

**Chesapeake Bay Program  
Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)  
Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
10:00 AM to 10:40 AM

[Meeting Materials](#)

**Summary of Actions and Decisions**

**Decision:** The WTWG approved the May 2024 meeting [minutes](#).

**Action:** Based on feedback from members, WTWG leadership will move future meetings to Microsoft Teams going forward.

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**Meeting Minutes**

10:00 **Introductions and Announcements** – Cassie Davis, NYS DEC (10 min).

- **Decision requested:** Approval of the May 2024 Meeting [minutes](#).

**Decision:** The WTWG approved the May 2024 meeting [minutes](#).

- Since the NEIEN Appendix update crosswalk from Jess Rigelman three months ago, have not received further updates. Next month, the NEIEN appendix will be formally brought to the WTWG and approved, with the idea that unless there are any fatal flaws, final additions, etc it will be posted to the website by the end of August.
- The beginning of August is the opening period for 2024 Progress land use data submissions.
- **Olivia Devereux (in chat):** Thanks to Bill Keeling and Arianna Johns for providing the harvested forest data for VA!
- Bill Keeling will present next month on Phase 7 Proposed Catchments. Bill will cover the proposed NHD+ catchments for the Phase 7 model including the current state of data available for review by the partnership and outlining any potential issues that may need resolution.
- **Alana Hartman:** I wanted to let everyone know this will be my last WTWG meeting. After 20 years I am taking a new position that is not in the water protection field. I just want to thank everyone for your partnership and professional relationships over the years, I'll really miss it.
  - **Thank you, Alana, you will be missed!**

**Action:** Based on feedback from members, WTWG leadership will move future meetings to Microsoft Teams going forward.

10:10 **2024 Progress Update** – Auston Smith, EPA (10 min)

Auston provided an update on the schedule for 2024 Progress. This included a look at the [‘Program Plans and Resources’ page](#) on the CBP website under the BMP Verification subsection, and going over the current notional schedule.

**Discussion:**

**Ruth Cassilly (in chat):** Updated EPA QAPP Standard [link](#). BMP Verification Program Plans and Resources [Link](#).

**Kevin DuBois (in chat):** Do federal agencies have access to the CAST reports for review and feedback?

**Olivia Devereux:** Yes.

**Dave Montali:** Are we going to get a list of your questions on BMPs? Last year that list kept changing right up to the date we had our meeting, which from our perspective impacted efficiency. Will the review be objective, or subjective like last year?

**Auston Smith:** We are hoping to follow a similar path to last year, except for the revisions to the agenda, which did happen last year, and we apologize for that. We want to make it an efficient meeting for all jurisdictions. The idea is to send out an agenda at the very latest a week beforehand. We're trying to do an objective analysis, looking at percent changes that we've seen across different thresholds of time. That's generally how we try and begin the discussion, but that initial discussion is for you as well, to highlight any questions or concerns, which opens up a period of time in which we can have a productive back and forth. I took the feedback last year to heart, so I appreciate this kind of insight.

**Bill Keeling:** Your objective criteria would be good to know if you could put those out.

**Olivia Devereux:** I think we have that posted on the CAST website as the Appendix V or the guidelines that EPA follows. I'm sure Auston will take a look and see if it needs to be updated. If you have any recommendations or edits, we've usually used this time to ask for those.

**Ruth Cassilly:** I want to remind everyone that states have the ability to update their data every Friday after December 1<sup>st</sup>, up until a certain period. Sometimes, that's why changes occur. The agenda we send out is based on the latest state reported BMP implementation that occurred on the Friday before, or the most recent data that we have. A state may report new data which may result in changes in what we see in the BMP implementation. By nature, this is a changeable process up until February 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> when the data is finalized.

**Auston Smith:** I do want to reiterate we appreciate everyone's patience. It is a dynamic process so there's some back and forth inherently built in, but we try and minimize it.

**Bill Keeling:** There was a written protocol that was used about three years ago, that specified it was as submitted or on the record as of the deadline of December 1<sup>st</sup>. That was the reason to pick a static run to evaluate, because yes, we know that we try to address NEIEN and CAST errors, but that's the reason to pick a specific date and model run to evaluate.

**Olivia Devereux (in chat):** Here is the [protocol for verification](#).

**Auston Smith:** Absolutely, that does allow us to get the appropriate baseline to begin to schedule those discussions. As Ruth highlighted, we try and encourage all BMP data to be submitted by [December 1<sup>st</sup>]. These discussions sometimes seem to highlight that some data wasn't submitted, was submitted in error, or there was an error on our end, which does update that report. We try and get a baseline as quickly as possible, but it is a moving baseline after that.

**Dave Montali:** This is the first time progress is going to be run on CAST-23 right?

**Auston Smith:** Correct.

**Dave Montali:** I believe there was a CBP review for illogical results. Where does that fit into this schedule? Do we say we reviewed '21 [Progress], we made the changes that we thought would be good for '23 [Progress], and we don't have a change in CAST, so we don't need to do that this time?

**Auston Smith:** That is my knee jerk reaction; I would want to confirm that with management, but I think that is the case this year, Dave.

