

EPA Region 2 Pre-SFIREG Meeting Report

Submitted by Anthony Lamanno, EPA Region 2 State FIFRA Issues Research and Evaluation Group (SFIREG) Representative.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 Pre-SFIREG meeting was held virtually on November 6, 2025. New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, (Region 2 states and territories), and EPA Region 2 staff participated in the meeting. The Cornell Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) and the University of the Virgin Islands PSEP also participated. The following topics were discussed during this meeting:

Cooperative Agreement Guidance:

An overview of the FIFRA Cooperative Agreement Guidance was provided during this meeting to determine if there is an important update that the EPA Office of Program Support is interested in addressing. This overview included the required program areas and pick list items. The Region 2 states and territories considered these items and believe that some, including Pesticides in Water, Pesticide Product Integrity, and Boarder Compliance could be pick list items, while Endangered Species Protection could be a required category. In addition, it was recommended that the performance measures form be eliminated. However, there did not appear to be updates that needed to be addressed immediately.

Draft Guidance for Certifying Authorities on Submitting Modifications of EPA-Approved Certification Plans:

USEPA Region 2 and the states territories discussed the draft Guidance for Certifying Authorities on Submitting Modifications of EPA-Approved Certification Plans to determine if there were any comments to provide during the SFIREG meeting. An overview of the Substantial modifications, Notable modifications, and Incidental changes was provided, including timeframes for providing the modifications to EPA. The EPA Region 2 states and territories did not have any comments for SFIREG.

Notification to State Lead Agencies when General use pesticides are reclassified to Restricted use:

To provide information to the Pesticide Operations and Management (POM) working committee there was a discussion regarding the EPA's Restricted Use Pesticide report during this meeting. The Region 2 states and territories are no longer using this report as a resource since it is frequently out of date. The states and territories have found other resources, including NPIC Product Research Online (NPRO), to obtain similar information.

Bilingual Labeling Frequently Asked Questions:

An overview of EPA's revised Bilingual Labeling Frequently Asked Questions was provided during this meeting to determine if the Region 2 states and territories had any concerns or questions regarding this resource. This overview included information regarding the registrant's requirement to accurately translate labels into Spanish or use the Spanish Translation Guide, that labels are updated through non-notification, the minimum risk pesticide exemption, the dates when bilingual labels are required for each category of pesticide product, and the use of QR codes.

The Region 2 states and territories were concerned about enforcement of these labels, but did not have any questions regarding the Frequently Asked Questions.

State-Level Conservation Programs accepted as an EPA-Qualified Conservation Program:

State conservation programs being accepted as an EPA-qualified conservation program to satisfy the requirements of the Endangered Species Act was discussed during this meeting. If state programs were to be recognized it would be similar to NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Programs being accepted as meeting the mitigation requirements for the ESA strategies.

The Region 2 states and territories were asked if they had state conservation programs similar to the NRCS program. The US Virgin Islands PSEP and Puerto Rico indicated that they rely on the federal NRCS programs. New Jersey was unaware of a state program. New York State does have an Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program. This program focuses on environmental planning and best management practice systems including conservation measures, nutrient management through manure storage, vegetative buffers along streams, and conservation cover crops. However, this program is not administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. New York may be interested in pursuing the acceptance of this program related to the ESA mitigation measures depending on the EPA requirements for acceptance and the agreement of the State and local agencies that administer these programs.

Pesticide App for Label Mitigations (PALM):

During this meeting there was a discussion regarding EPA's Pesticide App for Label Mitigations (PALM). This website calculator can be used for determining the mitigation points and ecological drift buffers for the Endangered Species Act Strategies requirements. SFIREG asked if the State Lead Agencies were aware if this tool has been used by pesticide applicators and if there were any suggestions for improvements or issues found. The Region 2 states and territories are not aware of any applicators using this tool and have not identified any issues or recommended improvements.

Pesticides in Water:

The Environmental Quality Issues (EQI) Working Group has been developing a reporting template for states to share information on water quality activities and is looking for information to determine if the states and territories are using EPA's Pesticide in Water Calculator. To assist EQI, the Region 2 states and territories were asked if they were using this calculator. The Region 2 states and territories are not using this calculator.

PFAS and Pesticides:

To assist the EQI Working Group with their efforts to track EPA's development of information relative to PFAS the Region 2 states and territories were asked if they are testing for trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) in groundwater or surface waters and if they register

pesticide adjuvants. The Region 2 state and territory pesticide programs do not test for TFA and do not register adjuvants.

Pesticide Treated Seed:

SFIREG requested information regarding State Lead Agency tracking of treated seeds. The Region 2 states and territories do not track the types or amounts of treated seeds sold, planted, or disposed of.

Pesticide Registration Decisions:

The Region 2 states and territories were asked if there were any pending or upcoming registration decisions that are of particular interest or concern and if they should be added to the agenda for the upcoming SFIREG meeting. The Region 2 states and territories did not identify any pesticides to add to the agenda.

New and Ongoing Issues:

The Region 2 states and territories did not identify any new or ongoing issues to be addressed by SFIREG.