



**Maryland
Department of Agriculture**

Office of the Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Kevin M. Atticks, Secretary
Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

Maryland Agricultural Commission

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry
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The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building
50 Harry S Truman Parkway
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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**MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
Committee Meeting Schedule**

April 9th, 2025

In-Person Location: Executive Conference Room, MDA HQ
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Farm Profitability & Sustainability Committee 10:15 am – 11:15 am

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84166103015?pwd=ro6AThttY2nP4Jkzm44TlohNwpnKWY.1>

Meeting ID: 841 6610 3015 Passcode: 544731

Legislative Affairs Committee 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86400186435?pwd=x3AH9uxiVrNBBXbKnxG22N42KU84sM.1>

Meeting ID: 864 0018 6435 Passcode: 291707

Committee on Ag Literacy & Education (CALE) 12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87314779141?pwd=hNimtpHMpbaYzn10Kkf1TwCWtWPqfv.1>

Meeting ID: 873 1477 9141 Passcode: 414391

Value Added Agriculture Committee 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87224947243?pwd=LQOqDbanMoX5QbCuYVXOFoHOdXChRM.1>

Meeting ID: 872 2494 7243 Passcode: 466034

Committee on Watershed Strategies (CoWS) 3:15 pm – 4:15 pm

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85333605963?pwd=0zOrioYTcAYnSuybdNb3FljbvBaoMO.1>

Meeting ID: 853 3360 5963 Passcode: 975752



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Maryland Agricultural Commission Committee Membership

Commodity	Representative	Committee
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh	CALE
Agribusiness	Vacant	
Agritourism	Janna Howley	VAA
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley	VAA
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt	
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser	Profitability, VAA
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria	VAA, CoWS
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle	VAA
Dairy I	Vacant	
Dairy II	Vacant	
Direct Farm Market	Amy Crone, Vice Chair	Profitability, VAA*
Equine	Ann Merryman	Profitability, Leg. Affairs
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum	Leg. Affairs*
Field Crops	Chris Rhodes	Profitability, Leg Affairs
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov	
Forestry	Hunter Pusey	CoWS, CALE
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers	Leg. Affairs
Horticulture	Vacant	
Livestock	Sean Hough	Profitability, CoWS
Nursery I	J. Kelly Lewis, Chair	Profitability
Nursery II	John Murphy	Leg. Affairs
Organic Farming	Emma Jagoz	Profitability*, Leg., VAA
Poultry I	Zach Evans	Leg. Affairs, CoWS
Poultry II	Vacant	
State Grange	Richard Stonebreaker	CALE*
Tobacco	Vacant	
Turf	Gordon Kretser	Profitability, CoWS*
UMD	Dr. Darren Jarboe	CALE, VAA
Vegetable	Russell Shlagel	Profitability
Veterinary	Dr. Marianne Bailey	Leg. Affairs
Viticulture	Rachel Lipman	VAA
Young Farmers Advisory Board	Jennell Eck McHenry, Edward Goodman	



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Maryland Agricultural Commission **Committee Missions & Operations**

Committee on Agricultural Literacy & Education (CALE) - Focused on promoting agriculture as a viable and necessary industry through public literacy, identifying shortcomings and opportunities to increase agricultural education in the state (K-12 and post-secondary), and engaging with MDA's Karen Fedor to support farm to school programs

Committee on Watershed Strategies (COWS) - Focused on environmental, natural resource, and conservation initiatives throughout the watershed of the Chesapeake Bay, navigating pathways to promote conservation and hold organizations/processes accountable when they fall short. Works closely with the department's Resource Conservation team.

Farm Profitability & Sustainability Committee - Priorities include marketing of agricultural products to increase attention to purchasing Maryland goods, preserving agricultural land throughout the state, and identifying opportunities for economic viability. Interacts with various programs at MDA including MALPF, Marketing, and others as appropriate.

