

**United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Air Quality Task Force**

March 10-11, 2004
Environmental Protection Agency – Main Campus
109 T.W. Alexander Drive
Research Triangle Park, NC 27711

Minutes of the Meeting

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) convened a meeting of the Agricultural Air Quality Task Force (AAQTF) on March 10-11, 2004 at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Main Campus, in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

Elvis Graves, Acting AAQTF Designated Federal Official (DFO), called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, March 10, 2004 and welcomed attendees to the proceedings. He immediately turned the meeting over to Mr. Bruce Knight, Chair of the AAQTF and Chief of the NRCS. Chief Knight welcomed Task Force members and attendees to North Carolina and gave a few brief logistical announcements. The following individuals were present.

AAQTF Members present:

Mr. Bruce Knight, Chair
Dr. Viney Aneja
Mr. Bob Avant
Dr. Garth Boyd
Dr. Tom Coleman
Mr. Roger Isom
Dr. Ray Knighton
Mr. Timothy Maupin
Dr. Calvin Parnell
Mr. Kevin Rogers
Dr. Joseph Rudek

Mr. Dave Roper
Ms. Rita Sharma
Ms. Annette Sharp
Ms. Sally Shaver
Mr. Doug Shelmidine
Dr. John Sweeten
Mr. James Trotter
Dr. Phillip Wakelyn
Ms. Stephanie Whalen
Dr. Bob Wright

Designated Federal Official:

Elvis Graves

**Natural Resources Division, Office of the
General Counsel, USDA:**

Meredith Dahl, Esq.

NRCS Staff:

Dr. Gary Margheim
Mr. Larry Clark
Ms. Mary Combs
Mr. John Brenner

Mr. Ron Heavner
Mr. Jeff Schmidt
Mr. Roel Vining
Dr. Sheryl Kunickis

EPA Staff:

Mr. Adam Sharp, DC
Mr. Kerry Drake, Region 5
Ms. Robin Dunkins, RTP
Ms. Linda Metcalf, RTP
Ms. Christine Davis, RTP
Mr. Dan Williams, RTP
Mr. Butch Stackhouse, RTP
Ms. Michelle McCallum, RTP
Mr. Bill Schrock, RTP
Mr. Bill Lamason, RTP

Dr. Beth Sauerhaft, DC
Ms. Michele Laur, RTP
Mr. Greg Green, RTP
Ms. Teri Porterfield, RTP
Dr. Karen Martin, RTP
Mr. Jerry Stubberfield, RTP
Ms. Teresa Clemons, RTP
Ms. Gail Lacy, RTP
Mr. Randy McDonald, RTP
Mr. Brian Timin, RTP

Public Citizens and Presenters:

Dr. Bryan Shaw, Texas A&M University
Steve Thompson, Oklahoma, Department of Environmental Quality
Trisha Marsh Johnson, Jones-Hamilton Co.
Tommy Stevens, North Carolina Pork Council
Anne Cohn, North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
Joette Steger, North Carolina Division of Air Quality
Cynthia Cory, CFBC
Molly Diggins, North Carolina Sierra Club
Roy Neulicht, RTI International
Tammy Harvey, North Carolina Department of Justice
Amy Poythress
Courtney Washburn, North Carolina Sierra Club
Marion Deerhake, RTI International
Megan Tipton, National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Glen Wilkenson, Jones-Hamilton Company
Blake Gibson, Jones-Hamilton Company
John Crenshaw, ERG
Ryke Longest, North Carolina Department of Justice (Presenter)
Jimmy Randolph, North Carolina Poultry Federation
Mike Williams, North Carolina State University (Presenter)
Carl Wilkins, Advanced Energy (Presenter)
Rodney J. Brown, USDA, Deputy Under Secretary, Research, Education and Economics
James Floyd, North Carolina State University
Jim Riviere, North Carolina State University
Matt Peterson, North Carolina State University
Dan Crawford, Office of Congressional Representative Brad Miller
Yang Zhang, North Carolina State University
Ray Fornes, North Carolina State University
John Fountain, North Carolina State University
Ian Rumsey, North Carolina State University
Wesley Stephens, North Carolina State University
K. Bagwa, North Carolina State University
Sylvia Blankenship, North Carolina State University
Sally Ramey, North Carolina State University
Dan Solomon, North Carolina State University
Will Parry-Hill, Office of US Senator John Edwards
Frank Humenik, North Carolina State University
Rose Auman, Office of Representative David Price
Joy Jefferson, North Carolina State University
Anita Stallings, North Carolina State University

