Meeting Minutes

Chesapeake Bay Program Forestry Workgroup
Urban Tree Canopy Management Strategy

Joe Macknis Memorial Conference Room (Fish Shack)
410 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403
December 3rd, 2014 10:00 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.

Meeting Summary:
Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Forestry Workgroup (FWG) members and interested stakeholders met on December 3rd for a face-to-face meeting devoted to the management strategy of the Urban Tree Canopy Outcome in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. Participants discussed current efforts, gaps, actions, and tracking options.

Urban Tree Canopy Outcome: Continually increase urban tree canopy capacity to provide air quality, water quality and habitat quality benefits throughout the watershed. Expand urban tree canopy by 2,400 acres by 2025.

Participants:
Rebecca Hanmer (Retired Citizens Advisory Committee), *FWG Chair*
Julie Mawhorter (USFS), *Mid-Atlantic Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator*
Sally Claggett (USFS), *FWG Coordinator*
Eric Sprague (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Tuana Phillips (Chesapeake Research Consortium)
Anne Hairston-Strang (MD DNR)
Barbara White (VA DOF)
Jenny McGarvey (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Kesha Braunskill (DE Forest Service)
Marcia Fox (DE DNREC)
Colin Jones (MD Department of Agriculture)
Charles Murphy (TreeBaltimore)
Bud Reaves (Anne Arundel County, MD)
Wayne Lucas (Chair, Maryland Urban and Community Forestry Council)
Tanner Heid (WV Cacapon Institute)
Frank Rodgers (WV Cacapon Institute)
Matt Poirot (VA DOF)
Marian Norris (NPS)
Tracey Coulter (PA DCNR)
Rachel Reyna (PA DCNR)
Marian Honeczy (MD DNR)
Justin Hynicka (MD DNR)
Craig Highfield (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)

Gary Allen (Center for Chesapeake Communities)
Earl Bradley (Citizen, Annapolis)
Lee Epstein (Chesapeake Bay Foundation)
Judy Okay (VA DOF)
Don Outen (Baltimore County, MD)
Cene Ketcham (VA Tech)
Chris Peiffer (Plan-it Geo)
Eric Wiseman (VA Tech)
Ginger Ellis (Anne Arundel County, MD)
Heather Montgomery (Frederick County, MD)
Jerry Dieruf (Terra Green)
Karl Berger (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments)
Karl Graybil
Katherine Reich (Falls Church, VA)
Linwood Robinson (Forest Heights, MD)
Patricia Greenberg (Reston Association)
Paul Eriksson (Cumberland, MD)
Jodi Rose (Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake)
Jana Morgan (CCL-Engineering)
Valerie Rupp (Parks and People)
Lindsay Burleigh (CCL-Engineering)
John Thomas (DC DDOT Urban Forestry Administration)

Welcome and Introductions
Rebecca Hanmer welcomed everybody to the meeting and confirmed participants.

Background and Overview – Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Management Strategy (MS)
Summary: Julie Mawhorter briefed participants on the UTC management strategy. Her presentation included an overview of the day's task, past work and urban tree canopy assessments, implementation plans, and the challenges of implementing and measuring on-the-ground impact. She also provided an overview of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and the strategy elements of the UTC outcome, including baseline targets, participating jurisdictions, and factors influencing ability to meet goal. Her presentation prepped the group for later discussions on management approach, tracking, and monitoring. For more information, please see Julie's presentation slides at this link.

Comments and other discussion points:
- The 2007 Forest Conservation Directive increased the number of communities with commitments to tree canopy expansion goals from 5 to 120.
- Over 70 cities and towns plus 9 counties have completed UTC assessments, and there are more in progress.
  - Maryland's state-wide UTC assessment is currently being processed and will soon be made available to communities.

