Speaker Biographies

Brian Brandt, American Farmland Trust
Mr. Brandt is Director of American Farmland Trust's Agricultural Conservation Innovation Center (ACIC), which works to develop market-based incentives to promote adoption of conservation practices by farmers. Mr. Brandt has played an integral role in a multi-disciplinary effort to develop innovative risk management tools to increase the adoption of best management practices. Specifically, he spearheaded the development of the BMP Challenge guarantee program. He is also coordinating the development of a water quality trading program in the Sauk River Watershed in Minnesota.

Mr. Brandt brings to ACIC an intimate knowledge of production agriculture having been raised on a hog and cash grain farm in west central Ohio and is still actively involved managing the family farm.

Robert Ensor, Howard Soil Conservation District
Mr. Ensor is District Manager of the Howard County Soil Conservation District. Prior to this role, he served as Administrator of the Conservation Grants Program with the Maryland Department of Agriculture. He has held various positions within USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), including Acting Director for Operations Management and Oversight Division of NRCS in Washington, D.C.; State Conservationist in Des Moines, Iowa; and, Assistant State Conservationist in Temple, Texas. He has also had various leadership positions with NRCS in Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Rhone Island.

Mr. Ensor earned a Bachelor of Science degree in agronomy from the University of Maryland in College Park, MD. He is a Certified Professional Agronomist and Certified Professional Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Specialist. Mr. Ensor is a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, National Association of Conservation Districts, and the American Society of Agronomy.

Cy Jones, World Resources Institute
Mr. Jones works in the World Resources Institute’s People and Ecosystems Program where he leads the Water Quality Team and its trading initiatives in the Chesapeake Bay and Mississippi River watersheds. The goals of these initiatives are to advance market-based efforts to reduce nutrient pollution impacting the Chesapeake Bay and the Gulf of Mexico and to promote the development of frameworks for interstate nutrient trading. Mr. Jones is also leading a WRI effort to promote the use of market-based methods for water pollution control in China.

Prior to joining WRI, Mr. Jones had a 24 year career with the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission in Laurel, Maryland, where he managed the regional and regulatory affairs of the water and sewer agency. After retiring from WSSC, he joined the engineering firm of CH2M HILL where he worked to develop nutrient trading programs in Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Zoology and a Masters of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Iowa.
George Kelly, Environmental Banc & Exchange, LLC

Mr. Kelly is the founder and Director of Environmental Banc and Exchange (EBX), where he has permitted and sold over $70m of environmental credits in the United States relating to wetlands, streams, endangered species and water quality. He has worked with numerous resource agencies, landowners, investors and private and public credit buyers in the implementation of mitigation projects. He has been a leader in promoting new polices at the federal and state levels relating to market-based solutions to achieve environmental objectives, including working on the recently promulgated federal wetland mitigation rules enacted in June 2008.

Mr. Kelly serves on the Board and was recently elected as the Vice President of the National Mitigation Banking Association. Additionally, he was appointed to serve on the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Nutrient Trading Task Force, the Advisory Committee to the Water Quality Fund for the Chesapeake Bay, the Maryland Non-Point Source Task Force, and the Maryland Climate Commission (Mitigation Work Group). He also served as Chair of the Section of Environmental Law for the Maryland State Bar Association and was asked to represent the business and legal communities in the drafting of the precedent-setting brownfields environmental legislation.

Prior to founding EBX in 1997, Mr. Kelly served as partner and member of the Environmental Law Group at the firm, Ober, Kaler, Grimes and Shriver. Mr. Kelly is a cum laude JD and MSL (Environmental Law) graduate of the Vermont Law School.

Mark Kieser, Environmental Trading Network

Since 2001, Mr. Kieser has served as Acting Chair of the Environmental Trading Network (ETN), a non-profit clearinghouse for water quality trading program information. He is also Senior Scientist and principal of the Kalamazoo, Michigan-based firm of Kieser & Associates, LLC. Mr. Kieser has 22 years of environmental consulting experience in addition to three years of academic research on water resource issues. Mr. Kieser is broadly recognized for his expertise in market-based environmental strategies, particularly through his work on water quality trading with U.S. EPA, USDA, states, watershed organizations, and the governments of Japan and Canada. He has been involved in water quality trading program and policy development for over a decade.

