

**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
**Toxic Contaminants Workgroup**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Time:** 1:00 – 2:40 PM

**Location:** Conference Call

**Calendar Page:** [April Meeting Materials](#)



Actions and Decisions:		
Agenda Item, (Lead) and Desired Outcome	Time	Background Docs, Notes, and Action Items
<b>1. Introductions and Announcements</b> (Keith Bollt, EPA; WG members) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro from TCW coordinator</li> <li>Intro from WG members</li> <li>Member announcements</li> <li>Coordinator announcements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call for confirming/updating WG membership</li> <li>Call for new workgroup chairs (2)</li> <li>Beyond 2025 update</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1:00	<b>Materials/Supporting Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Management Board and PSC updates related to the WQGIT Outcomes</a></li> </ul> <b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suzanne Trevena, EPA gave an update on the March 31st Beyond 2025 email update. She also thanked everyone for their engagement and continued collaboration despite the unexpected leadership changes and the rapidly accelerating Beyond 2025 deadlines.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Coordinator/staffer will email to update and confirm WG membership (signatory member and alternate; interested party members).</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Members will self-nominate/share names of people interested in being a WG chair (2 chair openings) with coordinator.</p>
<b>2. Beyond 2025 Outcome Evaluations</b> (Keith Bollt, EPA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will discuss recommendations to the MB in advance of their May 7&amp;8 retreat – outcome language, etc.</li> <li>We will discuss draft updated Toxics outcome language</li> <li>To inform this discussion on updated outcome language, we will brainstorm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What areas of toxic contaminants management do we want to collaborate on?</li> <li>How would you like your participation in this workgroup to add</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1:10	<b>Materials/Supporting Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Chesapeake Watershed Agreement</a></li> <li><a href="#">Clean Water Act Section 117</a></li> <li>Outcome evaluation papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <a href="#">Research Outcome</a> and 2) <a href="#">Policy and Prevention Outcome</a></li> </ul> </li> <li><a href="#">Draft updated Toxics outcome language</a></li> </ul> <b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emily Majcher, USGS gave context about where the draft</li> </ul>

