Stream Health Workgroup

Meeting Minutes

7/7/15

CBPO, Fish Shack

**Participants:**

Neely Law, CWP (Co-Chair)

Rich Starr, USFWS (Co-Chair)

Hannah Martin, CRC (Staff)

Jim Haggerty, USACE NY

Denise Clearwater, MDE

Julie Winters, EPA

Fred Kelly, Severn River Keeper

Scott Stranko, MDNR

Chris Spaur, USACE Baltimore

Claire Buchanan, ICPRB

Derrick McDonald, PADEP

Josh Burch, DDOE

Sarah Woodford, VDEQ

Steve Faulkner, USGS

Tish Robertson, VADEQ

Alison Armocida, MDNR

Greg Evans, VA Dept of Forestry

Seth Keller, USACE Baltimore

Kip Mumaw, Ecosystem Services

Renee Thompson, USGS-Healthy Watersheds GIT

Anne Hariston-Strang, MDNR

Mary Gattis, LGAC

Keith Underwood, Ecosystem Restoration

**Action Items:**

All-Send Neely Law and Julie Winters your ongoing projects within your agency that directly relate to the workplan matrix.

1. Project title

2. Project objectives

3. Geographic region

4. Funding

5. Program or Lead Agency responsible

6. Contact information

7. Actual date of the document/event

8. Product

9. Identify Relevant Stream Health Management Strategy (#1-5)

10. Document/event summary

11. Key Actions/recommendations and status

**Minutes:**

**Meeting Purpose**: Start working on the workplan to support the Stream Health Management Strategy document. Identify one or two strategies that are priorities for the stream health workgroup.

**Stream Health Workgroup Updates** (Neely Law)

The final management strategies were completed and posted online on June 30th. The next step is to discuss a plan to meet targeted deadlines for the biennial workplan. The workplans are now due April 2016 with an initial review in November.

1. *Proposed approach* 
   1. Template for workplan provided by Partnership
   2. By Nov 1: brainstorm initial ideas (manageable actions that can be accomplished in two years) and ask what state/resource/stakeholder agencies would be participating to help implement that action
   3. Dec and Jan: Complete draft with cost and and funding information
2. *Revised Workplan Timeline*
   1. June 30: Final Management Strategy completed
   2. Aug-Oct: Develop preliminary draft biennial workplan
   3. Nov 2: Preliminary drafts due
   4. Dec 18: Draft workplans due to MB for 4-week review
   5. Jan 22-March 8: Public Input Period (45 days)
   6. March 25: Revised drafts due to MB
   7. April 30: Final workplans
3. *Discussion*
   1. The workplan matrix is missing a section to outline the discrete products/results of each action. This could be incorporated in the performance targets column with expected outcome (pilot test results, white paper, etc).
   2. First round of workplans include actions for period January 2016-2018.
   3. Management Board has asked workgroups/GITs to populate the key action and performance target columns by September

**Overview of Management Approaches** (Rich Starr)

In the Stream Health Management Strategy, there are five identified management approaches to meet the stream health outcome (pg 15 of the strategy document). These approaches have been put in the draft workplan so we can prioritize for the next 2 years.

