**Chesapeake Bay Program**

**Management Board Meeting**

**February 11, 2016**

**Program Update**

**CBPO Calendar**

Feb 17-18 Citizens’ Advisory Committee meeting

Feb 18-19 Oyster Summit

Feb 25 STAR meeting

Mar 7-8 STAC workshop on Climate Change

Mar 7 End of Public Input on Workplans

Mar TBD PSC Meeting

Mar 15-16 STAC Quarterly Meeting

Mar 17 Draft Evaluations of 2016-2017 TMDL Milestone Submissions

Mar 24-25 LGAC meeting

**Updates**

**EPA decisions on Bay Jurisdictions’ Draft BMP Verification Program Plans**

On February 4, CBP Director Nick DiPasquale shared via email, to the partnership’s leadership and other stakeholders, EPA decisions on the Bay jurisdictions’ draft Chesapeake Bay BMP Verification Program Plans. EPA has approved the District of Columbia’s and Maryland’s BMP verification program plans and has conditionally approved Delaware’s, New York’s, Pennsylvania’s, Virginia’s and West Virginia’s revised draft BMP verification program plans. The District of Columbia and Maryland are cleared for award of their 2016 Chesapeake Bay Implementation (CBIG) and Chesapeake Bay Regulatory and Accountability Program (CBRAP) grants. EPA will continue to work directly with Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia to ensure they address remaining major comments shared in a final revised BMP verification program plan due back to EPA by March 4.

Contact: Nick DiPasquale, (410) 267-5710, [dipasquale.nicholas@epa.gov](mailto:dipasquale.nicholas@epa.gov)

**Public Input Sought on Draft CBP Watershed Workplans**

On January 22, the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership released, for public input, draft work plans pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement signed in 2014. The *two-year* workplanssuccinctly summarize the specific commitments, actions and resources each self-identified signatory and stakeholder will do individually and collectively to reach two-year targets for each outcome identified in the Watershed Agreement. The partnership’s Goal Implementation Teams have been crafting the work plans since the July 2015 release of their management strategies which give insight and provide broad, overarching direction to the partnership’s plans for reaching each outcome by 2025. The 45-day public input period ends March 8. The draft work plans are available at: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/managementstrategies>

Contact: Greg Barranco [(410) 267-5778](tel:(410)%20267-5778), [barranco.greg@epa.gov](mailto:barranco.greg@epa.gov)

**Bay Barometer: Health and Restoration in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed**

On February 3, CBP Director Nick DiPasquale took part in a media conference call as the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership released its annual “Bay Barometer.” This year’s Bay Barometer shows that many of our indicatiors are moving in the right direction. We are seeing positive results from our efforts to restore balance to an important ecosystem that has suffered decades of damage. There was extensive news coverage of the release and a news post on the partnership website <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/blog/post/chesapeake_bay_program_makes_measured_progress_toward_restoring_the_watersh> There is also a link to the report posted on the EPA resource directory webpage [Restoration of the Chesapeake Bay](http://www.epa.gov/restoration-chesapeake-bay) .

For more information contact Doreen Vetter (410) 267-5780, [vetter.doreen@epa.gov](mailto:vetter.doreen@epa.gov)

**Advisory Committee Updates**

**Local Government Advisory Committee**

*The purpose of the LGAC is to advise the Executive Council on how to effectively implement projects and engage the support of local governments to achieve the goals of the Bay Agreement.*

Contact: Mary Gattis, [mgattis@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:mgattis@allianceforthebay.org)

**Citizens’ Advisory Committee**

*The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is charged with responsibility for representing residents and stakeholders of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in the restoration effort and advising the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership on all aspects of restoration.*

The Citizens Advisory Committee will hold their winter meeting on February 17-18, 2016 in Alexandria, VA. The meeting theme is urban restoration and protection with a focus on Urban Tree Canopy. Additionally, CAC will continue to discuss oysters as BMPs, updates from Virginia, the Bay Program partnership, and the 2016 NFWF RFP.

Samples of some of the work that CAC members are contributing to:

Julie Lawson, DC CAC Member and Executive Director of Trash Free Maryland, is kicking off a 'Plastic Bag Fast' for Lent with a rally in Annapolis on Tuesday Feb 9 (Mardi Gras). They will have faith leaders from around the state coming to talk about the issue. This is in support of the Community Cleanup and Greening Act- legislation pending in the MD General Assembly to ban plastic shopping bags.

