

MCTF Pesticide Selection Subcommittee Meeting Minutes 10 05 21

Minutes for the Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century (MCTF) Task Force Meeting

Subcommittee Meeting: Pesticide Selection

October 05, 2021, 12:00 p.m. via Zoom

The meeting was called to order by Bob Mann. Roll call was conducted with all subcommittee members in attendance. The subcommittee had a quorum present, and members included:

- Nicole Keleher: Forest Health Program Director for Massachusetts
- Bob Mann: Works on state and local government relations with landscape professionals
- Priscilla Matton: Superintendent for Bristol County Mosquito Control District
- Brad Mitchell: Executive Director of Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation
- Jennifer Pederson: Executive Director of Massachusetts Water Works Association
- Richard Pollack: Public health entomologist
- Helen Poynton: Professor at UMass Boston with a background in ecotoxicology. Researches the effects of emerging contaminants, specifically the effects of pyrethroids and organophosphates on aquatic life.

Additional attendees included:

- Taryn LaScola (EEA Representative)
- Judi Rubin (EEA notetaker)
- Alisha Bouchard (Deputy Commissioner of MDAR)
- John Wilhelmi (ERG Facilitator)
- Kaila Stein (ERG notetaker).

Taryn LaScola (EEA Representative) communicated a refresher on open meeting law ahead of the commencement of this subcommittee session. John conducted introductions of all subcommittee members and attendees.

The session was opened with a request for Taryn LaScola to present background information relevant to the subcommittee. Five subcommittee members; Jennifer, Brad, Richard, Priscilla, and Nicole voiced their opinion that the presentation should be given as soon as possible to give members baseline information before discussing further. Other subcommittee members did not comment on the timing. Taryn agreed to present to the subcommittee at the next meeting on October 14th. No members voiced disagreement.

Alisha and Taryn suggested that Priscilla should present during Taryn's presentation since Priscilla has expertise as an Executive Director of a mosquito control district (MCD). Brad and Bob both agreed that Priscilla would be great to help give the presentation. No members voiced disagreement with this suggestion. Priscilla agreed that she would help with the presentation.

John asked the subcommittee group about what topics members would like to see covered in Taryn's presentation. Richard asked if Taryn could present an overview of what pesticide products are available for use in Massachusetts, what products are currently used by MCDs, and how the products are chosen

or prioritized by MCDs. Multiple members requested information on pesticide registration during the presentation. Taryn said she will give a high-level overview of the registration process in her presentation. Richard suggested that Taryn educate the subcommittee about how pesticides might be selected or used in a different manner if the products are being used for nuisance mosquitoes or in an arbovirus outbreak. Jennifer asked if Taryn could include information on PFAS in pesticides. Jennifer is unsure if PFAS are present in pesticide containers or in products. Bob thought that the subcommittee should have an expert in PFAS in pesticides present to the group. Taryn said she will give a brief overview of PFAS in her presentation.

Priscilla wants Taryn to talk about “25B pesticide products” in her presentation. Priscilla mentioned that the ERG document talks about using the “safest” product and that Priscilla is worried that this could be inferred to mean 25B products, which are not regulated by EPA or the state. Priscilla thought people outside this committee thought we should use non-chemical pesticides only (such as “garlic oil”). Priscilla suggested that the subcommittee should decide whether its charge is limited to pesticides that are federally registered and approved for use within Massachusetts. She cautioned the subcommittee that if their recommendations do not mention “25B pesticide products,” people may think the subcommittee did not do its job. Taryn said she plans to explain what a “25B pesticide product” is during her presentation.

- Nuisance vs. arbovirus spraying

The dialogue pivoted to the topic of nuisance spraying versus arbovirus spraying. Brad noted that some pesticides are applied for arbovirus control while other pesticides are applied for nuisance control. Helen asked if this subcommittee is looking at pesticides for nuisance spraying, arbovirus spraying, or both? Taryn noted that the document refers to mosquito control as a whole and does not pertain to just nuisance control or arbovirus control. Bob noted agreement that it is difficult to separate nuisance vs. arbovirus spraying and that the subcommittee should potentially focus on all because MCDs spray for both nuisance and arbovirus control. Brad also agreed. Richard mentioned that nuisance versus disease spraying is a highly controversial topic. Brad said that generally aerial spraying is done for an EEE outbreak, but generally not for nuisance control (which instead relies on ground-based spraying or applications).

