



**Chesapeake Bay Program
Management Board
Program Update
January 21, 2021**

CBPO Calendar

Jan. 21	Agricultural Workgroup Conference Call
Jan. 22	Chesapeake Conservation Partnership Steering Committee Meeting
Jan. 25	Water Quality Goal Implementation Team Conference Call
Jan. 27	Budget and Finance Workgroup Quarterly Meeting
Jan. 27	Climate Resiliency Workgroup Meeting
Jan. 28	Joint C/S-STAR Meeting
Jan. 28	SRS Dry Runs for Local Action Cohort
Jan. 28	BMP Verification Ad Hoc Action Team Conference Call
Jan. 28	Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management GIT Follow Up Meeting
Feb. 2	Wastewater Treatment Workgroup Conference Call
Feb. 3	Forestry Workgroup Meeting
Feb. 3	Communications Workgroup Meeting
Feb. 3	Land Use Workgroup Conference Call
Feb. 4	Watershed Technical Workgroup Conference Call
Feb. 8	Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT Meeting
Feb. 10	Toxic Contaminants Workgroup Conference Call
Feb. 11	Management Board Quarterly Progress Meeting
Feb. 11	BMP Verification Ad Hoc Action Team Conference Call

Program Updates

Evaluation of Draft Conowingo WIP; Public Comment Period Ends

EPA is preparing an evaluation of the Draft Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan (CWIP), now that the public comment period concluded on Wednesday, January 20. The Conowingo WIP was developed collaboratively by a steering committee consisting of representatives from the Chesapeake Bay Commission and each Chesapeake Bay watershed jurisdiction and supported by the Center for Watershed Protection and EPA. The CWIP identifies actions to be taken by each of the watershed jurisdictions to reduce the additional nitrogen and phosphorus pollution resulting from the inability of the reservoir behind the dam to trap pollutants from flowing downstream into the Bay. The CWIP is the first phase in this effort and will be followed by a detailed financing strategy.

Contact: Lucinda Power, 410-267-5722

EPA Evaluation of NY Amended WIP

EPA issued an evaluation of New York State's amended draft Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) on January 7. The evaluation identified sector-by-sector strengths in the revised commitments as well as areas that could be enhanced to provide greater confidence the projected reductions will be

achieved by 2025. The evaluation was posted on the Bay TMDL website at:
<https://www.epa.gov/chesapeake-bay-tmdl>

Review of Water Quality Milestones

EPA plans to conduct check-in meetings regarding current Jurisdictional and Federal partners milestones progress in the January-March 2021 timeframe. Written progress report for the two-year milestones were expected by January 15. There are three types of 2020-2021 milestones impacted: 1) numeric 2) programmatic and 3) best management practice (BMP)-specific. Per the CBPO Grant Guidance, the numeric progress is due December 1 of each year.

For more information, contact: Greg Allen, allen.greg@epa.gov; or Suzanne Trevena, trevena.suzenne@epa.gov.

CBF Issues State of the Bay Report

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) issued its biennial *State of the Bay* report on January 5, providing overall assessment of D+. It is the same grade but one point lower than the 2018 assessment – largely due to “ineffective management of striped bass” as opposed to water quality concerns. For a copy of the report: <https://www.cbf.org/about-the-bay/state-of-the-bay-report/index.html>

Deputy Director James Edward Retired

CBPO Deputy Director Jim Edward retired from the EPA on Jan. 2 after nearly 42 years of federal service. In his 12 years at the Bay Program Office, Jim played a central role in the major developments and agreements that have driven progress in the Bay watershed. He served a lead role in coordinating activities between EPA and other federal agencies and worked with state and local authorities to develop strategies to improve water quality and conserve living resources across the watershed. Jim served as CBPO Acting Director during the development of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. He also had a leadership role in the development and implementation of Executive Order 13508 Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and the Chesapeake Watershed Agreement, and he was instrumental in actions leading to the Executive Council’s statement and related commitments in support of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice. Jim’s first five years of federal service were with Department of Interior’s Wilderness Program. He came to EPA in 1984, working at EPA headquarters on federal facilities, water programs and pollution prevention. Before coming to the Bay Program he was Director of OECA’s Compliance Assistance Division.

