

Local Working Group Meeting- Franklin County FY19  
December 11, 2017

Meeting Minutes:

The annual meeting of the Franklin County Local Working Group was held at the Chesterville Town Office on December 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am.

The meeting was attended by the following:

Henry Hardy (Dairy Farmer & FCSWCD Board Chair)  
Robert Carlton (Consulting Forester)  
Robert Leso (Consulting Forester & FCSWCD Associate Supervisor)  
Ellie Hopkins (landowner & FCSWCD Associate Supervisor)  
Carolyn Drugge (woodlot owner)  
David Fuller (UME Cooperative Extension and woodlot owner)  
Bill Berry (landowner and FCSWCD Associate Supervisor)  
Hunter Manley (Apprentice Consulting Forester)  
L. Herbert "Bussie" York (Dairy Farmer & FCSWCD Secretary)  
Linton Robinson (LDR Farm, woodlot owner & FCSWCD Associate Supervisor)  
Frank Forster (hayland owner & FCSWCD Associate supervisor)  
Edmond Wurpel (landowner)  
Rosetta White (FCSWCD Executive Director)  
Amanda Burton (NRCS District Conservationist)  
Jade Gianforte (NRCS Soil Conservationist)

Rosetta White, FCSWCD Exec. Director, opened the meeting at 10:10 am with a brief introduction of the Conservation District and introduced Amanda Burton, NRCS District Conservationist. Amanda had each person around the room introduce themselves.

Amanda then gave an overview of the Local Working Group, what it is and what the purpose of the group is. She also explained that the decisions that are being made at the meeting today will be for fiscal year 2019. She asked attendees to fill out a membership application form and handed out packets of information to all attendees that included an agenda (included FY 18 EQIP national, state and local fund pool categories & percentages, and conservation priorities), explanation of the Local Working Group, EQIP fact sheet, and the fiscal year 2018 local ranking questions and points. Review of the agenda followed with Amanda giving an explanation of the national, state and local fund pools for FY 18 including a new national initiative specifically for pollinators.

Amanda then reviewed the FY18 conservation priorities and opened the discussion up to the group. Bob Carlton reiterated the importance of controlling invasive species and keeping that as a top conservation priority in Franklin County. The group agreed. The previous mention of the national Pollinator Initiative sparked a discussion about pollinators. Ed Wurpel recommended adding pollinator conservation as a local priority. Discussion ensued regarding pesticide use and their effects on pollinators. The group agreed to add pollinators as a Franklin County conservation priority and keep all the other conservation priorities.

FY2018 Franklin County Resource Priorities:

- Water Quality
- Soil Erosion
- Invasive Plants & Insects
- Soil Health
- Forest Management
- Pollinator Conservation

A discussion of local fund pool categories and percentages followed. There was talk about adding a Pollinator fund pool and combining it with the Soil Health fund pool and giving that combined fund pool 4% of the allocation. After review of ranking questions the group determined it would be difficult to rank the two separate issues in the same fund pool without giving preference to soil health so it was ultimately decided to create a separate local fund pool for pollinator conservation. There was a brief discussion about the fact that since there is a national Pollinator Initiative available, is there a need for a local fund category as well. The group felt that having a local fund pool for pollinators would ensure that some pollinator conservation was being done on a more local level and the applications would not need to compete on a state-wide basis. The group decided on the following local fund pool categories - Animal Waste, Forestry, Cropland, Pasture, Soil Health and Pollinator Conservation.

The group reviewed the FY 18 percentages and recommended the following allocation percentages for FY19:

Animal Waste:	52%
Forestry:	35%
Pastureland:	6%
Cropland	3%
Soil Health:	3%
Pollinator Conservation	1%

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100%

Ed Wurpel led a discussion regarding the need to establish and implement a program in the local schools that teaches students the value of pollinators. He felt strongly that the best way to raise awareness to the issue of declining pollinators was through the local youth. It was pointed out that this is something that might be addressed through the Soil & Water Conservation District's Agricultural Day at the Fair for students, but Ed felt it should be a more long-term program than one day. Jade responded that outreach could possibly be made to the schools and she would look into the idea.

