



Meeting Minutes

Chesapeake Bay Program Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team Land Use Options Evaluation Management Strategy

National Park Service Conference Room
Chesapeake Bay Program Office
410 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403
December 8th, 2014 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Meeting Summary:

Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT) members and interested stakeholders met on December 8th for a meeting devoted to the management strategy of the Land Use Options Evaluation in the [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#).

Land Use Options Evaluation Outcome: By the end of 2017, with the direct involvement of local governments or their representatives, evaluate policy options, incentives and planning tools that could assist them in continually improving their capacity to reduce the rate of conversion of agricultural lands, forests and wetlands as well as the rate of changing landscapes from more natural lands that soak up pollutants to those that are paved over, hardscaped or otherwise impervious. Strategies should be developed for supporting local governments' and others' efforts in reducing these rates by 2025 and beyond.

Meeting Participants:

Jason Dubow (MDP), *Vice-Chair of Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT*
Amy Handen (NPS CBPO), *Coordinator of Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT*
Tuana Phillips (Chesapeake Research Consortium), *Staff of Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT*
Donnelle Keech (TNC), *Chair, Local Engagement Workgroup, Healthy Watersheds GIT*
Kevin Coyne (MD DNR)
Wink Hastings (NPS)
Josh Hastings (Eastern Shore Land Conservancy)
Greg Evans (VA DOF)
Mary Gattis (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Local Government Advisory Committee)
Sheila Besse (District Department of the Environment)
Julie Winters (EPA)
Bevin Buchheister (CBC)

Welcome and Introductions

Jason Dubow welcomed everybody to the call and confirmed participants. He explained the outline of the meeting: the first half of the meeting is devoted to the “evaluation” component of

the outcome and second half is focused on the “development of strategies” component. Participants used a [Q and A document](#) as a guide for the discussion.

Discussion: Evaluation

Jason facilitated the group’s discussion on the part of the Land Use Options Evaluation Outcome that calls for an evaluation. The group responded to the questions posed on the Q and A document:

- 1) What does an evaluation of “policy options, incentives, and planning tools” look like to you? What types of similar evaluations (or organizations doing this type of work) already exist? How comprehensive or extensive does this need to be?
- 2) What “evaluation of policy options, incentives and planning tools” could contribute the most to local capacity building?

Comments and discussion points:

- Question: Have you looked at a list of organizations who have done an evaluation?
Jason’s answer: A little, yes. I’ve seen evaluations of state-level programs from Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; it didn’t necessarily look at local incentives. Also others like Victoria Transport Policy Institute.
- Comment from VA: The challenge in VA on this is how to link what’s available in policy options and get it implemented at the zoning level. We’ve been having state-wide conversations with a lot of NGOs, localities, and we continue to hear that they have these on the books (Comprehensive Plan). Yet, the rubber doesn’t quite hit the road. In addition, localities are often in competition as well. So, how do you incentivize? Is there some kind of special credit?
- A participant noted that it would be great to see what other states/counties are doing.
- Idea: develop a baseline for where we are now. What is already happening? Some places are denser than others.
- Is it possible to find cities in the U.S. that have low ratios of population change versus acres converted? Smart Growth America, Urban Land Institute might have that sort of data. There is an opportunity to collaborate with these organizations.
 - Harvard School Landscape Architecture graduate projects have looked at questions such as this as well.
- Consider that what works in some states will not work in others; there is no silver bullet, no single formula that could work for all.
- Chesapeake Bay Program Alternative Futures Workshop a few years ago – we can potentially use takeaways, lessons learned from this event.
- We have a lot of info and experience with motives, incentives. We know less about who has tried them.
 - Idea: maybe some sort of survey work that the Chesapeake Bay Program’s Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) could do?
 - Also, what do those local governments need? There is a help/support focus in this outcome. To make this evaluation most valuable, we should focus on what localities need.

