

NRCS Air Quality Update

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NRCS and Air Quality

- Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Conservation agency
 - Non-regulatory
 - Not a research agency
 - Rely on our friends at ARS, NIFA, FS, universities
 - Work with agricultural producers to accomplish natural resource objectives via voluntary conservation efforts

NRCS Structure

- National office/centers
 - Overall policy, technology development, etc.
- State offices
 - State Conservationist responsible for activities in each state
 - State Technical Advisory Committees have significant input into priorities in the state
- Area offices
 - Area staff responsible for activities in their area
 - Report to State Conservationist
- Field offices
 - District Conservationists responsible for direct farmer interaction
 - Report to area office or directly to state office
 - Work with local conservation districts

NRCS and Air Quality

- National Air Quality and Atmospheric Change Technology Development Team
 - Greg Johnson – Team Leader
 - Greg Zwicke – Air Quality Engineer
- National Environmental Markets and Energy Team
 - Adam Chambers – Co-team Leader
- State AQ Contacts
 - CA
 - Ted Strauss – CA NRCS Air Quality Director
 - Johnnie Siliznoff – CA NRCS Air Quality Specialist

NRCS and Air Quality

- NRCS Air Quality Support
 - Evelyn Johnson – Administrative Assistant



NRCS AQ Resource Concerns

- Emissions of Particulate Matter (PM) and PM Precursors
- Emissions of Ozone Precursors
- Objectionable Odors
- Emissions of Greenhouse Gases

NRCS Conservation Planning

- 9 steps, but basically:
 - Identify resource issues
 - Apply a suite of *conservation practices* to holistically address those resource issues without causing other issues

NRCS Conservation Practices

- 165 existing official conservation practice standards
 - About 50 have a specific AQ-related purpose
 - 5 primary AQ-focused practices
- Conservation practices are not control technologies, but can include application of control technologies

Primary NRCS AQ Practices

- Air Filtration and Scrubbing (Code 371)
- Combustion System Improvement (Code 372)
- Dust Control on Unpaved Roads and Surfaces (Code 373)
- Dust Control from Animal Activity on Open Lot Surfaces (Code 375)
- Field Operations Emissions Reduction (Code 376)
- http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/technical/nra/nri/?&cid=nrcs143_026849

USDA-EPA Agricultural AQ Conservation Measures Guide

- Compilation of conservation measures for addressing NAAQS pollutants and precursors for cropping systems and general land management
 - http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1049502.pdf
 - <http://www.epa.gov/airquality/agriculture/docs/agaqconsmeasures.pdf>
- Working on a companion document for livestock systems

USDA-EPA Agricultural Ammonia Workgroup

- AAQTF recommended that USDA and EPA collaborate on issues related to agricultural ammonia
- Greg Johnson (NRCS) and Robin Dunkins (EPA) lead the group
 - Participation from other EPA, NRCS, and ARS folks

National Air Quality Initiative

- 2008 Farm Bill included provisions for using EQIP to assist producers with air quality resource concerns and to meet Federal, State, and local regulatory requirements
 - Originally targeted solely to nonattainment areas
- Now, NRCS state offices apply for funds to address various agricultural air quality issues

National Air Quality Initiative

- 3 funding pools
 - National nonattainment
 - Regional air quality
 - State air quality
- Funds awarded based on:
 - Addressing nonattainment pollutants or precursors in a nonattainment area
 - Addressing an existing or potential Federal, State, or local air quality regulatory requirement related to agricultural sources
 - Involvement of significant partner participation
- <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/air/>

Questions?

