

Agricultural Burning Practices & Research Task Force #83 Meeting Summary

DATE: June 14, 2011

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

<u>Members Present</u>		<u>Representing</u>
Karen Wood-Chair	Air Quality Program	Department of Ecology
Larry Cochran	Grower	Conservation Districts
Jay Penner	Washington Association of Wheat Growers	Agricultural Community
Michael Ingham	Alfalfa Seed Industry	Agricultural Community
Gary Pruitt	Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency	Eastern Washington Local Air Authorities
Michael Bush	WSU Extension	Academia, (Tree Fruit)
Don Potts (alternate for Jeff Canaan)	WA. Dept of Agriculture	WA. Dept. of Agriculture
John Cornwall	Grass Seed Industry	Grass Seed Industry
Bill Johnston	Washington State University	Academia, (Crop & Soil)
<u>Members Absent</u>		
Dan McCarthy	Okanogan Horticultural Association	Agricultural Community
Sverre Vedal	University Of Washington	Public Health

Introductions, Announcements

The 83rd Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force (Task Force) meeting was held on June 14th, 2011 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 June meeting of the Task Force is normally reserved for hearing research project proposals. The Task Force recommends which projects they would like to fund and the amount of funding they would like to provide. Lastly, the Task Force considers revising, amending, and approving the Best Management Practices, (BMP's) for the upcoming year.

Research Presentations

The Task Force received final reports from five research projects.

1. *Alternatives to Burning Crop Residues in Alfalfa Grown for Seed: Economic/Pest Management Impacts and Interactions between Selected Burning Alternatives and Precision Crop Spacing.*
2. *Cereal Straw Utilization for Fibers and Chemicals.*
3. *Development of Kentucky Bluegrass Cultivars for Non-burn Seed Production.*
4. *Reduced Burning by wider Canola Seed Row Spacing.*

5. *Straw Management and Crop Rotation Alternatives to Burning Wheat Stubble: Assessing Economic and Environmental Trade-offs.*

The Task Force also heard presentations from three researchers with proposals to conduct research responding to Ecology's Request for Proposals (RFP Number ECY 1128AQP)

The presentations were, in order:

1. *Management of Fresh Wheat Residue for Irrigated Winter Canola Production*
2. *Straw Management and Crop Rotation Alternatives to Burning Wheat Stubble: Assessing Economic and Environmental Trade-offs*
3. *Cereal Straw Utilization for Fibers and Chemicals*

Presentations and Final Reports are available online at:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research.htm>

Task Force Recommendation

The Task Force recommended funding the *Straw Management and Crop Rotation Alternatives to Burning Wheat Stubble: Assessing Economic and Environmental Trade-offs* proposal at the full amount of \$47,931, and two of the four phases (and final report) of the *Cereal Straw Utilization for Fibers and Chemicals* proposal at the amount of \$60,000.

The Task Force also recommended funding the *Management of Fresh Wheat Residue for Irrigated Winter Canola Production* proposal for one crop-year plus an added treatment of crop rakes at the amount of \$32,500, rather than the \$62,326 in the proposal.

BMP's

One of the required activities at the June meeting of the Agricultural Burning Task Force is either to modify or reconfirm existing Best Management Practices (BMP's), and to institute new BMP's.

The Agricultural Burning Task Force reinstated the orchard BMP with no changes by unanimous vote. It is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/Orchard_BMP-2011.pdf

The Agricultural Burning Task Force reinstated the non-cereal BMP with no changes by unanimous vote. It is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/Non-Cereal_BMP-2011.pdf

The Agricultural Burning Task Force reinstated the cereal grain BMP with no changes by unanimous vote. It is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/Cereal_BMP-2011.pdf

The Task Force reinstated the Spot Burn BMP with no changes by unanimous vote. It is available at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/Spot_Burn_BMP-2011.pdf

The Task Force reinstated the Bale Burn BMP with no changes by unanimous vote. It is available at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/Bale_Burn_BMP-2011.pdf

The newly instituted BMPs are valid through June 30, 2012.

Public Comment

Val Turner of the Columbia Conservation District questioned whether it might be advisable to institute a BMP which would allow for the burning of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) take-out not in the same season as the subsequent planting. This practice has become more common in Columbia County because the growers want the chance to burn, allow seeds to germinate, spray, and then allow germination again and spraying again in some circumstances to decrease weed pressure in the crop planted the following season. This practice has been accommodated on a case-by-case basis outside of existing BMPs. Ecology staff agreed that they had seen this practice to some extent in other counties besides Columbia County. Ecology will survey the other conservation districts writing burn permits to assess how much need there is to incorporate this practice as a BMP, and report the findings to the Task Force.

Next Meeting

The next meeting (Meeting #84) of the Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force will be on Tuesday, November 8th, 2011, from 10am to 4pm in Spokane, Washington.