

# Reaching 2025 Group

## 3/20/2023 Meeting Summary

### In attendance:

- Katheryn Barnhart, EPA
- Gregory Barranco, EPA
- Carin Bisland, EPA
- Kandis Boyd, EPA
- Katherine Brownson, USFS
- Sarah Brzezinski, EPA
- Sean Corson, NOAA
- Rachel Felver, ACB
- Sarah Lane, DNR
- Genevieve LaRouche, USFWS
- Julie Lawson, DOEE
- Kevin McLean, DEQ
- Alisha Mulkey, MDA
- Lucinda Power, EPA
- Bo Williams, EPA

### Action Items/Decisions:

- Katheryn will reach out to each outcome lead and ask if the summary reflects the outcome status (timeline undefined)
- Team members: Please follow up via email with Sean, if desired, to get greater specificity on outline content or to provide additional feedback on the outline thus far.
- CBP Comms Office will pull together a template for the outcome portion by the next meeting.
- Sean will set up a time for the drafting team to get together and further review the timeline
- Sarah will send out a scheduler to the larger Reaching 2025 group to find a time for a standing bi-weekly meeting.

### Meeting Summary:

#### **The Reaching 2025 group is tasked with two projects:**

- Report that will give a static snapshot of where we are and why we are there.
- Communications strategy that outlines how we want to communicate the information in the report.
  - Need to be prepared for any negativity received when we discuss any perceived failures in meeting 2025 outcomes.

**Sean Corson provided an overview of the 2025 report outline, created by the drafting team:**

- Make sure climate and DEIJ are appropriately addressed throughout the report.
- Estimated number of pages per section is intended as a guideline to help us envision the scope and scale of the project
- Executive summary: High-level, will include some type of graphic about how we are doing. Discuss difference between qualitative and quantitative outcomes. Talk about potential change in direction moving forward.
- Introduction: Three to five pages expanding on issues identified in executive summary.
- Body Section 1: Fifteen pages of where we are on each outcome (half page for each outcome). Material pulled from previous outcome attainability templates and ChesapeakeProgress.
  - Paragraphs should say if they are on/off course, why they are on/off course and what needs to be done to put the outcome back on course.
  - SRS team is putting together a lessons learned document that will contain information about what makes an outcome attainable.
  - ACTION: Katheryn will reach out to each outcome lead and ask if the summary reflects the outcome status
  - Could each outcome that's off-course be given the opportunity to pose a high-level recommendation to improve attainability?
- Body Section 2: Two pages to describe efforts for accelerating progress on wetlands and forest buffers; incorporate specific examples of climate and DEIJ into this section.
- Body Section 3: Two pages to specifically address the Bay TMDL and water quality.
- Body Section 4: Two pages to focus on how we are addressing climate and DEIJ beyond what we committed to in the *Watershed Agreement*.
  - Should this portion go up after the first section since these are EC commitments?
- Body Section 5: Two-three pages on emerging science and monitoring efforts. This would cover CESR report findings, including shallow water monitoring and modeling, hypoxia, 4-D interpolator, one meter-by-one-meter land cover and land use data and tributary models.
- Conclusion: One page summary that points to the need to begin planning a new *Watershed Agreement* post-2025.
- All told, we're probably looking at about a 30-page document
  - Could include graphics for visual learners, or these could be developed in the Communications Strategy

#### Discussion:

- Concern/recommendation expressed: Limit "foreshadowing" in report so we do not go into the Beyond 2025 discussions.
- Some restructuring of the document may take place, as it is developed:
  - Consider moving Body Section 4 after Body Section 1 so the report talks about the EC commitments together
  - Consider revering Body Sections 2 and 3 so that there is a consistent flow with water quality outcomes
  - Response: The document is still evolving – Restructuring conversation will likely be continued at the next drafting meeting
- Question: General approach to snapshot of outcome attainability seems sound, but where do recommendations come in? Isn't that the core of the EC charge? Snapshots might fall short of charge.