Legislative Affairs Committee - A combination of the originally adopted Agricultural Policy and Advocacy Committee & Regulatory Reform and Oversight Committee. Responsible for monitoring local and state regulation that impacts agriculture, identifying shortcomings in existing legal code or zoning statutes where MDA could act, and discussing potential action of the Commission in support or opposition of bills. Works closely with MDA's Director of Legislative Affairs, Rachel Jones.

Value Added Agriculture Committee - Promotes value added agriculture initiatives through identifying economic incentives, training opportunities, market development and infrastructure initiatives, and supporting MDA's Value-Added Agricultural Specialist, Martin Proulx.



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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION FARM PROFITABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AGENDA

April 9th, 2025 – 10:15 am

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84166103015?pwd=ro6AThttY2nP4Jkzm44TlohNwpnKWY.1>

Meeting ID: 841 6610 3015 Passcode: 544731

I. Welcome: Emma Jagoz, Chair

II. Review & approval of February minutes

III. Review desired outcomes & deliverables theory

IV. Committee Discussion

- Increased Input & Operation Costs
- Changes in Support from Government
- Uncertain Market Opportunities & Alternatives

V. Industry Partner Guests List

VI. Working Group on Defining Regenerative

VII. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle
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Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
Forestry	Hunter Pusey
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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION FARM PROFITABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Minutes

April 9th, 2025 – 10:15 am

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84166103015?pwd=ro6AThttY2nP4Jkzm44TlohNwpmKWY.1>

Meeting ID: 841 6610 3015 Passcode: 544731

Committee Members Present:

Amy Crone
Sean Hough
Emma Jagoz
Gordon Kretser
Russell Shlagel
Janna Howley

Committee Members Absent:

Raj Kathuria
Kelly Lewis

Guests:

Martin Proulx, MDA
Jessica Hackett, MDA
Audrey Broomfield, MDA
Mark Powell, MDA

Aidan Boline, MDA
Kristin Hanna, MDA
Hans Schmidt, MDA

Call to Order:

The April 2025 Farm Profitability and Sustainability Committee meeting was called to order by Emma Jagoz, Chair, at 10:18 am.

Approval of Minutes:

The February 2025 Farm Profitability and Sustainability Committee meeting minutes were approved by Amy Crone, second by Sean Hough.

Meeting Minutes:

Emma kicked off the meeting with discussions around impending federal contract cuts, tariffs, input costs, and changing operational costs. Sean highlighted the volume of imported feed, fertilizer and fuels and the impact that tariffs will have on agricultural producers as spring



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planting is kicking off. Amy added that many farmers markets receive federal support for operations and support through programs like the Farmers Market Nutrition Program through the Woman, Infants and Children (WIC) program. The farm based alcohol producers, as represented by Janna Howley, are facing increased costs through tariffs on production materials like bottles, tanks, aluminum, etc., but are hopeful of an increased demand for local products as imports become more expensive. Cuts to the federal workforce will have a larger impact on Maryland and Virginia than other states given the proximity to Washington D.C. and the federal buildings in the DMV, which concern direct-to-consumer markets. However, Russell mentioned, there needs to a stronger push for regional grocery stores, retail establishments, and restaurants to engage more with Maryland farmers as they began to do pre-pandemic. Consumers should be aware of where their food comes from, remembering that local food is tariff free. One method that Emma is pursuing is creating yard signs for consumers to display that identifies “this home supports local farms” that builds pride in buying local and supporting farmers.

Institutional purchasing continues to be an opportunity for farmers in Maryland, and increased efforts from the Maryland State Department of Education and the Department of General Services to build a Local Food Exchange platform should help facilitate that opportunity for farmers across the state in various scales of production. Emma expressed concern with the buildout of the actual platform, citing that the actual usage must be extremely farmer friendly to encourage participation. Maryland is a challenging state to navigate due to its geographical shape and transportation network, and many jurisdictions have more access to local produce in Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia instead of Maryland. Increasing opportunities to support aggregators will support farmers’ success in the Local Food Exchange program and beyond.

