Building Partnerships to Implement Adaptive Management: Experiences Through NEW Water’s Silver Creek Pilot Project

Government Affairs Seminar
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Jeff Smudde – NEW Water
Watershed Programs Manager
Partners in Silver Creek Pilot Project
Silver Creek Pilot Project – From the Beginning

2014 – Project Kickoff
• Developed project partners
• Water quality sampling
• Soil sampling
• Stream surveys

2015 – Watershed Inventory
• Comprehensive field evaluations
• Arc GIS tablet application
• Conservation planning meetings
• Developed conservation and enhanced nutrient mgmt. plans
Silver Creek Pilot Project – 2016 & 2017

- Water quality monitoring
- Field planning
- Cost share agreements
- Best Management Practices (BMPs) installation
  - Filter strips (buffers)
  - Critical area plantings
  - Grassed waterways
  - Cover Crops
  - Residue Management
  - Etc.
- BMP Verification
- Coordination, coordination, coordination....
Cover Crops

- 2015 – 30% winter cover
- 2016 – 70% winter cover
- 2017 – 85% winter cover
Grassed Waterway Project

Aug 31, 2016

Oct 9, 2017
Filter Strip Projects

Aug. 23, 2017

Dec 1, 2017
Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCOB)

June 13, 2017

Oct. 9, 2017
Cover Crop Interseeder
Wetland Restoration Efforts

- 7 Wetland Basins
- 45 Wetland Acres
- 150 Acre Wetland Complex
- 650 Acre Drainage Area
Managed Grazing Operation
Program Organization

• NEW Water’s Hands-On Leadership at the Field Level
• Consultant
  • Assists with project coordination
  • Provide technical expertise in areas such as GIS

• Independent Agronomists
  • Work with landowners on crop planning and NMPs
  • Provide a valuable insight to farming operations

• County Land Conservation Staff
  • Delivers cost share agreements, design and install of practices, verification, and inspection
  • One staff position funded by NEW Water
  • Provide conservation expertise and technical resource to land owners and growers
Observations and Lessons Learned

• Agronomists are a critical asset in opening lines of communication with landowners and growers.
• Identifying growers that are leaders in the watershed helps build support
• Technical staff, working with landowners/growers will get things done
• Geographic situations pose unique challenges and opportunities for Adaptive Management
• Engaging DNR and EPA staff led to development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide clarity beyond guidance
• Local social and economic climate will drive how a watershed program is designed