

**Chesapeake Bay Program  
Principals' Staff Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, December 5, 2012**

**Program Update**

**CBPO Calendar**

Dec 6-8	Fisheries GIT meeting (Port Isobel, Va.)
Dec 10	Maintain Health Watersheds GIT Meeting
Dec 12	Management Board (conference call)
Dec 13-14	LGAC meeting (Annapolis, Md.)
Jan 2-13	PenAg "Today's Agriculture" (Lancaster, Pa.)
Jan/Feb	DoD Commanders Conference (Quantico, Va.)
Feb (TBD)	PSC Winter Meeting
Mar 4-6	Ches Ag Networking Forum (Staunton, Va.)

**Program Updates**

**2013 Executive Order Action Plan**

The Chesapeake Federal Leadership Committee Designees (FLCD) published their draft 2013 Action Plan for public comment on Wednesday, November 14. The Action Plan, required by the Executive Order Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay, lays out commitments for the current fiscal year from each of the federal agencies involved in restoration of the Bay. The comment period ended November 23 and the final report is anticipated to be released the week of December 17 with a combined media availability with the FLCD members that week.

Contact: Jim Edward, 410-267-5705, [edward.james@epa.gov](mailto:edward.james@epa.gov)

**State of the Chesapeake Watershed Report**

In mid-late January, the CBP partnership will release its annual health and restoration report on the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. The *State of the Chesapeake Bay and its Watershed* report will be written and designed to reach a public audience – meaning it will be shorter and more succinct in style and with more emphasis on visual readability than the CBP's previous [report](#), the *Bay Barometer*. The CBP Communications Office sent the first draft of text to the MB on December 4 for review. MB members have been asked to share the draft report with their appropriate agency staff and to collect and consolidate comments into one set of comments which are due back to the CBP by COB December 10.

Contact: Margaret Enloe, 410-267-5740, [menloe@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:menloe@chesapeakebay.net)

**USGS Report on nutrient and sediment loads and yields into the Chesapeake Bay**

A new USGS report, "Comparison of two regression-based approaches for determining nutrient and sediment fluxes and trends in the Chesapeake Bay watershed" by Moyer and others will be released in December, 2012. The report presents trend results for loads and yields at the nine USGS River Input Monitoring (RIM) stations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These nine stations are located on the three largest tributaries to Chesapeake Bay--the Susquehanna, Potomac, and James Rivers--and on the Choptank River, on the eastern shore; the Patuxent River, on the western shore of Maryland; and the Rappahannock, Mattaponi, Pamunkey, and Appomattox Rivers in Virginia. Trends in loads and yields are provided for two periods, long-

term (1985-2010) and short-term (2001-10). Long-term nitrogen trends improved at a majority of the RIM sites, while phosphorus trends improved at 2 sites and worsened at the 7 remaining sites.

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### **Draft Toxic Contaminants Report**

A draft CBP Toxic Contaminants Report, developed by a STAR Action Team, was released for public comment on October 22. Comments received by the end of the review period—Friday, November 9—are, where appropriate, being integrated into the final document by the Action Team's editorial board and will complete any necessary internal agency reviews and concurrences. The final report is expected by December 2012.

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### **NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System Serves Public during Sandy**

The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System (CBIBS) performed well during Hurricane/Superstorm Sandy, communicating data on wind and waves to constituents who used the internet, toll-free phone number, and smartphone apps to keep tabs on conditions on the Chesapeake Bay. The lone casualty in the system was the wind instrument from the First Landing buoy, which was lost likely because it was pummeled by 15 foot seas during the storm. During Hurricane Sandy, the CBIBS website had 14,067 unique visitors with more than a million hits to the website. There were also 274 new installations of the Android app, and the CBIBS Facebook page gained nearly 60 new fans. NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office staff answered questions from the Washington Post and Annapolis Capital during the storm. Soon after Sandy passed, NCBO posted a web article (<http://www.chesapeakebay.noaa.gov/observations-hot-topics/how-did-sandy-affect-the-chesapeake>) including a summary of Sandy's winds and waves at CBIBS buoys and an article featuring the work of NCBO's research vessel Potawaug and her crew, which operated in Delaware Bay to assist the NOAA Office of Coast Survey with work to ensure that the ports of Lewes, Del., and Cape May, N.J., were safe for navigation (<http://www.chesapeakebay.noaa.gov/observations-hot-topics/r/v-potawaug-supports-sandy-response-on-delaware-bay>).

