

**Vermont Soil Health and Payment for Ecosystem Services Working Group
(VT PES WG)**

Friday, November 15, 2019

Meeting #3

Location: VAAFM Williston Office, 94 Harvest Lane – Suite 203
Williston, VT 05495
10:30 am to 3 pm

Homework:

1. View Materials from Meeting #2 and Webinars: (<https://agriculture.vermont.gov/pes>)
2. Review early draft report outline

10:30 **Welcome and Introductions, Alyson Eastman, Chair**

10:40 **Review of Meeting Summary and Agenda**

- Approve the October meeting summary
- Brief overview of the agenda

10:45 **Vision and Aspirations of the WG**

- Review and revise the following ambition statement.

The Vermont Soil Health and Payment for Ecosystem Services Working Group aims to create a system in which farmers are hired to use their unique ingenuity and know-how in caring for the land to rebuild Vermont's soil capital. The group aims to catalyze a paradigm shift from one of solely production agriculture bolstered by programs and payments to one where farmers are recognized as land stewards and are compensated for a range of ecosystem services they provide, including but not limited to food and fiber. This approach requires fundamentally rethinking the role of farmers to ensure agriculture's economic and environmental sustainability in Vermont.

11:00 **Watershed Monitoring & Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP)**

Joshua Faulkner, UVM Extension

- Presentation
- Discussion

11:45 **Resource Stewardship Evaluation Tool (RSET) in Detail**

Judson Peck, AAFM

- Presentation

- Discussion

12:30 Lunch (provided)

12:45 Working Lunch & Brief Summary of Webinars

Sonia Howlett, AAFM and Ryan Patch, AAFM

- Brief review of webinar content to help inform and advance the conversation
- Update on Markets and PES

1:00 Brainstorm of Design Principles for a Demonstration Project

- Group brainstorms and discusses principles for guiding the creation of a demonstration project (who administers, verifies, where, etc.)

1:30 Reviewing a very early Draft Outline

- Assuming we want unleash farmer's ingenuity and know-how to build Vermont's agricultural soil capital, how do we think about soil capital, its elements, it's benefit flows, the tools we have at our disposal, at least to initiate a demonstration project
- Discussion and improvement of early draft outline

2:15 How USDA NRCS Programs might Help

Vicky Drew, NRCS

- Presentation
- Discussion

2:45 Public Comment

- Time allotted via how many want to comment, but no less than 2 minutes per person. The WG also takes comments in writing.

2:25 Work Planning and Next Steps

- Review meeting and webinar dates and next steps

3:00 Adjourn