



Chesapeake Bay Program

Science. Restoration. Partnership.

SAV Workgroup Winter Meeting

Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 1:00-5:00 ET

[Link to the Meeting Materials](#)

SAV WORKGROUP UPDATES

Presenter: Brooke Landry (MD DNR)

- 83,419 total acres of SAV estimated for 2023 → 61% of the 2025 target and 45% of the ultimate 185,000-acre outcome.
- GIT funded projects
 - Shallow Water Habitat Sentinel Site Program Development
 - Contracted to Green Fin Studios
 - Protecting Chesapeake Bay SAV Given Changing Hydrologic Conditions: Priority SAV Area Identification and Solutions Development
 - The project is complete, and the final report has been submitted to the Chesapeake Bay Trust
 - Advancing Social Marketing Through Two Pilot Programs
 - No new updates
- SAV Watchers Program
 - Offering the option of 2-day trainings
 - If you would like to participate in a training or host one – reach out to Brooke Landry
 - Subscribe to the SAV Watchers Newsletter at [this link](#)
- SAV Sentinel Site Program
 - Sites that will be monitored in 2025
 - Severn River, Susquehanna Flats, Smith Island, Marshy Creek, Dundee Creek, St. Mary's, VIMS sites, CB-NERR sites
- [SAV Data Dashboard](#) is getting update
 - [Link to the SAV factsheets](#)
- SAV Outcome Assessment Special Session
 - Completed the SAV outcome assessment 2-pager and it will be submitted to the Management Board on February 27th
 - You can find the full-length outcome assessment [here](#) and on the [SAV Workgroup webpage](#)
- SAV Mitigation & Monitoring Workshop
 - Workshop Purpose: Convene SAV WG and regulatory partners to ID in-kind SAV mitigation and monitoring requirements, success criteria, and performance standards for SAV mitigation projects.
- Calendar for the year
 - Spring Meeting (VIRTUAL ONLY): May 7th, 12-5pm
 - Summer Meeting (HYBRID): August 20th, 12-5pm
 - Fall Meeting (HYBRID): TBD



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SAV MITIGATION & MONITORING WORKSHOP RECAP

Presenter: Becky Golden (NOAA)

- Workshop Purpose: Convene SAV WG and regulatory partners to identify in-kind SAV mitigation and monitoring requirements, success criteria, and performance standards for future SAV mitigation projects.
- Partners gave presentations on how their agencies/groups are involved in SAV mitigation.
 - Maryland Department of the Environment
 - Board of Public Works
 - NOAA Fisheries
 - Tetra Tech
- Participants discussed questions that were posed by regulatory partners.
 - How do we determine if in-kind SAV mitigation is appropriate?
 - What size impact should trigger an in-kind SAV mitigation project?
 - What characteristics make for a suitable SAV mitigation project site?
 - What characteristics should a reference bed have?
 - How can you identify a donor bed?
 - If we need to acquire financial assurances, what would that look like?
 - How long is long-term maintenance & who is responsible?
 - How do we determine project success?
- Working on drafting recommendations from the workshop

Discussion

- **Jonathan Watson:** Saw the value of resource folks trying to understand the regulatory framework and the regulatory folks trying to understand the resource considerations. Interested in keeping that line of communication open because the more that regulatory folks understand the values of SAV the more comfortable they will be pushing back in terms of requirements.

2-PAGER OUTCOME ASSESSMENT

Presenter: Brooke Landry (MD DNR)

- Chris Guy (Habitat GIT Coordinator) gave an overview of the process for the Chesapeake Bay Agreement amendment
- Brooke went over the SAV Outcome 2-pager, which can be found [here](#).

Discussion:

- **Richard Zimmerman:** Is there any information about the extent to which one of the segments are close to being 100% supportable for SAV coverage? Where is it under vegetated? Do we have that for individual locations?



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- **Brooke Landry:** It's part of the [data dashboard](#) information in the SAV factsheets, but it's not up to date.
- **Becky Golden:** The data on [ChesapeakeProgress](#) can be downloaded and there is a tab for SAV acreage by segment.