**Olivia Devereux (in chat):** The [Grant Guidance](#) is also an important document to follow.

**Olivia Devereux:** We're using CAST-23, and it is the approved version, so we won't be switching among versions or providing data for multiple versions. The other thing I wanted to point out in terms of updates is that the entire back end of NEIEN has been rewritten. With any new software application, we would expect that there might be some items that didn't appear during testing that need to be repair so we will be looking for your feedback as we go through the process.

**Jessica Rigelman:** I don't have much to add; if anything pops up, please notify us. This backend had to be rewritten in order to meet the needs of the report that this group approved. So, there will be an improved verification report for you.

**Auston Smith:** Thanks. We try and make that schedule as easy to read as possible but there can be a lot of steps.

**Olivia Devereux:** I put two items in the chat. The protocol for verification that we used is linked as well as the grant guidance that. I just wanted to call everyone's attention to those two items, for their review.

#### 10:20 **QAPP Update** – Auston Smith, EPA & Ruth Cassilly, UMD (15 min)

Auston and Ruth provided an update on the recent QAPP Update Email that was sent to jurisdictions. This included points related to the R-5 QAPP Format Update, BIL/IIJA Project inclusions, Wastewater Default Data, Conowingo Updates, and Participatory Science.

#### **Discussion:**

**Jessica Rigelman:** Two things. States in general use default data for some of their insignificants that don't report, and we just want a record of what are being used for defaults. I know there are various levels of defaults depending on the facility, so we want it documented in the QAPP. I wanted to go back to BIL and reporting Conowingo. In your submissions for NEIEN, I wanted to remind everyone that we have the project label element in the schema and that is where you would put BIL/IIJA or Conowingo if you want to tag those as being specific to a certain type of project. That will allow us to pull the specific label out so we would appreciate it if you use those.

**Dave Montali:** With regard to wastewater, something came across my desk a month or so ago asking for an explanation of our non sig [sic] default wastewater approach, and that was answered, but how do I know if things were accepted, or where we stand relative to that? It's straight from our WIP and we've been doing it forever. I gave technical input to people who develop the wastewater data, but I don't know where that stands. I'm under the impression that

for WV for September 1<sup>st</sup>, there's no expectation to update our QAPP from last year. So where does wastewater fit in?

**Auston Smith:** That wastewater default data, we would be looking to see at least initially in some sort of email attachment. Eventually, we would want it included in the 2024 QAPP revision. Your understanding is correct that I was helping review the WV QAPP and, in our memo, there are no outstanding comments. This email serves as a supplement to that memo and where your 2023 QAPP stood at the end of last year. As Jess alluded to, everyone's existing default wastewater data is going to look very different, so we wanted to use this as an opportunity to see what it looked like and use it to supplement our own wastewater reporting in the future.

**Dave Montali:** I think I need to stay tuned.

**Ruth Cassilly:** You may have gotten the email, we sent it out a month ago requesting that information being put in the QAPP. I'm guessing they asked you for it and they'll put it in their QAPP and submit September 1<sup>st</sup> to us. That's what we're looking for, an explanation of where the data is coming from. There are several options outlined in the grant guidance. The point source data allows you to access DNR data for non significant facilities. If you don't have the DNR data for non significant facilities, you can do a state estimated one time data, a default state specific value, or a previous years' data. We're asking if you're doing one of those, and if so which one, and if you're using a methodology to estimate please provide us with what that is so we have a better knowledge of how states are coming up with that information.

**Dave Montali:** I provided feedback about what we do and why we do it. I'll follow up with wastewater people. What you're saying is if that approach is not detailed in the QAPP then it needs to be in the QAPP.

**Ruth Cassilly:** Correct.

**Dave Montali:** I'll follow up, thank you.

**Bill Keeling:** Jess may have made a place in NEIEN for a new code, that does not mean that VA will be capable of using it. That would take a development process in our warehouse to create any additional XML coding, unless we did it by hand, which I don't see us doing. I'm a bit confused because you are saying we have to flag stuff in our NEIEN submission related to IJJA and then we have to report twice a year in FieldDoc.

**Auston Smith:** So, it's not the Conowingo, it's specifically IJJA that in your current reporting system is not flagged in a way where it can be submitted to NEIEN?

**Bill Keeling:** Not using the code Jess just talked about. If it's been added to the schema since 2015, we do not have the capability without hiring developers to program the warehouse to produce that XML. VA will not be able to do that without a development process which could take two years to get through our IT division. We're going to be reporting to FieldDoc as per our guidance, and that's how EPA is going to have to figure out which of our records are IJJA versus not.

**Olivia Devereux:** Just to be clear, there was not a change to the NEIEN schema at all, the NEIEN schema has remained the same. I don't know where that falls within VA's needs, but the schema has not changed.

**Bill Keeling:** The entire schema isn't part of our nonpoint BMP warehouse and how we create the XML. I'm just saying, not every available code within the scheme is programmed or readily programmable within our system.

**Auston Smith:** Is there, to my understanding, a flag that you can put on the data submission when you're submitting it to NEIEN? Is there a different sort of input structure that would allow for that data to be tracked, or is it an issue on your end that wouldn't allow for that entirely?

