



**Joint Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting (STAR) and
Coordinator & Staffer Strategic Review System Dry-Run
Quarterly Progress Meeting
Theme: Aquatic Life Cohort Dry Runs**

Thursday, October 28, 2021
9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Meeting Materials:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/joint_c_s_star_october_2021_meeting

This meeting was recorded for internal use to assure the accuracy of meeting notes.

Action Items

- ✓ **Peter Tango will present a dry run of the PSC Monitoring Request Update at the December STAR Meeting in preparation for the January PSC Meeting.**

AGENDA

9:30 Welcome, Introductions & Announcements – Bill Dennison (UMCES) and Scott Phillips (USGS)-STAR co-chairs, Peter Tango (USGS) CBP Monitoring Coordinator, Breck Sullivan (USGS) STAR Coordinator

Announcements -

- Communication Update - Marisa Baldine
- Session Proposals for ChesRMS 2022 are due December 1st – Are there proposal ideas members would like to share with STAR?

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, Workshops, & Webinars -

- [CERF](#) - November 1-4 and 8-11, 2021, Virtual.
- [Chesapeake Watershed Forum](#) - November 1-5, 2021, Virtual.
- [American Fisheries Society](#) - November 6 - 10, 2021, Baltimore and Virtual.
- [Behavior, Energy and Climate Change Conference](#) - November 8-10, 2021, Virtual.
- [CitiesAlive Conference](#) - November 8-11, 2021, Virtual.
- [Maryland Water Monitoring Council Annual Conference](#) - December 2-3, 2021, Virtual.
- [A Community on Ecosystem Services](#) - December 13-16, 2021, Virtual.
- [American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting](#) - December 13 - 17, 2021, New Orleans, LA and Virtual.
- [Sustainable Agriculture Conference](#) - February 10-12, 2022, Lancaster, PA. (Virtual pre-conference in January).
- Chesapeake Community Research Symposium - June 6-8, 2022, Annapolis, MD. (Hybrid: virtual and in-person. [Subscribe here for updates.](#)) **Session proposals due December 1, 2021.**

Summary

Bill Dennison reviewed the announcements and encouraged members to consider submitting session proposals for the Chesapeake Community Research Symposium, due December 1st. Bill also mentioned that the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science is recording and holding all webinars virtually and encouraged members to attend, in addition to Chesapeake Research Consortium's roundtable events.

Marisa Baldine provided an update on the next Executive Council (EC) meeting on December 15th in Richmond, Virginia at the governor's mansion, where the next EC chair will be decided and all of the advisory committees will give presentations. More updates about that meeting will be provided soon. Marisa also reviewed the three most recent blog posts, which can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). Bill Dennison suggested a blog making scientific papers more digestible to the general public and Marisa said that is a push within the communications team, particularly lead by Jake Solyst. They agreed to collaborate further on this matter.

Renee Thompson introduced Sophie Waterman, a new staffer with the Healthy Watershed Goal Implementation Team (GIT).

Breck Sullivan proposed some suggestions for the Chesapeake Community Research Symposium, which included a session following up on the progress of the Strategic Science and Research Framework and the one-stop location for science needs. Presentations for this session could include academic institutions that work with the Bay Program and STAR, reports from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) like the Rising Water Temperature workshop, C-StREAM and other intern contributions, and the UMBC master's student's mentorship program. Denice Wardrop agreed that these suggestions should be considered. In the chat, Renee Thompson commented that yes, regarding C-StREAM work at the suggestion of Julie Reichert-Nguyen, they are utilizing the Sea Level Rise (SLR) work completed by Selaam Dollisso for a GIT funding project related to targeted outreach for green infrastructure in the middle peninsula area VA. Breck responded thanking Renee for this example and commented that it is great to hear how the intern's work is continuing to be useful! Julie added that they are also using Adrianna Marcela Murphy's blue carbon crediting protocol review to inform conversations with EPA ORD on selecting blue carbon projects and are using Shalom Fadullon and Anissa Foster's work on Bay water temperature change indicator development for the Rising Water Temperature STAC workshop (who were with the CRC-NOAA Summer Internship Program).

9:50 - 10:20 [PSC Monitoring Request](#)

Peter Tango will present on the rough draft for the PSC presentation and establish due dates of when updates are needed.

