

## Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

### Meeting Minutes

May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### Meeting Materials

### Summary of Actions & Decisions

**Decision:** The AgWG approved the [minutes](#) from the April AgWG meeting.

**Action:** AgWG members are asked to discuss the development of an agricultural lands target with their respective expert networks. This topic will return to the AgWG pending input from the Protected Lands Workgroup.

**Action:** Aurelia will share with CBP that the ag land target will not be finalized by August; rather, a baseline will need to be developed. Eric will work with the next coordinator of the Protected Lands Workgroup, to determine appropriate next steps for the AgWG and PLWG.

**Action:** Additional questions or feedback on the protected agricultural lands target can be directed to Daniel Koval ([Kovald@chesapeake.org](mailto:Kovald@chesapeake.org)), Protected Lands Workgroup Staffer.

**Action:** Caroline Kleis, AgWG Staffer, will follow up with a Google Form to members to gather additional input on the objectives outlined in the prioritization document. Members will also be provided with instructions to suggest “actions” under these proposed objectives.

**Action:** Bill Keeling, VA DEQ, will return to the June AgWG meeting to continue discussing a proposed change to the methodology for the application of buffer upland credit for Phase 7.

### 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:** The AgWG approved the [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” – was introduced at this meeting.

**Discussion:**

**Aurelia Gracia (in chat):** Agricultural Lands: By 2040, permanently protect a total of \_\_\_ acres of agricultural lands within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. August 2025 is the requested deadline I submitted for Protected Lands to confirm all language and metrics.

**Amanda (in chat):** Who is working on the protected ag lands data?

**Aurelia Gracia (in chat):** USGS is our main point of contact and they work with the states and federal system to pull data.

**Dave Montali:** Has there been discussion about what year the baseline is, in recognition that there's some problems with PAD US regarding the date that the easements were enacted?

**Aurelia Gracia:** So, 2010 is the baseline that was conducted for protected lands, and our current outcome language is an additional 2 million acres above that 2010 baseline. USGS is our main point of contact. We work with John Wolf, and he has an amazing team of other USGS employees that work on protected lands data. They pull data files from the states, and then they also work with PAD US. So, 2022 is the latest data that we have. There were several issues and challenges with the data. 1) within the states, not all states report the same fields when we pull from their data sets. So, that's something that we're trying to work out with the states, all reporting the same date fields. Then with PAD US, there were several issues where either certain sites or parcels weren't counted. So, I noticed like some national parks weren't counted as permanently protected. So, that was an issue. Then there was some duplication of certain sites that were found in PAD US. So, we've been working with PAD US contacts to update the Chesapeake region, and then we've been trying to work with the states on getting similar reporting formats. The other issue that we're running into now, which we're trying to create a project for that would heavily involve the states, is the date of establishment for each parcel that has been identified as permanently protected, so that we would have whenever it was deeded and understand how long it's been permanently protected. So, we're aware of all the challenges, but USGS has been doing a great job of taking them one by one, but we're constantly trying to refine the data, and they're currently working on a 2024 data set.

**Dave Montali:** Ok, fair enough. You guys are on it. I guess my overall recommendation when you ask this group for how much we can do, everybody needs to understand that there's been a lot that's been done over the last 8 or 9 years. So, the way I understand it is whatever number that you're coming up with is from 2010?

**Aurelia Gracia:** I totally understand. That was something that Eric and I spoke with John Wolf about. It's hard to pick a number when we don't know how much we've permanently protected in terms of ag lands. So, that's what I am trying to understand as well. There's also the option that the outcome language that I did post in the chat, and can repost for anybody who came in late, that there could be an option where we don't create an actual numeric goal for it. We kind of just keep it like a percentage or just say that we're going to strive to create a baseline of permanently protected acres for ag lands. So, there are ways we can kind of massage the language, but I just wanted to bring it to your attention to have y'all's input and expertise.

**Dave Montali:** Ok. Thank you.

**Alex Echols:** I rarely interject into these conversations, but I cannot say this strongly enough. We've got to use the right language. We cannot use the phrase protected. That's not what we're doing. What we're doing is we're restricting land use, and it may be with an easement, it may be with a private owner, etc. We have had the same farm in our family for 300 years. We have protected it with firearms from invading armies twice. That land is undeveloped. The only development that's ever occurred on it has been because of government activity. If you want to work with farmers,

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you got to get the language right. You'll make farmers scream from the room and never talk to you if you use the phrase "protected". What you want to do is accurately say what you're trying to do. What you're trying to do is restrict certain kinds of activities. This goes on all the time in government agencies and non-landowner communities. You've got to get the language right, and I cannot emphasize that enough, if you're going to work with the ag community.

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** There are state ag land protection programs. What does it mean to be protected? What is the relevance?

**Amanda Cather (in chat):** That's interesting. As a farmer, protected feels better than restricted to me

**Aurelia Gracia:** I appreciate that comment, Alex. Would you suggest the word preservation? Because when I looked at the data sets that come from the states, a lot of them, for example Delaware ag land preservation, Maryland agricultural land preservation foundation, the word preservation keeps coming up on those datasets from each of the states. Is that more of an accurate representation?

**Alex Echols:** Well, it depends. So, land preservation has lots of different kinds of meanings when you get into the land management business. So, keeping the soil on the land, that's part of the preservation. Keeping land in productive use, that's part of the preservation. So, preservation is less offensive to folks, though, you know, it can also be offensive. But, to simply call it protection, I can think of very specific cases where I have been out doing meetings where we're looking at large scale land organization, and there was a circle drawn around a place that says this land is not protected. The woman that owned that land just blew up, and all the farmers left, and she said what do you mean that land is not protected? My family homesteaded that land. Turns out, she was the Land Trust Alliance's national representative, and it was so offensive to her to say the land is not protected. So, what we're really doing is we're restricting the kind of land use that can happen. That's also uncomfortable, but we cannot use the phrase protected.

