



## Program Updates

### Management Board & Principle Staff Committee

June 13 & 25

#### CBPO Calendar

June 4 and 5	STAC Quarterly Meeting
June 5	Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Network Summit
June 10	<b>Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT Meeting</b>
June 12	Toxic Contaminants Workgroup Meeting
June 13	<b>Management Board QPM: Healthy Watersheds</b>
June 10	Data Integrity Workgroup Meeting
June 14	Agriculture Modeling Team Meeting
June 17	Climate Resiliency Workgroup Meeting
June 18	Criteria Assessment Protocol Workgroup Meeting
June 18	Wetlands Workgroup Meeting
June 20	<b>GIT6 Meeting</b>
June 20	Agriculture Workgroup Meeting
June 20	Climate Resiliency Workgroup Meeting
June 20	Nontidal Network Meeting
June 21	Stream Health Workgroup Meeting
June 24	<b>GIT3 Meeting</b>
June 25	<b>Principals Staff Committee Meeting</b>
June 26	Press Event for 2024 Chesapeake Bay Trust Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Grant Awards
June 27	Beyond 2025 Steering Committee Monthly Meeting
July 9	Press Event for 2024 UMCES Chesapeake Bay Report Card

#### General Updates

##### **Baltimore Harbor Splash Draws National Spotlight**

June 23, exactly 150 people jumped into Baltimore's Inner Harbor near Fells Point. The event sold out in 10 minutes and there were over 1,000 people on the waiting list. The Waterfront Partnership is doing a great job at assuaging people's fears about swimming in the Inner Harbor with a detailed list of information about their water quality monitoring practices, etc. However, another local organization, Blue Water Baltimore, which monitors the Inner Harbor and Patapsco River, released their annual

Harbor Heartbeat Report Card. The good news is that almost all their monitoring stations improved since the previous year. The bad news is that the Inner Harbor and areas of the Patapsco that surround it still received an ‘F’. <https://bluewaterbaltimore.org/2023reportcard/>

For more information: <https://www.waterfrontpartnership.org/harborsplash>.

### **Chesapeake 2024 Hypoxia Forecast Expected to Be Average Despite Heavy Spring Rains**

On June 21, Researchers from the Chesapeake Bay Program, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, University of Michigan and U.S. Geological Survey are predicting that this year’s Chesapeake Bay [dead zone](#) will be just above the long-term average taken between 1985 and 2023, despite above-average rainfall in spring 2024 that led to relatively high water flows entering the Bay from around the watershed. Experts also noted that the dead zone likely began earlier this year due to warmer-than-normal temperatures throughout the spring as well as weaker winds. Nitrogen and phosphorus (referred to together as “nutrients”) pollution that runs off from across the Bay watershed spurs the growth of algae blooms, which remove oxygen from the water when they die off. These low-oxygen sections of the Bay, known as hypoxic areas or “dead zones,” can suffocate marine life and shrink the habitat available to fish, crabs, and other critters. The slightly above-average estimated hypoxic volume following a season of relatively high stream and river flows indicate that management efforts to keep nutrient runoff out of the Bay watershed is having the desired effect. In the fall of 2024, researchers will follow up on this forecast with a Bay-wide assessment of the dead zone size and duration.

For more: <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/size-of-the-chesapeake-bay-dead-zone-predicted-to-be-about-average-despite-heavy-rainfall>

### **Progress Toward Forest Buffer Outcome Looks Promising**

On June 12, the Chesapeake Bay Program announced that 640.5 miles of forest buffers was restored by the partnership in 2016. This is the largest number of new forest buffers plantings recorded since 2016. Each jurisdiction of the watershed chipped in, including 298 miles of forest buffers restored in Virginia, 268 miles restored in Pennsylvania, 40 miles restored in Maryland, 21 miles restored in New York, 13 miles restored in West Virginia, and less than one mile restored in Delaware. Partners are attributing this success to recent increases in federal and state investments, such as the \$12.6 million in IJA funding the EPA CBPO has put towards grant projects since 2022. However, while planting projects have gained momentum, this recent success is still not enough to offset total forest buffer loss across the bay watershed from pressures like development.

