Nutrient Management Plans and Watershed Project goals

Andrew Craig
DNR Nutrient Management Specialist
March 2012
Topics

• What will NM plans address?
• How to get more NM plans
• How to get NM plans used by farmers
• How plans can help farmers make changes in crop practices to meet watershed goals
What will NM plans address?

- Cropland?
- Cropland and Pastures?
- Cropland and Animal production area(s)?
- Cropland, Pastures and Animal prod areas?
How to get more plans 
(used by farmers)

• Farmer participation is key

• Farmers know their fields well, but may not know about WQ problems in nearby waterways – make this connection

• Not all fields are the problem; only some fields may have ‘problems’

• Project will help ID and target problem fields
How to get more plans (used by farmers)

- Targeting fields will minimize change/cost to farmers and improve WQ

- Protect landowner identity
  - Codes, Map scales & features
  - Funding source and Project Scope dependent
  - Project cannot ‘shield’ farms from: Ag Spill Law, FPP or NR 151 Prohibitions

- Agreement with State/Local agency that regulatory action is ‘last resort’ for participating farms
How to get more plans (used by farmers)

• Make NM planning easier:
  – Field Inventory and Soil Sampling services
  – Data Entry service - SNAP+
  – Record Keeping assistance
  – Financial Resources
    • NRCS – EQIP, CRP, CSP, GLCI, CNMPs
    • Cost sharing – state $ - regulatory
    • Grants – Federal, State, Private - regulatory
    • Point Sources – Adapt Management & WQ Trading
How to get more plans (used by farmers)

- **Economics**
  - save on fertilizer & fuel costs

- **Soil Health**
  - Improve soil structure & productivity
  - Increase or more consistent yields
  - Conserve soil resources from erosion losses

- **Environment**
  - cleaner water and improved land stewardship
  - better aquatic habitat
How to get more plans (used by farmers)

- **Public Relations**
  - Farms are part of solution; not part of the problem
  - Farms deliver clean water vs. other land use
  - Farmers understand water leaving fields impacts folks living downstream
  - Help public learn and support farmers in ‘their’ watershed(s)
  - Demonstrate how farms help protect land and water
How to get more plans (used by farmers)

- Track or predict WQ trends via monitoring or modeling
- Compare results with actions taken or planned (by field or watershed)
- Offer Record Keeping services
  - minimize farmer time for record keeping; confirm actual management practices used on fields
How plans can help farmers make changes & meet watershed goals

- Recognize NM plans that only address fields *may or may not* meet watershed goals

- Analyze NM practices taken or planned by field or watershed (via monitoring / modeling)

- Demonstrate not all fields are problem; only some/few fields have ‘problems’.

- Targeting ‘problem fields’ helps minimize change/cost to farmers and improve WQ