Summary

Peter Tango started by providing an overview of the previous Principal Staff Committee (PSC) monitoring presentation, the PSC monitoring request, and the plan to provide the PSC with multi-tiered levels of detail across the deliverables. Peter then provided an update on the progress of meeting the PSC request and what the key findings have been thus far. Peter covered the network status, vulnerabilities, program management, and financial perspectives, followed by the monitoring gaps, options, and innovations. Peter then reviewed needs that extend beyond the water quality monitoring networks, including issues like carbonate chemistry, indicator updates, PCBs, and data management. Peter then highlighted the upcoming timeline for responding to the PSC and the need for STAR members to review these efforts in November and December and provide input. Peter and Bill Dennison then

agreed that Peter would return in December to present a dry run of his presentation for the PSC in January.

Scott Philips suggested that for section 3, the questions might be best organized by goal topics and that the focus be placed on the biggest gaps. He also added that the first goal in section 3 should be on monitoring goals for climate. Then for the section of the presentation on the tidal network, Scott suggested highlighting that the Chesapeake Bay Program is not able to assess attainment of water-quality standards. Denice Wardrop and Bill Dennison suggested heavily emphasizing that CBP cannot meet water quality standards as the main argument. Denice added that this is a good note and that the same point is highlighted in the CESR report. Kristin Saunders commented that presenting the bottom line up front seems to work really well with the Management Board (MB) and PSC. Carin Bisland agreed with Kristin and seconded this point.

Scott then added that the nontidal network also has gaps in small watersheds to detect changes from implementation of nutrient and sediment practices. He commented that there was a recommendation in the report endorsed by EPA Region 3, NRCS, and USGS.

Kristin thanked Peter for looking broadly at the needs beyond water quality, and Renee Thompson agreed, asking if there is an opportunity to add public health as a category too.

Bruce Vogt made a comment about the need to carefully message the equal importance of living resources and that water quality monitoring and improvements are necessary for living resources. Denice endorsed this comment and linked this back to the conversations at the Water Quality GIT about the need to improve indicators and communications

Scott suggested another potential way of grouping monitoring needs where there is an emphasis on grouping recommendations, like by academics, federal partners, jurisdictions, and on efforts to maximize the chances of MB input.

Michelle Price Fay commented that messaging is incredibly important and suggested considering how the collective resources of the partnership can help meet water quality standards. She very much agreed with Scott's point about asking the PSC pointed questions and that messaging should remind everyone why water quality standards are the key to living resources, which is what matters to everyone. Lee McDonnell agreed.

10:20 - 10:30 [Highlights of the upcoming CERF Conference](#)

Aspects of the CERF Conference will be shared and CBP speakers at CERF will be highlighted and given the opportunity to provide a brief summary of their talk.

Summary

In the chat Bill Dennison added to the list of [CERF sessions relevant to STAR](#), recommending the "Revisiting eutrophication conceptual models: Honoring the legacy of Michael Kemp" lecture from Nov 9 from 10am-2:30pm given its importance in the historical context of the Chesapeake Bay Program and its science. Bill also highlighted the sessions Qian Zhang, Peter Tango, and Rebecca Murphy are involved in.

Breck reviewed presentations and sessions that may be of interest to STAR members and presentations that were identified by Jeremy Testa, who is currently serving as the scientific campaign chair for the

CERF conference. Breck recommended checking out the [CERF website's schedule](#) to understand who else is presenting.

10:30 - 12:10 Strategy Review System Dry Run Presentations of the Aquatic Life Cohort (4 Outcomes)

Materials: Blue Crab Abundance SRS Dry Run Presentation, Forage Fish SRS Dry Run Presentation, Oysters SRS Dry Run Presentation, and Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) SRS Dry Run Presentation.

There are 4 CBP outcomes, organized under the Aquatic Life Cohort, that will be reviewed by the Management Board (MB) on November 18th, 2021. The dry run for STAR provides an opportunity for each outcome to provide their MB presentation and get suggestions for improvements. The presentations should follow the guidelines provided under the Strategy Review System on [Chesapeake Decisions](#).