### **Chesapeake Forest Restoration Strategy**

The US Forest Service (USFS) in collaboration with federal and state partners, jurisdiction representatives of CBP, and a broad group of other interested parties has finalized the Forest Restoration Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Strategy focuses on restoring forest cover in targeted areas to improve ecosystem function and provide community benefits in targeted areas of the landscape such as urban forests, mine lands, contaminated lands, agro-forestry, and fish and wildlife habitat. The Strategy is part of the Recover Habitat goal in Executive Order 13508 *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*.

CBP Director Nick DiPasquale will participate along with senior USFS officials and state foresters in a signing ceremony for the Strategy on Wednesday, December 5 at the Hall of States in Washington D.C. The final document will be available on the Executive Order website at <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/>.

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### **Environmental Financing Forums Planned for Local Communities**

About one dozen Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) Environmental Financing workshops are being planned by Region III's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) to help local communities identify and address financing issues related to WIP implementation with a focus on urban stormwater and agricultural programs. The EFC, funded by a cooperative agreement

with the Chesapeake Bay Program Office, will use the first few forum offerings to develop lessons learned and adapt and tailor the forums to the communities they are designed to serve.

After the workshops, local governments may request assistance for implementation via EPA's Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction and Small Watershed Grant programs (both run through cooperative agreements with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation) to pay for technical service experts to help them implement financing strategies and other technical professional service needs related to implementation.

The next in forum in the series, scheduled for December 14, 2012 in Prince Georges County, will focus on MS4 Phase 1 finance issues. Additional Environmental Finance Forums are being planned in the coming months including: PA Phase 2 Forum; PA Ag Forum; VA SW Forum; VA SW Forum; WV SW/WW Forum; MD/DE Ag Forum; VA A/SW Forum. No dates have been set for these forums.

Additional forums will be (or have been) offered as a part of an existing meeting. These include:

- MD Watershed Assistance Collaborative Stormwater Series; three days in December, January, and February in MD.
- EFC Network Water Systems Workshop; Spring 2013 in panhandle of WV (tentative).
- Center for Watershed Protection Conference; October 26, 2012 (completed) in Waynesboro, VA.
- Association of County Engineers; April 11, 2012 in College Park, MD.

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### **Menhaden Management Changes Looming**

On December 14, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Atlantic Menhaden Management Board will meet in Baltimore, Maryland to consider an amendment to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. Following a series of public hearings and a public comment period which ended November 16, the Board will select measures to be included in a final Amendment II to the menhaden fishery management plan. Amendment 2 includes a set of options to manage and monitor the stock in both the short and long-term including: process to set and allocate total allowable catch (TAC), including procedures to close the fishery when a certain percentage of the TAC has been projected to be landed and changing the biomass reference points to match the fishing mortality reference points. Once approved, Amendment II will officially cut back the allowable harvest and allocate the total allowable catch between the bait and reduction fisheries beginning with the 2013 fishing season.

### **Draft Model Program for Onsite System Management in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed**

On November 16, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released for public comment a draft Model Program for Onsite System Management in the Chesapeake bay watershed. The draft document was developed to assist states in developing and implementing a model program for managing onsite systems with the goal of minimizing nitrogen impacts to the Chesapeake Bay. The document is intended to help address nutrient pollution in surface waters when such systems are not otherwise regulated under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program.

The model program reflects EPA's latest research and recommendations on the reduction of nitrogen pollution using different onsite system technologies. It does not establish any binding requirements, nor does it change or substitute for any legal requirements under which states

and municipalities regulate onsite systems. Whether and to what extent a state or local government chooses to implement the recommendations contained in this document is a decision that is ultimately left up to the state or local government. Once it receives final internal review, the document will be posted on the CBP webpage at EO webpage at <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net>.

### **EPA Webinar on Water Quality Trading**

The Chesapeake Bay Program Office served as one of the host sites for a national webinar on Water Quality Trading presented by the EPA HQ Office of Water, Wednesday, November 28. The purpose of the webinar was to provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss the status of water quality trading and future needs.