- There is currently no basin-wide UTC assessment, so there is no baseline for the Chesapeake Bay Agreement UTC goal.
  - The Chesapeake Bay Program's USGS team and Land Use Workgroup (LUWG) will compile all of the UTC assessments to create one Bay-wide data layer.
  - *Action item: Next Spring the LUWG will come to the FWG to work on the UTC baseline.*
- LGAC, the Chesapeake Bay Program's Local Government Advisory Committee, will be an important group to get input from. The Coordinator of LGAC was at the UTC Summit in October, and they are having a meeting this week. Headwater states are not yet represented in LGAC, but VA, MD, PA, and DC are. In addition, local engagement is a component of the management strategy key elements.
- We will have to consider how the UTC strategy targets match up with the milestone targets in the Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) 2-year milestones.
- Sigma Space Corporation and NASA have plans to do a LIDAR assessment for Pennsylvania and Delaware.

UTC Summit – Highlights and Discussion Themes
Summary: Eric Sprague gave a presentation on the highlights of the UTC Summit, which occurred on October 14-15, 2014 and convened program managers and local tree advocates from all over the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Eric reviewed four key themes from the Summit: collaboration (among states and local government); integration and institutional alignment (e.g., integration with green infrastructure, Bay restoration efforts); new strategies; and "more than new trees," meaning that this effort is also about protection, maintenance, and local stewardship. For more information, please see Eric's presentation slides at this link.

Other comments and discussion points:
- The draft summary of the Summit is complete and is accessible on the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay website, along with the recordings of the Summit presentations.
- Baltimore County's Big Tree Sale program has been successful in integrating UTC and Bay restoration goals.
- A meeting participant commented that the best opportunities on residential lands are to provide free trees with agreement of landowner. With rural landowners, you can use stormwater dollars to put trees on agricultural lands.
- DC's MS4 permit has a tree planting goal. This is an example of how we can use stormwater fees to help pay for trees.
- Stress the positive – more trees mean better neighborhoods.
- There are poor tree selection and poor planting issues to be solved. VA has local citizens volunteering to educate and plant.
- Currently, there is no good survey or inventory that captures tactics among communities, or what communities are doing to achieve UTC goals. Such an inventory was identified as something worth creating to identify community needs, and foster the sharing of ideas.
  - *Action item: Consider the following in the management strategy – what is the best way to share experiences and techniques? How can communities learn from and help each other?*

Input on UTC MS Elements – Current Efforts/Gaps/Actions Needed
Summary: Julie Mawhorter and Eric Sprague guided meeting participants through *Table 2* in the
[Draft Chesapeake Urban and Community Tree Canopy Management Strategy Outline](#).
Participants were given the opportunity to provide additional information within each of the
table's categories: Assessment/Planning, Tree Canopy Protection, Tree Planting,
Maintenance/Stewardship, and Community Outreach/Buy-in. Their additions are summarized
below.

Assessment/Planning:

Current Efforts	Gaps	Proposed Partnership Actions
	• There are different types of assessments; technology is evolving and resolution improves over time. This makes it difficult to compare older and newer assessments. • Clarify definition of "urban" (e.g., do we include state and federally owned lands/parks?). • Locality capacity to implement plans (e.g., no natural resource people on staff). • Stormwater regulation is used as an excuse to remove trees (in MD) as they will be "replaced."	*What strategies/actions are most needed to assist local governments with each element?* • Strong motivation to do work is needed; the TMDL helps with that to a certain extent. • Other practical things are needed as well: is there money available? And who is it that is in charge? How much power do they have? • Break goal down into smaller pieces to make it more palatable and easier to comprehend. • Have Environmental Finance Center provide assistance. • Partner, collaborate with existing local infrastructures (Tree City USA). Stress the need for local advocates. • Develop a UTC implementation guidance document/plan for localities. Consultants or partnerships can help write it up. • Local UTC planning process is just as important as plan document; need buy-in; provide technical assistance to help communities. • Develop a culture, a tree canopy awareness. • Get buy-in from the community and allies; do not just ask groups to support a plan already developed. • Integrate with stormwater function. • Empower regulatory community / engineers; "it's about getting credit." • Get allies, champions.