John Dawes, PA CAC Members and Executive Director of Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds, is funding the PA Environmental Council to help coordinate planting riparian buffers on abandoned mine lands in Bay watershed- in partnership with PA DCNR, Office of Mining and their Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative, and the nonprofit Green Forests Works. The project includes a volunteer coordination component. This Foundation grant program is in response to PA's new re-commitment to Bay restoration and their goal of increasing buffers through DCNR.

Contact: Jessica Blackburn, [jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org)

**Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee**

*The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) provides scientific and technical guidance to the Chesapeake Bay Program on measures to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay.*

**Quarterly Meetings:**

STAC will hold its fourth quarterly meeting of FY 2015 on March 15-16, 2016 at The Crowne Plaza Hotel (formerly the Sheraton) in Annapolis, Maryland.  Please direct any STAC quarterly meeting questions or inquiries to STAC staff, Renee Kelly at [kellyr@si.edu](mailto:kellyr@si.edu).

**Workshops:**

STAC hosted three workshops so far in 2016. Information regarding those workshop is below.

1. **Conowingo Infill Influence on Chesapeake Water Quality**

This workshop took place on January 13-14, 2016 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland. The objective of this workshop was to discuss the future status of the processes taking place in the Lower Susquehanna River reservoirs, so that we can predict how any particular future watershed- or reservoir-management approaches will impact the attainment of the Chesapeake Bay water quality criteria. The workshop participants discussed what would be the best approach to modeling the process by which inputs to the reservoirs are transformed into outputs in the past, current, and in future conditions. The workshop steering committee is in the process of drafting a workshop report that will be distributed in April.

1. **Linking Wetland Workplan Goals to Enhance Capacity, Increase Implementation**

This workshop took place on January 14, 2016 at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) in Edgewater, Maryland. The workshop identified ways to enhance the capacity of the CBP Wetland workgroup by facilitating a solution-oriented discussion with the workgroup and other key parties on the 2-year workplan for wetlands, key obstacles, potential opportunities to overcome those obstacles, and other parallel and related efforts. The objective was to demonstrate a pilot process on how other workgroups might similarly enhance their capacity to meet and implement their overall goals.

1. **Assessing Uncertainty in the CBP Modeling System**

This workshop took place on February 1-2, 2016 at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offices in Arlington, Virginia. This workshop developed approaches to assess uncertainty in the suite of CBP models to support the Mid-point Assessment of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). The workshop (1) explored and identified drivers of uncertainty in the Bay Program Partnership’s modeling system, structure, parameters, data, and assumptions; (2) assessed the available methods for conducting uncertainty analyses in the suite of models; and (3) developed recommendations and priorities for conducting uncertainty analysis of the models in support of the 2017 Mid-point Assessment model review.

**Upcoming Workshops:**

1. **Cracking the WIP: Designing an Optimization Engine to Guide Efficient Bay Implementation**

This workshop will to take place on February 17-18, 2016 at The O’Callaghan Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland. The goal of the workshop is to develop the requirements of an optimization engine that can simplify and guide Bay jurisdictions’ efforts to develop Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) and Milestones that minimize implementation costs while achieving the required reductions and maximizing co-benefits. The workshop will generate recommendations for the best optimization method, key objectives, decision variables, an appropriate means of accounting for (i.e., modeling) the spatial and temporal interactions that will influence their effect on outcomes, the range to necessary constraints, and other data needs for a Bay optimization system.

Finally, planning for three additional STAC workshops has been underway for several months. The workshops below will take place before May 31, 2016.

1. Integrating and Leveraging Monitoring Networks to Support the Assessment of Outcomes in the New Bay Agreement
2. Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making
3. The Development of Standardized Climate Projections for Use in Chesapeake Bay Program Assessments

For additional information about the workshops above, contact Rachel Dixon at [dixonra@si.edu](mailto:dixonra@si.edu) or visit the STAC workshop webpage at: <http://www.chesapeake.org/stac/stac_ws.php>.

**Reviews:**

STAC is currently sponsoring two review and planning for approximately six additional reviews. Details of those reviews are listed below.

1. **Microbeads/Microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay**

At the request of the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC), STAC sponsored a technical review panel to identify (1) sources of microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay, (2) known impacts of microplastics on aquatic life and human health, (3) data gaps, and (4) policy actions to reduce microplastics. The review panel has been gathering data and drafting a review report since early November. Due to new federal legislation, the review panel recently modified the scope of this review to further emphasize the issues. Former STAC Chair, Kirk Havens presented the preliminary findings to the CBC on January 7, 2016 at their quarterly meeting. A final report will be distributed mid-February.