Bill Jenkins, who previously served as Acting Deputy Director of the Bay Program Office has returned to again to that position as a temporary sidestep from his current position as a Senior Advisor in the EPA Region 3 Laboratory Services and Applied Science Division. Bill also currently serves as the co-chair of the Habitat Goal Team and will continue in that role during this detail. He has more than 30 years of experience with varied program development, implementation and management; writing legislation, regulations and policies; data collection, analysis and decision support tool development; and developing and delivering training, education and communication materials at the federal, state and local government level, and in the private sector.

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.

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LGAC is preparing the agenda for the next quarterly meeting March 18-19. This is the annual meeting where elections occur, by-law revisions are considered and priorities are identified. Chair Ann Simonetti participated in the December 17, 2020 PSC meeting representing LGAC Members. LGAC welcomes Governor Hogan appointee Joshua A. Hastings, Councilmember, Wicomico County to the Maryland delegation.

LGAC still seeks a New York representative.

Questions about LGAC activities should be directed to LGAC Coordinator Jennifer Starr at jjstarr@allianceforthebay.org. To be added to the Interested Parties list, please contact LGAC Staff at lgac@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 CAC held their quarterly meeting virtually on Dec 3-4. The agenda included: a briefing on Virginia's leadership of the PSC and EC; a panel discussion on Chesapeake Bay Congressional Priorities for the next Congress and new Administration; a presentation on the draft Conowingo WIP and stakeholder perspectives, and Chesapeake Bay Program updates.

Action Items from the CAC meeting include sending a letter to President-Elect Biden highlighting three key Chesapeake Bay issues for his Administration consider: (1) Federal Leadership: reconvening the Federal Leadership Committee created under the Obama Administration's Chesapeake Bay Executive Order and reinstating the position of Special Assistant to the EPA Administrator on the Chesapeake Bay and Anacostia River that was created under President Obama and terminated by the Trump Administration; (2) requesting the highest possible levels of funding for all Federal agencies working on the Chesapeake Bay and to make major investments in clean water infrastructure in any initiative to rebuild America's infrastructure, (3) reversing the past four years of rollbacks in environmental regulations that protect the health of the people and the environment and Federal regulatory and enforcement agencies be adequately staffed and directed to utilize the full range of tools: inspections; monitoring; evaluations; equity assessments; and vigorous enforcement of existing laws.

CAC is also working on comments for the draft Conowingo WIP.

The CAC will be onboarding a new cohort of members throughout January and February.

- Daphne Pee, Diversity and Engagement Researcher, MD
- Brenna Goggin, Leadership Development Manager, River Network, DE

- Xavier Brown, DC Department of Parks and Recreation; Black Dirt Farm Collective, DC
- BeKura Shabazz, Life After Release; Out for Justice; First Alliance Consulting Group, VA

There are still 2 PA gubernatorial vacancies, 3 MD gubernatorial vacancies and 1 DC mayoral vacancy.

The CAC officers are Julie Lawson (DC), Chair and Ann Jurczyk (VA), Vice-Chair.

The next CAC meeting will be held virtually on Feb 25 and 26, 2021.

To be added to CAC's Interested Parties List, please contact: Adam Bray abray@allianceforthebay.org
for program questions, contact Jessica Blackburn jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

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.

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

For any inquiries, or to be added to STAC's Interested Parties list, contact STAC Coordinator, Annabelle Harvey (harveya@chesapeake.org)

Visit the STAC website at www.chesapeake.org/stac

FY2021 STAC Workshop RFP

STAC released the FY2021 STAC Workshop Request for Proposals on December 1st. Proposals are due to STAC Coordinator, Annabelle Harvey by February 16th, 2021.

[STAC FY2021 Workshop RFP](#)

STAC December Quarterly Meeting

STAC held its final meeting for 2020 on December 14-15, 2020 over Zoom. STAC received updates from the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). All three advisory committees have continued to improve communication and collaboration, and this update gave STAC an overview of the committees' current priorities and projects. Representatives from CBP leads of the Clean Water SRS Cohort provided STAC with the latest science needs for discussion and received feedback on filling these gaps from the membership. Along with this presentation, Breck Sullivan (CRC, STAR) gave a preview of the new Science Needs Database, which will allow STAC members to easily engage with the CBP science needs.