Amy Crone moved that the Commission submits a recommendation to State agencies, as they pursue local food procurement and agricultural initiatives, that they involve the Maryland Agricultural Commission serve as a liaison to the agricultural industry and sure that programming has a farmer focus. Emma seconded the motion; all were in favor.

During the March Commission meeting, Secretary Atticks requested the Maryland Ag Commission define regenerative agriculture. Emma recommended the creation of a workgroup with partners to establish a statewide definition throughout the summer, leveraging both internal and external partners.

Meeting Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Gordon Kretser, second by Russell Shlagel.



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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AGENDA

April 9th, 2025 – 11:30 am

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86400186435?pwd=x3AH9uxiVrNBBXbKnxG22N42KU84sM.1>

Meeting ID: 864 0018 6435 Passcode: 291707

I. Welcome: Paula Linthicum, Chair

II. Review & approval February Minutes

III. FSRC Recommendations

IV. Industry Partner Guests List

V. Notes

VI. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle
Dairy I	Vacant
Dairy II	Vacant
Direct Farm Market	Amy Crone, Vice Chair
Equine	Ann Merryman
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum
Field Crops	Chris Rhodes
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
Forestry	Hunter Pusey
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers
Horticulture	Vacant
Livestock	Sean Hough
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Nursery II	John Murphy
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Poultry I	Zach Evans
Poultry II	Vacant
State Grange	Richard Stonebreaker
Tobacco	Vacant
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Vegetable	Russell Shlagel
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**MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Draft Minutes**

April 9th, 2025 – 11:30 am

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86400186435?pwd=x3AH9uxiVrNBBXbKnXG22N42KU84sM.1>

Meeting ID: 864 0018 6435 Passcode: 291707

Committee Members Present:

Paula Linthicum
Emma Jagoz
Dr. Marianne Bailey

Committee Members Absent:

Stefanie Reiser	Levi Sellers
Chris Rhodes	Zach Evans
John Murphy	

** The Legislative Affairs Committee did not hold an official meeting because it did not have enough members for quorum.



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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION AGENDA

April 9th, 2025 – 12:45 pm

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87314779141?pwd=hNimtpHMpbaYzn10Kkf1TwCWtWPqfv.1>

Meeting ID: 873 1477 9141 Passcode: 414391

- I. Welcome: Richard Stonebraker, Chair
- II. Review & approval of February meeting minutes
- III. Review presentation from the Maryland Agricultural Education Coalition
- IV. Discuss recommendations for 1-, 5-, and 10-year goals
- V. Emphasis for Middle School Ag Education
- VI. IRC Strategy to Advance Agriculture
- VII. Industry Partner Guests List
- VIII. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
Bio-Fuel	Rajneesh (Raj) Kathuria
Consumer	Kellie Hinkle
Dairy I	Vacant
Dairy II	Vacant
Direct Farm Market	Amy Crone, Vice Chair
Equine	Ann Merryman
Farm Bureau	Paula Linthicum
Field Crops	Chris Rhodes
Food Processing	Nikita Bocharov
Forestry	Hunter Pusey
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers
Horticulture	Vacant
Livestock	Sean Hough
Nursery I	J. Kelly Lewis, Chair
Nursery II	John Murphy
Organic Farming	Emma Jagoz
Poultry I	Zach Evans
Poultry II	Vacant
State Grange	Richard Stonebraker
Tobacco	Vacant
Turf	Gordon Kretser
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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION Minutes

April 9th, 2025 – 12:45 pm

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87314779141?pwd=hNimtpHMpbaYzn10Kkf1TwCWtWPqfv.1>

Meeting ID: 873 1477 9141 Passcode: 414391

Committee Members Present:

Dr. Melissa Welsh
Dr. Darren Jarboe
Frank Allnutt
Ann Merryman
Hunter Pusey
Richard Stonebraker, Chair

Committee Members Absent:

Guests:

Call to Order:

The April 2025 Committee on Agricultural Literacy and Education meeting was called to order by Richard Stonebraker, Chair, at 12:46 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

The February 2025 Committee on Agricultural Literacy and Education meeting minutes were approved by Frank Allnutt, second by Dr. Welsh.