**Amanda Cather (in chat):** 'Restricted' feels a bit paternalistic. Like that 'productive use' framing

**Eric Reid (in chat):** DE Aglands, we usually say Preservation from development. Or protection from development.

**Marel King (in chat):** Most signage around here says "preservation"/"preserved."

**Eric Reid (in chat):** Preservation primarily though.

**Eric Hughes:** Thanks for that, Alex. I probably should have advanced the slide here because the next slide is the target language. So, you know, how do we feel about the premise of this? Alex spoke to that. Before we start talking numbers, the partnership setting a watershed-wide ag land protection restriction target, and any feeling about this, positive or negative, should be shared. I think that the Protected Lands Workgroup would appreciate any and all comments. So, just building on the two comments that we just heard, general thoughts? I know from at least one conversation that I had that there are positive feelings about this. Generally, it sounds like there's interest from our jurisdictional partners in having this here. So, any additional feedback? There's a lot of activity in the chat.

**Aurelia Gracia:** Eric, I can just add kind of some of the background. So, the protected lands workgroup is comprised of state representatives from each of the jurisdictions across the watershed. They're usually folks who are working in the Department of Natural Resources or some sort of conservation department within the states. They are the people, more on the administrative side, that we contact. We also have a GIS community of practice. Again, comprised of people from each of the state jurisdictions, and our language before was just permanently protected acres, and then it had a subset of just wetlands and forest lands. Like I said, even the datasets, we pulled multiple datasets, and that methods document that you referred to on

Chesapeake Progress, if you download that, it shows you all of our datasets. So, the ag land preservation data sets are being pulled from the states. The states don't all report or have the exact same data sets. So, sometimes we're having to dig through to try to speak the same language, and that's something that we're working on. But, it was vocalized in the work group that ag lands was something that they wanted explicitly written out this time around when we were redoing the outcome language. Pennsylvania, for example, brought to our attention that a large majority of their lands are ag lands. Then also in the Forestry Workgroup, there were some individuals who really emphasized that they wanted ag lands present. So, that's something that we're just trying to bring to light to make sure that ag lands is now a topic that's in the forefront.

**Amanda (in chat):** "acres under conservation easement"

**Jim Riddell:** Just to comment and appreciate what's been shared. I see where someone had said conservation easement, and I understand there are multi dimensions to what we're talking about. We're really talking about tangible incentives related to this ag and forest protection. One of the things we need to think about, too, is working lands. You can categorize a lot of things under ag, but the conservation word I think is probably preferable than protected, perhaps. But what you said earlier, anything under easement, they're perpetually protected. However, the conservation word, I think most folks will understand it, and you're seeing more and more use of conservation easements whether they are TDR, PDRs, or whatever else there is that somebody might be doing. So, I think it's a worthy outcome that is a big picture outcome. It governs a lot of issues, and we might gain on some Chesapeake Bay goals, but if we don't do some of this outcome we're talking about in a big way, we're going to lose tremendously. So, I support the effort, and I think that the language is important. But, at the same time, let's not lose sight of what we're talking about.

**Alex Echols:** I think that's exactly right and let me give you an example. Normally, if the Fish and Wildlife Service, for example, says they own the land, it's considered protected. Management of FWS and Park Service land isn't always the best for invasive species control and protecting ecological functions. They're trying to manage it; I'm not dissing those folks, but to say it's protected just because it has public ownership, by no means does it mean it's protected. We're trying to deliver the ecological services that come off of those properties, and that's going to require management.

**Aurelia Gracia:** I appreciate those comments. At least one thing I'm wrestling with is the workgroup is called Protected Lands. So, we're trying to look at different themes under protected lands, and these are each called targets under the Bay Program. There is a narrative text right after you read the title protected lands. That's something they gave us the opportunity to make edits to. So, we've gone back and forth on that language. Is it "protect" critical landscapes within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed? "Conserve" critical landscapes? So, we're trying to figure out what's the best word that would broaden the scope for all these targets- forest, wetlands, ag lands, urban lands to fall under? I do understand that if we're going to use the word protect, it's hard to identify what parcels are associated with the word protect, especially when we're using these data sets and they have specific criteria, and we don't want to offend people. I've already encountered with smaller land trusts that their parcels have not been added to the datasets. Sometimes that's just a reporting error between the Land Trust and the states, but we try our best to kind of incorporate that when we run into it. So, I can take all the feedback you all have given back to USGS, and we can try to propose different language and also how we define that.

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** Agreed - public ownership does not mean its protected! Many federal lands are leased to farms and do not have buffers. We have been working to establish buffers and other required conservation practices on all public lands - federally owned have been the most difficult.

**Jenna Schueler:** This might be a silly question. I'm just looking at the other proposed targets underneath protected lands. I'm just curious because there's forest in here and wetlands, too. So, are we thinking for the ag lands that we would just be counting ag lands in conservation easement, and then forest would be protected forest? Or, if you have forest protected on ag lands, does that get aggregated up into forest or aggregated up into ag land, or like double counted in some way?

**Aurelia Gracia:** That's a good question. So, I've been working with each of the point of contacts that come from the different workgroups, and we've talked about how it could be seen as double dipping or double counting. I think we are ok with that as long as we're making sure that it's counted under one category. So, the example you gave, if it's forested on an ag parcel, we have to make sure it's counted by either the forest target or the ag target. The people who work with the data set, like USGS, and then we have a point of contact with healthy watersheds that works with the data, when we've talked about this challenge, they said that it's more of just a data exercise that they would have to count it under a certain target.

**Eric Hughes:** That's a good segue. The first question here is what do we consider to be protected ag land? Building on all the comments we've heard, I'm wondering, if it differs across jurisdiction, when you're aggregating acreage and saying we have x amount of ag land preserved, is that taking into account everything that's on that easement? I know there's an awful lot of forest land on ag easements in some cases or non ag land on ag easements in some cases. So, I was wondering if our jurisdictional partners had any insight into how they do that in their agencies.