Hans Paerl, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (Presenter)
Mary Saunders, North Carolina Division of Air Quality
Bill Ross, Secretary, NC Department of Natural and Environmental Resources
Britt Cobb, Commissioner, NC Department of Agriculture

Welcoming Remarks. Chief Knight announced that Elvis Graves would assume the duties of the DFO. He then introduced several individuals who further welcomed the group to NC including Ms. Mary Combs, NRCS State Conservationist from North Carolina who thanked the members for visiting North Carolina.

Adam Sharp, Acting Counselor to the EPA Administrator for Agriculture, discussed his recent appointment to replace Jean Marie Peltier. He also provided the group with the operating principles of the new EPA Administrator, Michael Leavitt. He indicated the following "Principles of Leavitt":

- 1) Collaboration, not polarization.
- 2) National standards, but neighborhood solutions.
- 3) Rewarding results, not programs
- 4) Science for facts

- 5) Process for priorities
- 6) Markets before mandates
- 7) Using economic incentives whenever possible.

Larry Clark, NRCS Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, provided an NRCS technology update and discussed the agency's efforts to review and update conservation practice standards to include considerations for air quality. The process began in 2003. The agency is currently reviewing 16 practice standards to include management intensity concepts to achieve greater public environmental benefits. Mr. Clark informed the group that the practice standards are revised every five years and that state conservationists have the responsibility to elevate concerns/concepts to the national level. Mr. Clark provided a handout of the NRCS National Conservation Practice Standards to the group.

ACTION: Bob Avant asked that a cross reference (air quality benefit) be provided for the practice standard handout provided to ensure that practice standards reflect air quality components.

December 2-3, 2003 Monterey, California Meeting Minutes. Elvis Graves asked if the Task Force had reviewed the minutes of the Monterey, California meeting. The TF asked that the staff be commended for the way that the meeting minutes had been developed and with the exception of a few minor edits the minutes were approved.

Dr. Karen Martin, EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS), reported on the status of the Particulate Matter (PM) Criteria Document. She indicated that a staff paper was issued during the summer (2003) and two major issues are evolving:

- Overlap of coarse particle into the fine particle fraction
- Scope of control for background or "natural condition"

Dr. Martin further indicated that most studies in the document were based on mass measurement and that standards specify level of indicators. The standards will also define the types of monitors needed.

ACTION: The TF asked that a statement be included in the document to address its concerns about the inability of monitors to distinguish particle size. *Dr. Martin noted this but could not guarantee that this statement would be included.*

Emerging Issues Committee Update: Chief Knight recognized Roger Isom, Chair of the Emerging Issues Committee. Mr Isom discussed Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) emissions from pesticides, the importance of greater understanding of these emissions, and their relevance to agricultural activities in The committee developed a "white paper" outlining the issues and asked that the paper be elevated to the Secretary.

Adam Sharp offered to have the EPA Pesticide Program staff to review the white paper.

ACTION: Chief Knight suggested that TF committees work closer together to develop recommendations for the Secretary that have overall public policy impacts (hoping to streamline the process – not bog it down).

Public Comment: Chief Knight asked John Brenner, NRCS, to open the public comment period. Mr. Brenner provided instructions and then introduced Dr. Bryan Shaw, Texas A&M University. Dr. Shaw indicated that Texas A&M has developed a training program that can be tailored to meet the needs of many agencies regarding training to address air quality goals.