Other comments discussion points:

- UTC program has developed an approach to compare different assessments (aerial photography, IKONOS, LIDAR, and citizen/on-the-ground datasets). Their research can be shared with the group.
- Federal lands are not included in assessments in both Virginia and DC, but are included in MD.
  - *Action item: Look into connecting state data with federal data.*
- We are not using a narrow definition of urban; we are thinking of it broadly as urban and community tree canopy.
  - Federal and state parks can be included in this broad definition.
  - *Action item: the definition of UTC will have to be dealt with in the management strategy.*
- Julie asked the group how implementation plans are going along in different states.
  - VA got a grant to work with 4 communities, and they are developing implementation plans, in collaboration with Virginia Tech and Plan-it Geo. VA will be releasing a UTC Implementation guidance document for other jurisdictions, but suspects that these jurisdictions will need assistance with doing plans.
  - In WV, the Cacapon Institute developed implementation plans for localities within the 2 counties that have UTC data. Regarding federal facilities, there is a DOD representative on the WV Tributary Team and also current outreach to Martinsburg AF Base and Harper's Ferry National Park. Counties are reluctant to set goal because they are afraid the goal will turn into a regulatory requirement tied to their air quality or stormwater permits.
- Grant dollars are needed from the state to local governments to develop the plans.
- The Chesapeake Bay Commission "Crediting Conservation" report frames this issue very well.
  - *Action item: Share this document with meeting participants and the FWG.*
- The group spent some time discussing whether or not stormwater engineers and regulatory professionals are fully informed about the benefits of UTC and see it as a viable strategy.
- York, PA might be a good model for integrating efforts with stormwater sector. Sewer authorities in York are behind the plan and the city has a green infrastructure plan with a UTC component.
- What can we do collectively to reach out to public works directors? Do we have to get trees recognized in stormwater regulations and permits?
- A meeting participant pointed out that trees come in different sizes. We are promoting green infrastructure but need to address whether the right sized trees are going in for the desired benefits. It was clarified that UTC strategies should generally promote trees of larger sizes for canopy benefits, but also follow "right tree, right place" around utilities, etc. Action item: Julie will brief the Chesapeake Bay Program's Urban Stormwater WorkGroup on December 16th. UTC participants are welcome to call in.

Tree Canopy Protection:

Current Efforts	Gaps	Proposed Partnership Actions
	• Protection looks different in a more developed area	*What strategies/actions are most needed to assist local governments with each element?*

	compared to a forested area, or even a suburban area. • There is a lack of comparable data to review among counties that are enforcing laws. Need more than just new policies, there are resource issues with implementing existing policies that need attention too (e.g., keeping good records). • There is a lack of awareness and concern regarding the importance of protection. • Some areas do not consider themselves "urban."	• Engage with homeowner associations; they have the ability to communicate and follow up with homeowners. A great opportunity exists in residential areas. • Facilitate communities, get them talking to each other. • Be able to speak language: "If you remove x trees, this happens…" Tie UTC into MS4 program. Get EPA to endorse for MS4 and get involved in UTC management strategy. • Push to regulate privately-owned trees. Largest trees are the most important in the canopy. • Difficult to get support for regulattions/ordinances in many areas – so need to develop education/communications strategies: - research effective ordinances - social marketing - communicate values, not fears. - work with Water Words that Work - work with MS4 program - create a brand for UTC or "community forestry" - find what communities care about - Look at the best community models and make sure they are available to other communities; peer to peer examples.

Other comments and discussion points:
- All counties in VA can have tree ordinances, but northern Virginia's ordinances are more protective because they were approved by the state in order to address air quality non-attainment. In PA, a lot of ordinances are not enforced. In DC, tree removal and replacement are considered during development regulations/permitting.
- Tacoma Park is doing a great job of keeping tabs on what trees are coming down and penalizing homeowners that don't follow the ordinance.
- There is a real opportunity to educate localities; we can "crispen" up the message about net gain.
- Who is going to take care of the area? You can set it aside as a "protected" area, but if it is not cared for it becomes a mess.
- We need a baseline. Can we use the Federal Forest Inventory Analysis? Answer: No, the data provided by FIA is not at the scale and detail to be useful for localities – UTC data is best.
- We may want to consider state-owned lands – are they partners to be engaged with?