**Dave Graybill (in chat):** sorry, did I miss it but was the baseline acre # given for the 2010 baseline

**Aurelia Gracia (in chat):** No baseline was identified

**Aurelia Gracia:** Eric, I just want to bring up that Dave put a good comment in the chat about the baseline for acres of ag land. Like I said, our baseline for protected lands was done in 2010. We could use the 2010 data to create a baseline. However, because USGS is working on 2024 data right now, that would be the most accurate. That comment kind of made me think we could request to the Bay Program for that ag target, it requires a baseline assessment. So, we won't have to worry about trying to figure out a number right now. We could go back to the Bay Program and say we want this target present in protected land, so that it's captured and there's attention on it, but, we need time to develop a baseline and go back to the right terminology and the definitions and criteria. So, that's something that we could perfectly request. I'm actually requesting that for urban lands, because we have not explored urban lands in protected lands. There is no baseline. There is no definition. People have identified multiple words to consider- urban lands, green space, community lands. So, that's something I'm requesting for urban lands, and that's something we could do for ag lands as well.

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** Is there a definition for protected land? Why are we collecting this data?

**Aurelia Gracia:** So, there is a definition for protected lands and, again, we use the definition identified by PAD US, which is the federal database. So, we are collecting data because, for protected lands, we have the acreage goal that we are working towards. So, that's why annually we do the data collection with the states and that federal system to see our progress. But, ag lands was brought up as an interest and a need from the states, and so they want that more explicitly called out when we are doing our reporting.

**Eric Hughes:** Thanks, Aurelia. So, we're looking at trying to work toward getting the Protected Lands workgroup some sort of number here. A potential place to start, and this maybe wouldn't necessarily work, but if we were to look across the jurisdictions, what are your ag land preservation goals individually? 'For a jurisdiction, within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, this is our target ag land protection acreage.' May not be a good starting point, but maybe the counties have that? Just a starting place so that we can suggest something that complements the work that's being done

in the jurisdictions and the counties, not that just exists in a vacuum. I don't know if that's a helpful starting place. If it's not, what additional information do we need to work towards trying to come up with a number for the watershed? Very interested in hearing the group's thoughts.

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** Can you put that definition in the chat? I didn't snip it quick enough

**Daniel Koval (in chat):** "Lands permanently protected from development, whether by purchase or donation, through perpetual conservation or open space easement or fee ownership for their cultural, historical, ecological, or agricultural value.

- Includes transfer/purchase of development rights
- Protected through federal, state, county, municipal, township, tribal ownership
- Pulled from several fed/state data sources"

**Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat):** For Maryland, The Maryland the Beautiful Act of 2023 established goals of conserving 30% of the land in the state by 2030 and 40% by 2040. Not ag land specific. but ag land inclusive. We met our 30% goal in Feb 2024, 6 years ahead of schedule. MALPF and Rural Legacy have program goals as well, but some of that is budget dependent.

**Ken Staver:** Strictly from a Bay perspective, one of the biggest negative trends in the whole Bay is increase in impervious surface, right? So, maintaining agricultural productivity to feed the population and everything else into the future, that's not really a big goal. That's another goal that's really important, but it's not really a big goal. I don't think enough has been made of this. Increasing impervious surface is just a really, really negative metric for the Bay Watershed and loss of forest lands. So, this is kind of a [way to mitigate](#) that. I think that's what we're really working on here. I think any way we can support the states, I don't know what the number is, you just want to support it any way you can, but I don't know how you come up with a number. The satellite folks, Peter, he put out I think it's 10,000 acres a year of new imperviousness in the Bay Watershed. It's an astounding number, and that's coming from a lot of farmland and forest land, too. So, I don't really have a way to come up with the magic number, but anything we can do to support state efforts and not get in their business and not be prescriptive about it, but any way to be supportive, I think we should. Also, the thing about protected, management is another issue. How is land managed? Well, we can figure out managed later. But once it gets paved, it's done. Usually when people develop it, they plant nonnative invasives anyways when they develop it. So, at least if we keep it in force for now, we can maintain the potential for later to get the full ecological benefit of it. But once we lose it, we lose it. So, the management part, I don't think we should get wrapped up in that one too much. I just think the part about preserving natural functioning soil/plant/water systems which is ag lands, which is forest lands, is where we should help however we can. But, I can't help you with a number really. As big as possible. That's my number- as much as possible.

**Aurelia Gracia (in chat):** 2024 data could give us an estimate of how many acres are considered Ag lands based on the data sets from states and the federal system. Based on everyone's feedback here we could work on identifying the most accurate term and definition for Ag lands

**Jim Riddell:** I just want to say I appreciate what Ken said, and I agree with what he said, and this outcome is probably as important to overall Bay future quality as anything, and we can win and cover some goals and accomplish some of our strategies. However, if we don't work on this heavily, we're going to lose the big picture concerns, and it definitely is a big impact on Chesapeake Bay water quality. So, good comments, Ken.

**Elizabeth Hoffman:** I've enjoyed hearing the comments. I think this is a really good conversation. I appreciate being able to learn a little bit more from all the different perspectives on the language because that is really important with farmers. One comment I'll make is I put some information in the chat related to Maryland's goals about the 30% by '30, and that is not all ag lands, but obviously ag land is a pretty big piece of that pie for our MALPF and Rural Legacy. Maryland supports having



some kind of language around protecting, or whatever word we want to use, ag land, we see a value there of course. I think sometimes there's a value of maybe putting certain goals in writing to then be able to justify a need, if that makes sense. Then the elephant in the room is why it is so hard to pick a number is budget. It takes money to do some of this work, and I think everybody is in the same boat of facing some challenges there. So, in Maryland, this most recent session, a lot of program open space and other kind of similar easements and protected land programs, face a lot of challenges in being fully funded. So, that is especially going to be hard when we think of how to pick a number. Like Ken said, we would pick the biggest number we could, but some of that is part of the equation. So, it's really challenging to think that far ahead.

