

Agricultural Burning Practices & Research Task Force #63 Meeting Summary

DATE: February 10, 2005

LOCATION: Department of Ecology Eastern Regional Office, Spokane WA.

<u>Members Present</u>		<u>Representing</u>
Grant Pfeifer- Chair	Air Quality Program	Department of Ecology
Don Potts	WA. Dept. of Agricultural	WA. Dept. of Agriculture
Jay Penner	Washington Association of Wheat Growers	Agricultural Community
Michael Ingham	Alfalfa Seed Industry	Agricultural Community
Dave Lauer	Benton County Clean Air Authority	Eastern Washington Local Air Authorities
Michael Bush	WSU Extension	Academia, (Tree Fruit)
John Cornwall	Grass Seed Industry	Grass Seed Industry
Bill Johnston	Washington State University	Academia, (Crop & Soil)
<u>Members Absent</u>		
Larry Cochran	WA. Assn. of Conservation Districts	Conservation Districts
Sally Liu	University Of Washington	Public Health

Introductions, Announcements

The 63rd Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force (Task Force) meeting was held on February 10th, 2005, at the Department of Ecology's Eastern Regional Office in Spokane, Washington. The Task Force meeting began with the introduction of Task Force members and guests.

The February meeting is reserved for hearing research project reports, scoping future funding needs and discussing research direction. Per the Task Force Governance Document it is also scheduled for scoping changes and discussion about Best Management Practices, (BMP's).

Research Update Presentations

The four research projects the Task Force recommended funding during the 2003-2005 biennium are coming to a close and researchers were invited to share their results at this meeting. Each of the presenters discussed what they had accomplished over the past 18 months, how their research was progressing, problems they had encountered, and solutions they were trying.

All presentations are in PDF format and are located below,

[Eastern Washington Straw Residue as a Viable Fiber Source:](#)

Direct Seeding into heavy irrigated residue as Alternative to Burning:

Straw Management and Crop Rotation Alternatives to Stubble Burning:

Development of 'High Yielding Kentucky Bluegrass for Non-thermal Seed Production:

Task Force discussion

Following the four research presentations the Task Force discussed:

- What direction they would like to see for further research.
- Economic analysis of the projects
- Feasibility studies
- How does the “average farmer” use the research
- Research should use normal farming practices
- Practicality of the research

The next round of research grant money should stress the practicality of the research for the farmer.

The Task Force asked to have Ecology draft a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit research grant proposals for the 2005-2007 funding cycle which begins July 1, 2005.

Submitted proposals should be distributed to Task Force prior to the next meeting.

The Task Force would like to know the balance of the grass seed research account and how the process works to get the money available for research.

Agricultural Burning Rule

**Chapter 173-430 WAC,
Agricultural Burning Update on Rule**

Melissa McEachron, Ecology's lead in the rule making process, gave an update presentation on where the agency is in the rule making process.

- The Task Force has been asked to serve on the rule making advisory committee.
- The first committee meeting has been scheduled for March 16, in Spokane, at the Department of Transportation Office, 2714 N. Mayfair St. The scheduled time is 10:00am to 4:00pm.
- This first meeting will be used to discuss what is working, what could use improvement, set meeting schedules and outline the legislative changes that need to be incorporated in the revised rule.

Melissa's presentation can be found at; [Agricultural Rule Making](#)

The Task Force discussed the following topics regarding their role on the rule making advisory committee:

- Alternates
- Deadlocks
- Use of a facilitator
- Start the meetings early-long lunch-work late
- Anticipate six to eight advisory committee meetings
- Committee members need to be in touch with their constituents.

BMP's

Ecology requested a change to the *Cereal Grain Crop BMP* in the section "When Burning is Generally not Allowed" (page 3).

- Addition: No burning for residue management is allowable under these BMP's unless a crop is planted in the same season as the burn.
- This additional BMP is for residue management not pest management.

The Task Force accepted the addition with minor changes to the entire section.

- Change the language, strike the "No" and apply same stipulation to entire section, clean up the writing so there are no double negatives
- Task Force will see new language before adoption of BMP's in June 2005

Orchard Crop BMP's:

- Ecology will bring draft language to address orchard removal with land being kept in agricultural.
- Clarification concerning renewal or removal.
- The Central Regional Office of Ecology will take the lead in drafting BMP language

Administrative Change:

- Ecology requested a change in the date when BMP's are to expire and new BMP's are adopted.
- From June 1st to July 1st. Current BMP's will go into effect July 1st.
- The Task Force voted and accepted this administrative change.

Other Business

The Task Force was asked to endorse the Alternatives to Agricultural Burning Manual

- The manual will be available on the internet and distributed to permitting authorities, county extension offices, weed boards, etc.
- This manual does not replace the BMP's- it is a technical guidance document.
- The alternatives manual was not funded with Task Force research funds
- The Task Force voted to endorse the manual, and to take out the sentence that states "not endorsed by the Task Force", page 2. Jay Penner asked that he be named as the dissenting vote in the Task Force meeting summary.

General Questions and Comments

Are we going to use the same permit for the upcoming spring burn season? **Yes**

Is the burn program going to come out with a new post burn blue card so farmers can send it directly to the Spokane office? **Yes.** (Farmers will need to put a stamp on this card). Post burn reports can also report electronically using the web, fax in the report, or growers can still send the card to the Olympia office which will be postage paid by Ecology.

The Task Force heard an update on the Alfalfa bales in the Walla Walla area. The estimate is 3000 to 5000 tons that need to be disposed of.

The question about thermal weeding was brought before the Task Force. Although it is clear that a permit is required, the issue may need some clarification. The Benton county solution was to issue a permit for the entire acreage, but the burner could use the permit for a full year with multiple burns. The Task Force suggested that this might be an item that can be addressed during the rule making process.

Next meeting will be held in Walla Walla on June 9th, 2005.