

## MCTF Pesticide Selection Subcommittee Meeting Minutes 11 30 21

### Subcommittee Meeting: Pesticide Selection

November 30, 2021, 12:00 p.m. via Zoom

#### Meeting Topics:

- Opening (EEA representative)
- Welcome and Roll Call (chair)
- Housekeeping Notes (EEA representative)
- Agenda Review (facilitator)
- Introductory Remarks (facilitator)
- Directive 1: Identifying Ingredients in Pesticide Formulations (facilitator)
- Directive 2: Promoting Use of Safest or Minimum Risk Pesticides (facilitator)
- Homework for Next Meeting (facilitator)
- Public Input via Zoom Q&A, Closing Remarks, and Vote to Adjourn (chair)

Bob Mann opened the meeting and conducted roll call at 12:02 and a quorum was established. Meeting attendees included Priscilla Matton, Brad Mitchell, Jennifer Pederson, Richard Pollack, Helen Poynton, and Nicole Keleher. Taryn LaScola read the standard opening and housekeeping items. John Wilhelmi provided a logistical update regarding approving meeting minutes. John provided a display of the meeting minutes. Jennifer Pederson had pointed out a correction at the end of the meeting minutes related to meeting adjournment. The correction was noted in track changes on the meeting minutes document and would be updated. A motion was made by Richard Pollack to approve the presented meeting minutes which was seconded by Priscilla Matton. A roll call was conducted to approve 10/5 meeting minutes. Nicole Keleher (aye), Bob Mann (aye), Priscila Matton (aye), Brad Mitchell (abstain), Richard Pollack (aye), Helen Poynton (aye).

John Wilhelmi reviewed the agenda with the group and noted that this is the fifth meeting of the Pesticide Selection subcommittee. Reviewed the first directive and confirmed that Bob Mann will report out to the full Task Force on 12/14. Reviewed the second directive. It was noted the initial brainstorming for the meeting will be to get thoughts out on the table and spur further discussion for subcommittee meeting on 12/13. It was noted that due to scheduling there may not be a meeting on 12/28. Directive three may not be addressed until January due to MDAR presentation in December. John asked if there were any questions regarding where the subcommittee is heading and there were no comments or questions

John moved the conversation to directive two – *Make recommendations regarding promoting the use of the safest or minimum risk pesticides available.*

Brad Mann noted that the group needed to think about efficacy versus feasibility and identified a need to have someone who had a background in mosquito management when it comes to picking a pesticide. Richard Pollack noted efficacy was the critical element and it was critical the group formalize these so others understand as well. The first thing in picking a pesticide is that it be efficacious. Second, a combination that it is appropriate to use for the application and environment, that it is effective, and passes a risk benefit assessment. Richard Pollack noted that this already occurs with the EPA, the State, and MCDs take all of this under advisement, but that it's not clear the public understands this.

John asked the group to identify who selects the pesticides? Richard Pollack responded: the EPA, State Pesticide Board, and then the MCDs. Priscilla Matton noted that there was also the SRB, in consultation with other agencies. Brad noted that the subcommittee was focused on pesticide selection for mosquito control and the state can only chose a pesticide that was already registered. Priscilla also added in the Generic Environmental Impact Report (GEIR)

to the list and noted that someone was hired to write that report and review pesticides. Jennifer Pederson asked if the EIR happened every year and the answer was it did not. Priscilla stated that products are also reviewed by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program which sits within the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Alisha Bouchard shared the EIR as a link. Brad added to the conversation and noted that there was an expectation that we formalize the process of how pesticides are chosen for mosquito management.

John asked about the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and if they were consulted by SRB regarding selecting a pesticide for aerial application. Priscilla answered, yes, but separately than the aerial adulticide process. General mosquito practices are reviewed also separately from aerial adulticiding. Taryn LaScola added a clarification point regarding the SRB during aerial applications - the SRB does have documents and a formalized process on choosing pesticides and we could provide that information to the subcommittee. John asked if the group was interested in the resource that Taryn spoke of and they were.

