

Lower Mississippi Valley Initiative (LMVI)

Presentation to GOMP Policy Review Board

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What is it?

- Presently, a loose association of agriculturally based entities in 8 states:
AR, KY, LA, MS, MO, OK, TN, TX
- Consisting of:
 - Extension Service, Farm Bureau, Agriculture Commissioners, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Recognizing Need

- Where agricultural contributions are a concern, agriculture should be in the lead

Factors Contributing to Concerns

AGRICULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

- Total Maximum Daily Loads
- Nutrient Enrichment – Hypoxia
- Other Concerns
 - Wetlands, Fish and Wildlife Habitat, Riparian Buffers, Water Development and Conservation, Invasive Species

Overall Objective

- Demonstrate that the agriculture will reduce nonpoint source loadings without regulation if:
 - Planning and implementation is locally led
 - A sound science approach is used
 - Economic viability is maintained by providing needed incentives to support private actions that yield public benefits

Specific LMVI Objectives

- Increase public awareness of the importance of agriculture (Homeland Security)
- Frame agricultural profitability - environmental stewardship linkage
- Advocate a science based non-regulatory approach
- Affect key conservation - related provisions of the 2002 Farm Bill
- Establish technical and financial funding requirements for achieving needed conservation
- Identify essential research and technical assistance needed for success

Organization

- Existing MOU among partners within the states.
- Future - Need umbrella organizational charter, by-laws, 501 (3)c status to cover all 8 states as an entity?

Present Status

- Regrouping now that Farm Bill has passed.
- Organize to establish more official status.
- Establish operating procedures.
- Develop an Action Plan.
- Serve as a prototype for rest of MS RB

Operating Procedure

- Proposal - demonstrate on a watershed basis how locally led can add much value
- Discussion of Proposed Approach (Handout)

How do we get organized

- Develop Plan of Work
- Emphasize - Agents of Change (impact on concerns)
- Support Locally Led:
 - Use WS Coordinators (ex. Tensas River)
 - Creed
- Engage LMVI partners (LA ex. - Master Farmer, Watershed Agents, BMP booklets)
- WS Planning - form interagency teams

Non Agric. Partners Roles

- Participate in:
 - Selecting high priority watersheds
 - Funding Watershed Coordinators
 - Staffing and Funding Interagency Planning Teams
 - Implementation of BMP's
 - Monitoring
 - Research, Technology Development