ACTION: Inform Task Force members of upcoming training and meetings sponsored by Texas A&M and others.

EPA/Industry Consent Agreement: Ms. Sonya Peterson, EPA/OECA discussed the Consent Agreement that is currently being negotiated between EPA and the animal industry. She indicated that the agreement would be soon published in the Federal Register (FR) for public comment. The primary goals of the agreement are 1) compliance, 2) improve methodologies for estimating emissions, and 3) reduce pollution. The program is completely voluntary. Participants agree to pay a small civil penalty and must pay for monitoring activities.

This presentation generated discussion about the impact of CERCLA/EPRCA on CAFO's.

ACTION: The Task Force asked that a paper or presentation be provided explaining agricultures role in reporting CERCLA/EPCRA and if producers must report to whom and where.

A panel discussion of the agreement between the NC Attorney Generals Office and Smithfield Foods (known as the Smithfield Foods/Attorney Generals Agreement) was held. Representatives from Industry (Garth Boyd, Smithfield Foods), Technology (Mike Williams, NCSU), Environmental Groups (Joe Rudek, Environmental Defense), and the Attorney Generals office (Ryke Longest, DOJ) presented information on the impacts of the agreement to the various entities. The agreement allows the industry to assist in the research and development of environmentally superior technologies that would be to address concerns with the pork production industry in the state if technologies meet certain criteria. The agreement was brokered by the AG's office with the industry and encourages collaboration to develop solutions to the disposal and treatment of animal wastes.

Annette Sharp, Chairperson, presented an update from the **Education and Technology Transfer Subcommittee.** There was discussion on the follow-up to a AQ Manual/Handbook that was presented at the last TF meeting in Monterey, CA. NRCS will follow-up and will provide an update at the next TF meeting. The Chief indicated that the Coordinating Committee (recently established) will make sure that information that crosses agency boundaries be brought to the attention of the appropriate persons or staffs.

There was only one person making a presentation during the public comment period.

Tricia Marsh-Johnson, Jones Hamilton Company, thanked the TF for allowing them to participate in the previous day's tour.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM and a tour of the new EPA facility was provided to the members of the Task Force.

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Minutes of the Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2004 (Day Two)

The meeting was called to order by Elvis Graves, Acting DFO, at approximately 8:15.

Chief Knight introduced **Carl Wilkins** who provided a presentation on the **NC Green Power Program.** This initiative is dedicated to encouraging the development of renewable energy from the sun, wind, and biomass that are cleaner sources of energy.

Dr. Ray Knighton, USDA, CSREES, provided an update to the group. He indicated that a USDA/EPA collaborative effort has begun to conduct a conservation assessment. Currently, work is being done on an assessment of water quality practices but there is interest in looking at AQ as well. RFP should be out later this fiscal year. He further indicated that special research grants have been made available – one in the NW to look at fugitive dust emissions with not-ll and direct seeding being the target. The others include emissions from cattle operations (Dr. Sweeten, TAMU) and dairy emissions (Dr. Flocchini, UCD).

Dr. Knighton informed the group that a revised publication is currently available – “Farming with the Wind” and that the 04 RFP for AO proposals are now out and the submission deadline 06/15/04. A national workshop is being scheduled.

The FY-05 Request for Applications (RFA) for AQ proposals process began two weeks ago and Dr. Knighton requested input from the TF. April 1, 2004 will begin the 60 day comment period.

ACTION: Dr. Sweeten was invited to provide an update at the next TF meeting on his current research. He has agreed to do this.

Ray Knighton introduced **Dr. Rodney Brown, USDA Deputy Under Secretary, Research, Education and Economics**. Dr Brown provided an update to the Task Force on the NRI and made public announcements on the recently funded grants for this initiative. He announced the first ever AQ awards. In total, 11 awards were being made committing \$5.1 million that will address high priority research issues many of which have been identified by the TF.

Chief Knight thanked Under Secretary Brown for taking time to be with the TF for his support to the AQ initiative.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch.