Bob noted that he liked the concept of providing something more formalized and he wondered if something like that already existed. For example, was there a flow chart to show the selection of pesticide? John asked Taryn about formalized SRB process documents and what they look like. Taryn noted the plan happened in 2020 and 2021 and she believed it would be part of the SRB response plan going forward. Brad noted that there was an expectation that this subcommittee formalize this process and Jennifer agreed that formalizing a flow chart would be good. John asked the group for any additional feedback regarding documented processes they are aware of in the MCD. Priscilla noted that the EIR was a good place to start and keeping in mind that the active ingredients are not changing. Priscilla noted that we don't see a lot of new active ingredients in mosquito control.

Bob noted that he had no intention of changing what the MCDs are doing now through this process but wants to be able to document and formalize process to address any competing thoughts/ideas. Brad noted that the MCDs are choosing their own pesticide and that he never had an issue with the products that are chosen by MCDs; however, having a formalized process of how MCD's choose products would be beneficial. Helen Poynton asked Priscilla about active ingredients that are available and where to find a list of active ingredients? Priscilla noted the MCDs mostly choose minimal risk, and that MCDs know organophosphates are not welcomed in MA. Helen followed up asking if not using organophosphates was an informal decision or a result of a formal process. Priscilla noted that it was more informal. Richard Pollack added that we know that, for example, malathion works well, it was highly efficacious, but it is rarely used because we have other products available that are efficacious that are acceptable to more people. Richard noted this as an example of how the pesticide selection process works well – the product, in this case, was the most appropriate to use while also providing the least risk. Richard commented that it would be good to formalize a statement on how that process works, at some point it will be necessary to apply pesticide but by choosing one that was efficacious and acceptable on many levels.

John asked the group if it needed to know more about the SRB and MCDs selection process. Jennifer commented that if DPH were on the SRB, it might offer the public a higher level of comfort. Taryn added that although DPH was not on the SRB, that DPH was one of the state agencies heavily involved in mosquito control. Jennifer noted that was helpful, but the formalization of that would reduce the ambiguity that DPH may not be consulted. Richard noted that these were all good points; however, if we remain focused on pesticide selection, the group does not need to delve into this. Richard commented that this may be better for the policy structure subcommittee and Brad agreed. Richard added, that from his perspective, if one was going to apply a pesticide it should be chosen with the highest efficacy toward the intended target. Brad noted that this was not a two-dimensional discussion, what may be lowest risk to human health may be a higher impact towards aquatic organisms. We need a consensus of people with different end points in mind. Consensus and balance are key. John asked the group if there were any other comments on safest/minimum risk. Bob asked if there was a way to quantify this? Bob mentioned that Cornell uses an environmental impact quotient. Brad noted that if we can identify one or two for consideration then we can add them in for consideration, but they may be too limited to get the nuances of certain situations.

John opened the meeting to individual comments and/or a listing of items of concern and consideration for recommendation. Helen noted there was no formalized statement for selection and commented that the public does not know how this happens. Helen noted that maybe this should be its own separate issue with a separate recommendation. Richard noted a similar point to Helen. Richard thought perception was the issue. The recommendation would be that we would benefit from having a formalized road map of how pesticides are selected. Jennifer noted that the persistence piece was concerning. Jennifer called into question that any new pesticide that was selected that the SRB ensure that it not negatively impact drinking water, both public systems and private wells. Jennifer noted the cost benefit piece was important here as well as there are different opinions of that.

Brad noted concern on MCD process and consistency in choosing pesticides. We don't have ecotoxicologist in every MCD. However, if we put it to the State, we may not get the most efficacious pesticide selection. It is important to have balance between consistency across MCDs in selection, and flexibility in meeting individual MCD needs. For example, some MCDs have entomologists and some don't, there needs to be a balanced and broader state review while also meeting MCD needs. Richard built on what Brad said and noted the largest MCDs have expertise in house, smaller projects may not. This overlaps with pesticide selection, best practices, policy structure subcommittees. The first time a new product was proposed for use in an MCD, it is reviewed at the State level and approved/denied. Brad commented that we are talking about lowest risk situations where one may be better than other. Priscilla noted that she liked the formalization of process or review, just need to add in "in a timely manner". Priscilla commented if it was being reviewed, these things need to be done relatively quickly. Priscilla commented that she understands formulation is important, but it may be best to look at active ingredients versus formulation. Brad noted that Priscilla brought up an excellent point that most of the new products are better for the environment and we do need to consider that. Sometimes persistence is warranted, but we need guidance around that. Priscilla commented that a lot of that can be understood based on factors and environment. John documented a separate issue of concern that MCDs have varying degrees of expertise and capacity. John added this to the listing of information being compiled.