In STAC's continued effort to better communicate with decision-makers and the public, Caitlyn Johnstone and Rachel Felter (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Communications Workgroup) presented the various tools and products that the CBP Communications Workgroup can assist with developing for various STAC efforts. Day 1 wrapped up with a presentation from Rebecca Murphy (UMCES) and the CBP Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT) on the tidal water quality long-term trend data. Day 2 of the meeting was dedicated to reviewing drafted sections and identifying key messages of the STAC Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR—formerly SGA).

Materials and presentations from the December meeting can be found on the [STAC December Webpage](#).

STAC 2021 Quarterly Meeting Dates

STAC has approved the following dates for their 2021 Quarterly Meetings. All meetings are planned to be virtual, but STAC Staff will continue to monitor the possibility of in-person meetings in 2021.

March 23-24, 2021

June 15-16, 2021

September 13-14, 2021

December 7-8, 2021

STAC-Sponsored Workshops

STAC released an RFP for FY2020 workshops in December 2019 and received 3 proposals. During the March quarterly meeting STAC members reviewed the initial scores and comments and voted to approve the 3 proposals. Proposals #2 and #3 were conditionally approved, with the expectation that the workshop proposers will differentiate and coordinate between the two, with assistance from STAC Staff and Gary Shenk. After meetings with proposal leads to facilitate coordination, Proposals #2 and #3 were approved. An additional proposal was submitted for review at the June meeting and Proposal #4 was approved. Planning for all workshops is currently underway, with all considering the potential of virtual or partially virtual workshops.

- 1. Understanding Genetics for Successful Conservation and Restoration of Resilient Chesapeake Bay Brook Trout Populations**
- 2. Advancing Outreach Effectiveness to Improve Conservation Practice Adoption**
January 26-28, 2021, Virtual
This workshop will foster interactive discussions among farmers, outreach practitioners, and experts in behavioral economics to improve outreach capacity and address farmer concerns about conservation practice adoption. Along with funding partners from the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR), The Nature Conservancy, and the Walton Family Foundation, this STAC virtual workshop will utilize facilitation to best understand barriers to implementation of agricultural practices and to provide guidance to overcome these barriers to reach restoration targets.
- 3. Overcoming the Hurdle: Addressing BMP Implementation Through a Social Science Lens**
- 4. Assessing the Water Quality, Habitat, and Social Benefits to Green Riprap**

STAC Reports

Upcoming Reports:

STAC is working to finalize the following six reports. Information regarding workshops held prior to January 2018 can be found on the [STAC archived workshop homepage](#). STAC Staff and the Executive

Board are working with leads of reports from prior to FY2018 to potentially produce fact sheets or other products that would quicken the process of getting recommendations out to the Partnership.

1. Linking Wetland Workplan Goals to Enhance Capacity, Increase Implementation (FY2015)
2. Assessing Uncertainty in the CBP Modeling System (FY2015)
3. Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making (FY2015)
4. An Analytical Framework for Aligning Chesapeake Bay Program Monitoring Efforts to Support Climate Change (FY2016)
5. Chesapeake Bay Program Climate Change Modeling 2.0 (FY2018)
6. Linking In-Field and Edge-of-Field Water Management to Soil and Watershed Health (FY2019)
7. Incorporating Freshwater Mussels in the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership (FY2019)
8. Satellite Image Integration for the Chesapeake Bay SAV Monitoring Program (FY2019)

Several workshop steering committees are in the process of drafting activity reports and other workshop outcomes that will be distributed to the Partnership over the next few months. More information on recent workshop reports can be found on the [STAC past workshop webpage](#).

STAC Recommendations Database

Development of the CBP requested STAC Recommendations Database has continued to make substantial progress this quarter. STAC staff has tagged each recommendation with key words and categories, organized by the CBP Goal Implementation Team and workgroup structure. The CBP Data Team has released the test site, which is fully functional and is under Beta-testing by STAC members until February 2021. STAC Staff will then release the website to partners and present its functionality at various partner meetings throughout the beginning of 2021. The test website can be found [here](#).