Richard noted that adulticides can be applied by truck or by aerial spraying, but often the same product is applied at the same application rate in both cases. The main differences are the height of the nozzle above the ground and that a plane will cover many more acres than a truck. Priscilla noted that the state surveillance and response plan is available online from MDPH. (Note: The 2021 plan is available from this website - <https://www.mass.gov/lists/arbovirus-surveillance-plan-and-historical-data>.) The plan sets out a structure based upon risk level (remote, low, moderate, high, high critical, etc.). Priscilla thought this document would be helpful to the subcommittee. Brad mentioned that different processes that exist to choose pesticides depending on what the pesticides are being used for (nuisance vs. arbovirus). Additionally, he mentioned that the degree to which MCDs do arbovirus control varies based on location in MA. He also noted that the risk-benefit analysis is very different during a EEE emergency than during routine nuisance control.

- Registration Process

Brad suggested that this subcommittee's goal is not to change the registration process, but members should understand how MCDs choose pesticides for different purposes (e.g., spraying for arborvirus vs. nuisance control). Jennifer said that it would be helpful to know how the registration process works. After understanding it better, if members determined as a group that the registration process should be changed, then the subcommittee could make a recommendation. She mentioned that if she thought water supplies were not being protected through the existing registration process, she would like to make recommendations to address that matter. Taryn noted that making recommendations about the registration process might be outside of the topic of mosquito control or pesticide selection for mosquito control. Nicole said that as a member of the pesticide board, she is well versed in which products become registered and why certain products are restricted/not restricted in MA. She thought that the registration process is a good starting point for members to understand pesticide selection.

- Is the subcommittee considering (a) the decision made by MCDs to use pesticides in the first place or (b) the decision about what pesticides to use once an MCD has decided that pesticides are needed?

Richard brought up this issue. His opinion was that this subcommittee should be more focused on which pesticides should be used and in what manner once an MCD has already decided to use pesticides. Richard thought that choosing whether to use pesticides is up to other subcommittees. Basically, once an MCD has deemed it needs to apply a pesticide, this subcommittee is considering the decision of which pesticide an MCD should use and why. The topic of whether to apply a pesticide in the first place is more under the purview of other subcommittees. Helen wanted to clarify this point. Is this subcommittee looking at whether MCDs should apply pesticides or only which ones they should apply once that decision has already been made? This question was not addressed any further because Helen brought up another topic at the end of her comment and discussion switched to that topic.

- Which directives should the subcommittee focus on first?

Pesticide Selection Subcommittee:

(vii) promoting the use of the safest or minimum risk pesticides feasible and employing methods, including product disclosures or implementation of testing protocols and procedures, to avoid the use of pesticides containing per – and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

(ix) identifying known ingredients in pesticide products used for mosquito control, analyzing the ability, or lack of ability, to identify such ingredients, and making recommendations for determining such ingredients

Jennifer noted that the second directive (ix) is easier to address and therefore the subcommittee should address the second directive first. Brad agreed with Jennifer because he thought the subcommittee should identify the ingredients in pesticides first before determining which product is the safest. Bob said that he thought the subcommittee should have more discussions before splitting up the directives and the order in which the directives are addressed. Members need to know more first. John asked if anyone else had any strong opinions and no one else raised their hand.

An inquiry was made about how to present documents to the subcommittee. Taryn replied that EEA will meet with its legal team to talk about the proper protocol for submitting and sharing information and

will update ERG once that decision is made. Jennifer mentioned that the subcommittee meeting in the week between Christmas and New Year's Day (12/28/2021) could be an issue because members may be on vacation. Jennifer, Brad, and Bob will not be available. Helen may not be available but won't know until early December. John said he will revisit this issue at a future meeting.

- **Tasks for Members Before Next Meeting:**
 - Consider the understory questions
 - Read relevant sections of the MCTF report
 - Identify any critical data gaps and any known information sources to fill those gaps
 - Assess overall strength of information
 - Read relevant sections of ERG's report
 - Brad suggested that subcommittee members should also read Section 2 of the ERG report (Existing Mosquito Control Policy) because members need to understand the policy to make recommendations.

The next subcommittee meeting will be held on 10/19. John notes he cannot attend the 10/19 meeting, but it will be facilitated by one of John's colleagues, Jan Connery. Bob entertained a motion to adjourn, the motion to adjourn was seconded by Brad. The meeting was adjourned at 1:47pm.