*Discussion:* *which management approach is a priority for you and your agency?*

* 1. Kelly: The permitting issue will drive the rest of the approaches (like funding). Need to resolve the permitting issue in order to not lose the local support and county money to build the projects.
  2. Winters: In the grant programs there is pressure to not have unliquidated obligations; the money in the grant program needs to be spent which cannot be done if projects can’t get permitted.
  3. Burch: The permitting management approach #3 is a priority because we need clarity on which permitting process we should use in the future; in reference to release of Chesapeake Bay TMDL RGP. Need to consider costs linked with monitoring requirements, and exploring the pooled monitoring approach for projects so we can spend the money on the restoration projects; comprehensive monitoring for targeted projects vs project specific selected monitoring.
     1. Starr: that is an action item under strategy 3
  4. Armocida: Support for Management Approach 2 as funding is tied to nutrient and sediment reductions and we are looking for the most cost effective approach but that’s not necessarily the best for stream restoration. Need to find a better funding source that isn’t tied to TMDL/WIPs
     1. Winters: An action items from the EP was to compile funding sources that had anything to do with stream work, funding sources are highly competitive.
  5. Stranko: Look for stream restoration opportunities that will benefit overall local stream health, while also achieving nutrient and sediment reductions to the Bay. Advocate for those projects, especially while reviewing a project
     1. Starr: Could link to Approach 1 as well
  6. Spaur: Many priorities discussed to include reducing nutrient and sediment for the Bay TMDL, streamline permitting process but also need to prioritize actions within the watershed to improve stream health, stream restoration is just one option.
  7. Haggerty: The newly enacted General Permit should be good but there will be a learning curve for project managers and applicants. There is a need to see how it will work over 6-12 months with opportunities for training and outreach. Opportunities to improve permit process is through clear communication for information requests to ensure applications complete and receive timely review.
     1. Winters: In review of the recent permit documentation, the action plan for the federal executive order there are several actions/recommendations for stream health; Jim Edwards involved. Action items related to streamline permitted. Noted if RGP doesn’t do it, then streamlining will still need to happen. FOD and FLCD expect that the workgroups will incorporate action items from EO into the biennial workplans.
  8. Greiner: reassessed baseline for the CHessie BIBI should be a priority. Use the scope of work that Claire is working under and that should be transferred into the workplan.
  9. Starr: need to look at what is being done in the past, how successful the recommendations were at being implemented and if not why didn’t it succeed.
  10. Buchanan; similar situation where we are aware of efforts within our agencies that offer something to this workplan, it might just be thinking through what the agencies have in progress, has funding for, producing.
  11. Law: Need to review actions currently stated in the Management Strategy and refine as we work toward defining specific actions to include in this first biennial workplans
  12. Winters: curious to know if past action items (like informational documents for nationwide) if they were helpful. Did it work? If it didn’t, why? Currently compiling action items with Jana Davis, could add in what others are doing so it’s all in one place.
  13. Action: Send Law/Winters a summary of ongoing activities for your agency that would apply to the workplan matrix. Winters will incorporate into spreadsheet she is working on with Jana Davis. This should include the drivers of what you’re doing, who is working on it and any dependencies. July 20th, share the spreadsheet with the group and put it in the format and share with Neely and Julie by 24th to share with Work Group for next meeting (Aug 4th).

1. Member Updates
   1. Greiner: Thanked Hannah for her work with the SHWG. All provided their appreciation.
   2. Starr: MDE and FWS has been working together and the function based rapid assessment document is finalized and online. It is a rapid stream assessment methodology that follows Stream Functions Pyramid Framework.
   3. Winters: The RGP is released. TMDL RGP released by the USACE and it’s on the USACE website.
      1. Webinar July 23, 10-12
   4. Greiner: Brook Trout modeling; The North Atlantic LCC funded a pilot model for prioritizing Brook Trout habitat in the Chesapeake Watershed and it was produced by Downstream Strategies. It is a decision support tool to prioritize BT restoration and protection. There will be an application training in Annapolis and the FWS office on Sept 10th. Other larger landscape science will be also be demonstrated. More details coming.
   5. Kelly: RSC, project down at SERC Muddy Creek Project with 40 years of WQ data and FWS is doing other monitoring. Waiting for the permit but once we do the project, we received large grant for monitoring and that will hopefully give answers to get past issues permitting RSC.
   6. Stranko: pooled monitoring effort in MD; RFP was released through CBT and reviewed proposals and funded 4 projects for a total of $830,000. This will be a three year process and there is hope that it will help with permitting process by using the results of the projects to determine what kind of projects will yield specific benefits.
      1. SERC project
      2. Project Looking at wet vs dry. In the process of site selection
      3. Biology; macros at 40 sites and success of restoration work on biology
      4. Stability; how stable are the different practices in building projects
   7. Initiative coming out of Governors office in MD and discussions are occurring. Neely will follow up on the update.
   8. Faulkner: Started project looking at effects of unconventional oil and gas on brook trout in the upper Susquehanna. Working with Todd Petty (WVU) to update the brook trout model.

Next Meeting: Aug 4th. New staffer will be here for that meeting.