

EPA-USDA National Workshop on Water Quality Trading

*Conservation Practice Evaluation from Edge of
Field*

to Satellite Imagery
James Klang, P.E.

Senior Project Engineer
Kieser & Associates, LLC

Conservation Practice Evaluation

- Trading must provide real and verifiable reductions
- Trading verification is needed for:
 - Conservation practice implementation sites
 - Program performance and adaptive management
- Must consider long term viability of trading
- Plan for limitations



Limitation!

Holistic Water Quality Trading Program Infrastructure

Program verification monitoring plans should consider:

Physical monitoring

- Practice standards/as built
- Third-party site inspections during construction and operation
- Literature reviews and updates; best available science
- Crediting method and introduced uncertainty
- Trade ratios with adequate margin of safety

Water quality monitoring

- Leveraged water quality monitoring
- Adequate period of record
- Transaction costs

Transaction Costs

- Water quality trading credits in the Midwest:
 - Costs of \$2 to \$50
- High transaction costs can be cost prohibitive, for example:
 - Field generates: 300 credits
 - Edge-of-field monitoring costs: \$15,000/yr
 - Cost of credit increases by \$50
 - New credit cost: \$52 to \$100

Transaction Costs

- Monitoring cost reductions can occur by leveraging:
 - Other watershed programs
 - Audit style sampling for similar sites
 - Emerging/improved technologies

Questions?

James Klang, P.E.

Senior Project Engineer
Kieser & Associates, LLC
536 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 300
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

jklang@kieser-associates.com



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