Tree Planting:

Current Efforts	Gaps	Proposed Partnership Actions

	• Lack of data – especially size stock data.
	• Local gov'ts feel as though they don't have the ability to use public money to plant on private lands.
	• Resistance to plant because localities can't take care of what they already have.
	• Supply issue: lack of adequate supply of native species or others that are recommended. Lack of reasonable costs as well.
	• Issue of contractors; volunteers not planting correctly.
		What strategies/actions are most needed to assist local governments with each element?
		• Work with nurseries and landscape associations to let them know what you need; educate them about the WIP goals; also, let them know what you need years in advance.
		• Develop standards:
		   - user-friendly
		   - include recommendations based on land use
		   - use Baltimore County as an example
		   - include how to plan for climate change as well as soil and ozone qualities
		• Bring in DOT and state transportation agencies
		• Educate local gov't to use tree planting in WIPs
		• Work with EPA and state advisors to promote/integrate in WIP
		• There is a huge opportunity here to work with faith-based communities, congregationally-owned land. (e.g. Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake)
		• Push for good accounting for trees in trading and offset programs – you can't get a tree planted for mitigation credited toward WIP goal.

Other comments and discussion points:
- There are environmental justice and equity issues regarding funding turf replacement, as turf is generally on lands owned by wealthier people.
- The National Park Service has had issues ordering one kind of species and getting another species. If a certain desired species is not available, NPS is asking themselves, "what is a good substitution species?"
- What are the minimum guidelines that we develop as a partnership? ANSI (American National Standards Institute) for tree planting/arboriculture are already there. But what we don't find is recommendations on stock size based on land use. More emphasis is needed on diversifying species.

- ANSI standards are made for the profession, not handy for the homeowners. In Baltimore, ANSI is developed for contractors. There are separate guides for volunteer groups; these are not as detailed. The third guide is booklet for homeowners that is simplified from ANSI. This breaks it down by tier depending on who is planting.
- There are university studies that have looked at what was planted versus what should have been planted.
- Tree planting best practices are always evolving: we are planting different things now than we did 3 years ago. This is a potential problem.
- One participant shared that the local growing area he uses to source trees is within a 250-mile radius from Cumberland, MD.
- Do nurseries have the capacity to grow trees that we are looking for? What about tree farms as potential sources? This would pull in private landowners.
- Nurseries should feel comfortable that they will sell in a couple of years.
- The two-year workplan in the Management Strategy will have each state identify state-specific actions. The workplan will also include Bay-wide actions.
- Integrating into WIPs should help alleviate public concern about use of tax dollars on private property plantings
- Question about whether tree planting may not be reported in CAST because of another BMP in that same geographic (GPS) location. This is what NPS has experienced for federal facilities reporting. You are not able to count using more than 1 BMP for a latitude/longitude coordinate. Will they be able to change that in the new version of the model? This may be a tracking issue.
- What about considering climate change activity and species selection for future conditions? Do we want to get into soil amendments and soil volume?

Maintenance/Stewardship:

Current Efforts	Gaps	Proposed Partnership Actions
• WV "Tree Minders" program is being developed, modeled after Master Naturalist Program	• Issue: conflict over whether maintenance responsibility for trees in the right of way belongs to private citizen or public entity (in PA, not the case in other states)	*What strategies/actions are most needed to assist local governments with each element?* • Ratchet up the maintenance standards / expectations; lead by example • Upgrade maintenance section in standards, include state and fed folks • Incorporate in grants • Public outreach campaign (send messages out to landscape contractors as well) • Use Tree Tenders, Tree Stewards, Casey Tree, and similar programs as examples; partner at local level. Package these examples into trainings for localities. • Stress working with public arborist and public works department. • Educate funders that maintenance is essential

Other comments and discussion points:
- Tree Baltimore has maintenance tied to a 2-year period. One major issue is that mitigation trees don't have maintenance requirements, so we need to work with different departments to change maintenance policies.
- Although state and federal agencies play a part, people rarely call DOT when there is a problem. They usually call the County government.
- PA Tree Vitalize grants have a maintenance plan. Training is also required in the Tree Vitalize program.
- What about a moving tool program that provides supplies and equipment for maintenance?
- VA Tree Stewards are of two types – one based on Master Gardeners just does mostly education and not so much planting/maintenance; the other Tree Steward groups are more engaged with planting and maintenance.