STAC-sponsored Reviews of the Plastic Pollution Action Team Products:

In November 2019, EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board approved the formation of a Plastics Pollution Action Team (PPAT) to address the emerging and growing concerns of microplastics in the watershed. More specifically, the PPAT was asked to assist in implementing the following recommendations resulting from the April 2019 workshop, Microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay and its Watershed: State of the Knowledge, Data Gaps, and Relationship to Management Goals:

- The Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting Team should incorporate development of ERAs of microplastics into the CBP strategic science and research framework, and the Plastic Pollution Action Team should oversee the development of the Ecological Risk Assessments (ERAs) focused on assessment of microplastic pollution on multiple living resource endpoints.
- STAC should undertake a technical review of terminology used in microplastic research, specifically size classification and concentration units, and recommend uniform terminology for the CBP partners to utilize in monitoring and studies focused on plastic pollution in the bay and watershed.

In support of these recommendations, the PPAT is currently overseeing the preparation of an Ecological Risk Assessment of microplastics in the Potomac River and creation of a Terminology document

currently being performed by a third party. Both products were requested to be reviewed under two STAC-sponsored Reviews.

1. **Terminology Document Technical Review:** The contractor, Tetra Tech, is currently under contract with US EPA Region III to develop a uniform size classification and concentration unit terminology for microplastics and a Preliminary Ecological Risk Assessment. The Chesapeake Bay Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) has been formally requested by both US EPA Region III and the Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board to provide a Technical Review of the report (Standardization of Terminology Recommendations for Microplastic Ecological Risk Assessments in the Chesapeake Bay and its Watershed, hereafter referred to as the Terminology Document). The review team has completed the draft review report and it is in final development stages with STAC Staff and the STAC Executive Secretary, Denise Wardrop (CRC Executive Director).
2. **Phase II ERA Merit Rapid Response Review:** STAC convened a panel on November 11, 2020 to conduct a Rapid Response Technical Review. By design, these Rapid Response Technical Review advisories involve a limited number of individuals, occur in relatively short time frames, and generate concise and focused reports. The panel reviewed the following documents provided by the PPAT: Phase II: Preliminary Ecological Risk Assessment Conceptual Model for Striped Bass Exposure to Microplastics; Microplastics Ecological Risk Assessment: Phase II Model. Powerpoint presentation by Bob Murphy and Jennifer Flippin (Tetra Tech Center for Ecological Studies) and Ryan Woodland, University of Maryland, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory; Developing a Preliminary Conceptual Ecological Risk Assessment Model and Science Strategy for Microplastics in the Potomac River. Quality Assurance Project Plan prepared for US Environmental Protection Agency. Tetra Tech July 10, 2020.

STAC Synthesis Update

The STAC-sponsored Science Synthesis project continues progress and in September, due to COVID-related setbacks, Jeremy Testa (UMCES, lead PI) requested a no cost extension (NCE). Details can be found below in Testa's rationale. The STAC EB approved the NCE during their November 2020 meeting.

Research Activity and Progress (*Jeremy Testa, UMCES*): Despite of our delayed research activity, we plan to continue to present our progress to the Chesapeake Bay Program so that lessons learned from our synthesis can be communicated to the restoration partnership as early as possible. In fact, we hope the frequency of our presentations to the CBP will communicate our findings to the community in a similar timeframe as originally proposed, or envisioned. We have already made two oral presentations at the Chesapeake Bay Modeling workgroup Quarterly Meetings in May and July 2020, and we are committed to making two additional presentations in fall 2020 and winter 2021. Since our last update in April 2020, we have continued our statistical analysis (CART, GAM) to determine climate and biogeochemical controls on daily oxygen depletion metrics, (b) computing metrics of ecosystem metabolism (e.g. primary production, respiration) from each station's oxygen time series, and (c) assembling and collating the data necessary to perform these analyses.

For any inquiries, or to be added to STAC's Interested Parties list, contact STAC Coordinator, Annabelle Harvey (harveya@cheapeake.org)

Visit the STAC website at www.chesapeake.org/stac
Contact: Katheryn Barnhart, Barnhart.Katheryn@epa.gov

