

## CITIZENS (WOOD COUNTY) GROUNDWATER GROUP MEETING

DATE: Friday, September 23, 2022  
TIME: 2:00 p.m.  
LOCATION: Conference Room 114-Wood County Courthouse & Teleconference via WebEx

**Present (In person or via WebEx):** Bill Leichtnam, Bill Clendenning, Gordon Gottbeheut, Sara Walling, Bruce Dimick, Emily Salvinski, Mike Krizan, Karoline Whitman

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Bill Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
2. **Public Comment:** None.
3. **Speaker – Sara Walling, Senior Policy Manager, Agriculture & Restoration-Alliance for the Great Lakes**

### *Intro to Farm Bill:*

#### **Why does the Farm Bill matter?**

- It's huge! \$428 billion in 2018
- It's going to pass (fingers crossed)
- Farms typically largest source of nutrient pollution
- Our opportunity to engage in reshaping system

#### **History of the Farm Bill**

- 1933: First Farm Bill passed as part of the New Deal
- 1935: Soil Conservation Act
- 1936: Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act
- 1985: Title II: Conservation
- 18 Farm Bills passed since 1933

#### **Conservation Title**

- Over 20 programs and subprograms
- Set-aside and easement programs
- Compliance-oriented programs
- Stewardship-oriented incentives

#### **Conservation Compliance**

- Swampbuster: Farmers who accept Farm Bill benefits (commodity, crop insurance, loans, conservation, etc.) must have a soil conservation plan for their highly erodible soil
- Sodsaver: Benefits are reduced if production occurs on native sod

#### **Source Water Provision**

- Source Water Protection: The 2018 Farm Bill required 10% of all annual funding for conservation program (except CRP) be used for water protection practices FY 2019-FY 2023

#### **Advancing Equity**

- 2018 Farm Bill included provisions to increase access to programs for:
  - "Historically underserved" farms and ranchers:
    - Socially disadvantaged
    - Beginning
    - Limited resource
    - Veteran
- Some programs provide a higher percentage of covered costs for historically underserved producers (EQIP) or set aside a designated portion of funds for historically underserved applicants (i.e. CIG, CSP), or are ranked higher (RCPP)
- Conservation Outreach: Racial Equity and Justine Conservation Cooperative Agreements

#### **Legislative Context**

- Republicans expected to take Congress
  - Hearings
  - Marker bills
  - Agriculture Committees

- Markups
- Full vote
- Conference committee

**Our Priorities:**

- Modernize Crop Insurance
- Double Conservation Funding
- Limit CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) Spending
- Prioritize Water Quality Outcomes

**How did the coalition develop our priorities?**

- 6-month collaborative process
- Policy options were nominated by workgroup participants
- 3 months of presentations, research and discussion of criteria
- Poll to vote on top priorities for coalition action, January 2022
- Small working groups wrote principles statements

**Modernize Crop Insurance**

- Largest farm subsidy program
- Climate-related losses growing
- Often required for loans/leases
- Driver of monoculture cropping and planting on marginal land
- Needs to evolve, but it's politically challenging

**Double Conservation Funding**

- Why it's a priority
  - Farm Bill conservation programs are America's largest source of funding to encourage conservation on farms and ranches
  - Without effective regulation of farm runoff, education and incentive programs are our best tool to reduce widespread nutrient pollution in our waterways
  - Farmer/rancher demand for these programs far exceeds available funding
- What we're asking for
  - Double funding for the suite of conservation programs to \$12 billion per year

**Limit CAFO Spending**

- Why it's a priority
  - EQIP designates 50% of program funding for livestock, much of which goes to CAFOs and subsidizes environmentally harmful practices
- What we're asking for
  - Remove the requirement for 50% of EQIP funding to go towards livestock
  - Redirect federal funding towards a variety of regenerative, soil-, water-quality, equity-, and climate-based practices that protect water, air, soil, and community health

4. **Correspondence/Updates/Handouts/Reports on Meetings Attended:**

- 9/22/22- Health & Human Services
- 9/15/22- Portage County Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee

5. **"Action Items" proposed to CEED Committee by Wood County CGG:** None

6. **Roundtable:** Discussion around possible structural change to CGG meetings.

7. **Announcements by members / visitors (upcoming related events / meetings):** Bill Clendenning suggested attendance of River Alliance meeting.

8. **Future Speakers:** Please contact Bill Leichtnam or Bruce Dimick with suggestions for future speakers. Bill Leichtnam will contact Secretary Preston Cole. Bruce Dimick suggested Brad Pfaff. October - None.

9. **Agenda Items for next meeting:**

Agenda items should be submitted to Bill Leichtnam by the second Monday of the month.

10. **Next Meeting:** Meetings will be the third Monday of each month @ 2:00 p.m.

The next regular Citizens (Wood County) Groundwater Group meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. This will be an in-person and virtual WebEx meeting.

11. **Adjourn Groundwater Group Meeting:**

Bill Leichtnam declared the meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.
--

Notes by Karoline Whitman, Planning & Zoning Office