

United States Department of Agriculture



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SUBJECT: Interagency Nutrient Management Committee
Responsibilities and Charge

DATE: June 20, 2002

TO: INMC Members

Now that the outstanding committee efforts to develop our Phosphorus Loss Assessment Tool (PLAT) are nearing a completion, we need to prepare ourselves for the implementation phase after its formal release. This will require the continued strong cooperation between agencies that occurred during the development of PLAT and the nutrient management standard.

While there are many on-going tasks in the arena of nutrient management, two critical activities are (1) approving, maintaining, and updating the numerous databases that support the PLAT using a collaborative scientific process, and (2) addressing and coordinating official responses to appeals in those instances where producers have data that refutes the PLAT rating for a specific site. To address such issues, the PLAT Committee recommended that a North Carolina Interagency Nutrient Management Committee be established to coordinate these functions and related tasks.

Based on this request, I have taken the liberty to provide a draft set of charges for this Committee, as follows:

1. Develop, evaluate, approve, and maintain the databases required to support PLAT and the nutrient management software. Ensure these official data sets are posted on a publicly accessible web site once approved. These data include realistic yield estimates by crop and soil mapping unit, nitrogen factors, phosphorus removal rates, soil management groups, and other related data.
2. Evaluate appeals submitted for instances where a PLAT rating is contested. Identify specific monitoring requirements or other data needed to make a determination. Identify the appropriate scientists and discipline specialists to assist in making the evaluation and determinations.
3. Recommend enhancements and policies associated with the North Carolina Nutrient Management Software and Agricultural Nutrient Assessment/PLAT software.
4. Investigate and research specific nutrient management issues at the request of the .1217 committee, the State Technical Committee, the various agencies, and others as resources permit.

There are may be other tasks that this Committee should logically address. I ask that the agencies included on the Committee continue to assess the need to refine these charges to ensure we collectively provide sound nutrient management guidance and technical assistance to North Carolina's agricultural producers.

/s/

Mary K. Combs
State Conservationist