



Public Access Workgroup Meeting

November 18, 2025
2-3:30pm

[Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.](#)

Purpose: This meeting will provide updates on the outcome and target language, the Beyond 2025 process, and the upcoming Definitions Workshop in January.

Presentation Link: [Public Access Workgroup November 2025 Meeting Presentation](#)

Meeting Minutes

I. Outcome and Target Language (2:10 - 2:20pm)

Daniel provided an update on what language was approved by the Management Board and Principal Staff Committee, before being sent to the Executive Council for final approval at the EC Meeting on December 2nd.

See **slide 3** of the [presentation](#) for the language that has been submitted to the Executive Council.

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

II. Beyond 2025 Update (2:20 - 2:30)

Daniel provided an update on where we are with the Beyond 2025 process, and what the next steps for the Public Access Workgroup will be.

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

Discussion Notes:

Daniel Koval: Some public access workgroup specifics for the next steps of Beyond 2025 will be defining metrics for greenspace and tracking access for land-based sites; working with the Protected Lands Workgroup to identify the baseline of existing land-based sites; and discussing

strategies for addressing the maintenance and accessibility targets over the 18 month period for management strategy development.

Sophie Waterman: The Protected Lands Indicator (aka the protected lands dataset) is complete but yet to be released through the indicator process. This will be the data used for the baseline, and we will conduct a technical assessment. We need to do a deep dive of what we're talking about with urban and urban/community areas and compare what we already have in our dataset. The 2024 protected lands indicator is what we will use as the baseline, and for the January timeframe with the workshop we will be pulling out numbers from that dataset.

Sophie Waterman: Regarding placeholder language, was there any comments from the management board about us taking the time to do the assessment? People are often pro us taking the time to understand things, but is there anything we should be aware of when it comes to our timeline for defining greenspace?

Daniel Koval: Yes, the main change to address the placeholder there was in the last target regarding greenspace. The old language said something like "by the end of 2026 we will figure out what it will be" but the Management Board just removed that phrase and made it more vague to navigate not having a placeholder.

III. Definitions Workshop Discussion (2:30 -3:20)

This time was used to share information and hold discussion to prepare for the upcoming Definitions Workshop in January.

Decisions: N/A

Actions:

1. Talk with colleagues on how they work with and define greenspace and recreation in their department.
2. Think through discussion questions prompted on [slide 9 of the presentation](#) prior to the January Workshop.

Discussion Notes:

Daniel Koval: This workshop will nail down how the Public Access and Protected Lands Workgroups will be tracking greenspace, access, etc. that need to be defined before moving on with management strategies.

See [slide 6 on the presentation](#) for workshop details. This will be a hybrid meeting, though in person attendance is encouraged!

Daniel Koval: I did some research to see how the 2013 group defined their boundaries for tracking water-based sites with the 2013 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan. They

narrowed their sites to those that are owned/operated/managed by a unit of government (fed, state, local), or under an NGO with an agreement with a governmental agency. This scoped their work to only focus on those sites, and not count sites that do not have a relation with a governmental agency. Lastly, they focused their recreation on water; we will expand that to focus on land-based recreation opportunities as well. This is helpful to see how we can frame how we approach defining greenspace.

See [slide 8 of the presentation](#) for the list of Eligible Recreation Facilities for LWCF Funding.

Sophie Waterman: Do workgroup members track these types of recreation and facilities within your programs/If you do, do you have these datasets around? Is that outside of your current scope of work?

Mark Hohengasser: Yes we do track all of that information.

Mark McLaughlin, in chat: We also do, at PA Fish and Boat.

Kevin DuBois, in chat: For DoD, I am not aware of any comprehensive database, but the data might be found in individual installation Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans.

Brent Peterson: Same for DC. We track boating facilities in my office; the other large categories are probably in the department of parks and recreation, but we will get you guys a contact for them.

Vallie Edenbo: In my department (dept of conservation/natural resources), we do track this as well. A report would be relatively easy to come by with my colleagues.