**Alex Echols (in chat):** Maryland is already at 30%

**Aurelia Gracia:** I appreciate that, Elizabeth. So, the current outcome language for Protected Lands is protect an additional 2,000,000 acres. Based off the 2022 data that Eric was showing, like the overlays of the blue parcels and things like that, I believe that was like 83% of reaching our goal. The 2024 data would give us an accurate representation of whether we met that goal or not, but based on the 2022 data, we were on course to meet the goal. I reached out to the states to get their feedback on what the new goal would be because that one sunsets in 2025. They were very honest about challenges with capacity, funding, and resource management. So, we are looking at either another 1.5 million or doing the same 2 million again. So, that's where we're at overall, and the ag target would be a part of that. So, if it's 1.5 million overall protected lands, it would be some sort of percentage or some sort of smaller acreage goal of that 1.5 if that makes sense.

**Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat):** Yes, we are. I guess my comment was related to choosing additional acreage into the future. identifying may be a better word than choosing

**Eric Reid (in chat):** Delaware, at least as far as DALPF goes, our original goal was to preserve at least 1/2 the remaining aglands as of 1991 with a minimum to 200,000 acres. We currently have a little over 150k permanently preserved (148k have settled, still waiting on settlements for the rest). That includes cropland and forestland. But that is statewide, not watershed specific. I agree that it's going to be tough to pick a specific number

**Amanda Barber:** I just wanted to speak to the definition a little bit. Permanent protection and the word permanent I think has implications that point toward a conservation easement. I'm a little confused about the protected through a federal, state, county, municipal township ownership. That's where I guess I become concerned because public lands can often become private lands or developed lands. So, even publicly owned agricultural lands can become developed lands. I get your point about the management aspect being sort of a separate issue, but they are connected in terms of what type of permanent protection is in place, and just because it's under public ownership, does not imply permanence.

**Aurelia Gracia:** I agree with that. The management topic comes up a lot, and it's kind of a little bit difficult for me because I also was the coordinator for Public Access Workgroup, so when we're talking about stuff like urban lands and people getting access to those lands, it's a bit tricky in those conversations, but we try to stick with the definition of protected lands that was posted in the chat by Daniel, our staffer, and the data sets that come from the states and PAD US. The management part, we do not worry about in protected lands, and the other thing I wanted to mention was the Protected Lands Workgroup does not focus on the other goals like the 30 by '30 or 40 by '40. That's an individual state initiative, and we don't put that in protected lands.

**Amanda Barber:** Yeah, and I don't want to belabor the conversation if I'm trying to play catch up on understanding this, but I'm still trying to understand the relevance of collecting this data. If the protection doesn't imply management, why are we collecting and keeping this data? Why is this important to know how many acres? I mean, obviously, as a farmer, we all want to protect working

land. So, it's not that I'm opposed to having a goal for protecting agricultural land. I support that personally and professionally, but I'm just wondering why that's relevant to the Chesapeake Bay Program if there's not some implied management difference that's of value to the Bay Program.

**Aurelia Gracia** (in chat): I hear what you are saying. Right now, I can't answer that. But, I will say that the way protected lands was already being asked to track and report its data from the Bay Program was permanently protected acres, and the other workgroups like the Forestry, Wetlands, Healthy Watersheds, came to us and said we want forest wetlands, healthy watersheds to be more explicitly called out so that it gains greater attention, because a lot of folks are interested in protected lands from multiple stakeholders, land trusts, other federal agencies, and states. So, the topic came up of ag lands as well, where some of the states said we want ag lands explicitly called out so that it gains greater awareness and that we're tracking and reporting that to see if we're losing ag lands or areas that we can conserve more ag lands and protect more ag lands. So, that was a request to the states, and I didn't have any problem adding it to this opportunity to change the language.

**Mark Dubin** (in chat): USDA NRCS maintains extensive acreage of agricultural lands under easement programs. Is this acreage being included in the assessments?

**Amanda Barber** (in chat): One would assume that USGS is getting that data from them?

**Alex Echols** (in chat): USDA has a range of easements - some permanent and many more term easements.

**Ken Staver**: I've just sort of been hanging around this issue for a long time. It's not my area of science but, in the world of water quality, the weird thing we have going on with the Bay is all the focus on the TMDL, nitrogen and phosphorous. So, ag land doesn't necessarily come out so good. So, Amanda's question is, if we aren't going great management on our ag land, why are we calling it protected? But, I think in sort of the broader aquatic resources, there's a general sense that when you develop land, even though nutrient loads, in some cases, they can make a case that they would actually go down, being converted to a certain kind of development. So, just in a pure TMDL sense, you could make the argument, I've seen developers do this in hearings, that they're going to make the Bay better because, on paper, they can show nutrient reduction. But, in the scientific community, it's pretty well accepted that when you have more developed land in a watershed, that's not just the Bay, the whole system downstream goes downhill with more development. So, I think it's a little vague the connection, but that's why just protecting ag land, again, I think it's mostly a way to keep it from being development, which ends up having this whole host of environmental impacts that are negative in the big picture, even if in a very narrow nitrogen and phosphorous pounds per acre sense, it may not look so negative. So, I think that's why there's a push from a long-term perspective.

**Olivia Devereux** (in chat): Would this change the land data team's growth model?

**Olivia Devereux** (in chat): USGS does get the easement data from NRCS. However, it is not shared with EPA. In addition, PA has RTE species in some of those easements which is another reason the data are not shared publicly.

**Eric Hughes**: Thanks for that, Ken. So, for the interest of time, this was going to be a preliminary introduction. We had very lively discussion. So, I appreciate everybody's participation here. Aurelia, next steps? I think it would be great to have folks here, and I appreciate those of you who already joined, but I know we weren't able to pull everybody into the discussion. I think discussing this with the relevant expert networks to see what their take is on this is something that we can do. Then, reconvening to discuss what input we can provide on target acres. This sort of presents it as we have to provide a target acreage, but if the answer is according to the people that know best, it's really not going to be possible for us to set a number, Aurelia, I assume that's an



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acceptable outcome as well? Would be great if we could put a number to it, but what I'm seeing and what I'm hearing is that may be a little difficult, especially by the August date.