Contact: Matt Robinson, [robinson.matthew@epa.gov](mailto:robinson.matthew@epa.gov), EPA CBPO

### **Chesapeake Community Research Symposium 2024 (CCRS 2024)**

The biennial symposium on Chesapeake research was held in Annapolis on June 10-12, 2024. The three-day event highlighted the progress that has been made toward restoring the Chesapeake Watershed and Bay and enhancing coastal community resilience while addressing future climate change and other challenges to maintaining progress in the face of our changing human and natural environment. Within this theme the CBPO staff chaired six scientific sessions and presented on 19 topics. Keynote speakers included Martha Simkin (CBPO Director), Anna Killius (CRC Director), Hilary Harp Falk (CBF President), and others. While primarily a regional scientific symposium, participants attended from as far away as California, New Mexico, Washington, Nebraska, North Carolina, and New Hampshire.

Contact: Lew Linker ([linker.lewis@epa.gov](mailto:linker.lewis@epa.gov)), 443-875-8070. EPA CBPO

## **Goal Implementation Team Updates**

### **GIT1: Fisheries**

EXCOMM review on the 2024 Blue Crab Advisory Report: The Chesapeake Bay Program's Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team's Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee is working on creating the 2024 Blue Crab Advisory Report. This report details the state of blue crabs within the bay, including results from the Winter Dredge Survey. The document details estimated blue crab abundance, overwintering mortality, and other factors. Lastly, this report contains recommendations for the jurisdictions to manage blue crabs over the next year. This report is targeted for a release by the end of June.

Working on 2022/2023 Maryland Oyster Monitoring Report: Regular report developed yearly or every two years detailing the status of oyster restoration in Maryland for 10 tributaries goal. Report details monitoring metrics (biomass, density, multiple year classes, etc.). The report is on schedule and should be released in the coming weeks.

### **GIT2: Habitat**

#### **Past Meetings:**

- **Habitat Git Spring Meeting:** The Habitat GIT Spring Meeting was on May 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. This was a hybrid meeting with the in-person location at the D.C. DOEE office in Washington D.C. The minutes and other presentation materials can be found on the [calendar webpage for the HGIT Spring Meeting](#).
- **SAV Workgroup Spring 2024 Meeting:** The Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Workgroup Spring 2024 Meeting was on June 5<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-4:00 ET. This was a hybrid meeting with the in-person location at the CBP Office in Annapolis, MD. The agenda and other presentation materials can be [found at this link](#).

#### **Upcoming Meetings:**

- **Stream Health Workgroup June 2024 Meeting:** The Stream Health Workgroup will be meeting on June 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:00-12:00 ET. [More information on this meeting can be found at this link](#).
- **Wetlands Workgroup Meeting - Nontidal:** The Wetlands Workgroup will be having their Nontidal Team Workgroup meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-4:00 ET. [More information on this meeting can be found at this link](#).

**Strategy Review System (SRS) – Living Resources Cohort:** The Brook Trout, Fish Passage, and Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Workgroups have completed the most recent SRS cycle. During the December 14<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Progress Meeting ([link](#)), the Workgroup Chairs presented their Outcome's findings and next steps to the Management Board. All three outcomes have since finalized their new 2024-2025 Workplans and both Fish Passage and SAV have updated their respective Management Strategies. The Brook Trout Outcome will be updating their Management Strategy after receiving the updated brook trout patch dataset later this year. The updated SRS documents were submitted to the SRS Team and will be posted to the workgroup webpages in the near future.

**Strategy Review System (SRS) – Healthy Watersheds Cohort:** The Stream Health Workgroup has begun the SRS process and will be presenting to the CBP Management Board at the June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. [More](#)

[information on this meeting can be found at this link](#). After the June meeting, the workgroup will be updating their Workplan and Management Strategy.

**Beyond 2025:** The Habitat GIT supports the Beyond 2025 efforts and HGIT leadership is heavily involved in the Healthy Watersheds, Climate, and Shallow Water small groups. Workgroup members are acting as technical experts in all 5 small groups (Healthy Watersheds, Climate, People, Water Quality, and Shallow Water).