<p>value to your day job?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What other recommendations do we have for the MB as it considers updating Toxics outcome language?</li></ul>	<p>language came from. She sat as the lead on the research outcome for many years and said the mercury and PCB focus was mainly because they were the two contaminants driving fish consumption advisories. She also explained it was intentionally vague because it was written in 2014 when talk about microplastics or PFAS was not widespread.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keith Bollt, EPA said broad language can also allow for more flexibility for future opportunities and change in priorities. He then asked members if we should identify specific contaminants in the language.</li><li>• Marel King, CBC (in chat): There were competing perspectives regarding mentioning specific contaminants in order to ensure they were priorities, and not specifying any so that the outcome could be more evergreen and responsive.</li><li>• Kelly Somers, EPA (in chat): Keith and I discussed this morning re: microplastics and whether it "needed" to be called out to verify its place in toxics and i am fine including it or not and I think having outputs that are specific to MP will help solidify that relationship and by including it - i mean calling out the specific name of microplastics in the 'such as' conversation.</li><li>• John Cargill, DNREC mentioned in his work on contaminants in DE, he thinks PFAS may get more funding and attention. He asked the workgroup whether there are benefits to specifying contaminants.</li><li>• Marel King, CBC (in chat): I would suggest adding PFAS and microplastics to a "such as" clause. Given the public attention to them at the moment, their absence is likely to make us appear out of touch.</li><li>• Keith Bollt, EPA recapped some of the target contaminants mentioned so far (PCBs, mercury, microplastics, and PFAS) while also leaving language to be flexible to add more contaminants later.</li><li>• Suzanne Trevena, EPA suggested using "such as" language.</li><li>• Jeremy Hanson, CRC and John Cargill, DNREC suggested the word "etc."</li><li>• Suzanne Trevena, EPA asked people to "like" Marel King's comment in the chat if they agreed with his sentiment which helped to summarize the discussion around adding contaminants with a flexible "such as" clause. <i>(7 people liked the message)</i></li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dave Montali, TetraTech said it's difficult because it is hard to make this SMART, and the way the draft language reads so far seems unclear.</li><li>• Keith Bollt, EPA agreed it's not currently SMART, but asks the workgroup what the focus and responsibility for this workgroup should be, whether to offer a platform to convene practitioners working on reducing pollutants or to hold ourselves accountable to reduce pollutants through specific target reductions. This has been a topic of debate and discussion throughout the Beyond 2025 process with many other groups.</li><li>• John Cargill, DNREC said if we want to make this SMART, it will be difficult since many jurisdictions have different mandates and targets. Gathering all these practitioners together is important, but a specific shared outcome will be difficult. Nonetheless, he thinks it's important to collect information to make it measurable and to show an overview of the work that is being done. Pollution changes in the environment in fish tissues may be a good way to measure it.</li><li>• Emily Majcher, USGS adds that story maps help to provide examples of activities and outputs, and they can showcase all the work that the partners are doing. As a partnership we do not collect toxics data, but rather pull that information from the partners. To date, this data has been related to the TMDLs and fish, however, maybe we can more explicitly prioritize contaminants in fish. We struggle with the concept of scale because most the toxics projects we have are site based (Superfund sites, etc.). We have talked a lot in this workgroup that the boundaries there may conflict with the boundaries and waterways under the Agreement. The Bay Program's focus on a larger scale is a challenge because these site-specific projects are not looking at the large scale in the way the Bay Program is directed to do. The largest challenge now is that there is no single data repository of toxics data happening across the watershed.</li><li>• George Onyullo, DC DOEE said we are dealing with a very complicated case that does not work well with "buzzwords". His rebuttal to a story map is that we don't have data, even if we did there wouldn't be enough to create a meaningful story map. Toxic chemicals are not like nutrients and sediment that have a lot of data. Scale is another issue, DC</li></ul>
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		<p>collects data from impacted sites, but they are so small, that scaling it up is not possible without substantial financial resources. Yes, we would like it to make SMART, but we don't have enough data or resources to do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keith Boltt, EPA asked what resources we should focus on.</li> <li>• George Onyullo, DOEE said that he supported the language "such as" however that could reduce the ability to secure funding, potentially we focus on one or two and then use that data to make a story. He also feels that we should not have let the MB convince us to combine the two tracks. When we integrate and consolidate, we lose a lot of inertia and focus.</li> <li>• Jeremy Hanson, CRC mentioned that there was a lot of support for the work of the TWG for both outcomes, but there were about two partners that were pushing for consolidation. We just need to make sure that we're keeping the substance and scope of activities the same. There will also be a public comment period which may result in revisions.