**Aurelia Gracia**: Yeah, so the Bay Program asked us when we would have a time frame to get the actual numbers on paper. I gave August, 2025. That one's mostly for the ones that are kind of more squared away like forest, wetlands, and healthy watersheds. For example, we have tribal lands as one of the targets, ag lands, then urban lands. Urban lands, we've never explored that. That's going to require our baseline assessment, and that's more like a year timeframe. We could do the same for the ag lands as well. We could say we need a baseline. We're not going to give a number yet. We're going to need a baseline that identifies the correct term, definition, and then based on whether it's 2024 data, we'll give them a numeric goal. But, that's just something that I would have to notify the Bay Program of. But, for next steps, that is something I can put in to say we're working on this one, but we require more time to develop a baseline for ag lands, since it's new to protected lands, and it's not being tracked right now under the AgWG. So, that could be something to give more time, and then I can have Eric as the main point of contact. I am no longer going to be the coordinator for Protected Lands and Public Access, however Daniel Koval, he's the staffer. He can put his contact in the chat so that if you all have any questions or follow ups, you can reach out to him.

**Milton Melendez (in chat)**: With regards to aglands preservation the land itself remains in private ownership, what the State of Delaware purchases is the development rights from the owner. the interest of the public is the development rights not the physical land.

**Eric Hughes**: Yeah, that seems like it would be best. Getting that extra time, because by August, I don't see this happening. So, I'm glad this came to us, and I'm glad we're thinking about it. Hearing everybody's feedback has just been phenomenal. It varies across the board, but we had hopefully some valuable points for you to take back to the workgroup there. Looking forward to seeing where this goes over the coming months.

**Aurelia Gracia**: Yeah, and in the future, we hope that if it's a year timeline that we need to figure out the baseline and the right word and definition, we hope Protected Lands could come back to this workgroup and get feedback and have you all help us massage the language, so that we make sure that we're accurately speaking the same language.

**Eric Hughes**: That sounds great. Thank you, Aurelia. Any follow-up to this, we can go back and forth in the chat.

**Daniel Koval (in chat)**: My email is [kovald@chesapeake.org](mailto:kovald@chesapeake.org) for any future questions on the Ag lands target

**Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat)**:

<https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/0f3ffd3350b24b17bd3b8e1705af3df5>

sharing in case of interest, Maryland dashboard

**Katie Brownson (in chat)**: In case its helpful, sharing that for the forest protected lands target we are just going to be tracking forested land (using the land use data) within the protected lands footprint. Could be an approach to consider for ag lands as well

**Amanda Barber (in chat)**: NYS 30% conservation goal includes ag land

<https://dec.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2024-07/nys30x30draft.pdf>

**Action**: AgWG members are asked to discuss the development of an agricultural lands target with their respective expert networks. This topic will return to the AgWG pending input from the Protected Lands Workgroup.

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**Action:** Aurelia will share with CBP that the ag land target will not be finalized by August; rather, a baseline will need to be developed. Eric will work with the next coordinator of the Protected Lands Workgroup, to determine appropriate next steps for the AgWG and PLWG.

**Action:** Additional questions or feedback on the protected agricultural lands target can be directed to Daniel Koval ([Kovald@chesapeake.org](mailto:Kovald@chesapeake.org)), Protected Lands Workgroup Staffer.

## **AgWG Planning**

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

*Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator*

Eric provided 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 conducted an in-meeting, interactive assessment of the objectives and had a preliminary discussion about the “actions” nested under each. Next steps were reviewed.

#### **Discussion:**

**Dave Montali:** Not all BMPs are created equal. So, my question is on number one, when you “understand WIP progress”, is that inclusive of understanding the most important BMPs for water quality?

**Eric Hughes:** Absolutely. I know we have very clearly a list of the most important BMPs and the states, in their WIPs, the BMPs that are most important to them. I think that is absolutely part of the equation. We need to know what we’re working with and that can help guide our efforts. So, I think it’s a great point, and it’s absolutely something that can be considered there.

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** If not there, can we add something in the document about using/promoting/developing technology? Specifically to assist with bmp implementation and tracking, but there are other places technology will continue to change how we do business and an area where opportunities will continue.

**Olivia Devereux (in chat):** Regarding new, innovative, and most effective BMPs: There is a tool on CAST that shows the most effective and most cost-effective BMPs. Happy to share that at a future meeting. In addition, there are several groups working with farmers on nutrient application improvements related to updating or refining land grant university agronomy guides. These are not in the model, but are new and innovative and effective for water quality, cost-savings for farmers, and do not affect crop yield. Happy to put together these folks to present to this group, if it would be helpful.

**Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat):** Speaking to 1), a reminder that the EPA crediting task force presented at last March 2024 PSC meeting and there was support then for crediting of existing NRCS practices. (slide 9) [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/documents/USDA-EPA-Task-Force\\_TOP-SOLUTIONS\\_PSC-Meeting-Slides\\_03.12.24.pdf](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/documents/USDA-EPA-Task-Force_TOP-SOLUTIONS_PSC-Meeting-Slides_03.12.24.pdf)

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** While verification is the last step to credit BMPs, technology can be important for implementation and reporting.

#### **Mentimeter Activity**

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**Ken Staver:** When you said, “benefit the partnership”, does that mean help them meet their TMDL goal or WIP goal, or what? Benefit is kind of a vague word. One could say I’ll be benefited if I have to do as little as possible. That’s a way to have a benefit, right? So, what does that mean?

**Eric Hughes:** It’s a fantastic point, Ken. Benefit the partnership- help us advance toward our collective goals. So, I would say, turn to goals and outcomes for the partnership. For us in our space, it’s water quality in particular where we exist now. Then, making progress in some way toward achieving our water quality goals and the WIP outcome as well.