1. **Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Criteria Addendum**

The CBP’s Criteria Assessment Protocol Workgroup (CAP WG), under the Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting Team (STAR), requested a STAC review of the CAP WG technical report “Ambient Water Quality Criteria for Dissolved Oxygen, Water Clarity and Chlorophyll a for the Chesapeake Bay and Its Tidal Tributaries 2015 Technical Addendum.” A review panel has been formed and an information session has been scheduled for February 12th. The review is scheduled to be completed in early 2016.

Additionally, STAC is working closely with CBP representatives to plan for the upcoming CBP Partnership requested STAC-sponsored independent scientific peer reviews. The remaining review requests are expected in the coming months. These STAC reviews will help inform the Partnership’s 2017 Mid-point Assessment. The list of upcoming reviews are below.

1. Proposed revised James River chlorophyll *a* water quality criteria
2. Application of WRTDS to watershed WQ trend analysis and explanation s and General Additive Models (GAMs) to estuarine WQ trend analysis and explanations
3. Chesapeake Bay Scenario Builder
4. Phase 6 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model
5. Chesapeake Bay Water Quality/Sediment Transport Model (WQSTM)
6. Approach being taken to factor climate change considerations into the 2017 Chesapeake Bay TMDL Midpoint Assessment

For more information regarding the reviews above, contact Natalie Gardner at gardnern@si.edu or visit the STAC review webpage at: [http://www.chesapeake.org/stac/stac\_rev.php](http://www.chesapeake.org/stac/stac_rev.php%20).

**Reports**:

STAC is in the process of finalizing three workshop reports.  Below is a list of reports that STAC plans to distribute in February.

1. Re-plumbing the Chesapeake Bay Watershed: Improving Roadside Ditch Management to Meet TMDL Water Quality Goals.
2. Evaluating Proprietary BMPs: Is it time for a State, Regional, or National Program?
3. Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making.

For additional information contact Natalie Gardner at [gardnern@si.edu](file:///C:\Users\gbarranc\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\D0G80XMY\gardnern@si.edu)

**Goal Implementation Team, STAR and Communication Workgroup Updates**

**Fisheries Goal Implementation Team**

*The Sustainable Fisheries GIT focuses on advancing ecosystem-based fisheries management by using science to make informed fishery management decisions that cross state boundaries.*

* The Fish Habitat Action Team is designing a project to build on previous work by TetraTech. Last year TetraTech developed a review and synthesis project on the habitat requirements for 13 lesser studied fish and shellfish species as part of a CBP contract with TetraTech to support the management strategies. Fish Habitat Team members will explore options to expand upon the previous project which will provide more habitat information and identify major stressor and threats to fish habitat in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
* The Sustainable Fisheries GIT hosted their semi-annual full GIT meeting on Monday, December 14th at the Chesapeake Biological Lab in Solomons, MD. The team reviewed oyster restoration progress, blue crab research, a study on forage indicators, blue catfish diet research, and other fisheries topics. The team provided feedback on the Sustainable Fisheries workplans in a poster session that also included two Vital Habitat workplans. A summary of the Full GIT meeting is available here and presentations can be found at this link.
* The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office is hosting an Oyster Summit on February 18th-19th 2016 in Fredericksburg, VA. The summit will convene a broad group of stakeholders, including managers, industry, scientists, nongovernmental organizations and community groups across jurisdictions to discuss shared interests in increasing the number of oysters in the Chesapeake Bay. The products form the Summit will include proposals from the Summit participants based on the discussions and presentation, as well as next steps for engaging stakeholders and building consensus around proposals.
* The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office and Fisheries GIT staff completed a comprehensive workshop report which includes information from the presentations of the Cownose Ray Workshop. The workshop brought together scientists, fisheries managers and other interested parties to characterize what is known about the life history and population dynamics of cownose rays into the Chesapeake Bay as well as fishing effort and ecosystem interactions. A summary of the research and scientists’ recommendations can be found here.
* The Sustainable Fisheries GIT has released the draft workplans for blue crab, oyster restoration, forage, and fish habitat to the public for review and input. The GIT will review this input as they finalize the workplans and submit them in April.