Meeting Minutes:

The Committee reviewed recommendations from the Maryland Farm Bureau Agricultural Education Committee (MDFB), Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF), and Maryland Agricultural Teachers Association (MATA), on the development of an agricultural education specialist role at the Maryland Department of Agriculture as recommended by the Commission in a meeting during the Fall of 2024. Throughout the discussion, members highlighted the need to have an intergovernmental relationship between agriculture and education, and a dedicated person to represent the industry throughout the extensive meetings and committees hosted by the Maryland State Department of Education.



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Dr. Welsh and Richard agreed to review the proposal submitted by MDFB, MATA and MAEF along with the supplemental proposals to present to the Committee at the next meeting.

The Committee also discussed the role that apprenticeships and internships play in the current CTE framework, and the challenges in engaging with agricultural operations to host interns with the increased expense and time commitment to their small businesses. Industry Recognized Credentials are less cut-and-dry than industries like welding and carpentry, but are an integral factor for MDSE's consideration in effective programming. The Committee will continue to support MSDE's request for developing and supporting IRC's in the industry.

Meeting Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Dr. Jarboe, second by Dr. Welsh.



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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION VALUE ADDED AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE AGENDA

April 9th, 2025 – 2:00 pm

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87224947243?pwd=LQOqDBanMoX5QbCuYVXOFoHODXChRM.1>

Meeting ID: 872 2494 7243 Passcode: 466034

- I. Welcome: Amy Crone, Chair
- II. Review & approval of February minutes
- III. Presentation from Joe Milone, Agriculture Program Manager, Maryland Dept. of Commerce
- IV. Committee Member Discussion, Definitions Expanded
- V. Industry Partner Guests List
- VI. Adjourn Meeting

Commodity	Representative
Ag Education	Dr. Melissa Welsh
Agribusiness	Vacant
Agritourism	Janna Howley
Aquaculture	Johnny Shockley
At Large Ag Service	Frank Allnutt
At Large Ag Service	Stefanie Reiser
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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION VALUE ADDED AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Minutes

April 9th, 2025 – 2:00 pm

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87224947243?pwd=LQOqDbanMoX5QbCuYVXOFoHOdXChRM.1>

Meeting ID: 872 2494 7243 Passcode: 466034

Committee Members Present:

Janna Howley
Johnny Shockley
Kellie Hinkle
Amy Crone
Nikita Bocharov
Emma Jagoz
Dr. Darren Jarboe

Committee Members Absent:

Rachel Lipman

Guests:

Joe Milone, Maryland Department of Commerce
Martin Proulx, MDA
Aidan Boline, MDA
Kevin Atticks, MDA
Cassie Shirk, MDA
Jessica Hackett, MDA

Call to Order:

The April 2025 Value Added Agriculture Committee meeting was called to order by Amy Crone, Chair, at 2:01 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

The February 2025 Value Added Agriculture Committee meeting minutes were approved by Janna Howley, second by Kellie Hinkle.

Meeting Minutes:



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Joe Milone, Agricultural Programs Specialist with the Maryland Department of Commerce, presented to the Committee about the role that Commerce plays with Value Added Agriculture. As the liaison for the agricultural industry to the Department of Commerce, Joe's role is to help connect new and existing businesses with opportunities for growth, promote emerging food system technologies, and support innovation in agriculture, aquaculture, food and forestry sectors.

