

Agricultural Burning Practices & Research Task Force #84 Meeting Summary

DATE: November 8, 2011

LOCATION: Washington State Dept. of Ecology, Eastern Regional Office, Spokane WA.

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

Introductions, Announcements

The 84th Task Force meeting was held at the Washington State Department of Ecology Eastern Regional Office in Spokane, Washington. The Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force (Task Force) meeting began at 10:00AM with the introduction of Task Force members and guests.

The November meeting is reserved for a yearly agricultural burning program recap and a discussion about the previous year's burn season. The November meeting is also scheduled for scoping changes and discussion about Best Management Practices, (BMP's). In addition, this meeting includes a discussion of possible changes to agricultural burning fees.

Fall Burn Season 2011 Recap

Kary Peterson, Department of Ecology, (Ecology), Eastern Regional Office presented the 2011 agricultural burning recap. He mentioned that in the spring, Franklin County had not renewed their delegation to issue agricultural burn permits. The growers of Franklin County had approached the county commissioners, and Franklin County had eventually renewed their delegation agreement with Ecology to issue permits. This decision better serves the growers of Franklin County, allowing them a local source for burn permits and permit information. Also, audits of the delegated permitting authorities have been initiated, the main point of emphasis being to assure that burn permits are issued with adequate, accurate, and consistent data meeting Ecology's requirements. The Outdoor Burn Unit helped to host a US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-sponsored smoke management conference which included Idaho DEQ, and the

tribes. The total acres permitted for agricultural burning in 2011 was 194,000, up from 131,000 in 2010. This number (194,000) will probably decrease by between 10,000 to 15,000 acres after refunds for unburned acres are issued in December. The average number of acres over the last five years is 167,000. Enforcement cases in 2011 include 8 Notices of Correction, 4 Notices of Violation, and 4 Notices of Penalty.

Mr. Peterson informed the Task Force Members that the Mobile particulate monitors are running in Kettle Falls and Goldendale.

Best Management Practices

Kary Peterson mentioned that Ecology has issued several permits for a total of 6-7,000 acres for burns outside of the Best Management Practices (BMPs). These permits were of two types. They involved either Conservation Reserve Program acres being put back into production, or weeds, or both. The burns were outside the BMPs because they allowed for the burn in the Fall, herbicide application in the Fall and/or Spring, and then seeding in the Spring. The need was for adequate time to address the weed seed bank issue, before seeding the next crop.

Fees Discussion

Ms. Wood gave background information on why the fees are being addressed at this meeting. The state is having unprecedented budget challenges. The governor has requested agencies submit budget proposals that reflect 5% and 10% budget cuts. Among the cuts in Ecology's proposed budget for the governor's consideration are a cut of 1 position in the Agricultural burn program. This cut would affect the service that Ecology can provide in terms of burn decisions, enforcement, and permitting. She explained that the decision package provided to the governor addressing agricultural burn program cuts and fees includes suggested proviso language which, if passed by the legislature, would enable any fee increases set by the Task Force to be in place by July 1, 2012.

Mr. Penner moved that the agricultural burn fees for field burning be raised to the cap of \$3.75/acre.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Ingham.

Mr. Cochran moved that the motion on the table be amended to include raising the pile burn fees to the cap of \$1.00 per ton.

The move to amend was seconded by Dr. Johnston.

Mr. McCarthy presented the report from the pile burn sub-committee to the Task Force. The recommendation was to keep pile burn fees at the present level, awaiting a complete year of information before making a decision.

The amendment was clarified to include raising pile burn fees to the cap of an \$80.00 minimum fee for the first 80 tons, and \$1.00 for each ton thereafter.

The vote on the motion to amend passed.

The vote on the amended motion, to raise both field and pile burn fees to the cap (of \$3.75/acre, and \$80.00 minimum fee for the first 80 tons, and \$1.00 for each ton thereafter) passed.

Mr. Ingham moved that the bale and spot burn fees be increased to \$37.50.

Mr. Penner seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

Mr. Ingham moved that the smoke management portion of the Field Burning Minimum fee be changed to \$22.50, the smoke management portion of the Field Burning Variable fee be changed

to \$2.00 per acre, the smoke management portion of the spot burning fee be changed to \$22.50, and the smoke management portion of the pile burn variable fee be change to \$0.80 per ton, with the rest of the fee allocations to remain as they are.

Mr. Penner seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

2012 Meeting Schedule

The regularly scheduled meetings for 2012 were set for Tuesday, February 7, Tuesday, June 12, and Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at the Eastern Regional Office of the Dept. of Ecology.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.