



Meeting Minutes

Chesapeake Bay Program Forestry Workgroup (FWG) April face-to-face meeting

April 6th, 2016, 10 AM – 3 PM

Meeting Participants:

Rebecca Hanmer (Retired Citizens Advisory Committee), *FWG Chair*
Sally Claggett (USFS), *FWG Coordinator*
Julie Mawhorter (USFS), Mid-Atlantic Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator
Tuana Phillips (Chesapeake Research Consortium)
Jenny McGarvey (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Marian Honezcy (MD DNR)
Barbara White (VA DOF)
Matt Poirot (VA DOF)
Judy Okay (VA DOF)
Frank Rodgers (Cacapon Institute)
Eric Sprague (American Forests)
Ian Leahy (American Forests)
Earl Bradley (Maryland citizen)
Derrick McDonald (PA BOF)
Nancy Falxa Sonti (USFS)
Clair Ryan (CBF)
Lauren Townley (NY State DEC)
Lydia Brinkley (Upper Susquehanna Coalition)
Mike Lisenbigler (Conservation Strategies)
Justin Hynicka (MD DNR)
Anne Hairston-Strang (MD DNR)

10:00 Welcome and introductions

Rebecca Hanmer and Sally Claggett welcomed everybody and confirmed participants.

10:10 Updates and Putting Workplans into Action

- Justin Hynicka's tree canopy land use work has been approved by the Water Quality GIT! The land use loading rates will be incorporated into Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model by September.
- As we near the final stages of Workplan development, it is important to recognize that we are already a few months in the first year of the Workplan (2016). Much of the agenda time today will be focused on discussing how we will implement the actions in our Workplans.

10:20 Tree Canopy Topics

City of Trees Movie Trailer/Updates

Julie Mawhorter gave a presentation with tree canopy topic updates. Her presentation included updates on the City of Trees film, new Chesapeake Tree Canopy Network website, and other tree canopy actions/updates. For more information, please see Julie's PowerPoint presentation [at this link](#). Other notes:

- The City of Trees film will be broadcasted on April 19 and then streamed free for 90 days.
 - Participants gave ideas on where else the film could be broadcasted (e.g. Virginia Film Festival, Watershed Forum, etc.)
 - Participants discussed several topics related to the job training program which is a focus of the film. Specifically, they discussed the effectiveness of such job training programs and whether it actually helps people get jobs, diversity and differences in languages/culture as a barrier, economical barriers (e.g., having the skills to do the job but no car to get to the job), and other barriers preventing success within such programs. One participant suggested teaching landscaping and similar skills at the high school level, so that students have opportunities in that field when they graduate high school. The idea of developing a program to train people to do maintenance was brought up as well. Other similar programs were brought up for comparison.

New Chesapeake Tree Canopy Network Website

- The Chesapeake Urban Tree Canopy Network website is expected to launch in June. Thanks for Jenny McGarvey for her all of her work towards this effort! The website will be populated with good resources and stories to capture some of the initiatives going on in the Watershed.
- Julie will be contacting state coordinators to get more information to update the list and contact info on the map on the first page of the website.
- Sign up to be on the Chesapeake Tree Canopy Network by going to [this link](#).
- Recommendation from participant: link to Tree Campus, not Tree City under "Protect Your Canopy" tab.
- Next step: a few more stories and links, and then before it goes live Julie will send you all out a link and so you can see what is there and what is missing.
- Our role is not to generate new content but to point people to the current resource and latest research being done.

Other Tree Canopy actions/updates

- Workplan comments: only a few changes were made. Julie added a new action on fruit and nut trees from the Baltimore Orchard Project.
- Next steps: plan for a June face to face meeting. Keep the workplan items in your mind, and if you have any ideas on where to pursue various grant opportunities let Julie know (see her last slide for more information).

Presentation by Jenny McGarvey, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Jenny presented on some work the Alliance is actively doing related to workplan items. For more information, please see her presentation at [this link](#). Specifically, she highlighted the following work: Trees for Tomorrow, Richmond Urban Tree Initiative, and the Harrisburg Urban Tree Maintenance Plan.

