



**Chesapeake Bay Program
Principals' Staff Committee Meeting
June 2, 2015**

Program Update

CBPO Calendar

June 9-10	STAC Quarterly Meeting (Williamsburg, VA)
June 16	1 year anniversary of Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement signing
June 17	Management Board call
June 18	Federal Leadership Committee Designees (FLCD) meeting
June 30	Jurisdictions finalize BMP Verification Programs
June 30	Management Strategies final
July 9	Management Board Meeting
July 21	Executive Council Meeting (tentative)

Program Updates

Acquisition of watershed-wide high-resolution land cover data

An interagency agreement between the EPA and National Park Service (NPS) has been put in place to facilitate the acquisition of watershed-wide high resolution land cover data. The NPS awarded a cooperative agreement to the Chesapeake Conservancy and work is now underway. Work on the acquisition is being overseen by the CBP's Land Use Workgroup.

Contact: Rich Batiuk, (410) 410-267-5731; batiuk.richard@epa.gov

Federal Facilities Protocols

EPA transmitted the draft Federal Facilities Targets Protocol to the Federal Facilities Targets Action Team for review and comment by May 28. The targets will be presented to the Water Quality Goal Team on June 8 and to the Management Board on June 17.

Request for High-Level Riparian Forest State Leads

At the March 12 PSC meeting, attendees were provided an overview of the year-long Riparian Forest Buffer Initiative that culminates in June 2015. A request was made at that time for states to designate a high-level state lead who can: 1) Implement an "all hands strategy" in that state; 2) Engage with USDA at the national/state/local level on changes in delivery of the RFB practice and coordinates/tracks implementation; and 3) Work across state agencies and provide annual updates to CBP/RFB Initiative Steering Committee. PSC Chair Molly Ward recently sent a reminder to PSC members to identify that state lead by Friday, May 29. Jurisdictions are requested to identify that person and inform Al Todd (atodd@allianceforthebay.org), Chair of the Steering Committee, with a cc to Sally Claggett (sclaggett@fs.fed.us).

TMDL Milestones Interim Evaluations posting delayed

EPA's interim evaluations of Bay jurisdictions' and federal agencies' progress toward meeting their 2014-2015 Milestones, originally scheduled for May 20 on the Bay TMDL website, has been delayed. Posting is anticipated after June 1. Draft evaluations were shared with the jurisdictions and federal agencies allowing for comment prior to the final posting. The milestones outline steps the Bay jurisdictions and

federal agencies are taking toward having all pollution control measures in place by 2025 to fully restore water quality to the Bay, with practices in place by 2017 that would achieve 60 percent of the necessary reductions compared to 2009. The evaluations will include EPA recommendations for actions prior to the end of the milestone period and to be included in the 2016-2017 Milestone commitments to ensure jurisdictions and federal agencies remain on track. The 2016-2017 Milestones are due to be submitted to EPA by January 15, 2016.

Contact: Katherine Antos, (410) 295-1358, antos.katherine@epa.gov

Shad Indicator Data Released

On May 8, CBP Director Nick DiPasquale supported the release of the updated Shad Indicator data in a press event at Fletcher's Cove in Washington, D.C. Shad abundance has surged in four Chesapeake Bay rivers, surpassing restoration goals in the Potomac and Rappahannock. Between 2000 and 2014, shad abundance in the Bay increased from 11 percent to 44 percent of the goal. The Potomac River has seen the most consistent rise in returning shad, but the Rappahannock has also seen notable highs. In 2014, abundance in the Potomac and Rappahannock reached 130 and 110 percent of the rivers' respective targets.

Scientists attribute these increases to a series of factors, including improvements in water quality; a resurgence in underwater grass beds; moratoriums on shad harvest; an increase in habitat available to migratory fish; stocking efforts that reprint fish to rivers and kick-start local populations; and the overall suitability of the Potomac, in particular, as shad habitat. Shad abundance remains negligible in the upper James River and the Susquehanna, which experts mostly attribute to large dams that block fish passage and mute some of the natural cues that send migratory fish upstream.

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

CBC Report Underscores Benefits of Streamside Fencing

Preventing livestock from entering streams could improve the health of both local waterways and the animals themselves, according to a new report from the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC). The report details the benefits of livestock exclusion; describes current efforts throughout CBC's member states of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia; and looks at factors affecting the widespread implementation of these practices. In farm operations that have installed fences along streams, farmers have reported decreases in injuries and disease in their herds. The report, *Healthy Livestock, Healthy Streams: Policy Actions to Promote Livestock Stream Exclusion*, is available through the Chesapeake Bay Commission website at: <http://www.chesbay.us/recent.htm>.