Mr. Kieser holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio and a Master of Science degree from Michigan Technological University in Biological Sciences.

James Klang, PE, Kieser & Associates, LLC

Mr. Klang, PE is a Senior Project Engineer at Kieser & Associates, LLC. His expertise is in watershed management and market-based incentive approaches such as water quality trading. Before joining Kieser and Associates, LLC in 2006, Mr. Klang was the Principal Engineer for TMDL activities and water quality trading at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Mr. Klang has worked on watershed management and water quality issues for over 20 years.
Steve Luckman, Maryland Department of Environment

Mr. Luckman has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Johns Hopkins University in Chemistry and a Masters of Arts degree in Environmental Engineering. He has been with the Maryland Department of the Environment NPDES Discharge Permits Division for 29 years, including 20 years as Division Chief, where he helped develop the Phase I- Point Source to Point Source Trading guidelines. Mr. Luckman serves as MDE’s representative on the workgroup that has drafted the Phase II- Non-Point Trading Guidelines. In a previous life, he was in charge of the Drinking Water Quality laboratories for Baltimore City.

John Rhoderick, Resource Conservation Operations, Maryland Department of Agriculture

Mr. Rhoderick serves as the Administrator for Operations for the Office of Resource Conservation, which provides financial and technical assistance, as well as staffing support to the state’s 24 soil conservation districts in their promotion of soil conservation and water quality programs. He also serves on a number of inter-agency committees that are working on Maryland’s tributary strategies.

Mr. Rhoderick has managed portions of the Maryland Agriculture Cost-Share Program (MACS) during his 14 years at the Maryland Department of the Environment before the transfer of that program to the Maryland Department of Agriculture. At the Department of Environment, Mr. Rhoderick administered programs that dealt with non-point source pollution abatement and served as Maryland’s Biological Nutrient Removal Program Coordinator.

Roger Richardson, Secretary of Maryland Department of Agriculture

Secretary Richardson is a life-long farmer from Worcester County. His family farms 3,500 acres of grain on the Lower Eastern Shore and operates a trucking company. He has a long history of leadership positions in agriculture. Before accepting the job of Agriculture Secretary, he served in a variety of positions as director of the Maryland Center for Agro-Ecology and the American Corn Growers Association, chairman of the Maryland Department of Agriculture’s Board of Review, President of the Snow Hill Grain Co-Op, second term on the Worcester County Farmland Preservation Committee, and former president of the Worcester County Farm Bureau.

Secretary Richardson has also served on the Maryland Farm Service Agency, Maryland Agriculture Stabilization Committee, the Worcester County Soil Conservation District, and the Agricultural Stewardship Commission in 2006. Other community service includes 10 years on the Worcester County Board of Education in the 1980’s and 90’s including terms as vice-president and president; the Dividing Creek Public Drainage Association; and past-president of the Snow Hill Lions Club.

Mindy Selman, World Resources Institute

Ms. Selman is Senior Associate with the World Resources Institute in their People and Ecosystems Program. She has worked with trading various programs throughout the country through the development and implementation of WRI’s online nutrient tracking tool, NutrientNet. She has published papers on various trading topics, including improving cost-share programs to increase efficiency, potential cost savings using a reverse auction system, and assessing the state of knowledge of eutrophication and hypoxia in coastal areas.
Gerald Talbert, Maryland Association of Conservation Districts

Mr. Talbert has been working in the agricultural conservation field for over 30 years. He has held positions in the conservation community at the county, state and national levels. For the last 12 years, he has served as an independent consultant, managing various conservation projects for several national, state and local conservation organizations. He has been involved in several projects to raise awareness about market-driven approaches to conservation, through carbon and water quality trading, as new voluntary incentive tools for agriculture to put more conservation on the land. Mr. Talbert has a Bachelor of Science degree from Drexel University and a Masters of Science in Business from Johns Hopkins University.