

Missouri Special State Technical Committee Meeting
May 28, 2020
10:00 am – 11:30 am
TEAMS/Audio Teleconference
Minutes provided by Michelle Berry, Farm Service Agency

Presenters:

Nate Goodrich, NRCS, State Resource Conservationist
Lisa Potter, MDC, Private Lands Program Supervisor
Allen Powell, FSA, Conservation Program Chief

Attendees:

Shelly Berry, FSA Conservation Specialist
Casey Bergthold, Quail Forever Regional Biologist
Robert Parks, MO AWWA, Production Engineer
Ken Henderson, MDA
Tammy White
Charles Stevens, Kansas City Water, Water Utility Officer, MOAWWA
Scott Edwards, NRCS, State Conservationist
Adam Jones
Robert Stout, Strategic Outreach and Planning LLC
Joe LaRose
Leslie Hollaway, MO Farm Bureau Federation
Zebadiah Yoko, Missouri River Bird Observatory
Darrick Steen, Director of Environmental Programs, MO Soybean Programs
Tyler Cooper
Elizabeth Steele
Sarah Lovell
Chrislyn Means
Jon Wingo, Pure Aire Natives Inc, President
Brad Powell, SWCD Employee Association
James Cole, The Nature Conservancy, Director of Conservation Programs
Melissa Vatterott, MO Coalition for the Environment, Food and Farm Director
Bill Wilson, DNR Soil and Water Program
Kelly Srigley-Werner, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Nate Goodrich, NRCS, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and covered the purpose of the meeting.

Lisa Potter, MDC, covered the purpose of SAFE, SAFE policy changes, SAFE proposal Notice CRP-897, existing Missouri SAFE projects and the 2020 Missouri SAFE proposals via a PowerPoint presentation. Lisa reminded all participants to submit comments or questions to Allen Powell by Friday, June 5th.

Allen Powell, FSA, discussed proposed changes to the Wildlife and Water Quality Priority Zones. Only 25% of the total cropland acres of a state can be assigned to a conservation priority zone. FSA is proposing to move conservation priority zones from entire counties to 12-digit HUCs (Hydrological Unit Code). For General CRP, certain offers can receive additional points if they are located in a conservation

priority zone allowing them to be more competitive during the general CRP ranking process. By moving priority zones from whole counties to HUC designations will allow us to better distribute the limited priority acres from areas that either don't qualify for CRP or have very little general CRP interests to more areas across the state. Although FSA has not received the official deadline for submitting new Conservation Priority Areas, they expect one anytime. Allen requested any questions or comments be submitted by Friday, June 5th.

Questions and Comments:

Jon Wingo, Pure Aire Natives Inc, asked if the seeding rates for Milkweed would remain the same per the 420 specifications, less than 1%. Jon is concerned about seed availability based on the type of Milkweed required. Lisa indicated this decision has not been made and encouraged Jon to submit comments with his recommendations.

Casey Bergthold, Quail Forever Regional Biologist, thanked everyone for their work on addressing SAFE projects and reiterate they support the SAFE proposal changes covered during the meeting.

Brad Powell, SWCD Employee Association, indicated he felt the transition from county boundary to HUC units was a good idea. Brad asked who would take the applications and work with producers. Allen Powell explained the administrative county who carries the farm records will process those offers.

Questions through TEAMS Chat:

Leslie Hollaway, Missouri Farm Bureau Federation, asked if using HUC's would make administration of the program more difficult for field staff? Shelly Berry replied by indicating this change would not make program administration more difficult. Once the new conservation priority zones are approved, a GIS layer will be added to the CRP offer software and all the ranking point calculations will be done through the software.

Charles Stevens, MOAWWA and when counties will have the information back to FSA regarding the known water quality issues and will there be a map for STC to review. Shelly Berry replied indicating counties provided their initial wildlife priority zone assessments last week. Those recommendations will be reviewed by NRCS, MDC and FSA. A map with proposed wildlife and water quality HUC's will be created and made available for review.