**Kathy Brasier(in chat):** Think of the two questions as: will this have a big impact, and is the AgWG the best group to make this impact

**Eric Hughes (in chat):** Next Steps:

- Incorporation of additional feedback after today; posting of updated document (includes responses to questions)
- Google Form to formally capture answers to two Menti questions
- Call for input on actions, similar to call for feedback on objectives (separate email with instructions)

**Eric Hughes:** Great results. We will go ahead and post the results slides PDF so you can take a look at what really rose to the top here. As we wrap up in the next couple of minutes here, I dropped next steps in the chat from the slide. So, as I said, we’re going to incorporate any feedback. So, if you have any comments post-meeting, give it to us today or tomorrow. Again, that will include responses to the questions that we received already. We’re going to send out a Google Form to formally capture answers to these Menti questions and then a call for input on action items to members. So, we previously sent a document outlining instructions for what we wanted for the objectives. We’re going to do something similar this time around for actions.

**Action:** Caroline Kleis, AgWG Staffer, will follow up with a Google Form to members to gather additional input on the objectives outlined in the prioritization document. Members will also be provided with instructions to suggest “actions” under these proposed objectives.

## **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 presented a proposed change to the methodology for buffer upland credit application for the Phase 7 watershed model, and Katie provided 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. Katie started the discussion with additional background and context for the group to consider.

#### **Discussion:**

**Bill Keeling:** Again, this isn’t concerned about excess. It’s about logic of applying a credit to a land use or deriving a credit from a land use with a BMP that’s not actually applied in the model. All we’re saying is currently we are providing that credit, and we’re asking that it not be done that way, which reflects what we’re actually doing in the real world. So, I don’t see it as less restrictive.

It is removing illogic from the modeling system and to add it to all land uses is increasing the illogic instead of decreasing it.

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** could you show the table again?

**Amanda Barber:** I think I agree with that.

**Katie Brownson:** I'll stop sharing. I did just want to share that perspective from some of the folks that were involved with the expert panel report originally. But, the idea is that our landscapes change over time. I think we're saying that if a land used to be pasture, we're putting in a buffer, forever, we will only be treating pastureland from that buffer, even if the land next to it becomes a cropland eventually, we would not be providing that upslope efficiency to that cropland. We'd be saying we can't because the buffer itself used to be a pasture.

**Amanda Barber:** It wouldn't be an exclusion buffer anymore if it's not excluding anything in the adjacent land uses of pasture. So, when it's verified, it would have to be changed.

**Bill Keeling:** Again, each progress year, the land use is determined for that year. Concern about what happens in the future is sort of irrelevant to what happens with a progress year in the modeling and what we do. So, we project what a land use is for that year, and that year alone, we apply BMPs to it, and we determine the loads. Next year, it's another land use that's created with another suite of BMPs applied. It just seems illogical to be giving benefit from a load source where a BMP is not applied to it. We don't do that with any other BMP in the model.

**Eric Hughes:** Thank you for sharing your perspective, Katie. Olivia, I'm sure you have some interesting perspective to provide as well.

**Olivia Devereux:** Katie, I know that the BMP originated with the Forestry Workgroup, so it's good that you checked with the other folks who were involved in that and were able to provide their thinking. Bill, I always love things to be logical and appreciate that. I guess I have two questions. One is we don't actually know where the land is in a modeling segment. We don't even know if it's adjacent to a stream in the model. So, how does that fit into this? Number two is why did the phosphorous loads increase? I just have those two questions, and I really appreciate you sharing this information.

**Bill Keeling:** I don't necessarily see that the first question is actually relevant. What we are simulating is, when we do exclusion, we are assuming it's adjacent to a stream and that it is on pasture. The current rules say that that can only go on pasture and only that upland can be derived from pasture. So, again, we have a collection of BMPs that's unique to each progress year because progress is a combination of what's newly reported this year, what's currently still in life span, and anything that was in life span that has fallen out and has been inspected. So, it's a constantly changing number every year. The land use itself is changing. The only thing that we can say is that exclusion buffers are being done adjacent to streams and that we're excluding them from livestock and they are usually on pasture. So, it, again, goes to are we going to provide benefit to a BMP or from a BMP that's not actually applied to a load source? The fact that we don't really know where the streams are or where the acres are, what we have is a total per land river segment and what gets reported, sometimes that a county scale, gets redistributed down to that level, and it just does not seem logical to be providing a benefit from a load source that the BMP is not applied to it. We should only be providing a benefit from a load source if a BMP is applied to it. There's a big difference between the real world and what we do in the model. Where we can reduce the illogic, I would argue we should do so.

**Eric Hughes (in chat):** Apologies for my ignorance here - Bill, slide 6 of your presentation includes narrow buffers as receiving buffer upland credit. Looking at the 2014 EP report, it seems like buffers under 35' might not receive upland credit? Might be misinterpreting something here.

“Buffer Width Current regulations and credit: A forest buffer can be 35-300’ according to the Standard Practice of the Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Practice Standard (Practice 391). All of these buffers (with minimum 35’ width) receive the full efficiency in the CBWM. The average forest buffer width currently being restored in the Bay watershed is 101 feet (CBP unpublished).

1. **Narrow Buffer Strips (less than 35’)**—Narrow buffer strips can be a distinct practice, separate from Riparian Forest and Riparian Grass Buffers of 35 feet and greater. **These strips receive the benefit of land-use change only without any upland benefits.** The CBWM (Phase 5.3.2) currently allows this practice but labels it as a land retirement or tree planting practice. Defining these as Narrow Buffers would more clearly distinguish that they do not qualify as regular Riparian Buffers. The scientific literature for Narrow Buffer practices was not reviewed as part of this Expert Panel, but the following terms and definitions are suggested for use going forward (in both Phase 5.3.2 and 6.0):
2. **Narrow Grass Buffer** - Linear strips of grass or other non-woody vegetation maintained on agricultural land between the edge of fields and streams, rivers or tidal waters that help filter nutrients, sediment and other pollutants from runoff. Narrow grass buffers are between 10 and 35 feet in width. **Narrow Forest Buffer** – Linear strips of wooded areas maintained on agricultural land between the edge of fields and streams, rivers or tidal waters that help filter nutrients, sediment and other pollutants from runoff. Narrow forest buffer strips are between 10 and 35 feet in width.”

