**Minutes - Public Access Workgroup Meeting Conference Call**

**June 18, 2018**

**Purpose: To assess progress towards the 300 New Site Goal under the Public Access Outcome of Stewardship, review actions to be taken by the workgroup in 2018-19 workplan, and identify next steps.**

**Summary of Actions and Decisions:**

**Action:** Reach out to Drew Pizzala if state contacts change under “Contacts for More Information” at the end of the Public Access WIP Developer Document.

**Action:** Reach out to Drew Pizzala if any new reports come out that can be added in the next cycle of updating this Public Access WIP Developer Document.

**Action:** States will be asked to review their public access data in the fall of 2018 to make sure numbers are accurately reflected in the potential and new site lists.

**Update on 300 New Site Goal Status (John Davy, NPS)**

* To date, 153 new public access sites have opened in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed out of a total 300 site goal since 2011. This is equivalent to 51% of progress towards meeting the 300 site goal by 2025 of the [Public Access Outcome](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/managementstrategies/strategy/public_access_site_development).

**Update on meeting with Chesapeake Bay Program’s Management Board in September, 2017 (John Davy, NPS)**

Summary of Public Access Presentation to the Management Board:

* Access the [Public Access Presentation to the Management Board](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/27589/public_access_srs_presentation_for_workgroup6-18-18.pptx).
* The primary objective of the meeting was to review strategies, note issues, and identify any changes in emphasis. It was noted that for public access a new emphasis would be placed on enhancing quality sites and programing that engage people with the Bay, its rivers, and streams.
* Priorities:
  + Funding for planning development and maintenance, increasing not just the number but also quality of new public access sites.
  + Considering an additional outcome to address enhancing the diversity and number of new users.
  + Importance on how we measure progress.
  + Continue to build partnerships at the federal, state, and local level to leverage funding.
* Which actions in the workplan are most critical?
  + Development of high quality sites and appropriate management and maintenance of all sites.
  + Funding for staff to provide technical assistance, planning, development, and management of sites.
  + Increasing number and diversity of users at sites.
* What the Public Access Team plans to move forward:
  + Enhance opportunities at current access sites.
  + Continue to leverage financial assistance programs.
  + Continue to request and support funding for agency staff.
  + Continue to build partnerships for development of quality access sites.
  + Enhancing environmental literacy by increasing the diversity and number of users through programming with partners at public access sites.

Comments:

* Lisa Gutierrez: What guidance did the Management Board provide following the presentation?
* Amy Handen: Management Board received the presentation well and did not suggest any changes to what the workgroup identified as priorities. The Management Board is going through the process of evaluating 31 outcomes under the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement so their support may likely be limited in terms of actions they take.
* The table below summarizes the agreed upon actions to be taken by the workgroup and the Management Board:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Public Access**(status update provided by Drew Pizzala and Amy Handen) | | | | |
| **Request** | **Nov. Agreed Partner Action** | **Due Date** | **Dec. Follow-up Action** | **Status** |
| Funding for planning, development, and maintenance | Workgroup could collaborate with CBP Budget & Finance Workgroup and/or other financing strategies such as the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, private investment. | 2018 | No follow up required. | **Ongoing:** Workgroup has inserted specific action into 2018-2019 workplan to identify and work with, as staff and resources allow, any potential funders in the private or corporate sector that could contribute to the development of public access sites. |
| Increase not just the number but also the quality of new public access sites | MB approved a shift in approach. Build recognition within MB of prioritization of quality sites (e.g. capacity, amenities, meeting the needs of a diverse population), and that this may impact the quantity of new sites developed. | No follow up needed | No follow up required. | **Ongoing:**  The 2018-2019 workplan includes actions and strategies tailored to not only increase number but also enhance quality of public access sites. |
| Consider an additional outcome to address enhancing the diversity and number of new users | Workgroup will consider possible options for a new outcome, management approaches or prioritization of actions to increase the number of new users, and to enhance diversity of all users, at public access sites. | June 2018 | No follow up required. | This subject remains a strong area of interest for the workgroup but will remain so in the management strategies and actions at this time and not as a separate outcome. The workgroup will adaptively manage as appropriate. |

**Overview of New 2018-19 Public Access Workplan (John Davy)**

* Access the [2018-19 Public Access Workplan](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/27589/public_access_workpln_template_final_(2)_4-4-18_(1).xlsx).
* Changes that occurred since 2016:
  + Management Approach 4 was reworded to expand on priorities around diversity that were raised during the September 2017 Management Board Meeting.
  + Management Approach 6 expanded its first sentence to state: “Fill strategic gaps in access along water trails: NPS will work with partners to identify, prioritize and develop sites that fill public access gaps along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail and other state or locally recognized/designated water trails throughout the watershed.”
  + Management Approach 7 was revised to incorporate the Environmental Justice Screening Tool (EJ Screen) in order to engage more diverse audiences and increase collaboration with the Diversity Workgroup.
  + The actions under Management Approach 17 were changed to emphasize the need to get more stewards engaged while increasing the diversity and number of users through programming and multi-lingual signage.
  + Canoe Mobile, Kids in Kayaks, and the YCC were some examples of programs put in place that identify and engage new stewards.