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 Fisheries Goal Team hosted a successful virtual membership meeting over the last three days.
 - The first day of presentations focused on workgroup and outcome updates, calling attention to some great developments from our Oyster Team, Forage Team, Fish Habitat Team, Blue Crab Stock Assessment Committee, and Invasive Catfish Workgroup.
 - Day two highlighted ongoing fisheries and habitat science research being funded by NOAA Chesapeake Bay and Bay Program offices. Much of this research helps to accomplish actions and strategies outlined in the Forage and Fish Habitat Outcomes.
 - Day three focused on connecting environmental observations to living resources management. Details about emerging telemetry networks, hypoxia monitoring, and State of the Ecosystem products queued up an exciting conversation about management implications and how these efforts can provide useful information for the bay's stakeholders.
 - A summary and list of written updates will be distributed in the coming weeks. Stay tuned.
- The Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee convened for a conversation focused on underlying mechanisms of gear efficiency differences. MDNR and VIMS have designed a paired tow comparison study that can be implemented annually to better understand gear efficiency differences between the MD and VA Blue Crab winter dredge survey vessels. The Committee also began dialogue about choosing a new chair to lead the CBSAC.

Contact: Bruce Vogt; bruce.vogt@noaa.gov

Habitat Goal Implementation Team

The Habitat GIT works to restore a network of land and water habitats to afford a range of public benefits and to support priority species.

- At the November 12th Quarterly Progress meeting, the Wetland Workgroup and Black Duck Action Team jointly requested MB support in securing capacity and funding for a short-term Living Resource Data Manager to help address issues related to wetland restoration and enhancement tracking in the watershed model, as well as other living resources. The workgroup chairs provided a proposal detailing the work and funding required, which will be discussed at the January MB meeting.
- The Habitat GIT is developing an Action Plan based on the outcomes of the Fall 2020 meeting.

- The Wetland Workgroup held its bi-monthly meeting on December 15th. The agenda featured a presentation from MD DNR on beaver management as a wetland restoration practice, an update on the proposed changes to wetland classification and other mapping updates, and discussions related to SRS and a STAC workshop proposal.
- The Black Duck Action Team has recently added a co-chair position, which will be filled by Alicia Berlin (USGS).

Habitat GIT Contact: Julianna Greenberg and Megan Ossmann
(greenberg.julianna@epa.gov; ossman.megan@epa.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 cancelled its December 28, 2020 conference call.

The WQGIT will hold a conference call on January 25, 20201. A subset of topics to be discussed includes:

- At- Large Nominees for 2021
- Annual Tidal Water Quality Trends
- New Fact Sheet on Nutrient Trends and Drivers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed
- Usefulness of Optimization Methods in Practical Problem Solving

Contact: Lucinda Power, power.lucinda@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.

HWGIT will be meeting on [Monday, February 8](#) to continue review of the Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment projects and LUOE SRS materials. Staff are continuing to coordinate with the LLWG on implementing the [CBP Local Engagement Strategy](#) to help translate and deliver key resources and information to local elected officials. Concluding the protected lands projects, staff coordinated with the Maryland protected lands data team to provide resources and support for mapping best practices. The team will be expanding the protected lands indicator project to the whole watershed under a cooperative agreement with USGS and NPS Chesapeake office. HWGIT are continuing work with Tetra Tech developing the strategy and data source identification for the MDHWA. Coordinator and staffer are also supporting the development of a STAC workshop proposal on rising water temperatures.

Contact: Renee Thompson; rtompson@chesapeakebay.net

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.

Chesapeake Conservation Partnership

- The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership is preparing for it's upcoming Steering Committee Meeting on January 22nd from 10am-3pm where members will discuss recommendations that emerged from the CCP Annual Meeting last fall.
- The workgroup continues to add Chesapeake Conservation Success Stories to its new platform success.chesapeakeconservation.org. Management Board Members can email Olivia Wisner (wisnero@chesapeake.org) if they have a Conservation Success Story that they'd like to be developed.
- The CCP is proceeding with the FY20 GIT Funded Project titled "Developing Standards and Metrics to Target the Conservation of 'Green Spaces' in Diverse and Low – Income Urban Communities".

Citizen Stewardship Team

- The Citizen Stewardship workgroup is proceeding with the FY20 GIT Funded Project titled "Chesapeake Bay Program Social Science Assessment and Integration Road Map Development" which will determine ways to strategically integrate social science into the Chesapeake Bay Program.
- The Stewardship workgroup has continued work on the web-based tool to house and promote the use of the stewardship index data set. This project (generously supported by GIT funding) will ensure the development of a hub for social science tools and information for the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Education Workgroup

Since its Quarterly Progress Meeting in May, the Education Workgroup has been updating the Logic and Action Plans for the Student, Sustainable Schools, and Planning Outcomes of the 2014 Watershed Agreement. The updated plans were available for public feedback and will be before the Management Board at the Jan meeting.