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### **Chesapeake Bay Program Participation in RAE Conference**

The Chesapeake Bay Program's efforts to restore the watershed were highlighted during the 2012 Restore America's Estuaries Conference in Tampa, FL., October 22-24. Jeff Corbin, Senior Advisor to the Administrator for the Chesapeake Bay and Anacostia River participated on a panel discussing implementation of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and CBP Deputy Director Jim Edward chaired a panel, made up of other CBP Federal Office Directors, on implementation of the Executive Order Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay. In addition, information about CBP efforts was distributed at a conference booth and two posters depicting the Chesapeake Bay Program's work on the TMDL and on the Partnership's use of adaptive management were part of the conference poster session.

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### **New Study Shows Consumption of Contaminated Anacostia Fish**

A yearlong survey of anglers along the Anacostia River has confirmed that many fishermen are catching, sharing and consuming contaminated fish despite fishing advisories published by Maryland and Washington, D.C. for more than two decades. Research found that current advisories do not resonate among diverse anglers. Only 11 percent of fishermen had seen a sign or poster, and even fewer had received warning material with a fishing license or reviewed related information online. And English-only outreach is not effective among a population in which one-quarter speaks a language other than English at home. Research was conducted through hundreds of interviews along fishing "hotspots" and a community survey that canvassed the lower Anacostia watershed.

According to the report published by the Anacostia Watershed Society, warnings are often not seen, understood or listened to—and as many as 17,000 residents could be consuming fish caught in the Anacostia. The report found that 40 percent of fishermen had never heard that fish from the Anacostia could make them sick. Children, elderly people and women of childbearing age are at most risk to contaminants like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), lead and mercury that lingers in the Anacostia River's waters, sediment and many species of fish. Health problems associated with increased exposure to these chemicals include cancer, liver disease and developmental effects, as well as effects on the immune and endocrine systems.

The survey which studied the social behavior of Anacostia anglers found that a complex set of factors is driving the sharing and consuming of locally caught and potentially contaminated fish: past experience and present beliefs, a lack of awareness of the health risks involved and an overriding desire to share their catch with those who might otherwise go hungry. The full report is available at: [http://www.anacostiaws.org/userfiles/file/AWS\\_angling\\_FINAL\\_web.pdf](http://www.anacostiaws.org/userfiles/file/AWS_angling_FINAL_web.pdf)

### **Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Update**

STAC will hold its third 2012 quarterly meeting on December 4, 2013 in Annapolis, Md. at the Historic Maryland Inn. If you plan on attending this meeting, please send your RSVP to Matt Ellis at [ellism@si.edu](mailto:ellism@si.edu).

STAC is currently planning a number of workshops for the upcoming months. These workshops include:

- 1) Multiple Management Models in a Regulatory Setting – This workshop will be held in February of 2013 in the Annapolis area. The purpose of the workshop will be to gather stakeholders, modeling experts and regulatory experts to discuss how multiple models have been applied in management situations around the nation, and analyze whether the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort may benefit from multiple models in the future.
- 2) Targeting Restoration of Coastal Habitat Complexes - This workshop will be held in March of 2013 at a location yet to be determined. The Habitat Goal Implementation Team (GIT) proposed a workshop to convene coastal wetland, living shoreline, black ducks, and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) restoration partners to discuss complementary targeting approaches that will facilitate the development of coastal habitat complexes.

In addition, STAC recently held a workshop on October 16-17, 2012. Below is a description of this workshop:

- 1) Lag Times in the Watershed and their influence on Chesapeake Bay Restoration – This workshop was held on October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> in Annapolis, Maryland at the Sheraton Annapolis Hotel. The workshop investigated how lag times between implementation practices and nutrient reductions in water bodies are simulated in the current Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model. Participants developed a set of recommendations that will guide the Chesapeake Bay Program's future consideration of lag times. The workshop report will be released in the next few months.

For additional information about the workshops, contact Natalie Gardner at [gardnern@si.edu](mailto:gardnern@si.edu).

### **Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) Update**

LGAC conducted a major internal survey of its membership recently. It looked at its current mission, past activities (e.g., the Our Waters, Our Towns publications, association workshops), and potential future direction. Based on the survey, at its September meeting in Shepherdstown, WV, the Committee decided to conduct an all day, facilitated, strategic planning session which is now scheduled for Friday, December 14 in Annapolis. Because LGAC's ability to communicate local waters message to local governments is critical, they created an internal Communications Subcommittee which will monitor communications efforts and meet regularly between quarterly meetings.

LGAC staff has begun to talk to EPA and to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation about funding assistance to create special workshops which will focus on state issues and be presented at conferences of state associations of local governments (counties, municipal leagues, townships and borough associations in MD, VA, and PA).