**Jessica Rigelman:** I understand what you're talking about Bill. The schema has been, I understand you don't have the capability to use that element, and it's something we can talk about for future years, but I think we can get around this by just getting a list of the state unique identifiers that are part of IJA and other stuff. That label was put into place for this use, this is the first time we're wanting people to use it, it's not required, it's an optional field, so if the Bay Program decides to want to use that, we ought to talk to IT departments. We can get around this by just getting a list of state unique identifiers for each project.

**Bill Keeling:** You're going to get those when we report them to FieldDoc.

**Jessica Rigelman:** Ok. I don't have access to FieldDoc, but as long as you say we're going to have that I can work with it.

**Tyler Trostle:** One question for Jess on that, when submitting the IJA stuff or Conowingo items, we're considering separate batching as our way of separating it. Is that an acceptable format?

**Jessica Rigelman:** It all goes into one system here, so we don't know of your batches. That's the submission ID or agency code, is that what you're talking about? I think I can pull that out. That would be the system where in the current NEIEN portal you say 'is current' or 'not current' one of those batches? I can pull it out that way.

**Bill Keeling:** We could do similar things in VA. One of our XMLs could be exclusively IJA reporting, and the rest is non. That's not how we prefer to do things, but we could do it that way.

**Jessica Rigelman:** You don't have to. If you're telling me there'll be a list from FieldDoc of state unique identifiers then I can get it that way, both options work.

**Alana Hartman:** While Bill was talking, I was thinking we have a similar situation in WV. We'll probably use the list of state unique identifiers that Jess suggested.

**Alicia Ritzenthaler:** Similar in DC, I think we'll be able to use the flag, but if our development team isn't able to get it in XML soon enough, we can definitely do a list of state unique identifiers, so I think we'll be OK too.

**Ruth Cassilly:** I know there's been some confusion over when departments need to sign the QAPP in terms of submitting it. We'll be reaching out, I know we had a question from DC on this and we'll be reaching out to them directly, but I wanted to tell everyone that the QAPP you turned in September 3<sup>rd</sup> is a draft QAPP to be reviewed. It doesn't need to be signed by then, or even December 1<sup>st</sup> when it's submitted. It needs to be signed for the final submission. We go back and forth quite a bit with you all on the QAPP review memos in terms of this needs to be tweaked or that needs to be changed. The final QAPP version that you turn in on February 8<sup>th</sup> is what needs to be signed by all the appropriate parties from whatever jurisdiction. When we approve the QAPP it gets signed by EPA in return. This year we will also try to remember to remind everyone to take the track changes version off at that time so once EPA signs and

returns, we can post those QAPPs on CAST. Last year, I apologize, we had to do some back and forth with you who had QAPPs still in track changes at that point. You don't need to worry about getting signatures for the first round of QAPPs, just the final submission when it's the final version.

**Next Meeting:** [Thursday, August 1st, 2024](#), from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

### Participants

Alana Hartman, WV DEP  
Alicia Ritzenthaler, DC DOEE  
Arianna Johns, VA DEQ  
Ashley Kelly, DoD  
Auston Smith, EPA  
Bill Keeling, VA DEQ  
Cassie Davis, NYS DEC  
Chris Brosch, DDA  
Christina Lyerly, MDE  
Clint Gill, DDA  
Dave Montali, Tetra Tech WV  
Emily Dekar, USC  
Eric Hughes, EPA  
Helen Golimowski, Devereux Consulting

Holly Walker, DE DNREC  
Jessica Rigelman, J7 Consulting  
Joshua Glace, Larson Design Group  
Kevin DuBois, DoD  
Kevin McLean, VA DEQ  
Matthew Kofroth, LCCD  
Nicole Christ, MDE  
Normand Goulet, NVRC  
Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting  
Ruth Cassilly, UMD  
Samuel Canfield, WV DEP  
Scott Heidel, PA DEP  
Sushanth Gupta, CRC  
Tyler Trostle, PA DEP

### Acronym List

BIL: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law  
BMP: Best Management Practice  
CAST: Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool  
CBP: Chesapeake Bay Program  
CRC: Chesapeake Research Consortium  
DDA: Delaware Department of Agriculture  
DEC: [NY State] Department of Environmental Conservation  
DEP: [PA] or [WV] Department of Environmental Protection  
DEQ: [VA] Department of Environmental Quality  
DNR: [MD] Department of Natural Resources  
DNREC: [DE] Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control  
DoD: [U.S.] Department of Defense  
DOEE: [DC] Department of Energy and Environment  
EPA: [U.S.] Environmental Protection Agency  
GIT: [Chesapeake Bay Program's] Goal Implementation Team  
IIJA: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act  
LCCD: Lancaster County Conservation District  
MDE: Maryland Department of the Environment  
NEIEN: National Environmental Information Exchange Network  
NHD: National Hydrography Dataset

NVRC: Northern Virginia Regional Commission

QAPP: Quality Assurance Project Plan

UMD: University of Maryland

USC: Upper Susquehanna Coalition

WTWG: Watershed Technical Workgroup

XML: Extensible Markup Language