The Committee continued to highlight the need for the Department of Agriculture to set a statewide definition for agriculture, regenerative agriculture, value added, and other agriculturally related terms. Definitions that are adopted and recognized by the agricultural industry will help steer other sectors in State government to recognizing the evolving and growing industry. Kellie Hinkle agreed to start compiling county definitions of agriculture and support background research.

As the Committee discussed opportunities to collaborate with agriculturally adjacent groups, compiling resource documents of food packers and processors became a highlight of discussion, recognizing that aggregation and processing is a critical need to support value added agricultural production and growth.

Meeting Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Dr. Jarboe, second by Emma Jagoz.



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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON WATERSHED STRATEGIES AGENDA

April 9th, 2025 – 3:15 pm

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85333605963?pwd=0zOrioYTcAYnSuybdNb3FljbvBaoMO.1>

Meeting ID: 853 3360 5963 Passcode: 975752

I. Welcome: Gordon Kretser

II. Review & approval of February minutes

III. Mission Statement

IV. NRCS Pollinator Habitat Benefits

- Dr. Audra Hinson, USDA ARS
 - Research Ecologist, Partner on Soybean Pollination Ecosystem Services Project

V. NRCS Agrivoltaics & Guidance

- Dana Ashford-Kornburger, USDA NRCS
 - Acting Director – Ecological Sciences Division, Science and Technology Deputy Area
 - Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist, Climate Division, Office of the Chief

VI. Discussion

VII. Industry Partner Guest List

VIII. Adjourn Meeting

Resources:

- [Conservation Guidance for Utility Scale Solar Projects](#)
- [Conservation Considerations for Solar Farms](#)

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Forestry	Hunter Pusey
Hemp	Matthew Levi Sellers
Horticulture	Vacant
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Nursery II	John Murphy
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Poultry I	Zach Evans
Poultry II	Vacant
State Grange	Richard Stonebreaker
Tobacco	Vacant
Turf	Gordon Kretser
UMD	Dr. Darren Jarboe
Vegetable	Russell Shlagel
Veterinary	Dr. Marianne Bailey
Viticulture	Rachel Lipman
Young Farmers Advisory Board	Jennell Eck McHenry, Edward Goodman



Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Maryland Agricultural Commission

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MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE ON WATERSHED STRATEGIES

Minutes

April 9th, 2025 – 3:15 pm

In Person: 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85333605963?pwd=0zOrioYTcAYnSuybdNb3FljbvBaoMO.1>

Meeting ID: 853 3360 5963 Passcode: 975752

Committee Members Present:

Hunter Pusey
Sean Hough
Zach Evans
Gordon Kretser

Committee Members Absent:

Raj Kathuria

Guests:

Julie Devers, USDA NRCS State Biologist
Audra Hinson, USDA ARS Research Ecologist
Chad Stachoiaik, USDA NRCS Climate Division
Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA
Greg McCarty, USDA Research Soil Scientist
Jacob Dieguez, USDA NRCS State Conservation Engineer
Eric Hines, USDA NRCS Assistant State Conservationist
Hans Schmidt, MDA

Call to Order:

The April 2025 Committee on Watershed Strategies meeting was called to order by Gordon Kretser, Chair, at 3:19 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

The February 2025 Committee on Watershed Strategies meeting minutes were approved by Zach Evans, second by Hunter Pusey.

Meeting Minutes:

Dr. Audra Hinson, USDA ARS, presented to the Committee on soybean pollination ecosystem services and the impact that pollinator habitat has on soybeans. Dana Ashford-



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Kornburger, USDA NRCS, presented to the Committee on agrivoltaics and NRCS guidance documents published for farmers and agrivoltaics operations in the country. The Committee discussed opportunities for the incorporation of agriculture in solar installations and emphasized the significant impact on pollinators in agriculture, highlighting the need for native grasses and true pollinator habitat to be incorporated into plantings on new installation of solar projects.

Meeting Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Sean Hough, second by Hunter Pusey.