



Agriculture Water Quality Authority

Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2025 | 9:30 AM

300 Sower Blvd | # 216
Frankfort, KY 40601

Members In Attendance: Mr. Larry Thomas, Chair, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Mr. Jay Nelson, Division of Conservation; Ms. Megan Bailey-Komar, Member-at-Large; Mr. Fred Sipes, Member-at-Large; Dr. Amanda Gumbert, UK College of Agriculture; Mr. Joseph Sisk, Member-at-Large; Ms. Beth Williams, Kentucky Division of Forestry; Mr. Chuck Taylor, Kentucky Geological Survey; and Mr. Josiah Frey, Division of Water (proxy for Sarah Gaddis).

Others in Attendance: Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Ms. Kristine Whybark, Division of Conservation; Mr. David Wayne, Farm Service Agency; Mr. John Reinstette, UK Department of Forestry and Natural Resources; Ms. Sarah Marshall, Division of Water; Ms. Megan Hill, Division of Conservation; Mr. Abe Nielson, Division of Forestry; Mr. Adam Andrews, Kentucky Corn Growers Association; Mr. Larry Taylor, Office of Secretary EEC; Mr. Eric Allness, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mr. Pete Cinotto, US Geological Survey; Ms. Kim Barton, Division of Conservation; and Ms. Jesse Traylor, Energy and Environment Cabinet.

Call to Order: Chair Larry Thomas called the meeting to order.

Roll Call of Authority Members: Quorum was met.

Introduction of Guests: Introductions were made.

Oath of Office for New Members: Ms. Johnna McHugh stated that Ms. Beth Williams has been renamed to serve as a member of the AWQA representing KDF; and Mr. Jay Nelson will represent the Division of Conservation as a member of the AWQA. Ms. Johnna McHugh read the oath of office. Mr. Jay Nelson and Ms. Beth Williams both signed.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes from August 21, 2025: A motion to approve was made by Mr. Josiah Frey and was seconded by Dr. Amanda Gumbert. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

- AWQA Business Rules Review
 - The Authority discussed the draft *Operating Guidelines* document. Some minor revisions were suggested. The Division of Conservation will update the draft accordingly and distribute and updated draft to Authority members.

New Business

- Committee Membership:

The Authority reviews the membership of all committees annually. Mr. Larry Thomas asked the current committee chairs for suggestions for changes to their membership.

- *Pesticides*: Add Mr. Louis Bradley and Mr. Todd Griffin.
- *KASMC*: Mr. Pete Cinotto updates the membership of this committee regularly. He will send an update member list to the Division of Conservation.
- *Farmstead*: Ms. Kim Barton requested someone from the Division of Waste Management or the Division of Water to serve as a member; preferably someone with knowledge of septic systems. Ms. Kim Barton will reach out to Mr. Chris Edwards from the Department of Public Health for membership.
- *Education and Outreach*: Dr. Amanda Gumbert would like to add someone from the EEC communications team.
- *Streams and Other Waters*: Mr. Jay Nelson has been added to this committee.

Mr. Larry Thomas reappoints all current committee members. Division of Conservation staff will contact all the suggested new committee members to see if they are willing to serve.

- Committee Reports:

- *KASMC*: Mr. Pete Cinotto stated the committee hasn't met since the last Authority meeting. He's working on scheduling the next meeting.
- *Farmstead*: Ms. Kim Barton stated the committee hadn't met.
- *Pesticides & Fertilizers*: Mr. Adam Andrews stated that the committee will meet and start to review the current BMPs before the next Authority meeting.
- *Livestock & Poultry*: Mr. Fred Sipes stated that the committee will meet in December to finalize their changes to the current BMPs.
- *Crops*: Mr. Adam Andrews stated that the committee has started to review the current BMPs and has already identified some issues. The committee will meet prior to the next Authority meeting.
- *Silviculture*: Mr. John Reinstetle updated the Authority on the problems they had with getting new members approved by the Governor. They are planning to meet after the spring fire season. He also updated the Authority on the KDF's actions. So far this year there have been 2,622 inspections on 691 sites. Those resulted in 177 enforcement actions, 12 of those were emergency orders. 9 loggers were

designated as *bad actors*, 2 loggers had their *bad actor* designation removed, and 4 loggers are in the process of having their *bad actor* designation removed.

- Streams & Other Waters: Dr. Amanda Gumber provided the report as Ms. Paulette Akers was unable to attend. Dr. Gumbert presented the new BMPs (*BMP #5 Maintenance of Freshwater Ponds* and *BMP #6 Karst Features: Sinkholes, Sinking Streams, and Caves*).

A motion to approve both BMPs as presented was made by Dr. Amanda Gumbert and was seconded by Mr. Jay Nelson. ***Motion carried.***

- Education & Outreach: Dr. Gumbert discussed the following with the Authority:
 - The Committee met in October and reviewed several educational events that were held in 2025.
 - Dr. Amanda Gumbert discussed upcoming opportunities and emphasized farmer sharing.

- Quarterly Update of AWQA Related Violations

- Mr. Jay Nelson updated the Authority with the violations from the last quarter. There were 16 total, all livestock related: 3 were beef operations and 13 were dairy operations.

- Governor's Conference on Energy and the Environment Update

- Mr. Jay Nelson reported that he had learned about a new stillage digester that will be installed in Lebanon, Ky. It will accept stillage waste from multiple distilleries. Ms. Sarah Marshall will provide a link to the presentation.

- Vacancy Updates

- Mr. Jay Nelson and Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the following with the Authority:
 - No new movement on the confirmation of the nominees from NRCS, FSA and CHFS.
 - Requested suggestions for environmental or agricultural groups to solicit nominations for upcoming vacancies.

- Schedule Meeting Dates for 2026

- February 17th
- May 7th (Remote site: possibly at Scott Taylor's Tree Farm or Robinson Forest)
- August 27th (Kentucky State Fair)
- November 19th

- Updates from Members

- Mr. Josiah Frey stated the Division of Water is working on a nutrient newsletter for the fourth quarter.
- Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the following with the Authority:
 - DOC is currently working on dam repair projects with NRCS with a new deadline of January 16th for state funding requests.
 - A video on dam inspections was produced by the Cabinet.
 - Ms. Kimberly Bartley has presented about conservation district relevancy to multiple groups. Several other states and national organizations have requested that she present to them as well.

Next Meeting: February 17th, 2026, at 300 Sower Blvd., Frankfort, KY.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned.