

Communication Network Conference Call - November 6, 2007

Communication Network Conference Call

Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2007 at 11 a.m. (eastern).

Call-in number: 765-496-8419

Participants:

Karen Scanlon
Russ Evans
Peter Gamache
Dick Wittman
Brian Noyes
Doug McKell
Randy Raper
Randall Reeder
Kirk Iversen
Sjoerd Duiker

Agenda:

- * News from groups
- * Update on network activities
- * Discuss agenda for Dec 10-11 meeting

News from Members

Russ Evans, PNDSA – It seems that every farmer is plowing, everyone but Dick Wittman. PNDSA conference will be Jan 23-24, 2008. Association is working with Hans Kok, WSU extension, to conduct tillage transects for National Crop Residue Management Survey. Expect results this fall.

Dick Wittman, PNDSA – Keep an eye on the Lieberman/Warner legislation for carbon offset for farming. It's out of committee. This is the legislation to get behind and this group should voice support.

Peter Gamache, Reduced Tillage LINKAGES – Farm Tech meeting will be Jan 30-Feb 1; Dwayne Beck will deliver keynote address. Direct Seed Advantage meeting on Nov. 21-22. Alberta introduced emissions trading act, which set the basis for a carbon offset market. Carbon trading aggregators are signing up farmers now. Cap of \$15 CO₂ per metric ton. As this progresses, they are figuring out rules, protocols (for tillage and other ag practices). There is some concern with the definitions of reduced till and no till, but wanted to be inclusive. For more information, you can go to www.reducedtillage.ca or www.carbonoffsetsolutions.ca

Brian Noyes, Innovative Cropping Systems – Joint letter signed by 12 agriculture and environmental groups sent to Governor of Virginia by groups to request \$100 mil/year for 5 years to provide cost share for BMPs (including CNT). Would be big boost in state cost share. Could be next year before get answer on funding. Concept is being transferred to other bay area watersheds.

Doug McKell, Soil Conservation Council of Canada – The Council's work has been stalled because of lack of federal program; waiting until March/April '08.

Recently took a trip to South America (CAAPAS meeting – producer led, founded on no-till; third year that SCCC is a member) in Paraguay. Also, SCCC is a member of International Provincial Offset Group (IPOG), which is a group of industry -- the large emitters that must come up with reductions and need offsets. Participated in developing offset system. Waiting for information back from Environment Canada. Heard that the minister indicated that there will be an offset program and that ag will be involved. Proposed start date of July 08 (ambitious).

Randy Raper, ARS, and Kirk Iverson, Auburn Univ. – Preparing to assist with 2-3 conservation tillage workshops in spring. Also, developing 2-3 field days with NRCS and Extension in farmer field to demonstrate conservation tillage. Kirk volunteers at Callaway Gardens and offered to help with meeting preparations.

Randall Reeder, OSU – Dec 4 program, over 100 farmers for all-day meeting. Annual program in Feb will attract over 700 people for the two-day event. Delivering carbon sequestration and compaction presentations at New Orleans. Severe compaction means less carbon sequestration. Controlled traffic to reduce compaction in CNT systems.

Sjoerd Duiker, PSU – Getting into biofuel arena. Asked to be on project to look at oil seed crop, daikon. Fall seeded crop, comes off in summer. Moving ahead with different types of cover crops; farmers are really interested. Working with conservation district to look at new cover crops: legumes and forest radish. Looking at oats that produce lots of biomass to use as cover crops.

Network Update

Web page should be up to date. Please check your organization's entry and notify CTIC of any changes needed.

http://www.conservationinformation.org/?action=learningcenter_commnetwork

Remember that the Discussion Forum is there for your use.

December Meeting

Dec. 9 --- Arrive ATL (if flying in)

Dec. 10 --- 7:30 am, meet and begin drive to Callaway Gardens (about 1 hour)

Dec. 10 --- 9 am – 5pm Communication Network Meeting, Mountain Creek Inn

Dec. 11 --- 8 am – 12pm Continue meeting

Dec. 11 --- 1pm Tour of Callaway Gardens

Dec. 11 – 3 pm Presentations about conservation systems in the Southeast

Lodging

Dec. 9 --- Reserve a room at Comfort Inn - Airport North, 404-768-7800. The standard rate is \$89 per room per night. There is no group rate or room block, however availability is still good. I suggest you book a room ASAP just in case.

Dec. 10-11 --- Reserve rooms at Callaway Gardens, 1-800-CALLAWAY (225-5292)

We've secured a block of 13 rooms for Dec. 10 and Dec 11 at the Mountain Creek Inn for a rate of \$109/night. You are welcome to book a room in another facility within Callaway Gardens, but PLEASE USE THE CTIC GROUP NAME (or Conservation Technology Information Center) so that our group gets credit for the stay (we have to book a minimum of 13 rooms each night).

Transportation

CTIC will provide transportation from ATL to Callaway Gardens on Dec. 10 and from Callaway Gardens to ATL on Dec. 12. If you need to return to ATL on Dec. 11, please let me know, and I will look into options with you.

Meals

CTIC will provide lunch and dinner on Dec. 10 and breakfast and lunch on Dec. 11.

Travel Stipends

CTIC will provide \$1,000 travel stipends to support travel of representatives of no-till organizations to attend the meeting. In a separate email, I will distribute a "commitment notice" that indicates the signer is committed to attending and participating in the December meeting. Organizations requesting the travel stipend will have to sign and return the commitment notice before CTIC will issue the check. The stipend will be yours to use at your discretion.

Agenda Topics

The group agreed to the following agenda topics:

- Name for the Network
- Structure
- Reach out to South America? Or stay within North America
- Goals
- Actions
- Funding for the network
- Plan for addressing policy issues
- Collaborative research
- Group presentations: mission/structure of organization, how it interacts with farmers, accomplishments, lessons learned and the status of no-till in its area.
- Interest in a community of practice for extension on no-till.

Karen will develop a more thorough agenda and distribute prior to the meeting. In addition, Karen will compile a packet that includes materials developed to date, e.g. network description, draft pledge, suggested names, etc. This will be emailed to the entire network. Please bring your own copy with you to the meeting.

Anyone in the network that is not able to attend the meeting is welcome to provide written comments to Karen, and she will share them with the group during the discussions. All notes and decisions from the meeting will be shared with the entire network and time will be allotted for feedback and further discussion, if necessary.

Please call me with any questions – 765-494-2238.