Bob noted that even if individuals don't think pesticides should be used at all, building an easily discoverable and transparent process via the State would be beneficial and important but also noted that he would want to be cautious so that MCD's have a degree of flexibility for applicable use of mosquito management practices. Priscilla noted that her hope would be that a new subcommittee would review products and makes decisions by a certain time with labels being reviewed on an as needed basis. Richard added that he was not suggesting every new product be reviewed but a new active ingredient or a profoundly different way to apply product would necessitate a review. Richard commented if it was important enough it should be a process to approve a new product. Richard also noted, a lot of comments heard in other subcommittee are focused on how we limit MCD activity. There are worthwhile discussions, but it should be within each subcommittees purview on how we can further enhance activities. Richard noted that the group should not just limit what is done, but look at what can be done more efficiently. As a result, perhaps the group should make recommendations to that end. Nicole brought up mosquito resistance and where in our recommendation can we identify a mechanism in place to characterize mosquito resistance to active ingredients and how this information was folded into the selection process. Nicole noted if we are moving towards a decision tree on what pesticides are right to use, including resistance would be important.

Jennifer noted the public perception component, in which a subset of the public that has strong feelings about mosquito control. Jennifer understood the concern, but she was not sure how much effort the state should put into educating the public versus educating a small subsection of the public. Jennifer noted that she liked the formalized roadmap but doesn't want to waste time. Priscilla added that she would welcome more scrutiny on the product in a timely manner. Brad noted that it made sense to make it easier for the public to access. Helen agreed and commented that the information needed to be on the internet and easily discoverable for people to access if they want it. Priscilla added, issue of concern was the pesticide selection process be easily discoverable and was exactly what the recommendations should be.

Bob noted that the group should consider legislators. This should be part of our audience as we write and make recommendations, so legislators don't make mosquito control more difficult than is warranted. Helen had a question for the policy structure subcommittee members: is there concern about how MCDs are funded, and is this being discussed? Brad noted that has been discussed within the other subcommittees and there may be some general agreement to rewrite the enabling legislation from the start which would also include the funding mechanism. Richard noted that all of this was under discussion and included another recommendation, adding in a centralized body to use their collective expertise to assist across MCDs.

Alisha noted that the MCDs should be responding back by 12/3 on the specific questions that were distributed. Brad commented that perhaps when a centralized body was created, they can establish subcommittees to address certain issues that arise. Brad noted that we don't have to solve all the problems, we just need to create a mechanism by which they can be solved. Jennifer asked Priscilla if the exchange of information and ideas happened informally and Priscilla responded yes, there are a number of cross agency and cross-MCD touchpoints. Richard noted that he made the suggestion of having a subcommittee at a higher level that was more formal and it may be worth discussing more at the next meeting to determine if we need to act. Brad commented that this was more of a policy discussion, but it may be worthwhile to have discussions related to cross pollination with other subcommittees.

- Final remarks and homework assignments for next meeting:

Bob Mann noted the overarching problem in this consideration was to empower MCD decisions to impact public health, and that he doesn't wish to create a process that is burdensome. Brad agreed that we do not want to create an overarching bureaucracy and noted that when you look at inerts and resistance it does not seem to be an issue. Jennifer commented that she wants to continue discussion on the potential for DPH membership on the SRB. Brad noted that we need to think about who we want and at what level, and to consider layers of bureaucracy. Brad thought that it would be better if it was broken out into smaller subcommittees to maximize output. Alisha Bouchard mentioned that the MCDs do discuss with state agencies and even though the DPH was not an official member of the SRB there was consistent interaction between MDAR, MCDs and DPH. John noted that the table list of notes would be refined and asked Taryn if she could share the SRB document about selection process. There was nothing in the chat or Q&A screen. Bob Mann entertained a motion to adjourn from Richard Pollack, seconded by Brad Mitchell. All in favor voted aye. The subcommittee meeting was adjourned at 1:54 pm.