

Organics Council Minutes
Tuesday, March 30, 2004
Penn State University
10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Attending:

Jan Arnold, Blair County	Carla Castagnero, AgRecycle, Inc.
Jennifer Chilcote, Skelly & Loy	Amy Cicchillo, PROP
Nadine Davitt, PSU	Dan Eichenlaub, AgRecycle, Inc.
Art Feltes, Montgomery County	Ned Foley, Two Particular Acres
John Frederick, PROP	Bob Graves, PSU
Mark Jancin, US Filter/Veolia Water	Curtis Kratz, Penn E & R
Patti Olenick, PA DEP	Cary Oshins, Lehigh County
Keith Seltzer, Skelly & Loy	Rick Stehouwer, PSU
Bill Toffey, Philadelphia Water Department	Jeanne Weil, Zwicky Processing

Nadine Davitt kicked off the meeting with a welcome and the committee went around the table and introduced themselves.

Nadine recapped what was discussed at the previous two Steering Committee conference calls:

- The committee established a recording secretary (Patti Olenick) for Organics Council meetings. However, let it be noted that Jan Arnold will take over the responsibilities for the time being.
- The committee recommend appointing a vice chair – we would accept nominations or volunteers
- The committee suggested PROP place a compost equipment directory on their website. The Steering Committee felt information for a directory of this type already exists and recommended this issue be revisited at a later time
- The steering committee discussed a “committee structure” for the Organics Council.
 - The Organics Council will continue to have three sub-committees: Markets, Government, and Education/Technology.
 - Each committee will establish a core working group. A sign-in sheet was passed around at this meeting. Amy Cicchillo will send out an e-mail to recruit PROP members.
 - The committees will function primarily through conference calls and use scheduled Organics Council meetings as an opportunity produce update of committee progress.
 - Amy or a PROP staff member will coordinate the meetings and participate on each call. The PROP staff person will also type up the minutes from each call.
 - Minutes from each meeting will be e-mailed to the core committee members as well as any members who will not be able to participate in all calls but would still like to be informed on the meetings.

John Frederick updated everyone on the upcoming PROP conference. He gave an overview of the compost based courses that will be offered as well as promoted the “Best Compost Grown Tomato” contest.

John also updated everyone on PROP’s compost directory. The directory is on the web at <http://www.proprecycles.org/compdirectory.html>

There were a few suggestions/comments on the compost directory. Cary Oshins suggested linking the counties to a map. There was discussion on publicizing the directory. Dan Eichenlaub

asked how many hits the directory has received. PROP should place a kickoff announcement in the PROPonent.

Committee Reports

There were a few reports from the education committee:

- Cary Oshins gave an update on upcoming compost related certification courses. Upcoming courses include:
 - 201 Composting: The Practical Science, June 29-30, New Kensington
 - On-site/Institutional Composting, October 5, Nittany Lion Inn.
- Rick Stehouwer gave an update on the Manufactured Soils Conference. It will be held on November 17-18, 2004 at the Penn Stater. The theme for this year's conference is "Tools for the Trade"

Dan Eichenlaub gave a report from the Government committee:

- Dan reminded everyone of the upcoming Legislative day, all are encouraged to attend.
- John Frederick gave a short overview of Legislative Day. It is scheduled for May 11, in Harrisburg. For additional information, contact the PROP Office.

Presentations

We had the opportunity to hear presentations from two Penn State professors; Rob Shannon and Al Jarrett.. Each work in the Penn State Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering.

The title of Rob Shannon's presentation was "Compost Amendments and Constructed Wetlands Soils". Rob discussed wetlands and compost with the group. He gave us the definition of a wetland according to the Army Corp of engineers. It was as follows: Those areas that are ***inundated*** or ***saturated*** by ***surface or ground water*** at a ***frequency*** and ***duration*** sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of ***vegetation*** typically adapted for life in ***saturated soil conditions***. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas...

Rob also defined wetlands characteristics and wetlands functions. Rob then talked about constructed wetlands. He went through two case studies with us on areas that had constructed wetlands. The discussed the Rockview Penitentiary as well as Penn State's Spray Irrigation Wetland.

The title of Al Jarrett's presentation was "Bioretention: A Stormwater BMP". Al discussed the impact of Stormwater Management and what we can do better. He also gave a model for Stormwater Management. He then discussed Bioretention Areas and gave a Bioretention Schematic.

For more details on each presentation or to receive a copy, please e-mail me at acicchillo@proprecycles.org. Also, the presentations will soon be able to be viewed on PROP's website on the Organics Council page. They should be posted within the next week.

Tour

After lunch, the committee toured three constructed wetlands. These wetlands were located along route 220 near Port Matilda. Representatives from Skelly & Loy were present to guide us through the wetland tour.

The wetlands were created by excavation a minimum of subsoil and replacing the top soil. The water elevations are controlled both by weir structures and by the size of the watershed areas feeding into them.

Leaf compost was incorporated into the topsoil as soil enhancement and a replacement for chemical fertilizer and lime. This was done so as to minimize runoff potential into Bald Eagle Creek as this is a stocked trout stream with a limited naturally reproducing trout population.