**Fy2024 Git Funding:** The following project proposals were submitted to CBP Leadership for GIT Funding:

- **Joint-Brook Trout/Toxic Contaminants Workgroup:** *Investigating the Potential for and Presence of 6PPD-q in Brook Trout Habitat*
- **Fish Passage:** *Social Science Behavior Change Project*
- **SAV:** *Chesapeake Bay Shallow Water Habitat Sentinel Site Program Development*
- **Stream Health:** *Phase 3B – Data Review and Development of Multi-Metric Stream Health Indicators – Physicochemical Metric Analysis*
- **Wetlands:** *Increasing Effectiveness of Landowner Engagement to Accelerate Wetland Restoration Across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*

### **GIT3: Water Quality**

The WQGIT held a [meeting](#) on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and discussed the following topics:

#### **Workgroup Updates**

- AgWG
  - [Draft Agroforestry Expert Panel Establishment Group \(EPEG\) Charge](#)
- FWG
  - The FWG mentioned that they plan on proposing updates to the Forest Harvesting Practices BMP.

#### **Partner Spotlights**

Thanks to PA and VA for volunteering to kick off this meeting item! As part of WQGIT Leadership's goal to include more sharing of lessons learned and success stories, we've introduced a recurring agenda item to spotlight partner progress. PA and VA volunteered to go first, and we thank them for doing so. Jill Whitcomb, PA DEP went over [PA's progress](#) in local water quality improvements (i.e. stream delisting), accelerated load reduction implementation, data management improvements, and capacity building efforts. Kevin McLean, VA DEQ, went over [VA's success](#) in oyster restoration, the VA Conservation Assistance Program (over \$6 million disbursed!), and state lands. The presentations were followed by Q&A on things like local priorities and funding details.

#### **DEIJ Strategy Discussion**

Jackie facilitated a discussion on how the WQGIT can incorporate DEIJ into its updated SRS workplan and strategy. This included where the WQGIT is at on DEIJ after our last SRS process, an overview of the [CBP's DEIJ Implementation Plan](#) and potential action items for the WQGIT from it, and open questions for members. The WQGIT will have a more in-depth discussion in June on how to incorporate DEIJ actions into our upcoming workplan.

#### **2023 Progress and Modeled Load Reduction Indicator (MLRI) Overview**

Auston summarized high level results from the final 2023 Progress scenario and the latest updates to the MLRI on Chesapeake Progress. These included that 90% of the 2025 Planning Targets w/Climate are considered 'on track' by 2023, however the Nitrogen and Phosphorus outlooks are off course. The Sediment outlook is completed as the sediment goals have been met and exceeded.

## **Beyond 2025 Update**

KC and Joe summarized the latest developments and schedule for the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee, which most recently met on April 25th. KC summarized her impressions from the meeting and ERG's draft report, which included comments on their considerations about transparency, how the GITs are organized, whether the Bay Program is trying to do too much, and more. KC also mentioned that some of the considerations like data access and reducing the number of outcomes would help to reduce complexity. The usefulness of the SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound) analysis was mentioned, though ERG only assessed outcomes for 3 of the 5 criteria (SMT). During Q&A concerns were raised about whether all the recommendations were necessarily applicable to every group. The update ended with an overview and discussion of the process for finalizing the report and recommendations.

## **SRS Planning Follow-Up**

There was follow up on SRS and the WQGIT's long term planning based on feedback received at the April WQGIT Meeting. This included sections on the In-Person WQGIT Meeting, SRS feedback and timeline, the new Partner Spotlight, and an update on the Submersion series. Jeremy encouraged participants to view and share the Content Lead info sheet amongst their partners and collaborators.

### **GIT4:**

*No updates to report to the Management Board.*

### **GIT5: Stewardship**

Chesapeake Research Consortium welcomes its newest staffer, Meredith Lemke, supporting the Stewardship GIT (GIT 5) and the Stewardship, Education and Diversity Workgroups. Meredith will be located with the National Park Service Chesapeake office in Annapolis, and will work closely with the NOAA education team.