- The Education Workgroup continues to develop the Regional Outdoor Learning Network (ROLN). ROLN aims to 1) increase communication across partners and local implementation networks to support environmental literacy, including more and better designed MWEEs and 2) increase the number of teacher-supported systemic environmental literacy programs occurring in priority school districts.
- The Education Workgroup is working to finalize the [CBW Public School Stream BMP Evaluation Tool](#). This map tool provides information to help identify and prioritize public schools within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that have the greatest need for Best Management Practice installations taking into consideration stream health, environmental literacy, and equity considerations. The Stroud Water Research Center developed this online map tool, in cooperation with the Chesapeake Bay Program Education Workgroup and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office.
- The Education Workgroup has been working closely with the Chesapeake Bay Program Web Team to update elements of baybackpack.com, an Environmental Literacy teaching resource for formal and non-formal educators in the watershed.

Public Access

- The Public Access Workgroup put out its annual call for data to track public access site development in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
- The Public Access Workgroup is proceeding with the FY20 GIT Funded Project titled “Public Access Research - Benefits and Barriers Across the Watershed” which will determine how residents in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed utilize public access sites and what barriers prevent traditionally underserved populations from utilizing public access sites.

Fostering Stewardship contact: Olivia Wisner; wisnero@chesapeake.org

Diversity Workgroup

The Diversity Workgroup will be having our first all member meeting of the new year in February. We will have an official date for that next week. Additionally, we will be sending out our co-chair position description next week to find Jim's replacement as chair of the WG. We will be soliciting self-nominations for the position. The steering committee will be involved in reviewing nominees and throughout the selection process. We are hoping to find someone by the end of February. Lastly, Tuana and I have been working with other GITs to integrate DEIJ into their work and projects.

Diversity workgroup contact: Tuana Phillips; phillips.tuana@epa.gov

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.

Chesapeake Bay Program Strategy Review System

ChesapeakeDecisions was launched in July 2019 in support of the Strategy Review System (SRS). [ChesapeakeDecisions](#) is a tool that promotes transparency and guides the Chesapeake Bay Program's [Goal Implementation Teams \(GITs\) and Management Board members](#) through the Strategy Review System; a structured process that applies adaptive management to our work toward the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. All SRS documents, including schedules and materials relating to Quarterly Progress Meetings, can be found on ChesapeakeDecisions.

The Local Action cohort is the final cohort to go through the current SRS cycle (2nd cycle). Their Quarterly Progress Meeting (QPM) will take place on February 11, 2021. The SRS Planning Team and Biennial Meeting Planning Team are in the process of planning for the Biennial Meeting (May 2021) and 3rd SRS cycle (Summer 2021). Contact: Doreen Vetter, vetter.doreen@epa.gov

Quarterly GIT 6 Meeting – Winter 2020

The GIT 6 Spring Quarterly Meeting will take place on March 17, 2021 as a conference call. Agenda topics will include: Strategy Review System (SRS) 3rd Cycle Planning updates, Governance Document Action Team (GDAT) updates, and workgroup updates. Contact: Dave Goshorn (Chair), david.goshorn@maryland.gov; or Carin Bisland (Vice Chair), bisland.carin@epa.gov.

FY 2020 and 2021 GIT Funding

The FY20 RFP open advertisement period ends on January 22, 2021. External reviews will take place in February 2021 and awards to winning bidders will go out in March 2021. FY21 process/planning discussions are underway. Contact: Greg Allen (Coordinator), allen.greg@epa.gov

Budget and Finance Workgroup

The Budget and Finance Workgroup (BFWG) Winter Quarterly Meeting will take place on January 27, 2021 as a conference call. Agenda topics will include budget impacts (as a result of COVID-19), CWSRF follow-up discussion updates, Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion (DEIJ), and restoration economy action item updates. Contact: Bill Jenkins (Co-Chair), jenkins.bill@epa.gov; Dr. Elliott Campbell (Co-Chair), elliott.campbell@maryland.gov; or Michelle Guck (Coordinator), guck.michelle@epa.gov

Local Leadership Workgroup

The Local Leadership Workgroup (LLWG) Winter Quarterly Meeting will take place on February 23, 2021 as a conference call. Agenda topics will include: the impacts of COVID-19 on local governments and Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion (DEIJ). Contact: Laura Cattell Noll (Coordinator), lnoll@allianceforthebay.org; Matt Pennington (Chair), MPennington@region9wv.com; or Shannon Moore (Vice Chair), SMoore@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

GIT 6 Contact: Chantal Madray, madray.chantal@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.