Dave Goshorn reviewed expectations regarding the SRS dry run presentations and thoughts to consider, for example making questions and requests of the MB as specific as possible. He also requested that each outcome get their materials in on Chesapeake Decision on time (11/4/2021) so that MB members have time to review the materials ahead of the meeting on 11/18/2021. Dave said that for today, there will be 15 minutes for the presentation followed by ten minutes for discussion of improvements. Dave said that for the MB meeting there should be 15 minutes for presentation, 20 minutes for discussion. He also commented that one should assume that MB members have read the presentation materials ahead of time. Sherry Witt added that she will lead facilitation at the November MB meeting and frame understanding and responding to the presentations for the MB. She also added she will turn her camera on one minute before the time has elapsed. Dave also added that presenters should collaborate to consider the overall case they are presenting to the MB.

10:30 [Oysters Outcome](#) – Stephanie Westby (NOAA)

Summary

Stephanie Westby started by reviewing the Oysters outcome along with the expected and actual progress to meet the outcome on time. She then focused on what has been learned through these efforts, specifically the successes and challenges, before highlighting upcoming events and factors on the horizon. Based on these lessons learned, Stephanie highlighted planned actions to stay on track and implement the blueprints, as well as a focus on equitable and inclusive restoration. Stephanie then detailed what the MB can do to help the program adapt, including diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice needs, increased efficiency of monitoring protocols, and additional key science needs that are being identified.

In the chat, Carin Bisland commented that for inclusion, she got a call today about one of the federally recognized tribes wanting to get involved in oyster restoration for water quality improvement. She said it would be great if we could reach out to them if they are one of the 11 federally recognized tribes. Stephanie said that they will follow up with Carin here to make that connection with the tribe that reached out. Gina Hunt added that Chris Guy has some tribe contacts, and Kristin Saunders commented that she knows some tribes that are working closely with Chesapeake Bay Foundation on specific oyster restoration projects.

Carin suggested that for the help needed section, presentations should be as specific as possible. Dave

commented that the MB is not necessarily sitting with their checkbooks open, meaning that one might also ask them to identify areas of potential funding. Dave also commented that request for action from the Management Board should be detailed and specific.

Kristin Saunders added in the chat that because the Chesapeake Bay Commission is looking for policy nexus to work on, if there are specific regulatory or legislative changes required to achieve any of the needs, pull that information forward in the presentation.

Sherry Witt made a comment in the chat that a general observation of hers on slides is that if they are heavy with text, one may want to bold the very important words, or the key take way, or what one may want the MB to focus on. So much text may force them to read, and not listen. But focusing on just a few bold words while you present could help them to remember key things you are saying.

In the chat Breck Sullivan commented that the second bullet does connect with the Strategic Science and Research Framework and is glad Stephanie will highlight it to the MB. She also stated it would be great to know if the MB knows of anyone in their jurisdiction working on that type of research that they can connect Stephanie with! For example, Ann Swanson shared a document of climate resilience programs, so would any of these programs help with the shoreline need?
https://www.chesbay.us/library/public/documents/Meetings/May-2021/7-Climate-Matrix_Updated.pdf
Dave responded that he thinks this is a great comment Breck and this is what he was referring to earlier.

10:55

Blue Crab Abundance Outcome – Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Summary

Bruce Vogt presented work that he, Mandy Bromilow, and Justin Shapiro put together. He started by explaining the goal and outcome along with expected and actual progress, showing the timeline of threshold and target numbers for female blue crabs. He stated that blue crab numbers are in a good place and they are on track to meet their outcomes. Bruce then focused on what has been learned through these efforts, specifically the successes like the current management framework meeting the targets for the outcomes and the challenges like not being able to meet all the science needs. Bruce then highlighted efforts on the horizon relating to improving the stock assessment model and developing protocols for future management reference point updates. Based on these lessons learned, Bruce highlighted planned actions which focus on continuing the current work as well as a focus on equitable and inclusive restoration in future logic and action plans. Bruce then detailed what the MB can do to help the program adapt, including supporting science needs and identifying additional funding opportunities to support research.

Bill Dennison commented in the chat that the crab graph is information-rich and explained well—eventually, with it being referenced after moving to the next slide. Bill recommended displaying the crab population graph as a series of builds: 1) just show red and green lines and explain them, 2) add the data until 2009 and explain what actions these low population numbers stimulated, 3) add the 2009-present data, 4) finally add the 2009-2020 geometric mean. Bill said this will ensure that the audience is following the story. Carin added that the presenter should try to orient the MB around the graph and the numbers by providing context on what they are seeing. Kristin asked if in the presentation they should head off the expected comments about juvenile stock assessments. Dave suggested revising the presentation of the graph information as well. Bill offered the help of his science communicators with the graph, and Bruce said he would talk with Mandy about these ideas and then get back to him.

