



## GUAM LOCAL WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order: Date: 04-23-2015. Start Time: 9:10AM. End Time: 11:15AM.

### INTRODUCTIONS

- Introduction of Local Work Group (LWG) Members:

Angie Mendiola, Chair SGSWCD	Roland Quitugua, Chair NGSWCD
Hope Cristobal, NGSWCD	Joseph Santos, NGSWCD
Angie Mendiola, SGSWCD	Margaret Aguilar, GEPA
Christine Fejeran, BSP/GCMP	Brenda Ann Atalig, BSP/GCMP
Bob Schlub, UOG-ANR	Alison Hadley, NGSWCD
Leonard-John Ventura, NGSWCD	Adrienne Loerzel, NOAA

NRCS representatives: J. Bamba, S. Taylor, C. Simpson

- Sign In Sheet (available upon request)

### LWG Policy:

- Reviewed USDA-NRCS LWG policy – no discussion

### General overview of Farm Bill Program:

- Guam Ranking Questions
  - Members asked to provide written feedback by June 2015.
- PIA priority Land uses:
  - No changes or discussion

### Farm Bill Program Overview Discussion:

- Aguilar: Why do most of our farmers not meet National Standards for Points?
  - Bamba: Not many people can get the services either due to funds or availability
- Quitugua: Have you seen an increase in pasture and crop land.
  - Bamba: It is level and not much of an increase
- Cristobal: How is land divided when a farmer uses integrated methods of farming.
  - Bamba: The farmer will have to partition out their land and identify what their land usage is.
- Barber: I have “pests” and want to spray, would it count as an air-quality issue?
  - Bamba: No, it would need to address water quality if you have sufficient windbreaks in place to reduce the impacts of “drift”. If there are no windbreaks, pest management can be implanted to address Air quality – PMP offsite impacts.
- Cristobal: Are Nurseries covered?
  - Bamba: Yes, it is in the manual, but the plants need to actually be in the soil. For clarification – currently the tools we use to assess water quality and soil quality concerns are specific to plants grown in natural ground not in pots.
  - There are very few points given to nurseries (for potted plants) because their impacts soil quality/ health or water quality are relatively minor.
- Barber: Organic matter depletion, everyone has it, how is this assessed?
  - Bamba: Soil samples would be needed to get baseline data.



- Cristobal: Are Chamorro Land Trust leasers eligible for EQIP?
  - Bamba: Yes, leases from CLTC, Marianas Public Lands, Hawaiian Homestead lands, and American Samoa communal lands were given waivers by our National Office.

**Resource Concerns general discussion:**

- PIA priority resource concerns:
  - Water quantity – irrigation improvement

**Review Meeting Outcomes:**

- Stressed importance of providing recommendations in writing by the deadline of 06/01/2015.

**Participant Handouts :**

LWG Policy; EQIP Fact Sheet; Guam Field Office – FY15 local funds allocation request; Prior Year Ranking Tool; Feral Swine Interim Conservation Activity practice

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM**

- **Identify Local Priority Resource Concerns**
  1. Reviewed prior year Cropland resource concerns –
    - LWG recommended to retain all existing resource concerns
    - Include Water Quantity – reduce evapotranspiration loss
    - Include Water Quantity – increase irrigation efficiency
    - Include Soil Health – organic matter depletion due to imbalance in soil nutrients
  2. Reviewed prior year Pasture land resource concerns
    - LWG recommended to retain all existing resource concerns
    - No new recommendations made during meeting.
  3. Reviewed prior year Forestland resource concerns
    - LWG recommended to retain all existing resource concerns
    - No new recommendations made during meeting.
  4. Reviewed prior year Farmstead resource concerns (includes confined animal feeding operations).
    - LWG recommended to retain all existing resource concerns
    - Include Water Quality – excessive sediment in surface water.
  5. Unable to download PIA Statewide resource concerns. No discussion.
    - Bamba to provide electronic copy of PIA Statewide resource concerns.
    - LWG members will provide written comments by 06/01/15.
- **Ranking Questions**
  1. Review prior year local ranking questions
    - Due to technical difficulties unable to download Ranking Questions.
    - Bamba agreed to provide electronic copies to participants for their review. Participants can contact Bamba for any questions.
    - Proposed revisions and /or new questions must be submitted in writing by 06/01/15.
  2. Select prior year ranking questions and/or generate new questions –
    - No discussion; action not completed.
  3. Assign points to ranking questions –
    - LWG did not discuss prior ranking questions action not completed.



**Ranking discussion:**

- Santos: What about lands where people are stewarding that aren't clearly defined.
  - Bamba: There are clear legal definitions of land usage and if an applicant does or doesn't fall into one of them, that will determine their eligibility in the EQIP program.
- Loerzel: Can we have excessive soil and sediment surface water brought forward for the southern areas?
- Aguilar and Barber: What about water issues?
  - Bamba: It would have to be through irrigation and would once again have to be impacting water quality.
- Mendiola and Cristobal: Requesting for clarification of ranking process.
  - Bamba: explained Ranking systems
- Barber: Can we change questions/add?
  - Bamba: Yes, we can, but all the questions would need to be the same across all island-groups.

• **Recommend EQIP Eligible Practices**

1. Review prior year practices
  - LWG members did not review FY15 eligible practice list.
  - Bamba will provide electronic copy to LWG members.
  - LWG members will submit written comments by 06/01/15.
2. Recommend adjusts if any
  - No recommendations made during meeting.

• **Recommend EQIP Payment Rates and Cost Share Rates**

1. Review FY15 payment schedule
  - LWG members did not discuss payment schedule.
  - Bamba provide electronic copy and link to PIA eFOTG.
  - Recommend adjusts if any (*supporting data requested for all cost changes*)
  - LWG members may submit written comments / recommendations by 06/01/15.

**OTHER DISCUSSION**

1. LWG members provided copy of the PIA Interim Conservation Activity practice – Feral Swine Management
  - Feral Swine pilot program EQIP funds to pay for monitoring activities only.
  - Use of Fence practice to exclude pests such as feral swine on croplands is prohibited.
  - Applications will be accepted until 05/15/15.

Submitted by:

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