OUTCOME ASSESSMENT: OUTCOME LANGUAGE

Presenter: Brooke Landry (MD DNR)

- At the Special Session on the SAV Outcome Assessment, there was discussion and interest in also updating the language to present annual SAV acres as a composite of previous years to align with ecological fluctuations, permitting and regulatory review process, and water quality standards assessments.
- Proposed Outcome Language
 - Sustain and increase the habitat benefits of SAV in the Chesapeake Bay. Achieve and sustain the ultimate outcome of **196,000 acres** of SAV Bay-wide necessary for a restored Bay. Progress toward this ultimate outcome will be measured against a target of **100,000 acres by 2030 and 130,000 acres by 2035** for the whole Bay.
 - Current SAV status each year will be measured as the maximum combined extent of SAV area across the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries within the preceding five (or three) years.
 - Progress will also be measured against the following targets for each salinity zone (updated based on Virginia segment goal updates): Tidal Fresh: 21,330 acres; Oligohaline: 13,094 acres; Mesohaline: 126,032 acres; Polyhaline: 35,790 acres.

Discussion:

- **Peter Tango:** When talking about the ultimate acres – what will be the baseline period? For example, would it be the total best acreage since the 1950s or something else?
- **Gina Hunt:** The metrics can be considered outputs to make the outcome language simpler. Adding the rolling average for the salinity zones in the Management Strategy instead of the outcome language can lead to easier updates if things change.
- **Dave Wilcox:** For an area to be counted in a composite it must have had grass in the last 5 years. To be taken off there would have to be no grass in an area for 5 years. It would buffer the intermediate losses.
 - **Chris Guy:** It would alleviate the variability in the year-to-year data.
- **Becky Golden:** Would we want to include the use of preliminary data? I know the time lag has been a concern for the regulatory folks. We need to be clear that the data is from the annual survey. Might have to shift when we report the numbers and the press release.
- **Brooke Landry:** We can keep the outcome as simple as the first bullet and the other 2 bullet points be outputs and not part of the outcome language.
- **Dave Wilcox:** Would the interim targets be salinity zone levels too? Handy to have goals go all the way to the segment level.



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- **Brooke Landry:** We have targets for each of the salinity zones, but we can create interim goals for the salinity zones.
- **Greg Brennan:** Should we say where the 196,000 acres comes from in the outcome?
 - **Brooke Landry:** We can make sure all of that is included in Chesapeake Progress and the SAV management strategy.
- **Peter Tango:** The first line speaks to habitat benefits, is that a feel good or do you have metrics?
 - **Brooke Landry:** The assumption is that if the acres are there the benefits are there.
 - **Chris Guy:** We could take out that first sentence of the outcome because it's redundant.
 - **Brooke Landry:** So, start with "Achieve and sustain..."? We can do that.
- **Chris Guy:** Are we good with the 2030 and 2035 timeframes for the interim goals? Are these numbers just pulled out of the air? Can we support the number we put in there?

IN-PERSON ATTENDEES (9):

Brooke Landry (MD DNR), **Becky Golden** (NOAA), **Dede Lawal** (CRC), **Kaitlin Scowen** (MD DNR), **Greg Brennan** (Spa Creek Conservancy), **Julie Luecke** (CBF), **Chris Guy** (USFWS), **Peter Tango** (USGS), **Stephanie Hall** (MD DNR)

ONLINE ATTENDEES (28):

Damien Emory (Maryland Service Year), **Valerie Burke** (CCCC), **Magdalene Ngeve** (UMCES), **Tage Sylvan** (Maryland Service Year), **Gabriella Vailati** (DNREC), **Lisa Ham** (HdG Environmental Center), **Alyson Hall** (VIMS), **Megan Fitzgerald** (EPA), **Bob Murphy** (Tetra Tech), **Hannah Claggett** (CCCC), **Erin Shields** (VIMS), **Tish Robertson** (DEQ), **Lesley Baggett** (AKRF), **Mollie Boyd** (SRA), **Zack Kelleher** (Sassafras Riverkeeper), **Faith McCarthy** (JHU), **Sarah Brzezinski** (EPA), **Richard Zimmerman** (ODU), **Jonathan Watson** (NOAA), **Riley Kuehn** (ARF), **David Wilcox** (VIMS), **Mike Johnson** (MRC), **Woody Francis** (USACE), **Victoria Hill** (ODU), **Angie Sowers** (USACE), **Ken Moore** (VIMS), **Gina Hunt** (MD DNR), **Mark Lewandowski** (MD DNR)