Bill also added that when requesting action from the Management Board at the end, the presenter should not bury the lead and instead focus heavily and sell what they need. Renee also commented the importance of standardizing the goal posts and having consistent baselines. Carin added that as a part of the outcome, they are required to reassess the baseline consistently in comparison to most other outcomes.

Scott Philips suggested maybe asking the MB to support funding opportunities through endorsement letters or other methods. Dave mentioned one can always ask the MB to reach out to the PSC for guidance on funding as well or reach out to other contacts.

Carin suggested tying in water quality standards to ensure the attention of non-tidal jurisdictions up in the watershed. Bruce agreed and said this topic aligns with the Forage outcome.

Bruce responded thanking everyone for the great feedback and that he needs to check in with Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) and jurisdictions on Bill's chart suggestion for the blue crab outcome.

11:20 Forage Fish Outcome – Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Summary

Bruce Vogt started by explaining the goal and outcome along with expected and actual progress, stating that they think they are making good progress despite the lack of a quantifiable outcome criteria. Bruce then focused on what has been learned through these efforts, specifically the successes and challenges like the work that has started on an indicator development. Bruce then highlighted the science, fiscal, and policy efforts on the horizon. Based on these lessons learned, Bruce highlighted planned actions surrounding four new indicators and how to communicate their results and implications. Bruce then explained the steps being taken to address DEIJ needs like working more closely with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions and diversifying recreational fishing engagement and consumption. Bruce then detailed what the MB can do to help the program adapt, emphasizing the need for shallow water fish surveys and connecting information on forage status and trends to habitat conservation, land use, and other policy decisions.

Bill suggested emphasizing in the presentation the historical context to the MB so they understand the great progress that has been made towards this outcome given they started from very little to being on track towards meeting this outcome.

Dave Goshorn added that in the presentation the term Forage should be defined and there should be more clarity about how the work so far has focused on the tidal areas. Scott Phillips agreed with this distinction and commented that nontidal streams are covered under the Fish Habitat outcome.

Dave said that the first request for help is ideal and is a good example of what requests to the MB should look like. He asked a clarifying question about whether or not the second point is about merely informing the MB. Bruce responded with a question to Peter Tango asking about what the role of the MB is for the PSC request on Improving the Chesapeake Bay Program Monitoring Networks. Peter responded that the MB needs to be informed of the transition from information gathering to recommendations. Dave suggested elaborating on this point here. Kristin said in the chat that you want

them to brief up their PSC principals for sure and you may want to be more direct in the help needed: "brief your PSC members on the need and make the connection to policy decisions." Peter responded to Kristin saying yes, for January should start and end the meeting with that note.

Scott suggested asking the MB to support the need and recommendations being presented to PSC for shallow water fish and agreed with Kristin on having the MB brief the PSC on monitoring requests.

Gina Hunt identified that Maryland and Virginia have angler recruitment plans, and that the Maryland plan has specific strategies focused on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ). She indicated they may be a team to coordinate with to focus on DEIJ and anglers.

11:45 Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Outcome – Brooke Landry (MD DNR)

Summary

Brooke Landry started by explaining the goal and outcome along with expected and actual progress. She stated that it is highly unlikely they will meet their target and they are off track due to a very bad year in 2019-2020 which reduced SAV expansion in the previous six years. Brooke then focused on what has been learned through these efforts, specifically the successes and challenges like small scale restoration only working in expansion years, the need to drastically improve water quality to withstand climate change, and the importance of understanding shallow water systems. Brooke then highlighted climate and BMP challenges on the horizon. Based on these lessons learned, Brooke highlighted planned actions including the revising of the workplan based on capacity limits, collaborating with the Climate Resiliency Workgroup on advocacy and blue carbon markets, and re-evaluating small scale restoration. Brooke then explained the considered opportunities to expand DEIJ efforts. Brooke then detailed what the MB can do to help the program adapt, emphasizing the need for a staffer and significant improvement in water quality standards.

On the topic of SAV, Bill Dennison stated that Suzi Spitzer Webster is defending her dissertation on citizen science (29 Oct) at 10 am, and Suzi wrote a chapter on the SAV Watchers program.