Contact: Bruce Vogt, [bruce.vogt@noaa.gov](mailto:bruce.vogt@noaa.gov)

**Habitat Goal Implementation Team**

*The Habitat GIT is restoring a network of land and water habitats to afford a range of public benefits and to support priority species.*

Contact: Jennifer Greiner, [Jennifer\_greiner@fws.gov](mailto:Jennifer_greiner@fws.gov)

**Water Quality Goal Implementation Team**

*The Water Quality GIT works to evaluate, focus and accelerates the implementation of practices, policies and programs that will restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries to conditions that support living resources and protect human health.*

**The WQGIT held a conference call on January 11th. A second call, scheduled for January 28th, was canceled due to inclement weather.**

* The WQGIT approved proposed changes to their Governance Protocols, which added language to address potential vacancies, as well as to further clarify the selection process and term limits for at-large members.
* The WQGIT approved the Land Use Workgroup’s proposed membership definition.
* The WQGIT approved the Algal Flow Way Technology BMP expert panel report. Approval was contingent upon the inclusion of additional language on the influent loading assumptions, and clarification in the technical appendix regarding how land uses should be reported.
* The WQGIT discussed the timeline for the completion of ongoing BMP expert panels and potential implications of changes to the timeline.

**The WQGIT will hold conference calls on February 8th and February 22nd. A subset of the topics include:**

* Review and approve a revision to the current tree canopy and forest mapping protocols.
* Review and approve the street cleaning and storm drain cleaning BMP expert panel report.
* Receive an update from the Oyster BMP expert panel on a potential crediting framework.
* Review and approve the Phase III WIP Stakeholder Assessment Action Plan.
* Discuss a proposed charge and schedule for convening an ad-hoc Task Force with cross-sector representation that will frame out the options for a WQGIT recommendation regarding the development of local area targets for the Phase III WIPs.

Contact: Lucinda Power, [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto:power.lucinda@epa.gov)

**Federal Facilities Workgroup**

Contact: Greg Allen, [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov)

**Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team**

*The goal of the Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT 4) is to maintain local watershed health across a range of landscape contexts. With this goal, GIT 4 intends to bring attention to the challenge of protecting streams and watersheds that are healthy today.  This initiative complements the "dirty waters" approach which focuses on restoring impaired waters.*

Workplan Development:

* The Healthy Watersheds, Land Use Options Evaluation, and Land Use Methods and Metrics Workplans, which are overseen by the GIT, are currently available for public input through March 7th. The GIT is reaching out to those who might be interested in providing feedback.
* The GIT’s two FY15 Projects – Demonstrating the Value of Retaining Forestland in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (Phase II); and, Evaluation of Land Use Policy Options, Incentives, and Planning Tools to Reduce the Rate of Conversion of Agriculture Lands, Forest and Wetlands – have received a number of proposals which are currently being reviewed. The Chesapeake Bay Trust will complete the subaward process in the near future and GIT technical leads will met with awardees to commence the projects.

Contact: Tuana Phillips, [Phillips.tuana@epa.gov](mailto:Phillips.tuana@epa.gov)

**Foster Stewardship Goal Implementation Team**

*The Fostering Stewardship GIT promotes individual stewardship, supports environmental education for all ages, and assists citizens, communities and local governments in undertaking* *initiatives to achieve restoration and conservation in the Chesapeake region. It aims to build public support of restoration efforts and increase citizen engagement and active stewardship.*

**Citizen Stewardship**

* The Citizen Stewardship workgroup is completing a field test an index that will provide a metrics for the citizen stewardship outcome. The workgroup will be meeting March 1st to discuss preliminary results from the field test as well as discussing the goals and directions for the workgroup. Please contact Amy Handen at [Amy\_Handen@nps.gov](mailto:Amy_Handen@nps.gov) for more information.

**Environmental Literacy**

* Current workgroup efforts include planning an April meeting with the Chiefs of Education from each jurisdiction as well as representation from the U.S. Department of Education to discuss the importance of creating and sustaining high-quality environmental literacy programming as part of their ongoing education reforms across subject areas. Please contact Shannon Sprague at [Shannon.Sprague@noaa.gov](mailto:Shannon.Sprague@noaa.gov) for more information.

**Public Access**

* The Public Access team is continuing to make progress on the Public Access site development Workplan, as well as preparing for the development of the Public Access Data Quality Assurance and Application Integration project. The group has collected data on new access sites developed in 2015 and is in the process of compiling the data to get a final indicator report. For more information please contact John Davy at [John\_Davy@nps.gov](mailto:John_Davy@nps.gov).

