

LOUISIANA STATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE

ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA

JULY 25, 2012

RECORD OF AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Scott Edwards, NRCS State Resource Conservationist, opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m., and welcomed the meeting participants. (See attendance list attached.) Edwards reviewed the agenda and commented on the agenda items to be discussed.

◆ WELCOME COMMENTS AND FARM BILL UPDATE

Kevin Norton, NRCS State Conservationist thanked the members for attending the teleconference. Norton gave the committee a Farm Bill update.

◆ NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT STANDARD AND SPECIFICATION REVIEW

Edwards stated the NRCS National Office has updated and revised the Nutrient Management Practice (590). Louisiana is presently developing the state specifications of how the state is going to implement the new nutrient management standard. Public comment will be received by Edwards until August 31.

Chris Coreil, NRCS Conservation Agronomist, gave a brief explanation of the changes to the standard. The Phosphorus Index (PI), and the associated application ratings and rates, received a significant modification. The national standard will be adopted, as-is, in Louisiana.

State-specific guidance for conservation planners to follow, once integrated into the standard, is now summarized in the Nutrient Management Specifications document. The specifications are composed of guidance pulled from the old standard, the new standard, LSU guidance documents, and sections of the Waste Utilization Standard.

The PI has been updated to reflect new national policy and the Nutrient Management Standard. The Moderate (medium) Rating on the PI now limits applications of animal waste to meet phosphorus plant uptake needs. In the past, applications of animal waste could be made to meet plant nitrogen needs at the Moderate rating. Also, a variable for Leaching Index has been added to the PI.

Finally, the Waste Utilization standard has been renamed Waste Recycling. The same practice code (633) is still assigned to the practice, but all nutrient management guidance has been migrated to the new Nutrient Management Standard. ([Copy of this presentation can be viewed at LASTC Web Site http://www.la.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/LASTC/.](http://www.la.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/LASTC/))

Jeff Durand, LRGA asked the question, if the soil phosphorus level is low can you build it up?

Coreil answered that if the soil rating is low, animal waste could definitely be used to supply phosphorus based on the recommendations. The PI should only limits applications of animal waste when soil test results would show a very high phosphorus rating.

◆ **FY 2012 FARM BILL PROGRAM ALLOCATION SUMMARY**

Steve Cruse, NRCS Acting ASTC/Programs gave a program update. Grassland Reserve Program had no contract easements, but wrote two rental contracts for 117 acres. The Conservation Stewardship Program 259 contracts were awarded for a total of 250,000 acres for 5.3 million dollars. Wetlands Reserve Program is still obtaining obligations 11,000 acres received in contracts of the 16,000 acres goal for the year. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program, 1068 contracts were obligated for 176,000 acres for 21.5 million dollars. There was a reduced program for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program this year, 26 contracts were developed for 2600 acres for \$726,000. ([Copy of this presentation can be viewed at LASTC Web Site.](http://www.la.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/LASTC/))

Edwards stated there were new initiatives released, Gulf of Mexico Initiative with two focus areas in Vermillion Parish near Abbeville and Donaldsonville in the BTNEP area awarded \$977,000 to qualified landowners.

The National Water Quality Initiative had three focus areas, the Florida Parishes near Amite, Indian Bayou near the Lafayette/Crowley Area, and Bayou Louie near Sicily Island awarded \$919,000.

Existing program updates on Mississippi River Basin Initiative for \$500,000; the Long Leaf Pine Initiative for \$387,000; and the Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative for \$852,000.

Norton stated the cumulative Conservation Steward Program summary will be sent out with the minutes to members. (See Attached Sheet.)

◆ **LOUISIANA CONTINUOUS CRP SIGNUP SUMMARY**

Jerry Ursery, FSA gave a summary of the CRP Signup. FSA General Signup CRP-43 had 165 offers submitted, of which 145 offers were accepted. CP-23, Wetland Restoration is a new initiative to preserve one million acres of grasslands and wetlands. Louisiana received an additional 10,947 acres.

