



Chesapeake Bay Program

Science. Restoration. Partnership.

1750 Forest Drive, Suite 130, Annapolis, MD 21401

FISH PASSAGE WORKGROUP SPRING 2024 MEETING

Thursday, May 23rd, 2024; 10:00am-12:30pm ET

[Link to Meeting Materials](#)

ATTENDEES:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| • Alan Weaver, VA DWR | • Jim Earley, USFWS | • Mary Andrews, NOAA |
| • Brett Towler, USGS | • Jim Thompson, MDNR | • Matt Ogburn, Smithsonian Institution |
| • Chris Guy, USFWS | • Justin McClure, VDOT | • Ray Li, USFWS |
| • Clinton Morgeson, VA DWR | • Katlyn Fuentes, CRC | • Sandra Davis, USFWS |
| • Emily Young, ICPRB | • Lindsey Nolan, Coastal Resources, Inc. | • Sheila Eyler, USFWS |
| • Erin Chapman, EPA | • Lisa Moss, USFWS | • Tammy O'Connell, MDNR |
| • Jessie Thomas-Blate, American Rivers | | |

10:00 – ROLL CALL, WELCOME, AND INTRODUCTIONS

Presenters: Workgroup Co-Chairs Jim Thompson (MDNR) and Ray Li (USFWS)

10:10 – WORKGROUP UPDATES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presenters: Jim Thompson, Ray Li, AND Katlyn Fuentes (CRC)

- **COMINGS/GOINGS:** After three years on the CBP's Habitat Goal Implementation Team, **Katlyn Fuentes** (CRC) is finishing her term as the Fish Passage Workgroup Staffer on July 1st. The advertisement for her position is now live and will be sent out shortly. We anticipate that the next staffer will begin mid-August. In this interim period, **Dede Lawal** (fellow Habitat Staffer) and **Chris Guy** (Habitat Coordinator) will be providing workgroup support.
- **HABITAT GIT SPRING MEETING:** The Habitat Goal Implementation Team Spring Meeting was on May 1st and 2nd. This was a hybrid meeting with the in-person location at the DOEE office in the District of Columbia.
 - **LINK TO DAY 1 INFORMATION:** <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/habitat-git-spring-2024-meeting>
 - **LINK TO DAY 2 INFORMATION:** <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/habitat-git-spring-2024-meeting-day-2-of-2>
- **FISH PASSAGE PRIORITIZATION TOOL:** The updated Fish Passage Prioritization Tool is now live!
 - **TOOL:** <https://www.maps.tnc.org/chesfpp/#/explore>
- **FY2024 GIT FUNDING PROPOSAL:** The Fish Passage Workgroup has put forth a project proposal for consideration in the CBP's FY2024 GIT Funding cycle. CBP Leadership is currently reviewing the project, titled "*The Fish Passage Workgroup Social Science Behavior Change Project*", and more information will be shared once the funding decision has been made.
- **STRATEGY REVIEW SYSTEM:** The Fish Passage Workgroup has completed the most recent SRS cycle and the updated workgroup guidance documents can be found at the links below.



Chesapeake Bay Program

Science. Restoration. Partnership.

1750 Forest Drive, Suite 130, Annapolis, MD 21401

- **OUTCOME REVIEW SUMMARY:** https://d18lev1ok5leia.cloudfront.net/chesapeakebay/documents/FPWG-2023-SRS-Looking-Back-Questions-FINAL_2024-06-11-180513_ttwe.pdf
- **MANAGEMENT STRATEGY:** <https://d18lev1ok5leia.cloudfront.net/chesapeakebay/MANAGEMENT-STRATEGY-Fish-Passage-2024.03.15.pdf>
- **2024-2025 WORKPLAN:** <https://d18lev1ok5leia.cloudfront.net/chesapeakebay/WORKPLAN-2024-2025-Fish-Passage-2024.03.15.pdf>
- **MANAGEMENT BOARD PRESENTATION:** https://d18lev1ok5leia.cloudfront.net/chesapeakebay/documents/2023.12.14-FPWG-2024-2025-QPM-Presentation_2024-06-11-180524_rruo.pdf
- **BEYOND 2025:**
 - **Mary Andrews:** NOAA will be pressing for fish passage goals to be included in the new Chesapeake Bay Agreement. As noted, I'm sure USFWS will do so as well. The Workgroup needs to start thinking about what an appropriate goal is.
 - **Jessie Thomas-Blate:** It would be nice to support species for fish passage outside anadromous species.
 - **Alan Weaver:** Resident species and eels are always on our list of "targets" for fish passage projects.
 - **Mary Andrews:** The Workgroup modified our goal years ago to include resident fishes and eels. The real issue is the amount of funding dedicated to programs for these species. NOAA generally does not fund these since we are migratory-focused due to our mission.
 - **Chris Guy:** We may want to have a special Fish Passage Workgroup meeting when the Beyond 2025 report comes out. The Beyond 2025 Steering Committee members are asked to provide presentations and get feedback during the public comment period. This will be closed before our next meeting.

