



**Chesapeake Bay Program
Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 2nd, 2020

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Calendar Page: [Link](#)

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Decision: The WTWG postponed approval of the March meeting minutes until April to give members more time to review.

Action: Hilary Swartwood will add approval of the revised CAST 2019 schedule to the April WQGIT agenda (*Post-meeting note: based on new information from states, this was changed to an information update at the WQGIT meeting*)

Action: Hilary Swartwood will send an email to the WTWG once the revisions to CAST 2019 have been added to the production website.

Agenda

10:00 AM – Introductions and Announcements – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC

- Approval of March Meeting Minutes
 - **Decision:** *The WTWG postponed approval of the March meeting minutes until April to give members more time to review.*
- Upcoming CAST webinars – Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting
- Cost data in CAST-2019 – Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting
- Member and participant announcements
 - *Allie Wagner is leaving to work at NOVA*

10:20 AM – Schedule for TMDL-Related Measures – Jeff Sweeney, EPA

Jeff provided an update on the current schedule for TMDL-related measures including 2019 Progress (CAST17) and Milestone evaluations.

Discussion:

Kevin DuBois: Do you also call the DoD and share your evaluations about their milestones?

Jeff Sweeney: Yes, there is an evaluation of milestones specifically for federal facilities. There is a call from EPA with all federal facilities to discuss a draft version of the milestone evaluation, which includes progress to-date and plans over the next two years. Federal facilities, including DOD, have the opportunity to comment on the draft evaluations. A lot of this is done at the Federal Facilities WG. It's the same process for the feds that's done for states and DC.

Kevin DuBois: Just you know, Sarah Diebel is gone so I am the point of contact.

Jeff Sweeney: On our side, Greg Allen would be the point of contact

10:40 AM – Updates on Release of CAST 2019 – Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting and Jessica Rigelman, J7 LLC

CAST 2019 introduces new data and methods agreed to by the partnership for numeric assessments in the next milestone period (2020-2021). Feedback was due March 23, 2020 and comments provided by states identified some concerns. Olivia and Jess reviewed concerns raised about the planned updates to the CAST-2019 beta version. The timeline for final release was discussed. The changes to CAST are listed on the [Model Documentation](#) page.

Discussion:

Olivia Devereux: The methods used for some agricultural projections is called double exponential smoothing. Before 2002, there were even more crops being double cropped.

James Martin: I don't understand why the line for NY and PA is trending down, but the projection trend is going back up? It seems like the trend is downward.

Olivia Devereux: You'd need to see all the data from the 1980s onward. Sucharith does them as a group of crops, not individual crops.

Sucharith Ravi: The trends you are seeing are from 2002 - 2017 but there are still some that you aren't seeing from the 1980s. For example, in NY the trend is going down, but in previous years it was going up so there is a slight change in slope in the projections.

Jess Rigelman: Also keep in mind it is just one year for the projection.

Dave Montali: That is prior to any adjustments to small grain hay?

Olivia Devereux: No, we have already adjusted for that.

Bill Keeling: Why would small alfalfa hay be in the double crop? I've never seen alfalfa used as a double crop because of the expense.

Jess Rigelman: It's not the same crop and not the same crops per each state. This is an average for the watershed.

James Martin: The decision on soybeans was a decision of the Ag WG subcommittee?

Olivia Devereux: Yes, that's correct. They are all state specific. They could be county specific, but what I am showing is the average across the Watershed.

Bill Keeling: This is in the model, however, for a while people were applying biosolids to soybean fields because they are an excellent source of nitrogen.

James Martin: This is strictly based on the Ag Census animal numbers. Has there been any attempt to use state data or industry data instead? Should we really be relying on one data source?

Olivia Devereux: I know for poultry we use other sources of information.

Jeff Sweeney: Mark Dubin, Loretta, and Ruth are looking into additional data sources for animal information and that would be brought out the AgWG. Annual census population numbers aren't as accurate as the 5-year Ag Census numbers. However, the information has a lot of utility for accurate trends. We have developed methods for incorporating annual census data and apply them with the milestone timing.

James Martin: It's very unclear whether industry data has been continued or just been supplanted by the CBP data instead.

Jeff Sweeney: That is fairly correct. It's not a dead project, but industry groups have mostly stopped doing it.

Bill Keeling: I know turkeys had turkey placement and mortality numbers, which is very valuable data.

Jeff Sweeney: This will be brought up in the AgWG at some point in the future.

James Martin: We have heard stories about the rate of dairy-closings accelerating. Anecdotally, it would seem like the rate of dairy decline would be greater, but that's not showing up.

Jeff Sweeney: Even though the dairies are closing, a significant portion of the dairy population are now being measured as part of larger CAFO operations.

Norm Goulet: That might also be a regional thing. I know in VA our last dairy closed its doors a few weeks ago.

Olivia Devereux: We can look at that data by county, I just didn't put that in this presentation.

James Martin: These dates for CAST are not consistent by what was approved by WQGIT and PSC. Is your intent that these are going to be raised for approval at WQGIT and MB?

Olivia Devereux: Yes, these were brought up at the last WQGIT meeting in March and we will bring them up for final approval at the April meeting.

Jess Rigelman: Olivia said that a lot of these issues have been addressed and they have; however, they have not been added to the production website for you to review. They will be added soon.

Dave Montali: When the CAST 19 revision goes to production, will that show the impact of the difference between 2017 and 2019? Will that be updated?

Olivia Devereux: Yes. And the link in the chat box has the new data.

Jeff Sweeney: If any of you do find any errors, please reach out to us so we can start digging into the issue.

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Action: Hilary Swartwood will send an email to the WTWG once the revisions to CAST 2019 have been added to the production website.

12:00 AM – **Adjourn**

Next meeting: May 7th, 2020 from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Participant List

Hilary Swartwood, CRC

Cassie Davis, NYSDEC

Jeff Sweeney, EPA

Brittany Sturgis, DNREC

Ted Tesler, PA DEP

Bill Keeling, VA DEQ

Norm Goulet, NOVA

Alana Hartman, WV DEP

Dave Montali, Tetra Tech

Arianna Johns, VA DEQ

Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting

Jessica Rigelman, J7

Sucharith Ravi, UMCES

Jeremy Hanson, VT

Matthew English, DOEE

Lisa Beatty, PA DEP

Kevin Dubois, DoD

Lori Brown, DNREC

Sarah Lane, MDE

Greg Sandi, MDE

Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA