



Meeting Minutes

Chesapeake Bay Program Forestry Workgroup (FWG) December Conference Call

December 2nd, 2015, 9 AM – 11 AM

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)
Anne Hairston-Strang (MD DNR)
Justin Hynicka (MD DNR)
Lauren Townley (NY DEC)
Matt Poirot (VA DOF)
Nicholai Francis-Lau (MDE)
Tanner Haid (Cacapon Institute, WV)
Tim Garcia (NRCS, MD)
Peter Hoagland (NRCS, PA)
Matt Keefer (PA Bureau of Forestry)
Judy Okay (VA)
Jenny McGarvey (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Craig Highfield (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Greg Evans (VA DOF)
Frank Rodgers (Cacapon Institute, WV)
Marian Honeczy (MD DNR)
Eric Sprague (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Tracey Coulter (PA Bureau of Forestry)
Rachel Reyna (PA Bureau of Forestry)
Herb Peddicord (WV DOF)
Kesha Braunskill (DE FS)
Colin Jones (MDA)
Jeremy Hanson (VA Tech)

Welcome and Introductions

Tree Canopy Workplan Session

Julie Mawhorter led this session. Before going into the Tree Canopy Workplan, she went over the Workplan Timeline, found at the following link:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23263/workplan_timeline.pdf

- Julie noted that, although the Public Input period occurs in early 2016, we will start implementing some of the actions during that time since the Workplan takes effect from 2016 through 2017.
- The timeline also follows the Water Quality Milestones timeline.
 - **ACTION:** Jurisdictions should take advantage of 2-year milestone planning for TMDL/WQ BMPs and programmatic milestones to insert action items for Urban Tree Planting/Canopy and Riparian Forest Buffers in the TMDL/WQ programmatic milestones. The deadline for states to submit draft WQ programmatic milestones is January 15, 2016.

Tree Canopy Workplan:

- Julie noted that the Workplan hasn't changed much since the Forestry Workgroup last saw it in October. She made a few edits based on feedback she received. She plans to reach out to NY and finalize the Workplan within the couple weeks.
- A copy of the 12-1 Workplan draft can be found on the meeting website page at the following link: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/23263/>
- Each state will have their own action plan with additional details. These Action Plans will be attached to the Workplans as appendices. Julie is contacting state tree canopy leads to get this done by late December so that it can be included as part of the Public Input period.
 - **ACTION:** The Workplan will only incorporate the one or two most high level actions from each jurisdiction. Julie is working with state Tree Canopy leads to collect each state's more detailed action plan by 12/21, to be appended to the UTC Workplan when it goes out for 45-day public input on January 22, 2016.
- **ACTION:** A federal Tree Canopy Team at the Bay Program will be formed to identify and strengthen federal contributions to the Tree Canopy Workplan.
- **ACTION:** In 2016, Julie will hold monthly calls with state Tree Canopy leads to coordinate on implementing workplan actions. Tracking will be the first priority issue/action we will work on in 2016. FWG members are welcome to join the calls; please let Julie know.
- Julie went over the recent changes she made on the Workplan and asked for additional feedback.
- **ACTION:** In order to complete the draft workplan for review by the Management Board on December 18, FWG members should provide any additional changes to the action items to Julie by December 9.
- Jenny McGarvey (ACB) presented on the development of a website resource to facilitate coordination and information exchange among Forest Service and other CBP agencies, jurisdictions, local governments and non-governmental organizations engaged in urban tree canopy efforts. The web development contract was signed 1 December. The website will be linked to Chesapeake Network. The website will also be designed to allow for information exchange related to the Chesapeake Forest Restoration Strategy. A Forest Service Fellow will be at CBP during January-February 2016 to assist.
 - Comment to Jenny: You should brief LGAC and also the new local leadership workgroup on this.

Riparian Forest Buffer Workplan Session

Sally Claggett led this session. She noted that the RFB Workplan is still a work in progress, but it is much better shape than the October version. Since October, Sally has been in contact with partners such as FSA and has also been in touch with NGO organizations. She still needs to circle back with EPA too.

- A copy of the 12-1 Workplan draft can be found on the meeting website page at the following link: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/23263/>
- Sally reviewed the items on the Workplan that have recently been changed and need approval by the Workgroup. With these actions she also wanted to know if the right participating partners were listed, and also if the wording could be improved.
 - As Sally went over the Workplans, participants provided their comments and feedback.
- **ACTION:** Julie and Sally will work together on areas where the Riparian Forest Buffer Workplan actions overlap with the Urban Tree Canopy Workplan actions.
- **ACTION:** FWG members should provide any additional changes or additions to the action items to Sally by December 14.

Update on Tree Canopy Expert Panel

Julie Mawhorter went over the draft document titled *Tree Canopy Land Use/Loading Rate Coordination Plan*. This document is a communications document to keep everyone abreast of where we are and where we are going. For more information, please see the Draft Plan document at the following link:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23263/draft_tree_canopy_lu_coordination_plan.pdf

Jeremy Hanson (VA Tech) gave an update on the Expert Panel.

- The Panel is hard at work on a report with a BMP recommendation for tree canopy. This report is scheduled to come out around March 2016. We hope it will be approved by the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (GIT) and Workgroups in the summer.
- As for the tree canopy land use loading rates, you may recall that the land uses were approved earlier this year. However, currently the tree canopy land use rates are set equal to the underlying land use. The land use rates proposed in September were not approved by Water Quality GIT. That said, there is still an opportunity to work on the loading rate. It would need to go through the workgroups and the GIT before April. Our work will need to move at an accelerated pace in order to meet this deadline. I have been working closely with Julie, Sally and Rebecca on this. The Expert Panel has more or less done what they can do with the loading rate work. Their time is being monopolized by the BMP work too. There is talk of getting someone to help the Panel and FWG to dig into the methodologies and calculations to come up with loading rates that are defensible. I have been working with Sally and others to write up the task. Hopefully we will have somebody on board by late December or early January.

Round Robin Updates

- Rebecca Hanmer acknowledged all of the great work that has been done on forestry BMP verification. The updated documents look a lot better than the earlier drafts.
- VA DOF was happy to learn that Cindy Dunn, Secretary of PA DCNR, approved the partnership between VA and PA for Phase II of the Healthy Watersheds Forest TMDL Forest Retention Study.
- NRCS, PA has hired a forester to staff the forestry needs in PA. It is great to have Peter Hoagman on board.
- If you haven't already registered, next Tuesday, December 8th is the Potomac Partnership Information Exchange in Shepherdstown, WV.
- VA, MD, and WV are in the process of hiring forester positions to do riparian forest work.
- The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay has been working with David Noac to get an updated air quality dataset to look at pollution reductions from Chesapeake forests. Hopefully that dataset will be made available for public use sometime at the end of this month.

There will be no FWG conference call on January 6, 2016. Sally Claggett will send the FWG a draft schedule of work items and meeting topics for 2016. Members can comment by email.