The local ranking questions and points from FY18 were then reviewed. The group discussed again the importance of invasive control. Bob Carlton recommended giving more ranking points in the forestry category to invasive plant species since he is seeing this as a major problem in the woodlots he works in. He recommended switching the point values of questions 1 & 2 to give invasive plant species 100pts and water quality (sedimentation) 80pts. Henry Hardy recommended doing the same for the pastureland and cropland categories as well. The group agreed to the changes.

Discussion about local ranking questions for the new Pollinator Conservation category ensued. Priority will be given to pollinator plantings that will reduce soil erosion. Dave Fuller suggested that establishment of pollinator plantings using only perennial species is also important. Amanda and Jade were not sure if the NRCS pollinator planting practice already required the use of perennials but would find out. If it did require the use of perennials, then they would remove that ranking question and give the points to the agricultural crop question. And lastly pollinator plantings that will benefit a nearby agricultural crop was discussed.

The group decided on the following ranking questions and points for FY 18:

Animal Waste (same as FY 17):

1. Water Quality: Excessive nutrients in surface water not at the QC at the benchmark condition but will be with the proposed action? If yes, award **100 pts**.
2. Water Quality: Excessive sediment in surface water not at the QC at the benchmark condition but will be with the proposed action? If yes, award **80 pts**.
3. If the applicant previously had, or currently has an EQIP contract, has it been and is it now on schedule and in full compliance, OR, is this the applicant's first EQIP contract application? If yes, award **30 pts**.
4. Does the application include a roofed HUA and/or roofed waste storage facility? If yes, award **40pts**.

Forestry (points values slightly altered from FY18):

1. Plant condition: The existence of invasive plant(s) is not at QC at the benchmark condition but will with the proposed action? If yes, award **100 pts**.
2. Water Quality: Excessive sediment in surface water not at the QC at the benchmark condition but will be with the proposed action? If yes, award **80 pts**.
3. If the applicant previously had, or currently has an EQIP contract, has it been and is it now on schedule and in full compliance, OR, is this the applicant's first EQIP contract application? If yes, award **30 pts**.
4. If forestland, are the land units included in this application certified in a verifiable third-party forest certification system such as the American Tree Farm System, Forest Stewardship Council Certified Group, or Certified Resource Manager's client pool? If yes, award **40 pts**.

Cropland & Pastureland (points values slightly altered from FY18):

1. Plant condition: The existence of invasive plants is not at QC at the benchmark condition but will with the proposed action? If yes, award **70 pts**.
2. Water Quality: Excessive nutrients in surface water (Non-forestland) not at the QC at the benchmark condition but will be with the proposed action? If yes, award **70 pts**.
3. Water Quality: Excessive sediment in surface water not at the QC at the benchmark condition but will be with the proposed action? If yes, award **40 pts**.
4. **Cropland category only:** Are the land units included in the application currently being managed using soil health practices such as nutrient management, crop rotation and cover crop? If yes, award **40 pts**.  
**Pasture category only:** Are the land units included in the application currently being managed using soil health practices such as Prescribed Grazing and Nutrient

Management? If yes, award **40 pts.**

5. If the applicant previously had, or currently has an EQIP contract, has it been and is it now on schedule and in full compliance, OR, is this the applicant's first EQIP contract application? If yes, award **30 pts.**

Soil Health (same as FY18):

1. Plant condition: The existence of invasive plants is not at QC at the benchmark condition but will with the proposed action? If yes, award **40 pts.**
2. Water Quality: Excessive nutrients in surface water (Non-forestland) not at the QC at the benchmark condition but will be with the proposed action? If yes, award **100 pts.**
3. Water Quality: Excessive sediment in surface water not at the QC at the benchmark condition but will be with the proposed action? If yes, award **80 pts.**
4. If the applicant previously had, or currently has an EQIP contract, has it been and is it now on schedule and in full compliance, OR, is this the applicant's first EQIP contract application? If yes, award **30 pts.**

Pollinator Conservation (new for FY19):

1. Will the establishment of the pollinator planting included in this application reduce erosion? If yes, award **150 pts.**
2. Will the establishment of the pollinator planting included in this application include only perennial species? If yes, award **75 pts.**
3. Will the establishment of the pollinator planting included in this application benefit an agricultural crop located within the same tract? If yes, award **25 pts.**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 pm.