**Update on Revised Management Strategy Document (John Davy)**

* Access the [2018-19 Public Access Management Strategy](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/27589/5d_public_access_mgmt_strategy_final_2018(1).docx).
* Language around “Diversity” in the Management Strategy has been updated to align with the revised actions in Management Approach 17 of the workplan.

**Public Access WIP Developer Document (Amy Handen/Drew Pizzala)**

* Access the [Public Access WIP Developer Guidance Document](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/27589/wip_developer_audience_public_access_final_(1).docx).
* Jurisdictions and planners are encouraged to consider additional benefits of best management practices (BMPs) to enhance recreation opportunities at public access sites while supporting other outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Program to advance restoration.
* The document is intended to help guide implementers in the work that is done on the ground to increase and enhance public access and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Comments:

* Lisa Gutierrez: The Tetra Tech data does not accurately quantify how public access best management practices provide co-benefits to the other outcomes on the table. The research is outdated and needs to be updated to more accurately reflect today’s data.
* Drew/Amy: The WIP Developer Document provides a relative scale and it is hard to quantify the benefits of public access. It should be used as a supporting resource for driving implementation and not relied on as the only resource available for putting BMPs in place.

**Action:** Reach out to Drew Pizzala if state contacts change under “Contacts for More Information” at the end of the Public Access WIP Developer Document.

**Action:** Reach out to Drew Pizzala if any new reports come out that can be added in the next cycle of updating this Public Access WIP Developer Document.

**Actions for Fall, 2018 Public Access Workgroup Meeting**

* Update the potential new public access site list.
* Perform data count for CY 2018.
* Address any new issues/concerns raised by the workgroup.

**Action:** States will be asked to review their public access data in the fall of 2018 to make sure numbers are accurately reflected in the potential and new site lists.

**Open Discussion (All)**

What are any major concerns or exciting news as we move ahead in the public access arena?

* Robbie Rhur: A group in VA developed a water trail on the Rappahannock River and Robbie will be involved to enhance access and increase the number of new potential sites on the Rappahannock.
* Erik Zlokovitz: MD enhanced three existing sites by permitting three new free fishing areas as an incentive for increasing license revenue. Those sites include:
  + Greensboro shoreline on the Choptank River/Tuckahoe Creek.
  + Stretch of shoreline on east side of the Lower Susquehanna River/Perryville.
  + Crisfield town dock in the Tangier Sound region.
* Brandon Keplinger: WV has opened two new access sites:
  + New site on Cacapon River is in the process of being developed.
  + New branch of Potomac that could come up in the next 3 years
* Brandon Keplinger: Maintenance has been a recurring theme for the biggest challenge to up-keeping sites.

**Update on NPS Support/Staff for Public Access Workgroup**

* NPS doing reorganization and responsibilities have shifted to Colonial Historic Park in Jamestown, VA area for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.
* Some NPS Chesapeake Bay Office are now supporting that work.
* NPS will be tailored more towards supporting the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and its goals as they relate to Stewardship.
* John Davy is retiring on July 12th. NPS will still be providing the leadership support.
* NPS Chesapeake Bay Office is intended to be co-located with other federal agencies supporting the Chesapeake Bay Program when the office lease expires. Updates on this still to come.

**Next Steps:**

* The Public Access Workgroup will reconvene in November, 2018 to:
  + Update the potential new site list.
  + Perform a data count for CY 2018.
  + Address any new issues/concerns raised by the workgroup.

**Attendees:**

John Davy, NPS Chesapeake Bay Office, Chair

Jackie Kramer, NPS Chesapeake Bay Office, Co-Chair

Amy Handen, NPS Chesapeake Bay Office, Coordinator

Drew Pizzala, Chesapeake Research Consortium, Staffer

Andy Fitch, USGS Chesapeake Bay Program

Lisa Gutierrez, MD Department of Natural Resources

Brandon Keplinger, WV Division of Natural Resources

Michael Krumrine, DE Division of Parks and Recreation

Robbie Rhur, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Mark Scott, WV Division of Natural Resources

Uwe Weindel, VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

John Wilson, MD Department of Natural Resources

Erik Zlokovitz, MD Department of Natural Resources