Through its experience with the Circuit Rider program in PA, LGAC fully supports technical assistance programs for local governments. LGAC will continue to support the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Local Government and Green Infrastructure Grant programs and looks forward to offering its advice on how these programs might be expanded to a wider audience of local governments.

LGAC continues to promote the Lancaster "Green Infrastructure" program to other local governments in the Bay Region as a potential cost effective solution to many of the stormwater management issues we face. We think this will be important for local governments as they begin to implement their Watershed Implementation Plans.

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## **CBP Goal Implementation Team Updates**

### **GIT 1 – Sustainable Fisheries**

*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 Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) developed and recommended male specific blue crab conservation targets and thresholds to the Fisheries GIT, which will provide managers with a better tool to manage blue crab sustainability. The new target and threshold for the male population will be up for discussion and adoption at the upcoming full GIT meeting December 6-8.

The Fisheries GIT has been updating our current work plan and priorities for advancing sustainable fisheries. Our top initiatives as a GIT are oysters, blue crabs, and invasive catfish. We have narrowed down and prioritized a long list of actions and objectives we will work towards throughout the upcoming year.

#### **Blue Crabs:**

- Maintain sustainable population (i.e. between the abundance and exploitation targets and thresholds) by preparing and delivering the 2013 Blue Crab Advisory Report and convening the Fisheries GIT to discuss the report and adapt management approaches when necessary.
- CBSAC will recommend male blue crab reference points to be adopted and implemented by the Fisheries GIT ExComm in 2013.
- In order to make progress towards developing an interjurisdictional blue crab allocation framework, we should initiate discussions on an allocation process and develop an allocation framework complete with preliminary numbers for each jurisdiction.
- Continue blue crab commercial accountability pilot project. Evaluate efficacy of accountability program in MD and consider application in VA and PRFC.

#### **Oysters:**

- Continue to make progress towards the EO oyster outcome to restore 20 tributaries by 2025 by selecting priority tributaries and develop tributary specific restoration plans (blueprints) through the MD and VA interagency oyster teams.
- Identify a single tributary that by the oyster metrics criteria is seen as restored and then quantify the ecosystem services and fishery benefits.

#### Invasive Catfish:

- Convene the Invasive Catfish Task Force to coordinate research findings and develop and present their policy options/recommendations to implement the goals from the Invasive Catfish Policy Statement.

The next full Fisheries GIT meeting is scheduled for December 6th-8th on Port Isabel of Tangier Island. This will be the sixth full GIT meeting and they hope primarily to use the time to advance stakeholder engagement within the Fisheries GIT by holding the meeting close to local watermen. Other topics for discussion at this meeting may include updates on the blue crab accountability project, initial discussions on an allocation based blue crab fishery, outcomes from the latest blue and flathead catfish research, and oyster restoration.

#### GIT 2 – Habitat

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

The Fall Habitat GIT meeting was held on November 28<sup>th</sup> at Cacapon State Park, West Virginia. The meeting focused on a regulatory theme and included presentations of from several regulatory agencies as well as specific case studies presented by practitioners. Following the presentations, a facilitated discussion portion resulted in a list of issues and possible solutions on how to decrease time spent getting permits for habitat restoration projects.

The Habitat GIT has been working with STAR on the Brook Trout Indicator Task Group. A meeting was held in West Virginia on November 29<sup>th</sup> (day after the Habitat GIT meeting) with the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. At the meeting, Mark Hudy presented his new science patch metric data at the November 29<sup>th</sup> meeting to facilitate the development of the new indicator and engage researchers and state partners.

The Habitat GIT has been working with CBP and DNR communication teams to develop a Brook Trout Habitat Video Story. Filming has been completed in West Virginia with interviews from a landowner as well as a GIT representative. The purpose of the landowner interview is to engage a common audience by discussing fishing for brook trout as a cultural, cross-generational hobby, while the GIT representative interview provides the expertise on Brook Trout and why it is an excellent indicator of stream health. The video was shared at both the Habitat GIT meeting as well as the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture meeting and was well received at both meetings. The video is posted on the Chesapeake Bay Program website; [http://www.chesapeakebay.net/blog/post/from\\_the\\_field\\_linking\\_land\\_and\\_water\\_in\\_brook\\_trout\\_conservation](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/blog/post/from_the_field_linking_land_and_water_in_brook_trout_conservation). The next video story will focus on wetland habitat and Black ducks.