**Olivia Devereux:** Bill, thank you for your response. I see there’s a lot more in the chat with some other questions. I guess you may not be able to see that.

**Eric Hughes:** Thanks, Olivia. I just put something in there, Bill, and this may just be my misunderstanding, so happy to be corrected here. It looks like on slide 6 of your presentation, narrow buffers are included as receiving buffer upland credit and that may have gone into the generation of some of the numbers there. Based on the 2014 expert panel report, Katie, I don’t know if you would be able to speak to this a little bit, there’s a bolded line in the chat comment that buffer strips under 35 feet receive land use change only, without any upland benefits again.

**Katie Brownson (in chat):** Yes, narrow buffers shouldn't receive the efficiency credit

**Bill Keeling:** I pulled those numbers right out of CAST. CAST is providing upland benefit for narrow buffers. It may not be correct to do so, but that is the current practice.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Upon further review, it has been confirmed that narrow buffers are not receiving upland credit in CAST.

**Dave Montali:** For my sake, Katie, I get the point it doesn’t just filter the land that’s adjacent. It does some reductions relative to the groundwater, and that can be influenced by upland. How much of the credit is associated with filtering the stormwater runoff versus reducing the pollutants in the groundwater?

**Katie Brownson:** I think I’d have to get back to you on that, Dave.

**Dave Montali:** I was just looking for a ballpark.

**Ken Staver:** It just treats the two nutrients with specific coefficients, not broken down to groundwater versus surface water. It’s not that specific.

**Dave Montali:** I guess my layman’s thought is that the land closest to that buffer is really what gets filtered in the upland credit predominantly.

**Ken Staver:** When you report a practice on a farm at a location, that land that’s right adjacent to it is never reported specifically for a buffer. It’s treated at a much higher level. Even our corn and soybeans, those all change every year. So, each buffer specific location doesn’t have a land use with it.



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**Dave Montali:** I know that. I guess I'm just trying to relate this maybe to the real world. If we put a buffer strip on cropland, is its effect predominantly aimed at what's beside it?

**Ken Staver:** Yes, but it's an average of what's beside it for that whole.

**Dave Montali:** That's fine, but Bill says it's illogical, and I agree. It may be just to do what he's suggesting. I know it's not exact and we don't do it that way, but it might be a better replication of what's going on in the real world, too. But, I don't have a position on it, just trying to understand.

**Dave Montali:** One other thought is, if you go to all the land uses that are up there above it, it might not just be ag. There's a road and a house somewhere, too.

**Ken Staver:** I actually got lost a little bit in that whole discussion. So, for me, I have to sort of see exactly what the ask is. Sounded logical, but I'm not sure I actually totally understood what the ask was.

**Bill Keeling:** The ask, Ken, is really simple. It's to stop applying non exclusion upland credit to pasture and apply it to the land uses it's actually being applied to in the model. So, if it's applied to various crops and various hays, the crops and hays are provided acres for the upland benefit and not pasture, since it's not applied to pasture. Only exclusion is applied to pasture, and it currently is limited to only providing the upland benefit just in pasture. So, I'm just saying, if we can only do that on pasture, we should only be doing that to the others. It doesn't make sense to be giving upland credit from pasture when there's no BMP applied. It would be like we don't give credit to cover crops applied to forest because we don't do that. But, we could make that happen in the model.

**Ken Staver:** But, you could put a forest buffer on a pasture, right?

**Bill Keeling:** That's right. So, it doesn't matter whether it's forested or grass, as long as it has a fence keeping the livestock out, then it's exclusion forest or exclusion grass. You don't provide that when it's not related to pasture, because we don't pasture animals on cropland in the model. They reside on pasture. So, the hay and cropland does not have livestock and, therefore, does not get exclusion buffers applied to it. That makes sense. We only apply exclusion to pasture. That makes sense. What doesn't make sense is giving upland benefit to non exclusion from pasture. So, I would recommend doing that in Phase 7 and that we stop giving upland credit to the narrow buffers.

**Greg Albrecht (in chat):** This topic is being worked on by the AMT, correct?

**Tom Butler (in chat):** This specific topic of upland credit is not currently being looked at. We are looking at excess in other categories

**Greg Albrecht (in chat):** Would it make sense/be possible for the AMT?

**Tom Butler (in chat):** We tend to focus more on input data and processing so if people felt there was a processing component for us to look at and there was a desire we could discuss visiting it. If the partnership wanted this to happen, we could potentially look at this in conjunction with the other relevant groups

**Mark Dubin (in chat):** BMP Guide: Narrow buffers are only simulated as a load source change to forest or agricultural open space and do not receive the additional upland treatment summarized in Table A13-1.

**Eric Hughes:** What I might suggest, Bill, I believe you are bringing this back to a future Watershed Technical Workgroup. So, I'm wondering if there are folks that are particularly interested in this, maybe that's something that we could communicate with our membership and say, hey, this is where this is going to be. If more discussion is happening, this is where we could go to plug in. I'm not sure that everybody's on the same page with this, but I could be wrong.

**Auston Smith:** Sounds good from the Watershed Technical perspective.

**Dave Montali:** I thought the deal was the Watershed Technical Workgroup wanted the advice of the AgWG?

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**Auston Smith:** We wanted the insight of the AgWG and, Eric I guess I'll turn to you, if we think that additional discussion at next month's AgWG would be more beneficial or provide a better review of this, rather than continuing and possibly finalizing it in the early June Watershed Technical Workgroup, I defer to you. I would think with the proper amount of discussion time at the Watershed Technical, we could finalize this.

**Eric Hughes:** Dave or Auston, I'm not sure if you got the perspective you were looking for here. if there's a specific ask, we can have additional time for this if you haven't gotten what you feel you need from the AgWG, and we can take more time for this at a future meeting.