### **Stewardship Workgroup**

Work is on course for the Stewardship Network Study & Asset Mapping "Scope 9" GIT Funded Project with contractors from Local Concepts LLC. The project is working to develop a visualization (a "map") of the network of networks supporting stewardship work in the watershed, in order to assess and use networks more effectively to strengthen collaboration and increase progress toward our shared goals and outcomes. This will serve many outcomes, both under the Stewardship GIT as well as those outcomes that can benefit from increased stewardship efforts (such as tree canopy, riparian buffers, etc.). The network visualization tool, now called "Chesapeake Steward Map," will provide a platform for stewardship providers to share their information (such as who they are, what they do and where, which other providers they interact with), which will be used to help show existing and facilitate new connections among the various entities working in the field. This tool will highlight strengths and gaps in

partner relationships and geographic areas to inform future efforts. Invitations to join the network map have been sent out to a first round of network members. Individuals have begun joining the map. The map is being tested for functionality and refined to suit needs.

The Workgroup completed its biennial progress review with the Management Board in March, and is working to update the Management Strategy and develop the new two year action plan (2024-25) during April and May.

In February, Workgroup co-chair Michael Weyand left his position at the City of Gaithersburg for a different role with Montgomery County in the agriculture sector, and will not be able to continue leading the Stewardship Workgroup. The Workgroup will be recruiting for a new co-chair this spring, to work with the current co-chair, Ashley Traut from the Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition.

### **Education Workgroup**

The GIT funded project entitled, “How Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) are Advancing K-12 Student Outcomes,” referred to as “Scope 7” just wrapped up the first phase of the project. This included gathering data from school and school district personnel through surveys and focus groups to identify key areas where nonformal education organizations should be focusing to increase school district engagement. A summary document is now under review. The next step of this project includes developing a rubric/tool based on the results of the summary document and field testing it with partners across the region.

Work continues with contractor WE Strategies on the Workforce Landscape Assessment “Scope 8” GIT funded project. The contractor team and advisory committee have been meeting regularly. The contracting team has conducted their interviews and presented findings to the Education WG during the April Quarterly meeting.

The Workgroup provided a brief update to the Management Board in March on the 2022 Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool which measures and tracks progress on the Student Outcome of the Environmental Literacy Goal.

The 2024 implementation of the Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool (that tracks implementation of the Meaningful Watershed Education Experience across the watershed) is postponed because EPA is renegotiating their contract. We expect a summer launch rather than spring.

We are about to begin an Outdoor Learning Network Initiative (OLNI) Network Leadership Course. Proposals to participate are due May 30th. <https://cbtrust.org/grants/olni/>

### **Public Access Workgroup**

The Public Access Workgroup presented its progress review to the Management Board in March, 2024. During March and April, the workgroup has been developing their new two year action plan (2024-2025). They held their quarterly meeting on April 23rd, 2024 and are planning to initiate their 2023 data call for new Public Access sites. The Public Access Workgroup is currently on track to meet the Outcome target by 2025.

### **Protected Lands Workgroup (Support from Chesapeake Conservation Partnership)**

The Protected Lands Workgroup has been developing their new two-year action plan for 2024-25. This process is a bit off-cycle, but the new cycle of cohorts for the SRS process would have delayed the plan, and an updated, new approach was needed. The plan is being developed by new workgroup members who joined the reformed group last year, and should be in place this spring. The most recent indicator

shows sufficient progress to expect meeting the target for the Outcome by 2025, if the pace of land conservation stays on course; therefore the action plan will focus on actions needed to help accelerate or maintain the rate of conservation.

PLWG hosted its first meeting with their new GIS Community of Practice in early February. The group is enthusiastic about working together to coordinate the process of gathering annual land conservation data in the future.

### **Diversity Workgroup**

The Diversity Workgroup has been exploring the process and timing for restructuring and growing the capacity of the Steering Committee and Workgroup membership, along with redefining the roles within these groups. This restructuring effort aims to optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of the workgroup as a whole. There is also an effort to broaden the group's membership to include entities currently missing that would help to round out the group's capacity to implement actions and achieve progress toward the Outcome. Recent Workgroup and Steering Committee meetings have included many new members who are eager to contribute to the work, and these groups are pleasingly the most diverse we've seen in any CBP meetings!

The Diversity Workgroup has been involved in contributing to the internal assessment and the development of recommendations as part of the CBP's "Beyond 2025" process. Forward-looking discussions have been held with Workgroup and Steering Committee members and other partners over the past year to explore ways to center people in Chesapeake Bay efforts beyond 2025, and to consider a vision and hopes for the future of the watershed. These insights have been carried by staff to the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee meetings and the "People" topic small group.