Community Outreach/Buy-in:

Current Efforts	Gaps	Proposed Partnership Actions
		What strategies/actions are most needed to assist local governments with each element? • Push out a simple message. • Host a workshop with social marketers to help market the multiple benefits of trees; tie messages to local waterbody, not Bay, and identify the messages that work with different audiences • Work with Water Words That Work • Target all groups of people (including commercial/industrial), landscapers, and schools.

Other comments and discussion points:
- From UTC Summit: emphasis on having marketers, one outreach, one slogan across the watershed. Having one brief message, but putting it out to a lot of different audiences, using different images.
- Marcia: long-term funding is an issue in DE. Have very successful programs, but after the funding goes, the interest wanes.
- Is there a common theme we can deliver to a broader audience?
- NPS has experienced issues with managing wildlife (deer control, nutria, geese). For instance, public backlash exists over deer management. One idea is to incorporate this into our outreach.
- Audience targets include businesses, private residences, industrial, commercial property, as well as homeowners, schools, and landscapers.

Tracking Progress – Options to be Explored
Summary: Julie gave a presentation on the tracking issues and options for the Urban Tree Canopy Outcome. Her presentation highlighted what we currently have, BMP Verification

Guidance recommendations, tools to explore, and next steps. For more information, please see Julie's presentation slides at this link.

Other comments and discussion points:
- Rebecca announced to the group that we have been asked by the Chesapeake Bay Program's Water Quality Goal Team to do a webinar on Forestry BMP Verification guidance, in coordination with those being offered by the Agriculture and Urban Stormwater Workgroups. This is an opportunity for participants to provide input on the specifics of verification guidelines.
- Sally Claggett briefed the group on a new project proposal to do a Bay-wide assessment. The Chesapeake Conservancy has indicated they are interested in leading this work and collecting the data. Currently there are still lot of questions – such as what date stamp will be used. States are being approached to contribute to this effort. In addition, a list of minimum requirements that are wanted from this project is being created. Efforts will involve the entire partnership and the timeframe is 1.5 years for the first product.
  - There are multiple benefits and drivers for the use of this data, and it may even be applied to issues such as air quality. We need to think about the proposed change in the Clean Air NAAQS for ozone.
  - Julie noted that if several meeting participants are really interested in how this Bay-wide land cover/UTC assessment proposal takes shape, we might want to form a small group that can give forestry guidance on it.
- The Chesapeake Bay Program's Agriculture Workgroup is looking at 10% samples. Can we do something like that (statistically) to evaluate net gain?
- Question of whether/how trading and offsets program tree plantings should be counted, and mitigation plantings. One suggestion is that if you know it's not a net gain in site by site basis then it shouldn't be counted. If it seems like a net gain, you should always count those. If not, if just barely replacing, then maybe have a system in place where you don't report that.
  - On the other hand, these rules would be confusing for localities, so it would be best to just report everything.
- You can plant 6000 trees but a new Walmart could negate that.
- There are issues pertaining to mitigation – do we count mitigation plantings? MD is currently only state that requires mitigation, so we will need to have a separate discussion to look at the mitigation/credit issue.
- *Action item: The BMP Verification Guidance document will be distributed to the FWG and other meeting participants. Meeting participants are encouraged to read the document and send Julie any input or ideas they may have.*
- Concern – does every tree planted have to be checked?. 6000 a year will build up over time. Need to carefully consider whether tying the tree planting credit to net gain will create a disincentive for local investment in tree planting
- Rebecca explained the importance of evaluating net gain and loss strategically. How do we follow through on evaluating net gain/loss strategically without requiring individual planting programs to do the tracking and becoming dispirited?
- Several grants require 2-year replacement, which requires tracking and follow-up for at least that time.

- Julie announced that a Tracking Team will be formed with each state lead, and whichever non-profits and local governments that are interested in participating as well. This team will work through the questions and options and come up with decisions.

NEXT STEPS

- State urban forestry coordinators will solicit input in January on state-level priorities and actions
- February 4 Forestry Workgroup Meeting –final input and discussion to finish up Draft Strategy for public release/input
- Late Spring/Summer 2015 - Form issue teams to continue work on key actions in the 2 Year workplan (tracking, outreach, etc)