

MINUTES

WATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

November 18, 2015

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group met at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office in Louisville, Kentucky on Wednesday, November 18, 2015.

Working Group members present were: Steve Coleman, Chair; Todd Clark; Sharon Furches; Terry Gilbert; Pat Henderson; Kenneth Imel; Kevin Jeffries; David Rowlett; and Larry Thomas. Working Group members absent were: Warren Beeler; Pete Goodmann; Gary Larimore; and Roger Thomas. Ex-officio members present were: Kim Richardson, Director, Kentucky Division of Conservation; and Karen Woodrich, State Conservationist, NRCS. 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. Others in attendance were: Biff Baker representing Roger Thomas; Jack Stickney representing Gary Larimore; Bill Caldwell; Pete Cinotto; Chuck Taylor; Jacob Kuhn; David Chinn; Jeff Harper, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Ed McQueen, Kentucky Farm Bureau; and Katie Weatherholt, Kentucky Farm Bureau. The 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.

Chairman Coleman asked the Working Group to consider the minutes of the September 30, 2015 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Larry Thomas, and seconded by Mr. Kevin Jeffries second that:

“We approve the minutes of the September 30, 2015 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.

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Mr. Joe Cain reported to the Working Group about the policy recommendations the Working Group submitted to the Kentucky Farm Bureau Resolutions Board at the September 30th meeting. The policy recommendation that were approved will be voted on by the Kentucky Farm Bureau delegates at the Annual Meeting on December 4th. Mr. Kevin Jeffries, Chairman of the Policy Subcommittee, reported that all of the policy recommendations were approved except for the technology section recommendation, due to the fact that there was no language to submitted for that section at this time.

Mr. Peter Cinotto, USGS, presented a presentation on Data-Driven Documents (D3) and Data Visualization in Kentucky. D3 is a simple and cost-effective way to interactively visualize data and reach people in a modern manner. This platform could be used to observe and predict trends in water monitoring or weather data. An entry level D3 application costs about \$40,000 with live data and about \$3,000 annually to maintain. The presentation can be found on the Water Management website. Mr. Cinotto also reported for Mr. Stuart Foster on the recommendations for expansion and enhancement of the Kentucky Mesonet to support statewide water resource management. Over the ten years since the initial Federal project funding was received, many state agencies have relied upon the availability of weather data from the Kentucky Mesonet. However, State funding has not been provided at any level over that period. The Kentucky Climate Center is seeking recurring annual operating funding of \$750,000 through the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Adding soil monitoring capabilities at existing Mesonet sites, as well as creating new sites to fill unserved areas, will not be sustainable if the Kentucky Climate Center is unable to secure this funding.

Mr. Chuck Taylor, KGS, presented to the Working Group the recommendations for support and enhancement of the Kentucky Geological Survey's statewide Groundwater Observation Network. Reliable, up-to-date information about groundwater conditions are critical to assess groundwater availability, predict and monitor hydrological droughts, and evaluate the potential impacts of drought on groundwater and surface streams throughout Kentucky. At present, groundwater levels are continuously monitored in only one well located in far western Kentucky (Graves County). Approximately 120 private or public water-supply wells and springs are sampled quarterly by KDOW, and an additional 30 sites are sampled each year in one of the five major surface stream basins. While this sampling program provides data needed to characterize groundwater quality, it does not provide water-level data needed to assess or track changes in groundwater availability or to forecast trends in groundwater recharge and storage in any of the major aquifers of the Commonwealth. In fiscal year 2016, KGS began work needed to establish 15 new observation well sites in selected locations throughout Kentucky. KGS is requesting funds to achieve the following network objectives: Increase the present number of planned observation wells (15) by 5, to bring the total number of well sites in the network to 20, in order to better cover gaps in geographic coverage, and/or add monitoring wells in a few critical

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locations, increase the number of wells equipped with telemetry from 7 to 14, and routine operation and maintenance of the network wells. Total requested funding for KGS Groundwater Observation Network is \$124,000.00.

Mr. Joe Cain reported on the Ag Drought Subcommittee, stating Mr. Bill Caldwell has been looking at other states and countries agricultural drought mitigation plans to review, compare, and develop our own; but there are only a few to look at. An Ag Drought Mitigation Plan would set standards that would allow for a much quicker, and timely, drought response. Mr. Bill Caldwell is still reviewing what needs to be included in a mitigation plan for agriculture and who should be involved in the development of such a plan.

Mr. Pat Henderson, Chairman of the Information Subcommittee, noted the weather data survey is online and will be active at least through the end of the year. Hard copies will be available at the Annual Meeting for people to fill out. Mr. Henderson hopes chairman will announce the availability of the survey before the start of the commodity conferences.

Chairman Coleman discussed the upcoming Kentucky Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, December 2 - 5, at the Galt House in Louisville. He requested for the Water Management Working Group to participate in the commodity sessions on Thursday, December 3. There will be a panel discussion at 3:30 specifically for the Water Management Working Group that will report on workings of the Working Group and planned action items. Ms. Sharon Furches will also be a presenter at the Natural Resources Conference at 10:00 a.m. on December 3, discussing "Developing Irrigation Resources".

Chairman Coleman asked the Working Group members to reflect on the Working Group as a whole, keeping in mind Mr. Haney's objectives for the Working Group, and to think of areas where it could improve and what the future of the Working Group is.

Chairman Coleman opened the floor for additional comments or suggestions the Work Group or public might have, there were none.

Chairman Coleman announced the next Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group meeting will be held Wednesday, January 27, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. EDT at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office in Louisville.

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**