STAR

The December STAR meeting focused on three major items: (1) science needs of the Climate Change and Resiliency cohort, (2) potential ideas for STAC workshop proposals, and (3) communication opportunities. The Climate Change and Resiliency cohort includes CBP outcomes for the Wetlands, Black Duck m and Climate Monitoring and Assessment & Climate Adaptation. The updated science needs from this cohort will be reflected in the CBP Strategic Science and Research Framework (SSRF). There was also a presentation on a new database that has been developed to support the SSRF. The GITs also identified potential ideas for STAC workshop proposals, which are due on Feb 16. In STAR will host a presentation from STAC describing what makes a successful workshop proposal. Finally, STAR identified new science products that may be of interest to the CBP Communications Team, and was introduced to their new staffer Marisa Baldine. For additional information on STAR workgroup activities see our latest [newsletter](#).

Data Integrity Workgroup (DIWG)

The Monitoring Program Networks are following CDC protocols to continue monitoring efforts. They are able to accomplish almost everything they were doing prior to the pandemic. In the DIWG held on December 2nd, they discussed a potential STAC proposal for updating the Tidal monitoring and assessment program. Peter Tango is leading the STAC proposal effort to help the monitoring capacity issue which is influencing the Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring Outcome. The workgroup also discussed the new advancement in Continuous Water Quality Monitoring and gave a 2020 summer hypoxia update. The Chesapeake Bay had the second least amount of hypoxia this

summer on record, and only one cruise had above average hypoxia. This was the late July cruise, and it was the hottest July on Maryland record. The hypoxia for 2020 seems to follow the forecast. [Here](#) is a Press Release from the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP). The DIWG is planning to meet in March of 2021.

Criteria Assessment Protocol (CAP) Workgroup

The Criteria Assessment Protocol Workgroup met in November 2020. The next meeting is being scheduled for February 2021 to include topics of 1) the Maryland's Fishing Bay case study on monitoring and assessment of all applicable criteria in all designated uses, study design considerations, 2) Review a STAC Workshop Proposal under development on advancing monitoring for all applicable Bay water quality criteria with new data streams, technologies, and analysis approaches, and 3) Review the derivation of dissolved oxygen criteria to understand the foundations of establishing the criteria and what, if anything, might provide support for adjustments with considerations for climate change impacts to the Bay (e.g. Temperature rise).

Integrated Monitoring Networks Workgroup

Integrated Monitoring Networks Workgroup is holding its next meeting on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 from 1-2pm. The primary discussion is focusing on that status of the Nontidal Network, stations slated for discontinuation in data collections due to funding challenges, and options for reducing network size to stabilize support for the network and its data analysis and reporting over the next 5 years if no further funding can be obtained for the next FY. At least 3 stations are slated to be discontinued by the end of the present FY.

Modeling Workgroup

The Modeling Workgroup is actively working on next generation airshed, watershed, and estuary models to support CBP partners and decision makers in the December 2020 direction given by the PSC to consider results of updated methods, techniques, and studies in 2025 to revisit existing estimated loads due to climate change to determine if any updates to 2035 load estimates are needed.

CRWG

The Climate Resiliency Workgroup (CRWG) presented their science needs during the December 17, 2020 STAR meeting. The CRWG participated in a joint meeting on December 9, 2020 with the Urban Stormwater Workgroup and the Modeling Workgroup that focused on updates from projects involving the development of Intensity Duration Frequency (IDF) curves that account for projected future precipitation and discussion toward stormwater implementation. The CRWG continues to develop their next 2-yr logic and action plan and will be discussing the workgroup's future direction and activities during their January 27, 2021 meeting. The CRWG with partners from the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (NCBO) and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) will be supporting two internship positions during the summer of 2021, Climate Change Indicator Project (NCBO Summer Internship Program) and Blue Carbon Data Detective and Crediting Protocol Review (Chesapeake Research Consortium C-STREAM program). The application deadline is February 20, 2021.

The Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT)

The ITAT has just released a summary report describing trends in Potomac River tidal water quality and the factors that affect them. The Potomac summary can be downloaded from "Track Progress" page on

the CAST website. See the “Tributary Summaries” section at the following link: [CAST - TMDL Tracking \(chesapeakebay.net\)](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/cast). Draft summaries for the Rappahannock River and Upper Mainstem Bay are planned for 2021. Every autumn, the ITAT releases an update of trends in water quality at all long-term tidal water quality monitoring stations across the Bay and its tributaries. PDF maps of the latest results documenting trends through 2019 can be downloaded from the ITAT website at [Integrated Trends Analysis Team | Chesapeake Bay Program](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/integrated_trends). Trend results are produced by analysts at both MD DNR and VA DEQ (Old Dominion University) using a standardized method and co-developed software package. An interactive mapping tool called baytrendsmap is available at the following link for partners who want to produce their own customized maps of annual tidal water quality trends: [baytrendsmap R package v1.1.0.9003 \(chesapeakebay.net\)](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/baytrendsmap). Contact Jeni Keisman (jkeisman@usgs.gov) for more information.

STAR Contacts: Breck Sullivan; bsullivan@chesapeake.org and Tom Butler; butlert@chesapeake.org

Indicators

No indicators were updated since the December Management Board meeting.

Indicators that are likely to be updated before or close to the next Management Board meeting include:

- *Fish Passage – update with 2019 data*

NOTE: an asterisk* denotes new indicators that have been approved through the Status and Trends workgroup under STAR. The Indicators Coordinator provides notification to the Management Board and to STAR of these new indicators; members of either group may request additional information or a presentation at a meeting on these new indicators.

Contact: Katheryn Barnhart, Barnhart.Katheryn@epa.gov

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.

Communications Workgroup

On January 6, the Communications Workgroup held its monthly meeting where we coordinated shared messaging around the Save the Eagles Day and Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Additional shared messaging content can be found at:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/41858/january_2021_chesapeake_bay_program_shared_messaging.docx_2.pdf

Rachel Felver, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, shared updates on the progress of the 2019-20 Bay Barometer report. The presentation can be found at:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/41858/2019-20_bay_barometer_commwg.pdf

Caitlyn Johnstone, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, presented an overview of a recently-completed joint project with the Diversity and Toxics Workgroups to improve communications to communities at high-

risk for toxics contaminants. She also showed the Toxic Contaminants Workgroup's story map on PCBs in the Chesapeake Bay. The presentation can be found at:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/41858/fish_consumption_advisory_project.pptx

Communications Office

The following blogs were published in December:

- Year in photos: The Chesapeake watershed in 2020
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/year_in_photos_the_chesapeake_watershed_in_2020
- A look at the Chesapeake Bay watershed in 2020
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/a_look_at_the_chesapeake_bay_watershed_in_2020
- Train your eye to watch for winter birds
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/train_your_eye_for_winter_birds
- Cherry Springs State Park lures stargazers with dark skies
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/cherry_springs_state_park_lures_stargazers_with_dark_skies
- Chesapeake Bay nonprofits lend a helping hand to oyster aquaculture industry
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/chesapeake_bay_nonprofits_lend_a_helping_hand_to_oyster_aquaculture
- Pick your peak
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/pick_your_peak
- The highs and lows of Maryland's oyster aquaculture industry
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the_highs_and_lows_of_marylands_oyster_aquaculture_industry_part_i
- An urban forestry collaborative plants deep community roots
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/an_urban_forestry_collaborative_plants_deep_community_roots
- After unprecedented storms hit New York, communities take a different approach to flood protection
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/after_unprecedented_storms_hit_new_york_communities_take_a_different_approach

Harbor seals are becoming a regular highlight of winter in the Chesapeake Bay

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/harbor_seals_are_becoming_a_regular_highlight_of_winter_in_the_chesapeake_bay

Contact: Rachel Felter; rfelter@chesapeakebay.net