In the chat, Denice Wardrop stated in all presentations, the term resilience is used repeatedly, but rarely made "real" for the MB members by describing what resilience would look like in the various outcomes. She suggested starting a stealth education program by beginning to give examples.

Scott Phillips said that regarding the first request for the MB, it mirrors what they can say for crabs and forage. Dave Goshorn agreed with Scott and said maybe this is a good reason for having SAV present first.

Renee Thompson said in the chat related to DEIJ efforts she is curious if there has been analysis on bullet 1. One action item could be to assess SAV in relation to proximity to non-white, or lower income populations. She has done similar studies with conserved lands. Renee likes the idea of an analysis for opportunities to get involved in restoration projects. A geospatial analysis could help with that as well.

Peter Tango added in the chat that part of why we have clarity issues is the lack of effective filter feeder populations. Improved living resource populations provide multiple ecosystem services with feedbacks to SAV and more. Perhaps this is an opportunity to include something linked to that here. Bruce Vogt agreed saying it seems like there are opportunities to better link oyster, SAV and wetland restoration,

stating there is evidence oyster and SAV can help mitigate climate impacts for each other.

Scott asked if there is a way the presenters can more explicitly link living resources to specific, quicker water quality improvements. Denice added that one of the graphs coming out of the CESR report is that we are at the part of the curve where improvements in water quality will have great impacts on aquatic life. Bill added that he agrees there should be a conceptual diagram to get that point across. Scott provided how the case of the James River shows shallow water cases are important for local communities and might get water quality issues to spur more involvement.

Dave asked regarding the request for another staffer, exactly how many staffers they would like and what is the workload like now.

In the chat, Greg Allen asked if they have the science to support stating the 2019 and 2020 precipitation was climate-enhanced precipitation? Is that standard wording for CBP for extreme precipitation events?

Dave suggested reorganizing the presentations so that the presentations which will generate more discussion are first and the more straightforward presentations are last: SAV, Blue Crab, Oysters, Forage. He also suggested having less text and more key words so that MB can focus on what is being said, not reading. Julie Reichert-Nguyen added that from a climate perspective, having oysters and SAV back-to-back may be interesting.

12:10 - 12:30 Coordinator/Staffer Updates

The upcoming SRS and Strategic Science and Research Framework (SSRF) dates will be announced, as well as the appointment of Adam Ortiz as EPA Region 3 Administrator and PSC Chair.

Summary

Greg Barranco said that in addition to the aquatic life cohort, DEIJ will be a big initiative at the upcoming MB meeting. He then went down the calendar for November and highlighted upcoming meetings. Greg Allen provided some updates on GIT funding, saying that scoring is on-going, and will go up to the November 4th meeting. All scorers can score all projects, including ones that you worked on. Kristin Saunders shared updates on the STAC CESR report coming up along with updates on including other GITs in the Phase 7 model planning.

In the chat, Julie Reichert-Nguyen added that we are canceling the Climate Resiliency Workgroup November 15th meeting to accommodate a joint meeting with Wetland Workgroup in December. Katheryn Barnhart added that there is a Status and Trends meeting scheduled for Nov 12th. Kristin Saunders added that there is not a virtual option for the Chesapeake Bay Commission meetings. They will be in Richmond, VA next week in person. Kristin also added that there is not a confirmation of Sherry's availability for the MB meeting and that she needs to check with her and follow up.

12:30 Adjourn

Next Meeting Dates: November 16th, 2021

Participants: Alexander Gunnerson, Amy Goldfischer, Amy Handen, Annabelle Harvey, Becky Golden, Breck Sullivan, Brooke Landry, Bruce Vogt, Carin Bisland, Caroline Donovan, Caroline Johnson, Cindy

Johnson, Dave Goshorn, Denice Wardrop, Garrett Stewart, Greg Barranco, Julie Reichert-Nguyen, Justin Shapiro, Katheryn Barnhart, Kathy Boomer, Katlyn Fuentes, Kristin Saunders, Laura Cattell Noll, Marisa Baldine, Mark Nardi, Meg Cole, Megan Ossmann, Michelle Price-Fay, Peter Tango, Renee Thompson, Sally Claggett, Scott Philips, Sherry Witt, Sophie Waterman, Stephanie Westby, Bill Dennison, Zack Greenberg