Onsite Systems Memorandum of Cooperation

On April 16, the Chesapeake Bay Program Office hosted a signing ceremony for a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) on advanced onsite wastewaters systems. By signing the MOC, jurisdictions formally agreed to share data on advanced onsite wastewater treatment systems in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The MOC is based on protocols cooperatively developed over the last year for the ultimate goal of reducing nitrogen loading to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Contact: Maureen Pepper, (208) 378-5626, pepper.maureen@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

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 met jointly with the Local Government Advisory Committee on May 21 in Harrisburg, PA. The agenda focused on Land Use and Growth. CAC met for a Business Meeting, a presentation of ChesapeakeSTAT, and discussion on their annual recommendations to the Executive Council on May 22.

Contact: Jessica Blackburn, 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.

STAC will hold its first quarterly meeting of FY 2015 on June 9-10, 2015 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Williamsburg, Virginia. If you plan to attend this meeting, please send an RSVP to Renee Kelly at KellyR@si.edu.

STAC held a workshop at the end of May. Information regarding that workshop is below.

Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making - The workshop objectives are (1) to assess the relative skill of multiple linked hydrodynamic/water quality models in terms of their ability to reproduce observations of multiple variables at select shallow water sites in the Bay; (2) to compare the modeled Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) computed from an empirical SAV model for each participating hydrodynamic/water quality model; and (3) to compare results of nutrient reduction strategies applied to these multiple estuarine models at these select sites. The workshop took place on May 20, 2015 at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS).

FY15 Workshop Proposals Rankings: STAC approved funding for the following seven workshop proposals.

- 1) Assessing Uncertainty in the CBP Modeling System
- 2) Conowingo Infill Influence on Chesapeake Water Quality
- 3) The Development of Standardized Climate Projections for Use in Chesapeake Bay Program Assessments
- 4) Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making
- 5) Optimization for TMDL Implementation Planning
- 6) Enhancing Capacity to Support the Chesapeake Agreement Outcome through Increased Integration of Regional Science and Management Efforts
- 7) Integrating and Leveraging Monitoring Networks to Support the Assessment of Outcomes in the New Bay Agreement

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

STAC is in the process of finalizing four workshop reports. Below is a list of reports that STAC will distribute over the next few months.

- 1) Exploring Applications of Behavioral Economics Research to Environmental Policy-making in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
- 2) Re-plumbing the Chesapeake Bay Watershed: Improving Roadside Ditch Management to Meet TMDL Water Quality Goals.
- 3) Assessing the Chesapeake Bay Forage Base: Existing Data and Research Priorities.
- 4) Evaluating Proprietary BMPs: Is it time for a State, Regional, or National Program?

STAC distributed two workshop reports in May 2015. The first report entitled "Estimating Land Management Effects on Water Quality Status and Trends" was distributed on May 8, 2015. This report provides a summary of recommendations related to the most promising analytical approaches and corresponding data needs for detecting linkages between management practices on the land and changes in water quality within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The report can be found on the STAC publications database at: http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/336_Keisman2015.pdf. The second report entitled "Designing Sustainable Stream Restoration Projects within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed" was distributed on May 26, 2015. This report provides recommendations for the development of a function-based process to implement sustainable stream restoration projects. The report can be found on the STAC website at: http://www.chesapeake.org/stac/workshop.php?activity_id=232.

Finally, STAC is working closely with CBP representatives to plan for the upcoming CBP Partnership requested STAC sponsored independent scientific peer reviews. The ~11 remaining reviews will take place between now and 2016. The STAC reviews will help inform the Partnership's 2017 mid-point assessment.

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 full Fisheries GIT will meet for their semiannual [meeting](#) on June 1-2nd, 2015 at CBF's Brock Environmental Center in Virginia Beach, VA. Major meeting topics include updates on the fisheries management strategies & work plan next steps, striped bass telemetry, climate change and the annual Blue Crab Advisory Report. The meeting will also feature updates on two projects funded by the EPA-CBP funding to the GITs: development of a striped bass health indicator and development of forage indicators.
- The Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) met in-person on May 15th to discuss the Winter Dredge Survey results and draft the 2015 Blue Crab Advisory Report. They will present their draft report and draft management recommendations to the full Fisheries GIT on June 2nd.
- The blue crab management jurisdictions worked with stock assessment scientists on CBSAC to finalize the draft terms of reference (TORs) that will guide the next blue crab benchmark stock assessment, which is currently scheduled to be complete in late 2016/early 2017. The stock assessment scientists are currently developing a cost estimate based on the TORs.

- The Fisheries GIT Executive Committee will have their next monthly conference call on Monday, July 20th.

Contact: Bruce Vogt, 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

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 Face-to-Face meeting on April 13th. Presentations, discussions, and decisions included:

Oyster BMP Panel

The WQGIT approved the formation of a BMP expert panel to evaluate the nutrient and sediment removal rates associated with oyster practices. The Oyster Recovery Partnership will coordinate the panel, and is in the process of drafting a panel charge and a call for panel membership.