Sophie Waterman: How feasible is it to get that data/ how easy? Is it just a simple email to you all for data requests or something more complex?

Vallie Edenbo: In PA, I would need to see the list of exactly which facilities we want the data on, and in a week or two we could turn around a report in excel format.

Mark Hohengasser: Same for New York.

Sophie Waterman: Ok great, so not a huge lift; I just don't want to create a ton of more work for you all.

Daniel Koval: this last slide is a list of discussion prompts for how we can frame the workshop. People will be coming from not just public access, but also protected lands, CCP (Chesapeake Conservation Partnership), TPL (Trust for Public Land), etc, so it would be great to be prepared

with answers of how your jurisdictions go about these questions.

- How does your jurisdiction/organization define greenspace (aka open space)?
- What kinds of boundaries could be set for tracking within the workgroup?

Possibilities that have been mentioned include:

- Presence of recreation amenities (and if so, what kinds of amenities?)
- Size of parcel
- Characteristics of the the greenspace
 - Do athletic fields or parks that only have lawn grass count?
- Extent of accessibility
 - Within 10 minute walk of a certain percentage of people (Trust for Public Land)

Sophie Waterman: As we've been prepping for this workshop, Daniel and I have started collecting definitions; I would love to hear you all within your programs how you think about these things? Specifically with greenspace / urban greenspace - are there other folks in our networks we can connect with as well?

Mark Hohengasser: I can get you all these answers, I don't want to speak for other coworkers in NY parks. It might also be site specific and site dependent; a parcel in downtown NYC might value the size of the parcel more than another, even if it is just an acre. But generally as a rule, we think of parkland as just parkland. I can get you all these answers.

Vallie Edenbo: Within our formal program, I don't know if we have a definition for greenspace that we all agree on. We tend to use the work parks a lot and/or preserved lands, distinguishing a park being more developed and a preserved land being less developed, but that is not always the case, with exceptions there too.

Kevin DuBois: I pulled out the naval station norfolk integrated national management resource plan, and it lists the areas for recreation, but it doesn't give acre by acre details. It does list, in response to discussion on greenspace, a sailing center as part of the recreation amenities, which is all paved. There is no greenspace but it is a big recreational facility.

Daniel Koval: Yes, that falls into the discussion of would a paved recreation site like sailing or a basketball court or turf soccer field count in how we track? So that is good to know.

Sophie Waterman: I'm interested in people's opinions on that. I see the recreation benefits of those things, but in terms of water quality benefits, a turf grass is not an ideal situation. Where is the line? Do we focus on human health or other aspects?

Kevin DuBois: I think you just have to be careful because in the CAST model, the assumption is that all lawn is fertilized but I know we don't fertilize. Work of the urban nutrient management

expert panel is actually promoting a BMP for non fertilized turf grass, so just because it is grass doesn't mean it provides no benefit if it is managed appropriately. It's not as good as a forest or meadow or wetland, but it could provide some benefit with uptake of nutrients if managed well.

Daniel Koval: On a similar vein, Maryland's Greenspace Equity Program has a specific focus on a community green space is a community space that enhances the public health and livability of an overburdened or underserved community, and in that sub definition they have an inclusion of community gathering open space area; so would a greenspace be present there, or is an open community gathering area included, as it provides public health benefits? Good things to think about regarding the nexus of public health and environmental concerns.

Kevin DuBois, in chat: mental health is part of public health

IV. Wrap-Up & Adjourn

- **Next Meeting: January 29th, 10am-3pm (Hybrid)**
 - Definitions Workshop with Protected Lands Workgroup
 - Invite those you work with who you think can add to the conversation!

Attendees:

Daniel Koval, CRC
Emily Heller, EPA CBP
Sophie Waterman, USGS
Jillian Seagraves, MDNR
Isabel Layton, MDNR
Vallie Edenbo, PA DCNR

Mark McLaughlin, PA DCNR
Mark Hohengasser, NYS Parks
Jake Shoemaker, WV DNR
Brent Peterson, DC DOEE
Kevin DuBois, DOD
Samantha Cotten, DE DNREC