

Agricultural Burning Practices & Research Task Force #73 Meeting Summary

DATE: June 12, 2008

LOCATION: Walla Walla Regional Airport, Walla Walla WA.

<u>Members Present</u>		<u>Representing</u>
Karen Wood - Chair	Air Quality Program	Department of Ecology
Larry Cochran	CD Board	Conservation Districts
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)
Bill Johnston	Washington State University	Academia, (Crop & Soil)
Don Potts	WA. Dept of Agricultural	WA. Dept. of Agriculture
Sverre Vedal	University Of Washington	Public Health
John Cornwall	Grass Seed Industry	Agricultural Community

Introductions, Announcements

The 73rd Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force (Task Force) meeting was held on June 12th, 2008 at the Walla Walla Regional Airport in Walla Walla, 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 results of the research projects funded by the task force, as well as revising, amending, and approving the Best Management Practices, (BMP's) for the upcoming year.

Research Presentations

The Task Force heard updates on the 4 research projects funded by the Task Force in 2007-2009.

First to present was Nancy Hoobler of the Palouse Conservation District with a presentation about the research on Canola seed spacing using direct seeding methods, the presentation is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/canolawiderowsspring08.pdf

The next presentation was from Dr. Walsh on the results so far from his research on Alternatives to Burning Alfalfa Seed Fields. Dr. Walsh's report is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/alfalfaresearchreportjune2008.pdf

Bill McKean then presented a progress report on his cereal straw utilization study, the latest news being that Mickelsen Pulping in Yakima is using straw under contract in commercial runs in 2008. Mr. McKean's presentation is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/strawfiberresearchupdatejune2008.pdf

Last was Dr. Johnston on the results of the research he has been conducting on the development of High Yielding Turf-type Kentucky Bluegrass Varieties for Non-burn. Several very promising strains are currently undergoing on-farm seed production plot trials. The presentation he gave at the Task Force meeting is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/kentuckybluegrassjune2008.pdf

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/Orchard08-09.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/Cereal08-09.pdf

The Agricultural Burning 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/SpotBurn08-09.pdf

The Agricultural Burning 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/BaleBurn08-09.pdf

The Task Force discussed at length a revised version of the non-cereal BMP designed to clarify the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) takeout burn requirements and limitations. The Task Force voted in favor of the revising the BMP to indicate that agricultural burning is not generally recommended in CRP take-out.. This BMP is available at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/aginfo/research_pdf_files/non-cereal08-09.pdf

The newly instituted BMPs are valid through June 30, 2009.

Fees

Karen Wood discussed plans by the Department of Ecology to present to the legislature a request to increase the cap on fees for agricultural burning. She said that Ecology's Agricultural smoke management program doesn't generate as much in fee income as the program costs, and that with an expected budget shortfall in the upcoming biennium, there is a chance that the portion of the funding for the program coming from the general fund could be cut. Ms. Wood said that without a fee increase, a position may be lost on the burn team due to budget cuts, and that she hoped the members of the Task Force would be supportive of the proposed increase. Several Task Force members stated that they didn't anticipate much opposition to the fee increase itself, but were fearful of what might happen once the Agricultural Burning portion of the Clean Air Act were opened up. Mr. Ingham requested that Ms. Wood inquire as to what Ecology's position would be should the legislature want to extensively modify existing laws on

Public Comment

None