The aerial photography of the entire Bay for the 2012 SAV survey was completed to produce a baywide SAV coverage number for 2012. The hot spots for SAV growth in 2012 are the Susquehanna Flats, mid-bay islands from Tangier to Bloodsworth, the Mobjack Bay and Poquoson Flats.

The Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species meeting was held in Raleigh, NC on November 7 with a focus on *Hydrilla* eradication programs. The SAV workgroup held a meeting on November 8 to revise their strategy document based on the 2011 STAC review.

### GIT 3 – Water Quality

*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.*

On October 22-23, the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) met in Carroll Valley, Pennsylvania to prioritize input from the WQGIT and Modeling Workgroups for the midpoint assessment of water quality progress, to be completed by 2017. As a result, the WQGIT and its Workgroups identified eight high and several other lower priorities for conducting the midpoint assessment, including assigning lead entities for each priority, and a schedule and process for moving forward. A set of draft Guiding Principles provided an overarching framework for the discussion, which have recently been approved by the WQGIT and Management Board members for bringing forward to the PSC. These Guiding Principles, along with the outcomes and the proposed path forward from the October WQGIT meeting, will be the focus of the midpoint assessment agenda item for today's PSC meeting.

One of the driving considerations framing the midpoint assessment discussion was if the priority addressed barriers to implementation. The WQGIT and its Workgroups agreed that the primary barrier to implementation is the need to enhance the credibility and understanding of CBP models among local stakeholders. As a result, the majority of the higher priorities relate to updating the data inputs to the CBP modeling tools and making the tools easier to understand and more consistent with monitoring data. The WQGIT Workgroups are actively developing work plans for each of these priorities. Separately, WQGIT members remain committed to implementation and meeting the goal of practices in place by 2017 that would achieve 60% of the necessary pollutant reductions compared to 2009.

Additionally, several of the Best Management Practice (BMP) Panels undertaken by the WQGIT Workgroups have been progressing in the urban, agriculture, wastewater, and forestry sectors.

At their October 9 meeting, the WQGIT approved the urban retrofits and performance standards reports for crediting these BMPs. It is anticipated that BMP Panel reports for urban nutrient management and urban stream restoration will be submitted for WQGIT review and approval in the winter timeframe.

Finally, Bay jurisdictions are encouraged to start submitting their 2012 progress run data. Information on implementation and programmatic progress is due December 31 and will be used to assess interim progress toward the 2012-2013 milestones. As in the past, CBPO Modeling Team is ready to assist the jurisdictions with their submissions.

### GIT 4 – Healthy Watersheds

*The goal of the Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT (GIT4) is to maintain local watershed health across a range of landscape contexts. GIT4 activities in 2012 include the following:*

The goal of the Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team 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 4 has three principal strategies: 1) to provide a forum for mutual learning and exploration of scientific and management issues; 2) to develop and disseminate key information resources, including a capability to track healthy watershed protection, and advocacy communications; and 3) to find and apply the best available science that supports our mission.



In 2012, GIT 4 held quarterly meetings and at each one discussed case studies about healthy watershed identification and protection. We planned and hosted a session at the annual Chesapeake Watershed Forum; began a project to track state-identified healthy watersheds, their threats, and their protection; and collaborated with STAC on a workshop to identify ways to better represent, in the CBP Watershed Model, the role of natural landscape features in nutrient and sediment retention. As a complement to the STAC workshop, the Chesapeake Bay Commission is exploring policy options to more explicitly integrate protected lands into long-term pollutant load cap maintenance.

In a December 10th meeting, GIT4 will focus on 2013 work planning, including identification of measurable outcomes and adaptive management based on the key principles of the Decision Framework tool. The Goal Team will be planning next steps to further develop and communicate healthy watershed assessment capacities, including the tracking of protection status, as well as other state-identified activities that support state and local healthy watershed identification and protection initiatives. (Contacts: Mark Bryer, TNC, GIT4 Chair; Mike Fritz, EPA, GIT4 Coordinator; Anna Stuart Burnett, CRC, GIT4 Staffer)

#### GIT 5 – Foster Stewardship

*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.*

Protected Lands – The *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, issued under Executive Order 13508, sets a goal of protecting an additional two million acres of lands throughout the watershed currently identified as high conservation priorities at the federal, state or local level, including 695,000 acres of forest land of highest value for maintaining water quality. This goal, set for 2025, expands the scope of previous land conservation tracking efforts to include protected lands throughout the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed. A 2011 update was recently provided for the Chesapeake Bay Program's Protected Lands Indicator. This update indicates that cumulatively, 8,013,132 acres of land have been permanently protected in the Chesapeake Bay watershed through 2011.