Other notes and questions:

- The maintenance survey used in the Harrisburg project contains two components: concerns and solutions. Currently we (ACB and partners) are trying to figure out a way to fund an outreach coordinator with one of groups in city. Jenny is working on having initial meetings with the groups involved.
- With that survey it was a special group who signed up because they were interested, but their top concern was they do not know who to contact.

- Where else does the private/public tree issue occur?
- Answer: This also occurs in Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and other places as well. It gets complicated, for example if the tree is affecting utility lines then the city will go out and address it but then they will bill property owner. If there is a big construction, then they don't bill the owner because it is part of the construction. We really want to figure this out because if the landowner finds out about this policy then they won't want trees. The initial effort will focus on bolstering that knowledge so landowners know they are responsible. As another example in Ohio, the city was able to incorporate tree maintenance in the budget. So our hope is that city they will think about incorporating this into their budget.

Presentation by Ian Leahy, American Forests: Global ReLeaf in the Chesapeake Urban Areas

Please see the following two PDF documents for more information:

[American Forests Urban Forest Programs](#)

[Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coastal Resilience Project](#)

- American Forests has been trying to integrate their work with other systems (criminal justice, health and other fields). In 2013 launched program called Community ReLeaf.
- American Forests has done work in Austin, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Houston, and other locations. Overall, 15 cities with Community ReLeaf. DC is one of them. As an example of a project, one DC public housing site that is sitting vacant is going to turn into a farm.
- We (AF) have shifted our focus to funnel tree canopy money to areas in DC that really need it. We will be hiring two graduate students and others to work on certain projects. We are looking at all scales of green infrastructure, so this work will involve mapping existing green infrastructure and prioritizing preservation/restoration money.
- Also working on another website to really synthesize and target other industries specifically with research relevant to their issues.
- We rely heavily on local partners.
- Question: rather than one city, you do a whole area? Answer: It depends on the situation, we are looking for different scales. Did work in Katrina, for instance, for restoration.
- The new American Forests magazine issue is out.

Awards: Congratulations to Justin Hynicka and Eric Sprague for their Crown Achievement Awards! Also, an announcement: Eric has a new role with American Forests as Director of Forest Conservation.

11:40 Announcements/Round Robin

- Maryland has an official State Forester, Donald Van Hassent (no longer Acting)
- 2015 WV CommuniTree Report is now available
- A couple of awards were announced for CBF PA's work with the Arbor Day Foundation. Clair Ryan's team has been getting trees from the Arbor Day Foundation and working mostly with CREP buffer owners to help them replace trees to keep the survivorship level where it needs to be. They are looking at 14000 trees this year and are receiving an award from the Arbor Day Foundation. They are headed to Nebraska for this award on Arbor Day and are also receiving a Governor's award.
- Sally is still working on the official list of FWG members and ad hoc members to be included in the membership section of the Bay Program's Governance Document.
- CREP Forester Position updates:
 - Lindsey Obrien starting today with the MD Forest Service and will be working as a CREP Forester on the Eastern Shore.
 - Carin Clades also started in WV.

- In VA two full time staff are hired. We are also hiring two seasonal people and a part time coordinator. Once the new contract comes in we will hire another full time staff.
- In PA, nobody is on board yet.

1:00 Riparian Forest Buffer Topics

Sally Claggett gave a presentation reviewing the comments received on the RFB Workplan as well as other updates. For more information, please see her PowerPoint presentation at [this link](#).

