

Meeting #6
Matthews Training Center - July 28, 2014

Work Group Members

Pam Roberts (Chair)
Barry Dunn
Tim Kessler
Representative Mary Duvall
Senator Jason Frerichs (via phone)
John Cooper
Steve Halverson
Jan Nicolay
Jeff Zimprich
Doug Deiter (not present)
Secretary Jeff Vonk (not present)
Secretary Lucas Lentsch
Nathan Sanderson

guests

Tony Leif
Tom Kirschenmann
Angela Ehlers
Bill Smith
Rick Vallery

Welcome & Introductions

Nathan Sanderson welcomed the members and informed the group Chair Roberts would not be present and Senator Frerichs was joining by telephone. Sanderson reminded the PHWG that today's focus is reviewing draft recommendations and refining recommendations according to the PHWG discussions.

discussion of funding priorities and sources

Cooper discussed the known RCPP proposals submitted to NRCS and the need to have an organized proposal in place for the next round of RCPP applications. Cooper suggested the future proposal should include elements to address additional Farm Bill biologists, GPA habitat work, and the one-stop website. Further discussion then recommended using one-time funding as a match source for the next RCPP proposal to address these components. Dunn suggested the creation of a digital mapping tool for producers should also be part of that proposal. Zimprich suggested including technical assistance outreach efforts by conservation districts in the proposal.

Nicolay recommended Conservation Officers be part of the process of informing producers on what programs are available and who to contact to enroll and implement conservation programs. Leif responded by affirming that officers can be trained to know the general concept of programs so they are knowledgeable of the appropriate people for landowners to contact.

Halverson suggested that a priority should be habitat development on GPAs and other funds go towards the establishment of long-term dedicated conservation funds. Halverson also recommended that the established fund should be independent so people donating know exactly where their funds are going. Halverson suggested that an initiative be established to complete habitat work on GPAs over the next 5 years so folks can see the progress.

Duvall described to the PHWG that legislators will be in a difficult position to designate general funds for pheasant habitat versus providing those funds to other important causes such as education and health care. Frehichs suggested the funds set aside should not be used for land acquisition.

Nicolay emphasized the need and importance of a strong statement and effort to conduct an aggressive private fund-raising effort, not just an awareness effort. The discussion noted that such an effort needs to include a staff person to conduct the associated activities (eg. Executive Director).

discussion of actual use vs. highest and best use approaches to agriculture property tax

Land taxation was a topic brought forward by several Summit attendees and a topic of discussion of the PHWG. The PHWG determined the best approach is to recommend continued progress on evaluating land based on actual use versus highest and best use by the state legislature.

discussion of draft final report

The PHWG reviewed each draft recommendation and provided suggested changes and adjustments through a round table discussion.

Duvall suggested the web-page for the one-stop shopping center be located on a neutral site such as the South Dakota home page and not on the GFP website.

The PHWG strongly believes the issue of roadside ditch mowing needs further discussion and possible adjustments as it was brought up multiple times by the public. PHWG discussed the potential of attending the state convention of counties and townships to discuss the issue of roadside mowing. The PHWG also discussed the possibility of asking the DOT Commission to re-open the mowing rules to reconsider the ER and WR dates, counties WR, and safety buffer distances.

“Client Gateway” is a new USDA program coming out soon that may be a valuable tool for producers to better evaluate their operations, acres, and overall management considerations.

agenda items for august 13 conference call

- August 13, 2014, conference call at 9:00 a.m.
- Sanderson will incorporate comments and recommendations from the PHWG and send out the updated version for another review and comment prior the August 13 conference call.