

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State Technical Team (STT) Meeting**  
**May 10, 2012**  
**USDA Conference Room**  
**9:00a – Noon**

**Attending:** Michael Moorman (NRCS), Joseph Bachand (NRCS), Michael Kenyon (NRCS), Kevin Farmer (NRCS), Eric Boettger (NRCS), Nicole Bernier (NRCS), R. Phou Vongkhamdy (NRCS), Marilu Soileau (FSA), Paul Brule (FSA), Eric Scherer (SRICD), Tom Abbott (DEM), Dick Went (RIACD), John O'Brien (TNC), Heather Faubert (URI), Rick Pace (Eco Assets), Margherita Pryor (US EPA), Numi Mitchell (TCA), Rick Wolfe (TCA), Ken Ayars (DEM)

### **Introductions & Review Agenda**

Phou welcomed everyone and thanked all for coming. Phou added “Thank you for meeting with our Associate Director, Senators, etc. We cannot do these jobs alone, our partners are crucial to our success. Thank you for your support!”

*Update:* On April 26, 2012 the Agriculture Committee marked up and passed a reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

*FYI:* We distributed Quarterly Activity Report and the report is posted on our Web site.

### **Project Design Delivery**

Following Mr. Jordan's visit, Rhode Island became aware of some unsatisfied customers. In response, we created an Action Plan. Most of the clients who spoke with Mr. Jordan expressed their concerns and we are aware of these issues (program delivery, delay, communication, engineering backlog, etc.) Please be assured we are making changes to better serve our customers.

### **Farm Bill Programs**

#### National Water Quality Initiative

- Sakonnet River, Tomaquag Brook – Pawcatuck River, and Upper East Passage were approved.
- We will be soliciting applications for this initiative. The closing will be sometime in June.

## FY12 Financial Assistance Contracts

- EQIP
  - 136 Contracts Obligated , \$2.1 mil Total Funds
  - 19 Approved/Not Obligated, \$255,560 Funds Needed
  - 72 Pending/Eligible Applications, \$1mil Approximate Value
  
- WHIP
  - 6 Pending/Eligible Applications, \$180,000 Approximate Value
  
- AMA
  - 2 Contracts Obligated, \$18,920 Total Funds
  
- CSP
  - 8 Approved/Not Obligated, \$12,104 Funds Needed

## Easement Programs Update

- Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP)
  - Received 9 applications
  - Funding for FY12 IS \$4,127,000 with regional equity amount of \$1,363,718 totaling \$5,490,718 available for Rhode Island
  
- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
  - Received 2 additional applications
  
- Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP)
  - It is anticipated that 3 obligations will be made for permanent easements in FY12

## **Technical Assistance**

In the beginning of April, 2012 Eric Boettger sent an email in regards to 3 draft practices: Aquatic Organism Passage, Bivalve Aquaculture Gear and Biofouling Control, and Nutrient Management. They were added to the EFOTG draft folder and since there were no comments, they were added to the EFOTG Section IV on May 9, 2012.

## **FY12 Financial Assistance Programs**

EQIP – Conservation Innovation Grants for FY12 – State Component

- Eric Scherer and Dick Went volunteered to be reviewers

### **Safe Cycle (Bioliqidator)**

- Utilized CIG grant to run a pilot program
- Create an agreement with an eligible EQIP customer
- Write a letter to NHQ outlining the benefits
- Agreed upon moving this practice forward
- Joe B. & Eric B. will work together

### **Partnership Reports**

Margherita Pryor will send information regarding the “Annual Conference” in Portsmouth, NH to Eric Boettger and he will forward to RI staff

Dick Went informed everyone of a conference in July, Washington, DC and also the NACD Conference in August  
He is also running for National Office, NACD

Heather Faubert received 16 applications for an Agriculture Agent  
The following training is scheduled:  
Rotational Grazing Training  
Friday, July 13, 2012  
10a to 1p  
Watson Farm, Jamestown, RI

### **Next Meeting**

July 12, 2012