The Diversity Workgroup presented its progress review to the Management Board in March, 2024. During March and April, the workgroup has been developing their new two year action plan (2024-2025). They held their quarterly meeting on March 22nd, 2024 and are currently in the process of getting feedback from the Workgroup and Steering Committee in regards to said action plan.

### **GIT6: Enhance Partnering, Leadership, Management**

**Upcoming Meetings:** The next GIT6 quarterly meeting is Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This meeting will be completely virtual. The tentative time set is 10am to 3pm. The meeting link can be accessed [here](#).

**Contact Information** Lucinda Power(Chair) [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto:power.lucinda@epa.gov), James E. Martin(Chair) [james.e.martin@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:james.e.martin@dcr.virginia.gov), Greg Allen (Coordinator) [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov), Erin Sonnenburg (Staffer) [Sonnenburg.erin@epa.gov](mailto:Sonnenburg.erin@epa.gov).

### **Local Leadership Workgroup:**

The last LLWG meeting was on May 14. This meeting was held in person at Masonville Cove Education Center. The theme of the meeting was disaster mitigation and resiliency, as it pertained to watershed health. All meeting materials and information on presenters can be accessed via the [meeting webpage](#).

The LLWG just completed the 2nd year of the Local Leadership Survey aimed at gaining a better understanding of the knowledge and capacity of local officials around water resources, regulations, tools

for addressing issues, and actions taken. We are currently comparing results against the baseline survey from 2022.

The next LLWG quarterly meeting will be on August 20, 2024. The theme of the upcoming meeting is Toxics. The meeting will Explore resources, funding, and technical support for local governments to address toxic contaminants. LLWG hopes to partner with the Toxic Contaminants Workgroup to host this meeting.

### **Budget and Finance Workgroup**

During the GIT6 quarterly meeting, the Budget and Finance Workgroup introduced its new co-chair, Khesha Reed.

The workgroup recently submitted a proposal for a STAC workshop. The proposed workshop would explore the natural and social sciences gaps that impede the use of market-based approaches for Chesapeake restoration.

Joint project CBP and NCEE (The accrual of benefits from bay restoration): The purpose of this NCEE project is to analyze whether value as a result of CBP restoration efforts accrues to underserved communities in the same way as for other communities. Examples of possible values include healthier communities, increased property values, more abundant fisheries, and cleaner fish. The next phase of this project is to host 12 focus groups.

**Contact Information:** Dr. Elliott Campbell (Co-Chair) [elliott.campbell@maryland.gov](mailto:elliott.campbell@maryland.gov); Khesha Reed (Co-Chair) [reed.khesha@epa.gov](mailto:reed.khesha@epa.gov)

### **Strategy Review System Workgroup**

GIT6 leadership reintroduced the formerly known SRS action team as an official GIT6 and CBP workgroup. The coordinator for this workgroup is Sarah Brzezinski.

The Strategy Review System (SRS) Workgroup is soliciting nominations for Chair and Vice/Co-Chair. Experience with the science and practice of adaptive management, public policy or the Chesapeake Bay Program's governance and structure are valued. After new leadership is confirmed, the SRS Workgroup will revisit the team's purpose and scope of work to ensure progress is being thoughtfully made on key priorities. Please contact SRS Coordinator Sarah Brzezinski, [Brzezinski.Sarah@epa.gov](mailto:Brzezinski.Sarah@epa.gov), to self-nominate or to recommend a colleague for consideration.

Thank you to the Peoples cohort for submitting their Workplans and Management Strategies prior to the deadline.

### **Scientific Technical Assessment & Reporting Updates**

#### **Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting Team (STAR)**

The May STAR Meeting's theme was ecosystem services. The meeting opened with an update on Beyond 2025 from Ken Hyer and Breck Sullivan (USGS). They announced that there will be a period for anyone to provide feedback on the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee's report from July 1-August 31. Dr. Susan Yee (EPA) gave a presentation that defined ecosystem services and provided an overview of how EPA's Office of Research and Development viewed them. She went over a couple examples of projects that aimed to provide frameworks, tools, and approaches to link restored biological condition to social and economic benefits via ecosystem services. Then Dr. Krissy Hopkins (EPA) presented on a recent

publication that quantified the benefits that floodplains provide for sediment and nutrient retention in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. She also shared the Floodplain Ecosystem Services Mapper which is a tool her team is developing to help in estimating benefits of floodplains for different catchments. The meeting wrapped up with a presentation from Jeremy Hanson (CRC) on the STAC Workshop report “Using Ecosystem Services to Increase Progress Toward, and Quantify the Benefits of Multiple CBP Outcomes.” Jeremy provided an overview of the workshop and the report’s findings and their implications. The next STAR meeting is on June 27th, 2024 and will focus entirely on the Beyond 2025 effort.