Other notes:

- A colleague, Don English, is working on answering the question of the fate of buffers not being re-enrolled. How important is it to go after these people to get re enrolled? Don has also designed a survey that he will conduct with assistance from a partner.
- Conversations with FSA are starting regarding more funds for next year.
- The upcoming Riparian Forester training will have components on the outreach and monitoring pieces. It will be an overnight training event.
- Twelve different entities commented on the Riparian Forest Workplan.
- Discussion occurred over whether foresters take a photo when they visit the site to see how buffer is doing and also how often do they go and check the buffers.
- Sally also reviewed the actions which were not prioritized as “high” by the commenters.
- Comment: a lot of groups have easements, but not buffers. Those cases are great opportunities for buffers.
- One commenter thought we should do more to address legacy sediment. Clearing out legacy sediment with stream restoration is controversial.
- Comment: We might foresters to also look at whether there is continual stream bank erosion when they go out as part of buffer monitoring. It could be a part of the checklist.
- Sally asked what the CBPO/federal government could do to help state efforts.
 - In Virginia we had a tracking program set up years ago to capture things not being done through government program in terms of voluntary work and nobody was using it. Now that we are looking for that information perhaps we can ask non-profits when they get their grant approved to record their work so the state can get credit.
 - We also want more help with getting additional buffers through MS4 permits.
 - A map on the new Chesapeake forest buffer website with data per county would be helpful. Also, another idea would be to include stars on the map highlighting projects including nonprofit work.
 - We should think about what we want to recommend to FSA for their website pages. Although note that updating their website requires going through a long, bureaucratic process.
- Some of the actions on the Workplan are aimed at making better policy, and the FWG would need to partner with others to make that a reality.
 - Some EPA sources of funding e.g., CBIG and 319, could be used for RFBs. (Note that you cannot match 319 money with CREP.)
 - One policy issue is that some people don’t qualify for federal funding options. For instance new farmers, people who don’t produce agricultural products, even some states, all these types of people can’t apply.
 - Easement policies. MET’s language does not specify trees, but includes vegetative buffers.
- We should think about buffering in areas adjacent to brook trout streams.

- The Virginia Conservation Assistants Program (VCAP) cost share program for urban BMPs – it was a pilot and now is VA-wide.
- In regards to considering climate change in future actions:
 - Judy Okay did a lot of work on this a while ago. Her work can be connected to the Climate Resiliency group at the Bay Program.

Presentation by Mike Lisenbigler: Buffer Training, Monitoring and Outreach

Notes:

- We are working on developing some postcards and draft letters that states can use for expiring buffers. Maryland FSA wants to do the mailing themselves as well as follow up calls. PA ideally wants a contractor to do the mailing. WV does not a lot of contracts expiring, but is already doing some work towards the ones that are. VA has not gotten back to us. NY is trying to modify CREP proposal to add a new addendum.
- Maryland's standard procedure for re-enrollment is to do it 9 months ahead. But really you need to begin a year or two ahead. Maryland FSA provided the Bay Program records of upcoming contracts and we have been working with FSA offices to get the records out a year or two ahead of time.
- As part of one of the grants for outreach work, money is available to develop products including a tool to figure out how much the rental rate will be. This should be available this fall.
- Another element we heard at the February RFB Forum is that NRCS is changing standards for saturated buffers so that in cases on the Eastern Shore there will be tile drainage system with a box that drains water into laterals, allowing water to percolate through the soil profile. Usually this system is on the outside edge of the buffer.
- The BEES Webinars have been successful, with some webinars having over 150 people attending.
 - Comment: I would like to see a webinar including the outreach talks at given at the Riparian Forest Buffer Forum (3 people spoke - Matt, Jen, and Joe Thompson).
- Terry Noto and Mike are working on ten fact sheets. Currently they are waiting for feedback from states.
- There is an effort to put pressure on FSA to get the database of potential eligible participants and that can help with outreaching. It would include EQIP people.
- Mike is working with a Penn State colleague and others to do a survey with about 144 sites.
- The upcoming training will have two aspects: one part will focused on contacting the FSA office, how to get access to documents at FSA, also issues to getting access and biosecurity. That will take up about two hours of the training. The other aspect will be to give new foresters what is FSA process for getting a contract, reviewing the paperwork and rental rates and the length of a contract, other forms that need to be filled out, etc. This training will hopefully take place in May.
 - Comment: I would recommend getting the date set as soon as possible. We might want to combine this training with the monitoring training too.

The next FWG meeting will be a conference call on May 4th.