**Auston Smith:** We will be in touch after the June meeting, then.

**Ken Staver:** I like that they were interested in our perspective. I think that's a good thing, but I don't feel like we had time to really get a hold of this issue, and if the group doesn't want to deal with it, that's fine. But, for us to have input and, like I said, I think it's good for us to have input, we need to take just a little more time to sort this out. I know there's lots to do, but that's my feeling as a group member.

**Eric Hughes:** So, for the Watershed Technical Workgroup perspective, I was under the impression that Bill delivers the presentation, and we hear comments, questions, concerns, and that would inform the next Watershed Technical Workgroup meeting. I'm with you, Ken, but if the group feels very strongly about having more time to dig in on this, if that's something that's of interest to folks, then we can do that. I don't want to derail the Watershed Technical timeline, but if we feel we need to really sink our teeth into this, then we can make that happen. So, I'll turn to our members here to see what the preference would be. It looks like the preference is more time, so we'll allocate some.

**Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat):** Agree with Ken. More time needed to dig in.

**Jim Riddell (in chat):** agree with Ken

**Greg Albrecht (in chat):** Agree as well.

**Jim Riddell (in chat):** detailed current situation plus detailed what ask is and examples

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** Take time to discuss and do what's right.

**Auston Smith:** That's fine from the Watershed Technical Workgroup timeline. This is a Phase 7 effort, as Bill went over, so a month or two, if needed, would be fine. That would work with the timeline for Phase 7.

**Eric Hughes:** Ok. So, then we can be in touch with what exactly the Watershed Technical Workgroup, maybe Dave as well, would like to get from us specifically, so that there's an explicit ask we can deliver on, if that works.

**Ken Staver:** The thing Olivia said, there was a quick view of a slide that said if we do this, phosphorous flows are going to go up somewhere. Well, we need to understand why phosphorous loads are going to go up. What happened there? So, we need to understand that before we say, yeah, do this or do that. That's my thought.

**Amanda Barber (in chat):** Phosphorous would go up because you are no longer applying exclusion buffer credit to cropland.

**Kathy Brasier:** That's fine. I was just going to note that in the chat, there's some discussion about whether this could go to the AMT, but I just wanted to raise that for a broader discussion as well. Tom, I don't know if you want to jump in or not.

**Eric Hughes:** I believe this would be more our wheelhouse, but, Tom, feel free to expand on that.

**Tom Butler:** I don't need to go too much further. I think it's clear this is more Watershed Technical with insight. Obviously, the BMP mechanics is an AgWG area. We are really geared towards the data inputs, maybe the processing for some of those. So, for example, if we had BMP excess that were due to a processing of animal numbers from inventories, that's something that I think we'd

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be looking at a little bit more closely. Obviously, this is a partnership, so I'm not going to shut anything down. I think that's kind of the path we have in this. So, I think it's a good one, but I'm not going to step on anything.

Greg Albrecht (in chat): Thanks, Tom.

Eric Hughes: It's crediting, so this is good. We will put additional time on the agenda for this, and we'll reach out to necessary parties to make that happen.

**Action:** Bill Keeling, VA DEQ, will return to the June AgWG meeting to continue discussing a proposed change to the methodology for the application of buffer upland credit for Phase 7.

## Wrap-up

### **New Business, Announcements & Updates**

- **Thriving Ag- Celebrating Innovation and Insights to Build Thriving Ag Systems**
  - On May 28-29<sup>th</sup>, 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 28<sup>th</sup>, and the full workshop will take place on May 29<sup>th</sup>. The May 29<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> MB Retreat)**
  - In the weeks following the March 27<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup>. 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 15<sup>th</sup>. Outcome language presentations from the May 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 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

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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 22<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup>, 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 22<sup>nd</sup>, 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](#).

12:00    **Adjourn**

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup>\*\*, 10:00AM-12:00PM

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

## Participants

Kathy Brasier, PSU  
Caitlin Grady, GWU  
Eric Hughes, EPA  
Caroline Kleis, CRC  
Aurelia Gracia, NPS  
Bill Keeling, VA DEQ  
Jim Riddell, VA Cattlemen's Association  
Brady Seeley, PA DEP  
Tom Butler, EPA  
Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting  
Dave Graybill, Farm Bureau  
Clint Gill, DDA  
Milton Melendez, DDA  
David Behm, NYS Dept of Ag & Markets  
Greg Albrecht, NYS Dept of Ag & Markets  
RO Britt, Smithfield Foods

Nathan Radabaugh, PA DEP  
Auston Smith, EPA  
Seth Mullins, VA DCR  
Dave Montali, Tetra Tech  
Jessica Shippen, TJSWCD  
Mark Dubin, UME/CBPO  
Natasha Rathlev, Sustainable Chesapeake  
Emily Heller, EPA  
Amanda Cather, Plow & Stars Farm/ American Farmland Trust/ AAC Member  
Eric Reid, DDA  
Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA  
Grant Gulibon, PA Farm Bureau  
Marel King, CBC  
Amanda Barber, NY Cortland SWCD  
Hunter Landis, VA DCR

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Jenna Schueler, CBF  
Tyler Trostle, PA DEP  
Scott Heidel, PA DEP  
Matt Kowalski, CBF  
Ashley Hullinger, PA DEP  
Daniel Koval, CRC  
Ken Staver, UMD/Wye  
Cindy Shreve, WVCA  
Kevin McLean, VA DEQ  
Nicholas Moody, VA DCR  
Carlington Wallace, ICPRB  
Alex Echols, Campbell Foundation

Helen Golimowski, Devereux Consulting  
Dylan Burgevin, MDE  
Gregory Mitchell, AAC Member  
Mchezaji Axum, AAC Member  
Doug Austin, EPA  
Arianna Johns, VA DEQ  
Kate Bresaw, PA DEP  
Katie Brownson, USFS  
Jenna Schueler, CBF  
Christi Hicks, USDA-NRCS  
Mark Rohrbach, AAC Member

### **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