

**MO Bootheel Nutrient Management Coalition
Conference Call
May 15, 2009
Notes**

In Attendance: Kat Logan Smith, James Hunt, Scott Crumpecker, Bob Ball, David Dunn, Gene Stevens, Hudson Peters, Christa Jones

Additional Funds through EPA grant. Christa Jones reminded the group that approximately \$20,000 could be available to the group to continue/augment current activities. Funds expire 3-31-10.

Potential use of funds is to support David Dunn's research on nitrogen enhancers, providing publicity and informing producers of the research results. We could support an event that David is planning to present research results. Industry representatives could be invited to do presentations on their products. This event will be held the 2nd or 3rd week in July. David needs to talk with members of the MO Rice Merchandising and Resource Board. Envisioning a ½ day event, 9-12.

Nitrogen management "confidence builder." Could also feature ways to do in season and post season monitoring of corn crop. In season, growers test soil for adequate nitrogen content, which tells them how much to apply. After harvest, producers send in stalks to the lab to measure N content. Growers get coupons to pay for the tests. We could use the extra funds to develop this program for the bootheel. May not be enough interest, because cotton and rice are more dominant than corn. Could this program be adapted to another crop?

Bob Ball presented information on Peter Scharf's conservation innovation grant (nitrogen sensors project). This could be incorporated into a field day. Sites include Jim Stuever's near Malden, east of Dexter, and southernmost Dunklin County. Timing would have to be mid-season, focusing on cost-benefit factors.

The Rice Farm Field Day could include a 15 minute presentation of David Dunn's research.

What will get the best turnout for a field day?

For the Delta Center Field Day, timing is key. Need to focus on financial aspects/profit management. Need to follow up on public service announcements sent out. Identify key vendors and advertise through them. Use grant money to buy advertising. Use Delta Farm Press and Mid America Farmer to advertise.

The group agreed to support David Dunn's research presentation as a ½ day event in mid-July. This might include a presentation from Gene Stevens on nutrient management tools. Program might also include a heads-up on new products. David will send out a written synopsis of his research to the group. **July 24** was chosen as the target day for this event. Peter Scharf may provide the afternoon presentation (1:00-3:00). David will talk to Peter on this.

The group formed two committees:

Promotion	Program
Christa Jones	David Dunn
Scott Crumpecker	Peter Scharf?
Kat Logan Smith	Gene Stevens or his replacement

Hudson will contact Davis Minton to help.

Rice Field Day. David Guethle and Don Beighley are contacts. Will include related subject matter on different stops. One stop could focus on current nutrient management research, the Malden meeting, etc. Forty-five minutes for each stop. Date is August 27.

Delta Center Field Day. September 2. Gene Stevens is coordinating this event. One tour based on nutrient management. Joe Henggeler possible speaker. CTIC could have a booth on nutrient management/hypoxia. 3500 people expected. Could have a stop on the high school tour to include information on hypoxia issues? Could bring up shrimpers and fisherman from LA to talk about the economics of hypoxia. Also charter boats/tourism in general. Doug Daigle (Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force) could help with this.

EQIP Priority Area. Late June or early July we would need to have a proposal together. Scott Crumpecker reported on recommendations from Bootheel district conservationists:

1. NRCS technical staff members need training on available nutrient management technology.
2. Continue support of Malden producer meeting and demonstration projects through field days.
3. Perform outreach effort to inform non program participants of nutrient management EQIP availability.
4. Change screening tool to favor new EQIP participants (which has already been recommended).
5. Add nutrient management as a local concern in the Bootheel counties.
6. Increase nutrient management incentive through EQIP to match level of required work.
7. Increase the number of technical personnel available to help producers with nutrient management planning. (Train extension personnel in nutrient management as potential Technical Service Providers (TSPs)).
8. Explore role for extension in discussing results of the SPARROW modeling. What can be done to prove or disprove the model? Model prediction is based on sales and what other methods? How to quantify? Is water quality sampling actually involved?
9. Rather than an EQIP priority area, there are other ways to highlight nutrient management.
10. Potentially repeat groundwater study from 1980's but from different standpoint. Go after funding to determine presence of nitrates, nitrites, and P?

NRCS state office will take recommendations of group under advisement, if submitted by early July. TSP issues should be discussed at State Technical Committee meetings. Issues include extension personnel on Tech Register; NRCS might be able to pay extension to provide services. However, this defeats the purpose of moving TSP funds to the private sector.