To facilitate protected lands data collection, sharing and prioritization, USGS and NPS, with the support of GIT5's Land Conservation Action Team and NatureServe developed a watershed-wide strategic, publicly accessible land conservation geographic information and priority system to support sound conservation planning and decision making: LandScope Chesapeake. By leveraging an existing interactive platform and map viewer developed by NatureServe that brings together maps, photos, and stories, LandScope Chesapeake will serve as a tool to foster collaborative, strategic land conservation priority setting and implementation, including leveraging partner resources and capabilities to achieve mutual conservation goals. The prioritization system will incorporate multiple land conservation values, including those of ecological, cultural, historic, scenic watershed, recreational, and working importance to the Chesapeake landscape.

Public Access – As reported for the 2011 update to the Chesapeake Bay Program's Public Access Sites indicator, a cumulative total of 1,144 existing public access sites were identified as providing access to the Chesapeake Bay and its streams (fifth-order and higher) as of September 2011. It is estimated that in 2011, 15 new public access sites were developed. The development of new public access sites will be tracked towards A new goal, established under the [\*Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed\*](#), to "increase public

access to the Bay and its tributaries by adding 300 new public access sites by 2025.” To support the expansion of public access opportunities, the National Park Service and GIT 5’s Public Access Planning Action Team have also drafted a *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan*. The finalized plan will be released in late 2012/early 2013. This plan assesses the demand for public access; describes (inventory) the existing public access facilities; assesses barriers to public access; determines gaps in the public access system; identifies opportunities for new access sites; and helps direct federal, state, and local funding toward public access opportunities.

K-12 Education – The Chesapeake Bay Trust and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office facilitated a two-day workshop at the National Conservation Training Center from November 14-15. The meeting brought together many members of the CBP Education Workgroup. The meeting focused on state and federal progress toward the Mid-Atlantic Environmental Literacy Strategy on day one, then shifted to developing a new goal statement, best practices for environmental literacy, and metrics for their shared work under the Workgroup. Much progress was made, but there is still work to be done to come up with a set of materials around which the group can come to consensus. This work will continue throughout the winter months with a goal of feeding into the Management Board/Principals Staff Committee prior to the next Executive Council meeting.

#### GIT 6 – Partnering and Leadership

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

Decision Framework – The Decision Framework Implementation Workgroup is currently drafting a one-page guidance document, “Decision Framework Next Steps” to help goal teams as they continue to work on goals and implement the framework. The workgroup is also in the process of developing text on adaptive management and the decision framework to be used in communications outlets in an ongoing effort to keep the partnership updated on the utility of the framework and implementation progress. The goal team is also working with GIT chairs and coordinators on an as needed basis to assist them as they identify their high level goals using the coordinator/staffers meeting as a forum to collaborate. These high level goals will be presented at the January 10 MB meeting.

Program Alignment – Barring PSC approval the Goal Team is prepared to start its work on the alignment process through the formation of a GIT sub-group charged with the development of options for new goals, governance, and a potential new agreement for MB and PSC review.

Workplan – The GIT is modifying its workplan, which defines the structure and goals of the team. Highlights of ongoing work to be included are: (1) enhance meeting management, (2) provide superior information technology support, (3) support GITs in implementing adaptive management through the decision framework, (4) address governance issues, (5) continue to develop ChesapeakeStat website to support decision-making, (6) develop and implementation options for independent evaluation of the program to promote continual improvement.

#### Recent Meetings and Events

Nov 28	Habitat GIT meeting (Shepherdstown, Wv.)
Nov 16	NCEL and CB legislators (Annapolis, Md.)
Nov 29-30	CAC meeting (Havre de Grace, Md.)
Dec 10	Healthy Watersheds GIT Meeting

Dec 2-4	Maryland Farm Bureau conf (OC, Md.)
Dec 4	STAC meeting (Annapolis, Md.)
Dec 4	VASWCD (Roanoke, Va.)
Dec 4	Penn Ag Tech Farm Tour (Lancaster)