Forestry Workgroup New Member Guide

Chesapeake Bay Program Organizational Overview

- Primary website for the Chesapeake Bay Program [1]
- The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) was established in 1983 and is managed by the EPA [2] through the Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO), but is staffed by employees from many federal, state, non-profit organizations, and academic institutions
  - Partners Page [3]
  - Office Staff Page [4]
- The Bay Program uses written agreements to guide the restoration of the estuary and its watershed. The most recent agreement is the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement [5] (amended in 2022). Included were commitments to Abundant Life, Clean Water, Conserved Lands, Engaged Communities, and Climate Change Resilience and 10 goals. Each goal is linked to a set of outcomes, or time-bound and measurable targets that will contribute to the achievement of the goal.
  - The CBP tracks progress towards each outcome on Chesapeake Progress [6].
  - The CBP uses the Strategy Review System [7] (SRS) to adaptively manage our work to achieve each outcome. The SRS runs on two-year cycles which culminates in a meeting designed to inform the Management Board on specific commitments, short-term actions, and resources required for success.
- In 2010, The Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) [8] was established as a comprehensive "pollution diet" to restore the health of the Bay and its local streams, creeks and rivers. Under the TMDL, all states are required to implement practices to achieve allocated nutrient and sediment load reductions by 2025.
- The partnership is organized into various committees, teams, and workgroups to meet the goals established in the Watershed Agreement and work towards the TMDL. This structure is visible on the CBP website on the "How We're Organized" [9] page, and described below. The structure of the program is spearheaded by;
  - The Chesapeake Executive Council [10] (EC), which is comprised of the governors of all watershed states, the mayor of DC, the chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and the administrator of the EPA. They establish policy directions for the restoration and protection of the Bay. They are supported by;
    - The Principals' Staff Committee [11] (PSC), which translates the restoration vision of the CEC into policy and implementation actions. They are staffed by various officials throughout the watershed. They are supported by;
      - The Management Board [12], which provides operational guidance to the Bay Program, is chaired by the Director of the Chesapeake Bay Program. They oversee the Goal Implementation Teams (GITs). The six GITs work to improve a specific outcomes and goal. They are as follows:
        - Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team [13] (GIT 1)
        - Habitat Goal Implementation Team [14] (GIT 2)
        - **Water Quality Goal Implementation Team** [15] **(GIT 3). The Forestry Workgroup falls under this GIT, described below.**

- o [Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team](#) [16] (GIT 4)
- o [Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship Goal Implementation Team](#) [17] (GIT 5)
- o [Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management Goal Implementation Team](#) [18] (GIT 6)
- The charge of the Water Quality GIT (GIT 3 or WQGIT) is to evaluate, focus, and accelerate the implementation of practices, policies, and programs that will restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. To do so, it is comprised of many Workgroups and Action Teams, including the Forestry Workgroup.

Other Helpful CBP Resources

- [Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool](#) [19] (CAST). CAST is a publicly available model of the Chesapeake Bay watershed used to estimate changes in long-term nutrient and sediment loads due to changes in point sources, land use, and land management. CAST allows planners to specify a geographic area and select Best Management Practices (BMPs), which estimates nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment load reductions. The cost of the scenario is also provided so that users may select the most cost-effect practice. CAST is also used to report BMPs implemented to track progress towards CBP goals. Reports of this progress can also be found on CAST.
- [Chesapeake Healthy Watershed Assessment (CHWA)](#) [20]. An assessment tool that explores the health and vulnerability of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Built out with the newest Land Use Land Cover Data this tool allows for users to interact with the Bay Watershed without needing prior knowledge or special equipment.
- [Chesapeake Bay Targeting Tools Portal](#) [21]. A collection of maps and applications that can be used to evaluate watershed restoration and landscape conservation initiatives relative to multiple goals and outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.
- [Chesapeake Bay Program Newsletter](#) [22]. The CBP publishes daily, weekly, and monthly newsletters related to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay: the Bay News, Bay Brief, and Chesapeake Currents, respectively.

The [Forestry Workgroup](#) [23] (FWG)

- The FWG coordinates, develops, and implements plans and projects which focus on the contributions of forest lands in restoring the health and productivity of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (CBW). The workgroup provides a forum to discuss issues and identify opportunities among the forestry community, interested individuals and organizations, and federal, state, and local governments.
- Workgroup membership includes a representative and alternate for each signatory to the 2014 Watershed Agreement and up to six at-large members. Current members are listed on the [Forestry Workgroup webpage](#) [23].
- The two Outcomes from the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement that the FWG is responsible for are the following:

- o [Forest Buffer Outcome](#) [24] – Increase the capacity of forest buffers to provide water quality and habitat benefit throughout the watershed. Restore 900 miles per year of riparian forest buffer until at least 70% of riparian areas are forested.
  - Current progress towards meeting this outcome is tracked on the [Forest Buffers Outcome](#) [25] page of Chesapeake Progress.
- o [Tree Canopy Outcome](#) [26] – Increase urban tree canopy capacity to provide air, water, and habitat benefits throughout the watershed. Expand urban tree canopy by 2,400 acres by 2025.
  - Current progress towards meeting this outcome is tracked on the [Tree Canopy Outcome](#) [27] page of Chesapeake Progress.
- o The current management strategy and two-year workplan for both outcomes are posted on [Chesapeake Decisions](#) [28].
- Other administrative resources for Forestry Workgroup:
  - o [Meeting Calendar](#) [29], including our monthly FWG call.
  - o [Past Meetings](#) [30], including files from past meetings and meeting minutes.
- Forestry Workgroup meetings are all open to any interested parties.

Other Helpful FWG Resources

- [State of Chesapeake Forests 2.0](#) [31]. In October of 2023, the CBP released State of the Chesapeake Forests 2.0 Storymap as a follow-up to the [2006 State of Chesapeake Forests report](#) [32]. The storymap utilizes the Bay Program's [new high-resolution land use and land use change data](#) [33] to provide an updated understanding of Chesapeake forests and how they are changing.
- [Chesapeake Forest Restoration Strategy](#) [34]. This Strategy was developed in 2020 and lays out broad priorities and actions that will guide forestry partnership efforts and was the basis for a [Shared Stewardship agreement](#) [35] signed in 2020 by all of the watershed's seven state foresters and the Chief of the US Forest Service. The Strategy also has an accompanying [Storymap](#) [36].
- [Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Network](#) [37]. This website connects practitioners working with RFBs to forest buffer programs, resources, and success stories located throughout the watershed.
- [Chesapeake Tree Canopy Network](#) [38]. This website connects urban tree canopy practitioners with resources, stories, and best practices to understand, expand, and maintain their canopy.

Acronyms

Best Management Practice – BMP
Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool – CAST
Chesapeake Bay Program – CBP
Chesapeake Bay Program Office – CBPO
Chesapeake Bay Watershed – CBW

Executive Council – EC
Forestry Workgroup – FWG
Goal Implementation Team – GIT
Principals Staff Committee – PSC
Strategy Review System – SRS
United States Forest Service – USFS

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