</li> <li>• John Cargill, DNREC mentioned that DE finished last year an Advanced Restoration Plan (somewhat related to a TMDL) where they worked on toxic contaminants in one of their watersheds with EPA. They didn't get to a complete status and the hope that was this workgroup would take the foundation created by the DE contractors = to then be applied to the Bay Watershed. Wants to bring it back up, because this could be an example of an output that we could work backwards to write the outcome. In the project, they tracked the way certain contaminants reached the targeted watershed and then created a plan. Maybe we could take that document to see how it could be applied.</li> <li>• Emily Majcher, USGS asked what the motivation of expanding to lands, lakes, rivers, streams, etc. in the draft language came from.</li> <li>• Jeremy Hanson, CRC thinks that was included that to explain the scope of contaminants in the watershed.</li> <li>• Emily Majcher, USGS said it gives her a little pause, by looking too broad. Mentioned that there is some focus on contaminants in the tidal waters related to the TMDL.</li> <li>• Jeremy Hanson, CRC, maybe we just say the Chesapeake Bay waters and watershed?</li> <li>• Keith Boltt, EPA said he suggested adding "lands" to not</li> </ul>
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		<p>exclude other media. Even though outcome language can be updated later, agrees it may be better to make things broader so that the workgroup can adjust the language later based on their desired direction of the workgroup.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anthony (Tony) Timpano, VA DEQ said he had many of the same concerns around SMART language while being thrown into the drafting of the language, suggested maybe we focus on making ourselves a resource and a knowledge hub for others. We have the potential capacity to synthesize assessment outcomes, in terms of progress, just general accounting of what the status of current priorities and lowest hanging fruit are things we could provide. Maybe instead of naming contaminants we could focus on language related to human health concerns.</li><li>• Tom Parham, MD DNR said he's working on draft language for the workgroup to chew on. <i>Draft language Tom shared following the meeting:</i> <u><i>Draft Outcome Language:</i></u> <i>Establish and continually improve a comprehensive, coordinated strategy to increase our understanding of the impacts and mitigation options for addressing key toxic contaminants and reduce the presence of toxic contaminants in the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. To support those efforts, partners will maintain and pursue a common agenda that shares lessons and emerging science, policy, and management on contaminants of concern within the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.</i> <u><i>Outputs:</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Every two years, work with Bay toxic experts as well as GIT teams to identify two key toxic contaminants of concern to address.</i></li><li>• <i>On an annual basis, compile and summarize existing research on XXXX toxic contaminant throughout the Bay watershed to identify status, trends, emerging science, existing policy and management.</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o <i>Identify and share lessons learned, existing policy and management gaps as well as threats to Bay living resources.</i></li><li>o <i>Collaborate with other GIT teams to identify key areas impacted by XXXX toxic contaminant as well as possible mitigation strategies.</i></li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>
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<p><b>3. Future Meetings, Future Collaboration</b> (Keith Bollt, EPA; Emily Majcher, USGS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics, speakers, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How would you like the workgroup to add value to your day job?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Projects/collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Given limited time, resources, how can we take advantage of this opportunity for collaboration?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Discussion of PFAS Quarterly Meeting Priority Topics and Proposed Schedule in 2025 (Emily Majcher, USGS)</li> </ul>	2:00	<p><b>Materials/Supporting Documents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">PFAS TCW Discussion</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sushanth Gupta, MWCOG said it could be useful to cover recent toxics related legislation from just wrapped up VA/MD legislatures.</li> <li>• Kelly Somers, EPA mentioned two projects that are still ongoing at the EPA and will wrap up at the end of the fiscal year. She could present on both, but would rather have the final products before sharing them. Last summer they also completed a microplastics monitoring strategy and will be in touch with the workgroup in the coming months to review this information before it goes live on their website.</li> <li>• Keith Bollt, EPA said the previous workplan documents may also be a good reference when planning ahead.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emily Majcher, USGS, presented on past priority projects, the recently identified ones, and possible steps moving forward. The full presentation is available to review <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Members will continue to reach out to and work with the coordinator/staffer to get desired topics, projects, speakers on future WG agendas</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Keith Boltt, EPA will update the TCW research outcome workplan to reflect one combined Toxics outcome and will continue discussions with the workgroup at subsequent meetings.</p>
<b>Wrap Up and Adjourn</b>	2:35	<b>Next meeting: May 14<sup>th</sup> 1:00-3:00PM (Quarterly PFAS call)</b>
<p><b>Attendance:</b>  Keith Boltt, EPA; Suzanne Trevena, EPA; Jeremy Hanson, CRC; Marilyn Yang, CRC; Emily Majcher, USGS; Eric Hughes, EPA; Noam Weintraub; Anthony Timpano, VA DEQ; Dave Montali, TetraTech/WV; Sushanth Gupta, MWCOG; Nick Murray, WVDEP; Shlomit Chelst; John Cargill IV, DNREC; Sakinat Ahmad, DNREC; Kelly Gable, EPA; Caitlin Bolton, MWCOG; Kelly Somers, EPA; Raquel Wetzell, USFWS; Petra Baldwin; Raffaella Marano, EPA; George Onyullo, DC DOEE; Josh Lookenbill, PA DEP; Paul Hlavinka, MDE; Lisa Oschenhirt, Aqua Law; Marel King, CBC; Maria Russo, WV Rivers; Tom Parham, MD DNR</p>		