**Land Conservation**

* Several Partnership work groups convened in January to discuss topics including land trust capacity building, developing a coordinated approach to address mitigation of infrastructure projects, and developing landscape scale conservation goals. These meetings (all held via conference call) built on progress generated at the Annual Meeting in October 2015. The Partnership's steering committee is currently nominating new members and plans to convene in Spring 2016.
* The Protected Lands work plan received several additional contributing actions from partners in early January before the draft was released for public comment. For more information contact Kate Baker [kbaker@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:kbaker@chesapeakeconservancy.org)

**Enhance Partnering, Leadership, and Management Goal Implementation Team**

*The goal of the Enhance Partnering, Leadership, and Management GIT is to continually improve the governance and management of the CBP Partnership.*

The work plan for the Local Leadership outcome was posted for public comment by the GIT’s Local Leadership workgroup. While the workgroup awaits comments more planning is underway for coordinating with the other GITs to determine priority issues where local leader engagement is critical. The Management Board recently endorsed formation of a new Budget and Finance (B&F) workgroup. The GIT is planning the formation and launch of the B&F workgroup so that work can begin to prepare for the financial reporting required by the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act due in Fall 2016. The GIT is staying closely connected to the developing ChesapeakeStat suite of tools and participating in the design work as well as helping to envision how the tools will be used to adaptively manage the CBP’s strategies over time. Our superb and long-standing chair Mike Foreman VaDEQ has announced he will step down in April so efforts are underway to identify a replacement.

Contact: Greg Allen, [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov)

**Scientific, Technical Assessment, and Reporting Team**

*The purpose of STAR (Scientific, Technical Analysis and Reporting) is to facilitate productive deployment of scientific resources, to provide timely, quality information to managers, and to expand communication between workgroups.*

**Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Criteria Addendum**

The CBP’s Criteria Assessment Protocol Workgroup (CAP WG), under the Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting Team (STAR), requested a STAC review of the CAP WG technical report “Ambient Water Quality Criteria for Dissolved Oxygen, Water Clarity and Chlorophyll a for the Chesapeake Bay and Its Tidal Tributaries 2015 Technical Addendum.” A review panel has been formed and an information session is being scheduled for mid-January. The review is scheduled to be completed in early 2016.

**Integrated Monitoring Networks Workshop**

STAR Leadership in cooperation with the Integrated Networks Workgroup (INWG) is coordinating with STAC planning a spring 2016 integrated monitoring networks workshop. The workshop is looking to use a single geographic region and several outcomes to provide a process that produces an integrated monitoring plan across the needs of multiple outcomes in that local region as a pilot to addressing larger spatial scales and additional outcomes.

**Citizen Science Project Data Classification Framework**

The Citizen Science Project Team has developed a 3-tiered data classification framework over the last 6-months for use with citizen science and nontraditional partner data by the CBP. The framework has been supported by the Data Integrity Workgroup, INWG and STAR. The framework will be presented to the WQGIT and a summary of the Citizen Science project work to date, a schedule of milestones, and the framework is anticipated for the Management Board in the near future.

**Upcoming STAC Climate Change Projection and Scenarios Workshop**

STAC will be holding a workshop in March 2016 to establish recommendations on selecting a suite of climate change projections and scenarios to be used in Chesapeake Bay Assessments, including the Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Sediment Transport Model.

**FY16 STAC Responsive Workshop Proposals with STAR Leadership Support**

Proposals were submitted for 1) Quantifying Ecosystem Services and Co-Benefits of Nutrient and Sediment Reducing BMPs (WQGIT and STAR), 2) Understanding and Explaining 30+ Years of Water Clarity Trends in the Bay’s Tidal Waters (WGGIT, Vital Habitats GIT, Partnership, Leadership and Mgt GIT, STAR, Chesapeake Bay Commission) and 3) a spring 2017 workshop to examine the monitoring needs and trends analyses to assess potential effects of climate change and adaptively manage for multiple outcome targets (e.g. bay grasses, blue crab, oysters) (Climate Change Workgroup, STAR) .

Contact: Peter Tango, [ptango@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:ptango@chesapeakebay.net)

**Communications Workgroup**

*The Communications Workgroup provides strategic planning and expert advice to support the communication needs of the Chesapeake Bay Program partners, and spur public action through consistent messaging, expanded media coverage, use of multimedia and online tools, comprehensive branding and promotion, outreach to stakeholders, and coordinated internal and external communications.*

Contact: Joan Smedinghoff, [jsmedinghoff@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:jsmedinghoff@chesapeakebay.net)

**Recent Meetings and Events**

Jan 15 Draft 2016-2017 Milestones due to EPA

Jan 15 MB comments on draft work plans due to GITs

Jan 21 Phase 3 WIP stakeholder assessment

Jan 22 Draft workplans released for public input

Jan 28 STAR Meeting

Feb TBD CBP Chesapeake Progress website launch

Feb 2 (tent) Release of 2015 Bay Barometer

Feb 9 (tent) Chesapeake Progress website launch