The session reconvened after lunch with Roger Isom asking what role the TF could play in getting increased funding for AQ research in NRI. Ray Knighton responded that the TF needs to establish priorities.

Larry Clark, NRCS discussed the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) and that the agency has recently undertaken. Larry suggested that a more detailed briefing be provided at the next TF meeting.

Phil Wakelyn suggested that an assessment of the effectiveness of conservation practices be done on the existing NRCS conservation practices that have a perceived AQ benefit.

ACTION. A presentation on CEAP will be provided at the next TF meeting.

Bob Wright, USDA/ARS, informed the TF that a \$1.6 million increase for AQ research was provided to ARS in FY04. A \$2.5 million increase is proposed for FY05.

Annette Sharp asked if money was available [from ARS] to support research in outside organizations. NO. ARS is not a granting agency.

Bob Avant commented that monies being allocated for AQ research were headed in the wrong direction and he was concerned that this could directly impact EF development.

ACTION/MOTION: AAQTF concerned that additional increases in AQ research be reconsidered for action by the Secretary. Motion was made that their concerns be elevated to the Secretary which was approved by the group.

Calvin Parnell indicated that the EPA Ammonia Inventory public comment period was currently ongoing. He wanted to know if ARS was planning to make comments. Bob Wright indicated that ARS scientists intended to make comments by the March 31, 2004 deadline.

Joe Rudek questioned if the ARS intended to do parallel studies with the EPA Consent Agreement monitoring studies. Wright indicated that USDA/ARS intended to support the studies and may be making parallel studies.

Roger Isom provided an update on the VOC white paper. A motion was made and approved to conditionally approve the paper. An interim joint meeting between the Emerging Issues Committee and the Research Committee will be held to develop recommendations on resolutions to the VOC concerns. The recommendations will be presented at the next TF meeting. It was suggested by Bob Wright that Al Jennings, USDA Office of Pest Management review the white paper.

ACTION: Ray Knighton asked that additional input be made by the TF on VOC issues on the FY05 RFA.

ACTION/MOTION. Motion made and approved that outline concepts for the VOC white paper be approved conditionally and that questions and concerns be clarified and presented at the next TF meeting.

David Roper provided updates from the **Policy Subcommittee** and commented that priorities need to be established for reviewing the effectiveness of conservation practice standards for AQ concerns. He indicated that the development of a white paper is critical in order to heighten the awareness of this need.

Annette Sharp commented that the TF needed to recognize the lack of discussion between the ag community and the regulatory community.

Roger Isom suggested that the development of the aforementioned white paper will assist with defining the actions of the TF. He also suggested that this information should be included on the AAQTF web page.

Bob Avant reported on the **Research Subcommittee** and indicated that the committee would follow-up with the Emerging Issues subcommittee on the VOC white paper.

Dave Roper petitioned EPA to provide information on the CERCLA/EPCRA responsibilities. Information is needed on who needs to report and the process for such reports.

Sally Shaver commented that she would work with USDA to make this information available. USDA will confer with legal counsel on this issue and make information available at the next TF meeting.

Dr. Parnell informed the group that municipalities are not required to report to CERCLA and that reporting is actually done to the Coast Guard and not to EPA. This was a follow up to comments made earlier about what is reported under CERCLA and where the information is reported.

Joe Rudek asked a question about the use of conservation practices to control air emissions and if conservation districts were engaged in this effort.

ACTION: Joe Rudek asked if a presentation can be made at the next TF meeting by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). This will be pursued for the next meeting in July.

There was one comment made from the public during the public comment period.

Gary Saunders, NC Department of Environmental Quality, thanked the group for meeting in NC and indicated the importance of working together to address the concerns within the ag community. He further stated the need for accurate data and encouraged the TF to continue to find ways to work with the environmental community.

The next meeting of the Task Force has been set for July 20-22, 2004 in Idaho. The specific location will be determined at a later date.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:15 PM.