

## **1/16/2024 – Wetlands Workgroup Meeting: Nontidal**

**MEETING:** Wetlands Workgroup Meeting: Nontidal

**DATE/TIME:** 1/16/2024, 2:00 - 4:00 ET

### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

*Presenter: Nancy Schumm (Workgroup Vice Chair)*

- Roll Call

### **WETLAND CHALLENGES**

*Presenter: Nancy Schumm (Workgroup Vice Chair)*

- Back in July workgroup members ranked priorities for the workgroup and *wetland challenges* came out as one of the top priorities.
- [Jamboard Activity](#): What do you consider a nontidal wetland challenge? Which challenges should the workgroup focus on first?

#### **Comments/Questions:**

- **Pam Mason**: There may be more capacity for outreach and communication through the CBP Strategic Engagement Team and University of Michigan master students.
  - **Sarah Koser** (*in chat*): Will the University of Michigan SEAS Master's Project Students be working with the WWG and the SET? As Chris noted, the Trust is working on a Tidal Strategic Plan that includes a landowner engagement objective so it would be good to know who the contact is - thanks and congrats!

### **WETLAND WORD ASSOCIATION**

*Presenters: Nancy Schumm & Pam Mason*

- Want to gain consensus on wetland terms and practices used and see if they are classified as restoration, creation, or enhancement.
- We recognize that there are different variations of terms around wetlands projects (on the ground) and a lot of those terms were assessed at one time to determine BMP load reduction crediting. There's pretty good agreement on some terms, but not all.
- The Wetlands Outcome is linked to three specific terms until 2025, but we want to get input on the kinds of activities that you think fall into these different terms and if the terminology should change.

#### **Comments/Questions:**

- **Dave Goerman**: The FGDC establishes the standards for federal agencies to follow in meeting the executive order and other requirements of the federal government, the Chesapeake Bay Agreement being one of them. In PA we follow the definitions explicitly whether they be used for federal, regulatory, or non-regulatory purposes.



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- **Pam Mason:** We want to gain an understanding of where practitioners/permit reviewers/etc. would place these actions and activities under the three terms: creation, restoration, and enhancement. To develop a table or spreadsheet that can be used to crosswalk some of these terms. Do we think these terms capture the activities? Do we want to keep using those terms when thinking about modifying the wetlands outcome?
  - **Denise Clearwater:** It seems the simplest way to do this would be to classify if you are working in an existing wetland or not. Former wetland would be restoration and not would be creation.
- **Alison Santoro:** Should we split this a little bit more? Move to BMP implementation-based categories similar to stream restoration.
- **Pam Mason:** Trying to get an understanding of the terms to communicate with non-wetland people more effectively.
  - **Nancy Schumm:** Reminds me of an exercise through the Institute of Conservation Leadership where if we don't agree amongst ourselves what business we're in, how do we sell it to the rest of the world? Make sure we're all speaking the same language.
- **Pam Mason:** We're not trying to change anyone else's definitions we're just trying to make sure we understand them moving forward as we set our goals.
- **Chris Guy:** This won't be done in a day, there will be several iterations. We need to gain consistency in our terminology. This is where it starts to get messy on the ground.
  - **Dave Goerman:** We do have a common set of definitions and it's a matter of performing an analysis on your project to figure out where it falls.
  - **Denise Clearwater:** If we are talking about voluntary gains the only area of confusion is related to enhancements.
- **Chris Guy:** The next step would be to state what we mean when we use federal definitions, state definitions, and the definitions established in the Wetlands Outcome. This will help set ourselves up for 2025.
  - **Dave Goerman:** Use the FGDC definitions as the foundation. EPA wetlands restoration definitions and distinctions:  
<https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/wetlands-restoration-definitions-and-distinctions>
- **Denise Clearwater:** Since some of these can be cross walked, I think the focus is on what the resource is before you started and what it is after. Not so much the activities.
- **Ben Sagara (in chat):** We may need 2 things here - define wetland restoration/enhancement/creation and determine a list of practices that could apply to those three categories.
- **Denise Clearwater:** For the purposes of voluntary tracking is it important to breakout creation from restoration?
  - **Pam Mason:** Probably not.



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### ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

- The wetlands indicator was updated on [Chesapeake Progress](#). Here's a link to the press release: <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/pressrelease/chesapeake-bay-program-notes-increase-in-wetlands-across-the-watershed>
- Maryland Department of the Environment finished a project on a new assessment and guidance for stream restoration projects with associated wetlands: <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/WetlandsandWaterways/Pages/Stream-Wetland-NewGuidance.aspx>
- Pam will be presenting on the Chesapeake Bay Program Wetlands Outcome at the [Delaware Wetlands Conference](#) in February.
- A [vernal pools wetlands protection act](#) is being introduced to revise Maryland's wetland regulations to protect vernal pools that don't technically meet the wetlands definition.

### PARTICIPANTS (24):

<b>Pam Mason (VIMS)</b>	<b>Nancy Schumm (City of Gaithersburg)</b>	<b>Tess Danielson (DOEE)</b>	<b>Dede Lawal (CRC)</b>
<b>Chris Guy (USFWS)</b>	<b>Joe Berg (Biohabitats)</b>	<b>Amy Jacobs (TNC)</b>	<b>Alison Rogerson (DNREC)</b>
<b>Greg Noe (USGS)</b>	<b>George Doumit (DNREC)</b>	<b>Denise Clearwater (MDE or MDNR)</b>	<b>Cassandra Davis (NY DEC)</b>
<b>Megan Diehl (CBT)</b>	<b>Megan Fitzgerald (EPA)</b>	<b>Katie Stahl (USFWS)</b>	<b>Sarah Koser (CBT)</b>
<b>Matt Robinson (EPA)</b>	<b>Kevin Mclean (VA DEQ)</b>	<b>Melissa Yearick (USC)</b>	<b>Dave Goerman (PA DEP)</b>
<b>Ben Sagara (DWR)</b>	<b>Alison Santoro (MDNR)</b>	<b>Camille Liebnitzky (City of Alexandria)</b>	<b>BeKura Branch (First Alliance Consulting)</b>