BMP Protocol Revisions

The WQGIT is undergoing a review of the BMP Protocol. Discussions on the issues of panel composition, potential conflicts of interest, and panel transparency were held during the April face-to-face meeting. Comments on the Protocol were due on April 30th, and any revisions to the Protocol will be up for WQGIT approval in June.

Agriculture Modeling Subcommittee (AMS)

The WQGIT approved the Poultry Litter Subcommittee (PLS) report that was developed by the AMS and the PLS as a method for handling poultry litter in the Watershed Model. Additionally, the WQGIT members approved the list of Agriculture Land Uses for the Phase 6.0 Watershed Model.

Revised Land Use Loading Rates

The WQGIT received a briefing on the revised land use loading targets for the approved land use categories in the Phase 6.0 Watershed Model. The Modeling Workgroup reviewed the loading targets during their April quarterly meeting.

Climate Change Update and Local Impoundments

The WQGIT received an update on the climate change analysis currently underway. WQGIT members also agreed to distribute the proposed list of reservoirs and impoundments for the Phase 6.0 Watershed Model and inform jurisdictions and localities that they may provide more accurate data on spills or discharges from their impoundments if they have that data available.

Upcoming WQGIT Topics for May 11 Conference Call

- Management implications of the Eastern Shore Monitoring Report.
- Update on the jurisdictional review period for Phase 6.0 land use categories and the timeline for land use decisions.

- Update from the Modeling Workgroup quarterly meeting.
- Proposal and timeline for finalizing the agricultural land use loading targets.
- Proposal for approving recommendations from the Agriculture BMP expert panels.
- Briefing of the Agriculture Modeling Subcommittee's methodology for double cropping.
- Midpoint Assessment Schedule update
- BMP Protocol review update

Contact: Lucinda Power, power.lucinda@epa.gov

Toxic Contaminants Workgroup

Management Strategies

Comments that were received on the two Toxic Contaminants Management Strategies have been reviewed and the workgroup is updating the strategy documents and beginning work on the workplans.

Mercury Deposition and Loading

The Toxic Contaminants Workgroup recently heard from leading mercury researchers regarding trends in mercury deposition and loads to the Bay and watershed. While some of the long-term monitoring stations show decreases in mercury deposition, others do not. Regulatory actions and market forces should reduce loads. Funding is needed to maintain long-term monitoring and modeling to better understand trends and to determine whether additional controls are needed.

Contact: Greg Allen, 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.

GIT Members met on April 30th for a face-to-face meeting. Presentations, discussions, and decisions included:

- Participants discussed some of the public and partner comments received on the Healthy Watersheds and Land Use Options Evaluation Management Strategies.
- Participants suggested edits to improve the Healthy Watersheds Management Strategy, including how to better align the Gaps with the Management Approaches.
- Participants heard an update on the Landscape Pilot Forest Retention Demonstration project in the Rappahannock river basin. This study will assess growth trends in the region and evaluate the spatial variability of forest ecosystem service value. By simulating the loading impact of the alternative development scenarios and comparing the cost of additional urban BMP implementation to offset the loads, the aim of the project is to demonstrate the cost-benefit relationship of forestland retention.
- Participants also heard about the status of the Land Use Options Evaluation Management Strategy, ongoing cross-GIT coordination efforts and the new vision of the Goal Team's Tracking Workgroup.

GIT leaders and select members responded to and incorporated comments received during the public input period on the Healthy Watersheds, Land Use Options Evaluation, and Land Use Methods and Metrics Management Strategies.

Contact: Tuana Phillips, 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.

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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.

Governance Document

Since the April Management Board meeting, an ad hoc group of MB members convened to continue discussions about issues related to formalizing a membership process and decision-making at the goal team and workgroup level. These decisions were presented to GIT Chairs and GIT6 in early May and will be presented at the upcoming MB and PSC meetings.

Local Leadership

Comments that were received on the Local Leadership Management Strategy have been reviewed by a group of key participants including the signatory representatives. A meeting to bring various stakeholders in Chesapeake Bay watershed local leadership issues also took place on May 18. The group plans to take the input from the stakeholder group and begin development of the workplan.

Goal Implementation Team Funding

An RFP has been issued to acquire the services of an organization to act as a primary agent and to issue sub-awards for completion of GIT projects to support management strategy development and execution. The primary award is expected in August and GITs should be able to forward projects for sub-award approximately in September

Contact: Greg Allen, 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.

Contact: Peter Tango, 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: Margaret Enloe, menloe@chesapeakebay.net

Recent Meetings and Events

May 28	Management Board Meeting (Annapolis)
May 26	GIT Chairs meeting
May 21-22	LGAC/CAC Quarterly Meeting
May 14	Management Board full day meeting
Apr 30	End public input on Management Strategies
Apr 28	Goal Implementation Team Chairs Meeting