- Idea: A participant suggested that perhaps it would be helpful for each state to have a fictitious model jurisdiction.
- Idea: learn from federal-level non-point source MS4 and similar programs that are already engaged with local governments.
 - Question: How were these programs successful? Answer: That would be a question for Joanne Throwe, Director for the Environmental Finance Center (EFC).
- Issue: there are dramatic changes at local level with changes in legislative terms. Continuity across terms is a challenge; we have to educate every generation of politicians.
- There are models and good ideas outside of the watershed that we can learn from.
- Can we look at existing evaluations and synthesize them by 2017? Is there an NGO that would take this on? OR Bay Program funding that can look at what has been tried out?
- Question: Is it possible to build in a bit more flexibility in the management strategy? Answer: Yes. That is good to keep in mind.
- Idea: collaborate with Urban Land Institute and Society of Urban Landscapers.
- How detailed do we need to be in management strategy? Answer: We will do what works for us.
- Work with CBC to implement the idea of crediting conservation.
- Jason summarized what has been discussed thus far: we want to determine the baseline and what is out there; we also want to look at existing evaluations, and complete a survey. What are the tools in the toolbox, and what are local governments' needs?
 - Apply factors that influence to evaluate tools.
- Education is not an event, it's a process. Make or tie it to a long-term program.
- We have to acknowledge that some people won't agree with us.
- Are we deciding what an evaluation will look like or what we are going to do to determine what an evaluation will look like?
- The Chesapeake Bay Program's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) has a new Natural Lands Subcommittee, and CAC like LGAC wants to be very involved in the management strategies.
- At a recent LGAC meeting, it was discussed that a land use change scenario tool would be very valuable to have. Local governments need to know why they should be using these tools.
 - Focus on the economics in the message.

Discussion: Development of Strategies

The group continued their discussion, facilitated by Jason. Participants responded to the following questions posed on the Q and A document:

- 1) What does a strategy to support "local governments' and others' efforts in reducing" land conversion rates by 2025 look like to you?
- 2) When should the strategy to support local government be developed and whose efforts should it direct?
- 3) What adaptive management approach should be used if the Bay Program Partnership notes that land conversion rates are not decreasing over time towards the 2025 goal listed in the Outcome?

- 4) Where does this Outcome fit within the range of priorities in the Bay Program?
- 5) How does this outcome add to work already underway?
- 6) How does this outcome differ from the Local Leadership Outcome? How does it overlap with other outcomes?

Comments and discussion points:

- When I read last sentence, “support” jumps out to me.
- I’m having trouble thinking about these questions because to me it’s a two-step process: i.e. you can’t develop strategies before completing an evaluation.
- How does this tie in with people doing riparian forest buffer strategies?
 - Our direction should complement other groups’ work/outcomes (e.g. Urban Tree Canopy).
 - This is not only for Agreement, also action plans (agriculture and wetlands), Executive Orders, and what states have put in WIPs. We need synergy.
- Another way to look at it is to have outside experts/organizations who work with communities interested in reducing conversion rates and help them, rather than recreate something that may or may not get traction.
- The outcome states “support local governments’ and others’ efforts”
- How can we support them?
 - Give them what they need.
 - Give them credit (TMDL, policy, economics)
- We need to give a hard look at existing programs/acts/policies.
- Is there existing information we can give now to local governments (Bay Program info, load changes, data?)
- We have to be real careful about mission creep, and stay focused on what our outcome is asking for.
- We want to do the same for healthy watersheds, i.e. build capacity for local leaders, and I think it’s not helpful to create several venues within each outcome focused on this. We can refer to other efforts’ in the strategy.
- How do folks feel about using the LU metrics outcome as part of the strategy?
 - I think it’s open enough to do that.
 - I am not sure how this would be taken by jurisdictions who are hostile towards this goal. But there are NGOs in these hostile areas who can help aid this.
 - I don’t think this metric should be the only tool.
- I think this management strategy would be incomplete if it didn’t recognize other drivers/policy that will need synergy with...e.g., Executive Order, WIPs, etc. don’t want to miss them or at least say that you recognize they exist.
- This management strategy is a multi-step process.
- It is a bit frustrating to know the information is there, but not accessible until 3 years from now. Is there any way we can get the information now?
 - How can we be more responsive with the public as the CBP? That is a need because there is a barrier.
 - I think the trick is to respond in kind but keep digging at what precisely people need to move forward.
 - In the end, facts don’t always matter. Think about the economics of this, place this in budget form. Local officials need that kind of information.

- Frame this management strategy as contribution or recommendation to the local leadership management strategy; or even to all management strategies.
- Issue to take to the Chesapeake Bay Program's Principals' Staff Committee: make sure management strategies are not disconnected, that they don't all look different.

Next Step: Jason will put an initial management strategy draft together by 12/15