10:40 – CULVERT AOP GRANT PROGRAM

Presenter: Jim Earley (USFWS)

- **This presentation contained preliminary information and as such, will not be distributed nor posted to the webpage.**
- **PRESENTATION DESCRIPTION:** Jim provided a presentation on the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program.
- **PROGRAM INFORMATION:** <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/engineering/hydraulics/culverthyd/aquatic/culvertaop.cfm>
- **COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:** **For more information, please contact Jim Earley (james_earley@fws.gov).**
 - **Brett Towler:** It's oddly specific that the program funds culverts and "weirs". Similar acts and programs may refer to "stream barriers", rather than weirs. Is there a reason why the weir language was used?



Chesapeake Bay Program

Science. Restoration. Partnership.

1750 Forest Drive, Suite 130, Annapolis, MD 21401

- **Mary Andrews:** The intent of the funds is to address fish passage associated with road and transportation infrastructure. DOT defined that as culverts, weirs, and even some dams. However, it has to have some connection to transportation infrastructure. It's using DOT's definition of a weir - DOT is not funding fish passage in general.
- **Brett Towler:** I was wondering if there was an intent to exclude any number of other stream barrier types (e.g. removal of partial breaches, notches, incised channels, piers) that could be found at transportation infrastructure.
- **Mary Andrews:** Yes, my understanding is if it's a fish barrier that is associated with transportation infrastructure, it would be eligible. "Weir" here is used in general terms.
- **Jessie Thomas-Blate:** VDOT is willing to work with folks on projects.

11:10 – STATE FISH PASSAGE COORDINATOR UPDATES: DAM REMOVALS & CULVERT PROJECTS

Presentations provided by multiple speakers

- **PENNSYLVANIA:**
 - *Dave Dippold was unable to attend this meeting nor provide updates for PFBC.*
 - *Jessie Thomas-Blate (American Rivers)*
 - More than 50 dam removal projects in PA are in the works; not sure how many of those are within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
 - A well-attended dam removal project manager training was held in March in central/eastern PA near Allentown. There was lots of interest in projects in DE/Chesapeake basin. Hoping to get additional funding through TNC to continue trainings in the future.
 - Through this effort, we realized training is needed targeting specific entities (e.g., engineering-specific, regulatory aspects, etc.). There is a lot of interest from other agencies on more targeted trainings in the next several years.
 - PA is still the leader in dam removals in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed regarding the number of projects being removed.
- **VIRGINIA:** *Alan Weaver (VA DWR)*
 - **LINK TO THE VIRGINIA UPDATES:** <https://d18lev1ok5leia.cloudfront.net/chesapeakebay/documents/2024.05.23-Fish-Passage-Spring-Meeting-PRESENTATION-Weaver.pdf>
- *Discussion on appointing new State Fish Passage Coordinators*
 - This discussion will continue at the Fall 2024 Workgroup Meeting on 11/21.
 - **ACTION: If you are interested in becoming a representative on the workgroup and providing updates on fish passage news for your respective jurisdiction at each workgroup meeting (spring and fall), please contact Workgroup Co-Chairs Ray Li (ray_li@fws.gov) and Jim Thompson (jim.thompson@maryland.gov).**



Chesapeake Bay Program

Science. Restoration. Partnership.

1750 Forest Drive, Suite 130, Annapolis, MD 21401

11:40 – MARYLAND FISH PASSAGE COORDINATOR UPDATES & DISCUSSION ON INVASIVE SPECIES/FISH LADDERS

Presenter: Jim Thompson

- **LINK TO PRESENTATION:** <https://d18lev1ok5leia.cloudfront.net/chesapeakebay/documents/2024.05.23-Fish-Passage-Spring-Meeting-PRESENTATION-Thompson.pdf>
- **PRESENTATION DESCRIPTION:** Jim provided fish passage updates for the state of Maryland, and additionally discussed methods in handling invasive species at fish ladders/dams and what to do about ladders that are not functioning well.
- **COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:**
 - **Sheila Eyler:** They have caught more snakeheads at Conowingo this year than American shad and river herring combined!

12:20 – MEMBER & INTERESTED PARTY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Mary Andrews:** NOAA's announcement for fish passage awards this year under BIL: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/fish-passage-projects-selected-funding>
- **If you have any additional announcements you'd like to share with the workgroup, please send them to Workgroup Co-Chairs Ray Li (ray_li@fws.gov) and Jim Thompson (jim.thompson@maryland.gov).**

12:30 – MEETING ADJOURNED

Next meeting is November 21st, 2024 from 1:00-4:00 ET.