

MINUTES
WATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP
KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

December 6, 2018

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Water Management Working Group (WMWG) met at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office in Louisville, Kentucky on Wednesday, December 5, 2018.

Working Group Members present were: Steve Coleman, Chair; Warren Beeler; Todd Clark; Peter Goodmann; Pat Henderson; Kenneth Imel; Gary Larimore; and Larry Thomas. Working Group members absent were: Nancy Cox; Rusty Cress; Sharon Furches; Terry Gilbert; Kevin Jeffries; and Keith Rodgers; and Shane Wells. Ex-officio members present were: Paulette Akers, Director, KY Division of Conservation. Ex-officio members absent were: Brian Lacefield, State Executive Director, FSA; Michael Griffin, KY Director, U.S. Geological Survey; Hilda Legg, State Director, USDA Rural Development Office; and Karen Woodrich, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Dale Booth, Others in attendance were: Biff Baker, GOAP; Dale Booth, KY Division of Water; Bill Caldwell, KY Division of Water; Stuart Foster, WKU KY Climate Center; Greg Heideman, Financial Officer, Farm Credit Mid-America; Crystal Renfro, Executive Director, KACD; Erica Rogers, Financial Officer, Farm Credit Mid-America; David Rowlett, KACD; and Chuck Taylor, UK KY Geological Survey. This meeting was staffed by Joe Cain.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m., EDT by Chairman Steve Coleman, who welcomed the committee and reviewed the purpose of the meeting. Chairman Coleman opened the meeting with a moment of silence in honor of former President Bush. Introductions were made. Mr. Biff Baker announced his upcoming resignation effective January 31, 2019.

Chairman Coleman asked the Working Group to consider the minutes of the August 29, 2018 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Kenny Imel, seconded by Mr. Pat Henderson that:

“We approve the minutes of the August 29, 2018 meeting. ”

Ms. Amy Babey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, presented an overview of the Corps emphasis out of the Louisville District. Her slide presentation will be

posted to our resource page. Ms. Babey reviewed the jurisdictional oversight the Corps has both from a civil and military perspective and discussed their role in water resources priorities such as flood risk management, infrastructure, climate change and risk management. There was considerable discussion about the maintenance of locks and dams and the Corps efforts to divest of various properties. Ms. Babey also went through the changing regulatory oversight they provide, specifically concerning waters of the United States and farming authorizations and exemptions.

Mr. Peter Goodman, KY Division of Water, reviewed rules that determine designations of surface waters, and how blue-line streams are defined. He noted that surface waters include waters that have a well-defined stream bed and stream bank and have either constant or intermittent flow. Definition of wetlands requires the land meet three conditions including hydrology, hydric soils and hydric plants. He reviewed how streams are regulated, and noted that blue-line determinations are not acceptable for jurisdiction. Ephemeral streams can have a defined bed and bank with flow dependent upon rainfall. PPT presentation is posted in online resources.

Ms. Dale Booth, KY Division of Water, provided an update on the KY Water Resource Board (KWRB) on-farm water management program that is a collaboration between the KWRB and KY Ag Development Board (KADB). PPT presentation is posted in online resources. The goal is to increase on-farm water availability and reduce agriculture's dependence upon municipal water resources. Ms. Booth reviewed the two primary categories of projects being considered: the Research, Development and Demonstration (RDD) and Practical Implementation Program (PIP) farm projects. RDD (\$250,000 maximum grant) are primarily research and demonstration projects that could be on either public or private lands but would require data collection on the project and allowing on-farm visits and field days to showcase the project. PIP (maximum \$50,000 on a 50/50 cost share basis) projects are primarily smaller projects that would be primarily on private lands. Several examples of both RDD and PIP projects were shared, as well as the application process interested individuals would follow.

Mr. Bill Caldwell, KY Division of Water, provided a follow-up overview on the water risk assessment and water project development. He noted he was working with various agencies to accomplish the goals of the project and how the project can help keep usable water on the farm to reduce risk (drought and runoff). Mr. Caldwell also said the risk assessment is important because it

anticipates working through drought, or water emergency issues more regularly. In the past it may have been every second or third generation; now it will likely be every generation may deal with water emergencies in some aspect. He noted how interconnected our water systems are in Kentucky. Mr. Gary Larimore noted how water systems are connected across Kentucky, but also said we have several aging systems that will need attention. The group discussion noted there are several potential water resource retention/capture systems that could be explored. The concern is the core requirements that may be tied to various projects, so this needs to be a multi-agency effort to ensure obstacles can be overcome.

Mr. Joe Cain, KFB, provide an overview of the 2018 Kentucky Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and policy adoption. He also noted there could be a vote on the farm bill in Congress as early as next week.

The committee considered tentative future meeting dates; 1st Quarter, March 13; 2nd Quarter, May 29; 3rd Quarter, August 28th; and, 4th Quarter, December 11th.

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

**Recorded by: Tiara Carter
Administrative Assistant**

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