

MINUTES

WATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

July 28, 2016

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group met at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office in Louisville, Kentucky on Thursday, July 28, 2016.

Working Group members present were: Steve Coleman, Chair; Warren Beeler; Terry Gilbert; Pete Goodmann; Pat Henderson; Kenny Imel; Kevin Jeffries; Gary Larimore; David Rowlett; and Larry Thomas. Working Group members absent were: Todd Clark; Nancy Cox; and Sharon Furches. Ex-officio members absent were: Tom Fern, State Director, USDA Rural Development; Michael Griffin, State Director, U.S. Geological Survey; and John W. McCauley, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency; Kim Richardson, Director, Kentucky Division of Conservation; and Karen Woodrich, State Conservationist, NRCS. Others in attendance were: Biff Baker, GOAP; Bill Caldwell, KDOW; Chuck Taylor, KGS; Brent Burchett, KY Livestock Coalition; Adam Andrews, KY Corn Growers Association; Tom Ruby, USGS; Matt Dixon, UK Ag Weather Center; Jacob Bowman, USDA FSA; Reed Creeps, USDA NRCS; Steve Blanford, USDA NRCS; David Chinn, Monty's Plant Food Company; Mark Haney, President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Eddie Melton, First Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Fritz Giesecke, Second Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; David S. Beck, Executive Vice President; Jeff Harper, Public Affairs Director, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Katie Weatherholt, Kentucky Farm Bureau. This meeting was staffed by Joe Cain.

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 made. Mr. Mark Haney, President, Kentucky Farm Bureau, thanked the committee and is excited to see what this Working Group has accomplished so far with the Water Resource Board being created. Mr. Eddie Melton, First Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau and Mr. Fritz Giesecke, Second Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau, each showed appreciation to the Working Group for their efforts and emphasized the importance of the Working Group. Mr. David S. Beck, Executive Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau, told the Working Group to take pride in seeing accomplishments and use that as motivation to make new recommendations.

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Chairman Coleman asked the Working Group to consider the minutes of the April 27, 2016 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Kevin Jeffries, and seconded by Mr. Pat Henderson second that:

“We approve the minutes of the April 27, 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 the Kentucky Farm Bureau’s Newsroom website at www.kyfb.com/water.

Mr. Chuck Taylor, Kentucky Geological Survey, presented the Working Group with a groundwater update. KGS has been inspecting and testing existing wells in select parts of the state where up-to-date information on groundwater conditions are particularly critical to the needs of public water suppliers and expanding agricultural and industrial operations. Five wells are now established with groundwater well monitoring equipment in the Jackson Purchase area, with the goal of having 15 wells established in the next few months across Kentucky. Mr. Taylor noted there currently is a research project in Eastern Kentucky related to the use of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing techniques and the impact on groundwater quality in the region.

Mr. Joe Cain, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation, reported that the Water Management Working Group is often discussed by various groups and organizations. He noted it would be good to develop a WMWG publication for use as a handout to such groups that would provide a brief explanation of the goals and objectives of the Working Group. Mr. Cain also noted the Working Group has been asked by the newly formed Water Resources Board to create a summary of work and research recommendations for consideration.

Dr. Stuart Foster, Kentucky Climate Center Western Kentucky University, via conference call, updated the Working Group on the Kentucky Mesonet. The Kentucky Mesonet received state funding and has set funding priorities for the fiscal year to support current operations, restructure staff and make two hires, expand branding, marketing and outreach. Due to AT&T upgrading to a higher speed modem Kentucky Mesonet stations will need to be updated to be compatible. New modems have been purchased and will be deployed across Kentucky to the Mesonet sites over the next few months. He noted that soil probes have been added to various Mesonet stations including those in Butler County, Carroll County, Madison County, Marshall County, and Shelby County; bringing the total to 10 sites, with 4 more installations planned. Dr. Foster announced the Kentucky Mesonet hopes to have an app released in the next couple months. The app will initially be a basic

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version but plans to have expanded capabilities once fully launched. His full presentation can be found on the Water Management website.

Mr. Tom Ruby, USGS, provided a handout on a quick-reference listing of contacts and information on Kentucky Irrigation and Drought Resources. Mr. Ruby gave the Working Group a sneak peek of the in-progress weather website and reported that the website currently is in approval mode and not yet approved for public use. They are still gathering data and further designing the layout. It will be a website that can eventually be formatted to a cell phone. Handout can be found on the Water Management website.

Mr. Matt Dixon, UK Weather Center, reported that the Weather Center was evaluating where they want to be in the future and new ways they may expand. He announced that UK did a similar survey to the Working Group's Weather Data Survey, and concluded that people want apps. So they are discussing the possibility of designing an app, but it currently is just in the planning phase.

Mr. Steve Blanford, NRCS, and Mr. Reed Cress, NRCS, reported that NRCS held 2 irrigation system overview training sessions; one in Daviess County and the other in Calloway County. They plan on taking 10 of the trainees and providing more training to make them irrigation management specialists.

Mr. Pete Goodmann, KY Division of Water, provided the Working Group with an overview of the first meeting of the Water Resources Board. He noted the Board is trying to establish what their objectives and recommendations are and how they will interact with groups such as the Working Group. He noted the Board needs to get their members familiar with the issues to help them better understand project recommendations. He noted the Working Group has done some valuable groundwork that will help the Board save time and valuable resources and that will help to speed this process up. Mr. Goodmann thought overall the initial meeting was positive and understands the need to keep a "big picture" perspective and not get project focused in order to make a positive effect on Kentucky's water resources. Mr. Coleman noted that the Water Resources Board and the Water Management Working Group do not need to be competing with each other; instead they need to work complimentary with each other.

Mr. Gary Larimore, KY Rural Water Association, and Mr. Bill Caldwell, KY Division of Water, discussed the data gap public utilities have with what percentage of public utilities is provided to farms. The noted we need to look system by system to see what percentage of water they produce is being used, mainly by animal production. This data is needed to calculate surpluses for public water suppliers. Mr. Larimore then discussed possible ways to extract this data.

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Mr. Joe Cain, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation, discussed the need for new recommendations from the Working Group and asked for assistance from the Working Group to come up with new ideas and recommendations. Mr. Kevin Jeffries, the Policy Subcommittee Chair, Mr. Pat Henderson, Mr. David Rowlett, and Mr. Brent Burchett volunteered to help brainstorm new recommendation, projects, and grants that can help fund these endeavors.

Chairman Coleman opened the floor for additional comments or suggestions the Work Group or public might have. No comments were made.

Chairman Coleman announced the next Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group meeting will be held Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at 10:00 am EDT at the Kentucky Division of Water in Frankfort in Frankfort, KY.

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**