

MINUTES

WATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

December 14, 2016

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group met at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office in Louisville, Kentucky on Wednesday, December 14, 2016.

Working Group members present were: Steve Coleman, Chair; Warren Beeler; Sharon Furches; Terry Gilbert; Pat Henderson; Kenneth Imel; Kevin Jeffries; Gary Larimore; and Larry Thomas. Working Group members absent were: Todd Clark; Nancy Cox; Rusty Cress; Pete Goodmann; and David Rowlett. Ex-officio members present were: Michael Griffin, State Director, U.S. Geological Survey; and Kim Richardson, Director, Kentucky Division of Conservation. Ex-officio members absent were: Tom Fern, State Director, USDA Rural Development; John W. McCauley, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency; and Karen Woodrich, State Conservationist, NRCS. Others in attendance were: Bill Caldwell, KDOW; Drew Graham, UK; Steve Higgins, UK; Biff Baker, GOAP; Brent Burchett, KDA; Pete Cinotto, USGS; Chuck Taylor, KGS; Reed Creeps, NRCS; Stuart Foster, KY Climate Center; David Chinn, Monty's Plant Food Company; Robert Augustine, Senator Rand Paul Regional Field Representative; Eddie Melton, First Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Fritz Giesecke, Second Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; David S. Beck, Executive Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Tim Thornberry, KFB; and Katie Weatherholt, KFB. This meeting was staffed by Ed McQueen.

This meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m., EDT by Chairman Steve Coleman, who welcomed and reviewed the purpose of the meeting. Introductions were skipped. Mr. Eddie Melton, First Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau, briefed the Working Group on the Executives Committee's recent trip to Washington D.C. where they met with Kentucky's delegation about the Working Group's progress and goals and the difference between the Working Group and the Kentucky Water Resources Board. More NRCS funding for technical assistance to farmers was also discussed. He noted the delegation seems excited for the future of water management in Kentucky and wants to see pilot projects in each congressional district soon. Mr. Fritz Giesecke, Second Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau, thanked the Working Group for their commitment and hard work. Mr. David S. Beck, Executive Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau, told the Working Group that it is great when elected officials understand the significance of water

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management in Kentucky and are enthusiastic about the future. He said it is a win for everyone by helping Kentucky grow and moving Kentucky ahead for the future. Chairman Coleman noted this meeting marked the two year anniversary of the Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group.

Chairman Coleman asked the Working Group to consider the minutes of the October 26, 2016 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Kevin Jeffries, and seconded by Mr. Larry Thomas second that:

“We approve the minutes of the October 26, 2016 meeting.”

Motion passed.

Chairman Coleman reminded the Working Group that a depository of meeting information (presentations, useful links, supporting literature and minutes) is located on Kentucky Farm Bureau’s website at www.kyfb.com/water.

Dr. Tanja Williamson, USGS, made a presentation via WebEx on “A Better Understanding of Climate Change and Soil-Water Availability for Kentucky.” She noted that increasing the organic matter in soil will increase plant available water storage and field capacity storage which would then increase the growing season due to more water availability. Dr. Williamson noted how evapotranspiration will outpace increases in precipitation that would then lead to limited soil-water for agriculture and decreased stream-flow allowing less water use for humans during the hottest time of the year.

Mr. Bill Caldwell, KY DOW, reported on the Kentucky Water Resources Plan and the Prioritization of Projects. He noted that he has been looking at other states’ Agricultural Drought Mitigation Plans and has begun to develop a wish list for what he would like Kentucky’s to entail. The various state plans are unique, but share common features that are the foundation for water planning. These features include: water availability, demand forecasting, and gap analysis. Mr. Caldwell then looked at Kentucky’s water availability and determined that groundwater and instream flow are the missing components needed. He also discussed two projects pre-dating the Water Plan concept -- one being a drought risk assessment which will be developed by the DOW in 2017 and is funded by a FEMA grant, the other is a water tracking project that will track the various uses of water produced by the state’s 397 public water systems. The full presentation can be found on the Water Management website.

Dr. Stuart Foster, KY Climate Center, presented on the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) which coordinates and integrates drought research, building upon existing federal, tribal, state, and local partnerships in

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support of creating a national drought early warning information system. NIDIS' goal is to improve the nation's capacity to manage drought-related risks by providing the best available information and tools to assess the potential impacts of drought, and to prepare for and mitigate the effects of drought. A Drought Early Warning System (DEWS) utilizes new and existing partner networks to optimize the expertise of a wide range of federal, tribal, state, local and academic partners in order to make climate and drought science readily available, easily understandable and usable for decision makers; and to improve the capacity of stakeholders to better monitor, forecast, plan for and cope with the impacts of drought. Kentucky is in the Midwest DEWS. Currently, the Midwest DEWS is in the strategic plan stage where they are setting priorities to improve on and identifying existing and new drought-related actions throughout the Midwest region.

Chairman Coleman led a discussion on finalizing the Water Management Working Group's recommendations. Working Group members reviewed and edited the recommendations and discussed what they hope these recommendations will accomplish for agriculture. Five edits were requested. A motion was made by Mr. Pat Henderson, seconded by Mr. Kevin Jeffries, to finalize and approve the recommendations with the changes mentioned. Please see attached for the final recommendations.

Chairman Coleman opened the floor for additional comments or suggestions by the Working Group. Ms. Terry Gilbert mentioned a "quality of life" issue involving an old natural gas pipeline that a company wants to turn into a natural gas liquids pipeline. The concern is about a segment of the pipeline under Herrington Lake which provides drinking water for Boyle, Garrard and Mercer counties and the possibility of a leak contaminating the water supply. The liquids also release a very toxic gas vapor that settles into low areas.

Chairman Coleman announced the next Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group meeting will be held Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at 10:00 AM at USGS Office located at 9818 Bluegrass Parkway in Louisville, KY. Other meeting dates scheduled are Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at the UK Grain and Forage Center of Excellence in Princeton and Wednesday, April 26, 2017 at a location to be determined.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.

**Recorded by: Katie Weatherholt
Administrative Assistant**

**Approved by: L. Joe Cain, Director
Commodity Division**