Ecology, and a proposal to conduct research responding to Ecology's Request for Research Proposals of up to \$100,000 in research proposals.

The presentation,

*Vermi-Treatment Solutions: Enhancing Air Quality and Toxic Chemical Removal Through Sustainable Orchard Wood Utilization and Vermi-Treatment Filtration Systems*

is available at [Department of Ecology - Committees, Boards, and Workgroups \(wa.gov\)](https://www.wa.gov/department-of-ecology/committees-boards-and-workgroups)

## **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 no changes to the BMPs this year, other than to revise the expiration date to June 30, 2024. These changes were accepted by the Task Force unanimously. The BMPs are available at [Agricultural burning - Washington State Department of Ecology](#)

## **Washington Ag Burn Program News and Updates**

Ecology's Daniel Matsche gave a review of the spring burn season, showing that burning amounts were up dramatically from the spring of last year, in general. The number of agricultural acres burned in the spring of 2023 was close to the total from the spring seasons of 2021 and 2022 combined, for instance. This overall long-term trend in agricultural burning appears to be relatively flat, however.

## **Round Table Discussion**

Several topics were discussed by the Task Force.

- It was the consensus of the group attempt to have an in-person meeting during the next scheduled get-together in November, likely in Moses Lake or Dayton.
- The Task Force members discussed whether the Teams meetings of the Task Force should be recorded in the future, with the consensus being that Ecology should record these, starting with the next meeting.
- Ecology and the Task Force members will make a concerted effort to look for replacements for the 2 vacant positions on the Task Force, one representing agriculture from college and university perspective, and the other being a representative of the orchard industry.
- Karin Baldwin would like the task force members to carefully review the task force governance document before the next meeting, looking for any opportunities to revise or update the task force within the boundaries set forth in the law.
- Scott Windsor suggested that Ecology and the task force discuss the topic of air curtain incinerators at the next meeting. This will be on the agenda.

## **Task Force Research Funding Recommendation**

The Task Force discussed the proposal by PERCA, above, and recommended unanimously that Ecology fund the research proposal for the full amount of \$100,000.

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### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting (Meeting #115) of the Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force will be on Wednesday, November 1, 2023.