- Response: Probably going to recommend a focus on wetlands, forest buffers, climate and DEI. However, there aren't a lot of new things that we're going to do in the next year-and-a-half to make substantial progress on some of these outcomes (e.g., toxics, climate, DEI, forest buffers, wetlands).
  - Feedback: If wetlands and forest buffers are going to be our big recommendations, then they should be up front and center. They'll likely need some sub-bullets with tangible recommendations for the Partnership.
  - Focus on wetlands and forest buffers was stated as a fact... We may need to back up and talk about broader recommendations for how to proceed, such as focusing on outcomes with deadlines and areas where we can make real progress while we work towards 2025.
  - Perhaps the recommendations would be about the things that need to be put in place to make outcomes achievable (e.g., if you are going to have a quantifiable goal, then you need an accounting system in place).
    - Ex: need a trackable system with baseline commitments from states to provide some level of indication of comprehensive progress
    - Ex: Ensure you have a consistent baseline of support, that other groups can join on to.
- Recommendations might be how we communicate where we are. Also, when to communicate and who we are communicating to. Reaching 2025 is not just the report itself, but recommendations could be the communications strategy.
- Consider making recommendations for where the Beyond 2025 group should pick up. Can we flag problem areas for the Beyond 2025 group?
  - Could give the Beyond 2025 group the tools to do this
  - Challenge the Bay Program to evaluate what we as a partnership, not individual agencies, can create clearly identified collaborations around
  - Who is putting money and time towards an outcome, and do you have partners who are going to help you work towards it. If not, should the outcome be dropped?
- It would be helpful to flag some of the issues rather than just saying we aren't going to reach the outcome. As part of the assessment, can we ID the problems with each one so that the 2025 group can make forward progress?
  - The SRS team is putting together what they are calling "lessons learned" that also contains some information about a "secret sauce" of what makes outcomes attainable. We can use that to help us.
  - Leverage outcome experts to hone Body Section 1 paragraphs before they are put out to a larger group – make sure we have the facts right and know where the problems are.
  - Some outcomes, such as Black Duck, may be longer than half a page.
- GIT funding is working well. Would hate to see that synergy go away. Want to make sure our recommendations don't have unintended consequences.
  - This is important but might need to be done by Beyond 2025. May need a Value Assessment to determine where the Partnership can be most effective. Recommendation may be to keep an eye on unintended consequences of recommendations – make sure we are not directing funding away from important areas of work.

- Will we be questioned about why haven't we done certain actions to meet an outcome? Are there political ramifications if we point the finger at some group or entity that let down the rest of the Partnership in getting an outcome back on course?
  - Suggestion that Body Section 4 takes a couple pages to explicitly address Climate and Diversity – handling the development of the change, creation of workgroups, challenging GITs to incorporate DEI, etc.
  - In order to be trusted, we need to be honest. However, there will likely be some blowback.
    - Concern: Explaining why things are off course could have unintended consequences.
      - Need to ensure that even when there is blowback, we can still “all be in this together”
      - Even for outcomes that haven’t been met, there is often lots of good work that has been done. We aren’t going to achieve the outcome, but that doesn’t mean that a particular agency or group is to blame.
    - Concern: Nervous about those outcomes that don't have good measuring tools or those with no target to meet. “What do you mean you can’t say if you’re on target to meet the goal?”
    - The communications strategy will be critical. Can use it to anticipate and plan for how to address blowback
- ACTION: Please follow up with emails to get greater specificity on outline content or to provide additional feedback on the outline thus far.

#### **Timeline:**

- Final report with recommendations is due to the EC in October.
- The bulk of drafting needs to be completed over the next two months.
  - This only allows about 6-8 weeks to develop the snapshots
  - Other sections will be fleshed out in mid-May
- June PSC meeting--provide draft report with recommendations.
- ACTION: CBP Comms Office will pull together a template for the outcome portion by the next meeting.
- Communications Team is busy with the 40<sup>th</sup> celebration, so we can’t lean on them until mid-April
  - Comment from Rachel: Ideally not until the after the first week of June.
- May 2023 SRS Biennial: Start drafting outcome attainability summaries.
- May 2023 SRS Biennial to June PSC: Assess outcomes from biennial and where they impact recommendations.
- June 8, 2023: MB meeting
- June 21, 2023 PSC to August 2023 PSC to incorporate the SRS Biennial outcomes into report and complete full draft.
- August 2023 to September 26, 2023: PSC: Finalize draft report ahead of 2023 EC.
- Note: Clearance for EC submissions is substantial
  - Different EC members/agencies require different levels of effort to put something in front of their member

- ACTION: Sean will set up a time for the drafting team to get together and further review the timeline
- The larger Reaching 2025 team to meet every other week.
  - ACTION: Sarah will send out a scheduler to the group for a standing meeting.