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Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

Meeting Agenda

May 15th, 2025

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Materials

Virtual Meeting Information

Meeting Link: [Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 255 026 759 588

Passcode: 2MvGxh

Phone: +1 202-991-0477,,999598303# US

Calendar page: <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/agriculture-workgroup-may-2025>

Workgroup Areas of Focus

Accounting & Reporting • Implementation • Innovation

Data & Modeling • CBP Assignments

Intro & Announcements

10:00 **Welcome, roll call, review meeting minutes – 5 minutes**

Kathy Brasier, AgWG Chair

- Roll call of the governance body
- Roll call of the meeting participants - *Please enter name and affiliation under “Participants” or in “Chat” box*
- **Decision requested:** Approval of [minutes](#) from the April AgWG meeting.

CBP Assignments

10:05 **Development of a Protected Ag Lands Target for the Protected Lands Outcome - 30 minutes (presentation and discussion)**

Aurelia Gracia, Protected Lands Workgroup Coordinator; Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator

The Protected Lands Workgroup (PLWG), a workgroup under the Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT 5), is responsible for updating the Protected Lands Outcome through the Beyond 2025 Phase 2 Outcome Review process. A new “target” has been proposed under the outcome for agricultural lands that will include target acreage for watershed-wide agricultural land preservation to be achieved by the year 2040. The PLWG would like to have AgWG input on the target language and support in developing target acreage. The target language – and the associated “ask” – will be introduced at this meeting. There is not a decision associated with this item this month; if a vote is warranted, it will be requested at a subsequent meeting. Please consider inviting your colleagues with expertise in agricultural land preservation to participate in this discussion.

AgWG Planning

10:35 AgWG Planning Document Review – 45 minutes (presentation and discussion)

Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator

Eric will provide a quick recap of the planning document presented at the April AgWG meeting and during our recent office hours sessions, focusing on the twelve proposed “objectives”. We will conduct an in-meeting, interactive assessment of the objectives and have a preliminary discussion about the “actions” nested under each. Next steps will be reviewed.

Data & Modeling

11:20 Application of Upland Buffer Credit for Phase 7 – 40 minutes (presentation and discussion)

Bill Keeling, VA DEQ; Katie Brownson, Forestry Workgroup Coordinator

Bill will present a proposed change to the methodology for buffer upland credit application for the Phase 7 watershed model, and Katie will provide additional context from the [2014 Riparian Forest and Grass Buffers expert panel report](#). Bill presented this proposal to the Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG) in April. Before voting on the proposal, the WTWG would like the topic to be shared with the AgWG for our awareness and to give our group the opportunity to provide any comments or concerns.

Wrap-up

New Business, Announcements & Updates

- **Thriving Ag- Celebrating Innovation and Insights to Build Thriving Ag Systems**
 - On May 28-29th, the Thriving Ag Project will be hosting a [two-day event](#) to discuss the key findings of their project. Participants will be able to join in field tours on May 28th, and the full workshop will take place on May 29th. The May 29th workshop “will provide participants with the opportunity to learn and discuss the opportunities and key findings the Thriving Ag project has provided for an economically and environmentally thriving agriculture in the Chesapeake Bay watershed”. A draft agenda can be found [here](#).
 - The workshop will take place at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College, PA. Additional details, including information on hotel accommodations, can be found on the [workshop page](#).
 - Registration for this event is free. To register, please use the following [link](#).
- **Beyond 2025 Update (2025 WIP Outcome, May 7th and 8th MB Retreat)**
 - In the weeks following the March 27th Management Board meeting, WQGIT leadership worked to incorporate GIT feedback into the updated 2025 WIP outcome language submitted to the Management Board. Included in the [updated outcome language](#) was a proposed name change from the 2025 WIP

Outcome to the “Reducing Excess Nutrients and Sediment” outcome.* WQGIT leadership presented the updated [outcome language](#) and [slides](#) to the Management Board at their retreat on May 8th. Using the feedback from the Management Board meeting, WQGIT leadership will work to refine the proposed outcome language and targets before submitting updated materials to the Management Board by May 15th. Outcome language presentations from the May 7th and 8th Management Board retreat can be found [here](#) for all outcomes.

*Please Note: The proposed name, updated outcome language, and targets are subject to change based on Management Board feedback.

- **York County Water Quality Monitoring Data Release**
 - York County and the USGS partnered in a cost sharing program from 2020-2024 to collect data at 6 water quality monitoring stations on the eastern boundary of York County. York County has also entered into a second agreement with USGS and will continue collecting this data from 2025-2029. To learn more about this partnership and the recent associated data release, view the [April 22nd Press Release](#) or visit the [Water Quality Monitoring Page](#) on the York County Planning Commission website for more details.
- **Work with NRCS to Update your State’s Source Water Protection Priority Areas**
 - On April 2nd, the USDA NRCS published a national bulletin, giving “state conservationists and directors of the Caribbean and Pacific Island areas the action date to update high-priority areas for source water”. In this bulletin, states are requested to review their high priority areas for source water and submit changes by August 22nd, 2025. For additional information, view the [national bulletin](#).
- **Findings Released from the American Farmland Trust 2024 Survey of Virginia Farmers and Landowners’ Views on Solar Energy Development**
 - In 2024, the American Farmland Trust surveyed 240 Virginia farmers across 78 counties to better understand farmers’ attitudes toward solar development on farmland in Virginia. In April, an [overview of these findings](#) was published and featured a range of opinions from farmers. To learn more about the survey and the related American Farmland Trust Smart Solar initiative, see the [linked article](#).
- **Other Announcements?**
 - Send to Caroline Kleis (Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov) for inclusion in “Recap” email.

12:00 **Adjourn**

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Next Meeting: Thursday, June 12th**, 10:00AM-12:00PM

**** NOTE: meeting moved to second Tuesday in June to avoid conflict with federal holiday.**

Acronym List

AgWG- [Agriculture Workgroup](#)

AMT- [Agricultural Modeling Team](#) (Phase 7)

BMP – Best Management Practice

CAST- [Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool](#) (user interface for the CBP Watershed Model)

CBP- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)

CBPO- Chesapeake Bay Program Office

CBW- Chesapeake Bay Watershed

CTIC – Conservation Technology Information Center

CVN – Conservation Validation Network

EPA - [United States] Environmental Protection Agency

FSA – Farm Service Agency

MLRI – Modeled Load Reduction Indicator

NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service

NFWF – National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

ORISE – Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education

PADEP – Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

PSC – [Principals' Advisory Committee](#) (CBP)

PSU- Penn State University

SWCD – Soil and Water Conservation Districts

WQGIT- [Water Quality Goal Implementation Team](#)

UMD - University of Maryland

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

USGS – United States Geological Survey

USFS – United States Forestry Service