



# MANAGEMENT BOARD


## QUARTERLY PROGRESS MEETING: HEALTHY WATERSHEDS

Thursday, June 13, 2024

### ACTIONS/DECISIONS

Acronyms: SH – Stream Health; HW – Healthy Watersheds; MB – Management Board

SRS Quarterly Progress Meeting for the Healthy Watersheds Cohort – 4 <sup>th</sup> Cycle	
June 13, 2024	
<u>Action Table from QPM With Cohort Revisions</u>	
Healthy Watersheds and Stream Health Outcomes	
Where Help is Needed	Follow On Response
1. Improve the alignment of outcomes.	<p><b>Note:</b> The Management Board recognizes the importance of holistic approaches that seek to improve alignment between outcomes. The Management Board encourages Workgroups and GITs to pilot cross-outcome collaboration and joint meetings in the run-up to 2025 and encourages the prioritization of this topic in Beyond 2025 Steering Committee discussions.</p> <p><b>Responsible Party:</b> Healthy Watersheds Cohort</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b></p> <p>Piloting cross-outcome collaboration and joint meetings should be incorporated into the outcomes' 2-year Work Plans (due September 5, 2024).</p> <p>Updates and lessons learned will be shared at the Healthy Watersheds Cohort's June 2025 QPM of the Management Board.</p>
Healthy Watersheds Outcome	
Where Help is Needed	Follow On Response
1. Support the tracking of protected lands.	<p><b>Note:</b> The Healthy Watersheds GIT will return to the Management Board with more specificity on the request to improve the tracking of protected lands.</p> <p><b>Responsible Party:</b> Healthy Watersheds GIT</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> At or before the Healthy Watersheds Cohort's June 2025 QPM</p>
2. Support the new CBP Land Use Strategy.	<p><b>Note:</b> The Management Board recognizes the importance of conserving healthy watersheds and invites the Healthy Watersheds GIT to present on the Land Use Strategy at a future meeting.</p>



	<p><b>Responsible Parties:</b> Land Use Workgroup and Healthy Watersheds GIT</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> Future MB meeting (confirm with Greg Barranco)</p> <p>The Land Use Workgroup and Healthy Watersheds GIT will present the Land Use Strategy to the Water Quality GIT and seek their endorsement.</p> <p>If approved by the Water Quality GIT, the Land Use Workgroup and Healthy Watersheds GIT will return to the Management Board to present the Land Use Strategy for consideration and potential approval.</p>
<b>Stream Health Outcome</b>	
<b>Where Help is Needed</b>	<b>Follow On Response</b>
<p>1. We ask the Management Board to support the investment of resources to achieve a more holistic approach to improving ecological integrity of streams based on sound science, coupled with land management, planning, and protection to improve and sustain stream health.</p>	<p><b>Note:</b> The Management Board supports the continued investment of resources from sources throughout and external to the partnership to achieve a more holistic approach to improving ecological integrity of streams based on sound science, coupled with land management, planning, and protection to improve and sustain stream health. Through this support the Management Board and Stream Health Workgroup seek to accelerate progress up to 2025 and beyond.</p> <p><b>Responsible Parties:</b> Stream Health Workgroup and Habitat GIT</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> Ongoing</p>


## **ADDITIONAL NOTES**

### **Healthy Watersheds Outcome**

- We may want to revisit the idea of a new land use strategy at a future MB meeting.
- Jurisdictional representatives on the HWGIT come from the regulatory side, so we are missing folks at the table. We need to meet with other groups to find out where the synergies are and how to move forward. Maybe not by adding more people to HWGIT but adding healthy watershed concepts to other groups. The MB can support the HWGIT in having those alignment conversations and invite HWGIT to present to MB on the new strategy.
- This discussion speaks to why GITs and workgroups should be involved in the "structure" changes to B25. LUWG is under the WQGIT, this could be reconsidered especially in light of the draft strategy that's been developed.

### **Stream Health**

- Stream health is different from water quality—it has a more holistic approach. While N, P, and sediment are important, they are not the main drivers of stream health. There is a disconnect between stream restoration and BMPs that are implemented for TMDLs.

- 
- Looking into additional indicators for stream health and knowing which ones respond to management actions can help get into the “why” – what is improving or changing most.
  - Driving stream restoration on nature-based designs and ecosystem services beyond water quality makes sense to further endorse investments.
  - We need to be strategic on how, where, when, and what avenue, we are going to support this investment. Making those connections in the is going to be critical moving forward to prioritize things.
  - For those jurisdictions relying heavily onstream restoration in their WIPs, a secondary request emerging from this work could be to really take to heart the planning of ecological uplift and consideration of ecological tradeoffs on the front end of planning implementation of the stream restoration projects. The opportunity is there to also include considerations of social benefits (like access to nature and other benefits to local people). The STAC workshop referenced should be out in final form very soon.

#### **Brief Update: Riparian Forest Buffers (RFB)**

- Since 2019 there has been a steady increase in planting rates, with an increase in 2022 and 2023 (second highest since the signing of the Watershed Agreement). As of 2017/2018, which is the most recent data we have available, RPB is seeing that 68.85% of the riparian area was forested.

#### **Brief Update: Tree Canopy (TC)**

- Since the last MB meeting TC worked with the Chesapeake Conservancy, USGS, and others to release tree canopy cover status and change fact sheets that are available on the county level to jurisdictions throughout the watershed. TC expects to have these fact sheets available later this year for municipalities as well.
- The IRA is a more holistic approach to TC funding; it also funds urban forest management by looking at communities to see what the need is; Some of the tree removals that are shown are for removing older, at-risk trees and replanting newer healthy trees. There is a need to work with the Forest Service and USGS to provide more context through analysis to figure out why trees are being removed.
- TC would like to partner with others in getting the technical assistance needs met to develop the best models to share with communities about how they can adopt stronger policies that'll work in their community.
- What is needed is more of those policy approaches at that local ordinance-type level to better protect trees during development, conservation, and management.
- TC would like to partner with those working with local governments in those areas to be advocates to get the message and data out there.