Signing Incentives Payment (SIP) increased from \$100 per acre to \$150 per acre for newly enrolled acres only, regardless of the practice length, for the following practices: CP-23 Wetland Restoration; CP-23A, Wetland Restoration, Non-Floodplain; CP-33, Habitat for Upland Birds; and CP-42, Pollinator Habitat (for continuous signup only). This applies for contracts approved on or after June 12, 2012.

Highly Erodible Land Initiative (HELI) is a new conservation program for any land that erodes with an EI Index with 20 or greater. Louisiana has a 1700 acres allocation.

Due to the drought that is affecting much of the country, using the U.S. Drought Monitor, any county that has a drought designation of D0 or greater automatically qualify for haying and grazing, with the exception if the state has not gotten out of primary nesting season. In Louisiana, primary nesting season ended on July 15. Louisiana only has 5 counties that did not meet the criteria which are: East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Lafayette, and West Baton Rouge. Practices that are eligible are: CP-1, CP-2, CP-4B, CP-4D, and CP-10. ([Copy of this presentation can be viewed at LASTC Web Site.](#))

◆ **PARTNER UPDATE AND COMMENTS**

Buck Vandersteen, LFA stated Price, Waterhouse, and Cooper conducted an audit and Louisiana has obtained an excellent rating for being the standard of forest sustainability for small family forest landowners.

Norton congratulated Vandersteen on the rating.

Ernest Girouard, LA Master Farmer Program gave an update on the program. There have been difficulties with Phase III and Certification, an alternate route for certification has been developed with two options. Option One is to stay with the current planning effort through NRCS; Option Two is to request a resource conservation plan developed through the LSU AgCenter.

Bob Dew, DU had a question on the EQIP funding spent on this year. How did the 21.5 million dollars compare to what was originally budgeted for the year?

Cruse stated that Louisiana got additional funding for initiatives for one million dollars extra funding.

Fran Bartee, President LA Association of RC&D Councils stated the RC&D Councils are progressing even though they were cut from the national budget.

Norton stated contact information for the councils will be sent out with the minutes. (See attached contact list.)

Luke Lewis, NWTF, stated the Long Leaf Alliance Bi-Annual Regional Conference in Nacogdoches, Texas is scheduled for October 23 – 26, 2012.

- ◆ **Next Meeting Date** – The next face-to-face meeting will be Thursday, October 18, 2012, 10:00 a.m., in the USDA Conference Room, 3727 Government Street, Building B, Alexandria, Louisiana.

10:55 a.m. – Meeting Adjourned

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ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA

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LIST OF ATTENDEES

Kevin Norton, USDA-NRCS
Sarah Haymaker, USDA-NRCS
Steve Cruse, USDA-NRC
Scott Edwards, USDA-NRCS
Holly Martien, USDA-NRCS
Tim Landreneau, USDA-NRCS
Mike Lindsey, USDA-NRCS
Dan Didier, USDA-NRCS
Randy Cheveallier, USDA-NRCS
John Pitre, USDA-NRCS
Chris Coreil, USDA-NRCS
Mari Gilford, USDA-NRCS
Leslie Michael, USDA-NRCS
Sheila Ryland, USDA-NRCS
Cheryl Walters, USDA-NRCS
Britt Paul, USDA-NRCS
Glenn Austin, USDA-NRCS
Marlin Jordan, USDA-NRCS
Jerry Ursery, USDA-FSA
Andy Dolan, USFWS
Barry Wilson, Gulf Coast Joint Venture
Cliff Vining, GLCI
Carrie Castille, LDAF
Dwight Landreneau, LSU AgCenter
Roger Leonards, LSU AgCenter
Ernest Girouard, LSU AgCenter-LA Master Farmer Program
Jan Boydston, LDEQ
Luke Lewis, NWTF
Jeff Durand, LRGA
Jess Barr, LCGA
Buck Vandersteen, LFA
Rick Brontoli, Red River Valley Association
Fran Bartee, LA Association RC&D
Sylvia Ritzky, EPA
Anthony DeFee, EPA

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Eugene Thilsted, EPA
Bob Dew, DU
Bill Bartush, Gulf Coast Prairies
Matthew Anderson, USGS
Brian Kemp, Gulf CPR
Juli Kemp, Gulf CPR
Jerry Booze, EPA Gulf of Mexico