### **Modeling Workgroup**

The Modeling Workgroup held its quarterly review on April 2nd and 3rd, 2024. The April 2024 CBP Modeling Quarterly Review outlined the schedule and provided status updates on the Phase 7 suite of models in development. The 19 presentations ranged from updates on the BMP optimization approaches, to discussions of crop yield calculations for estimating nutrient application and projecting future demand in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. On April 4th, the Climate Resiliency, Modeling, and Urban Stormwater Workgroups held a joint meeting for two purposes: 1) To support information transfer and facilitate a collective understanding in the opening discussion of the 2027-2028 climate assessment using the Phase 7 Suite of models; 2) Facilitate discussion and provide an opportunity for partners to offer feedback on priorities, remaining needs, and how best to coordinate efforts. Additionally, the modeling team is preparing for and attending the STAC Climate Change 3.0 Workshop in May. The modeling team continues to work on the development of the Phase 7 suite of models. The next CBP Modeling Quarterly will be held in a hybrid format on July 9th and 10th, 2024.

### **Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT)**

The April ITAT meeting began with a presentation on the non-tidal water quality data gathering project to inform the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Watershed model calibration. Isabella Bertani has been presenting to interested parties to ensure all appropriate data is included in this project to ensure a robust model calibration. Anyone with feedback on this project may contact Isabella Bertani ([ibertani@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:ibertani@chesapeakebay.net)). The rest of the meeting focused on how to connect CBP monitoring tools with local partners and decision makers. ITAT members discussed possible methods for improved tailoring of tools to partner needs and venues to have further conversations on this topic. The next ITAT meeting will take place on June 26th, 2024.

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) and its partners previously compiled tributary basin summaries for 12 major tributaries or tributary groups in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. In efforts to distribute the Tributary Summaries to interested parties, ITAT has presented information and examples on how to use the information to inform management decisions to multiple groups including the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), CBP Modeling Workgroup, Anacostia Watershed Steering Committee, Anacostia Watershed Community Advisory Committee, and the Mid-Atlantic Planning Collaboration. If interested in having the Tributary Summaries presented at your jurisdictional or local meetings, please contact ITAT co-coordinators Breck Sullivan ([bsullivan@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:bsullivan@chesapeakebay.net)) and Kaylyn Gootman ([gootman.kaylyn@epa.gov](mailto:gootman.kaylyn@epa.gov)).

### **Data Integrity Workgroup**

The Data Integrity Workgroup held their spring meeting on March 18, 2024. Participants shared monitoring and laboratory updates. Everyone is on target with their deliverables. Blind audit samples were sent out mid-March. The group discussed the comparison sample requirement for switching to new lab instrumentation. The Data Integrity Workgroup coordinator and CBP’s Quality Assurance Coordinator, Durga Ghosh, requested that labs share their minimum certification requirements so she could determine how to proceed with labs’ request that they not be required to do 100 samples when all labs are switching from Lachat to SEAL instruments. If an update on comparison sample protocol is deemed necessary, Durga will initiate a Data Analysis Issue Tracking System (DAITS) documentation. The

group also discussed the purpose of the Coordinated Split Sample program, and how it is used as a layer of data checks so that labs can proactively address any issues as soon as possible. Finally, the group discussed community science, Tier 3 nontidal monitoring and bacteria monitoring. Severn Rivers Association will likely be the next Tier 3 community science monitoring group. There is interest across multiple groups and states in having Tier 3 nontidal monitoring, but there are challenges associated with differing state standards and data uses and needs for audits. Regarding bacteria monitoring, Tier 1 and Tier 2 standards are established, but there are challenges for a Tier 3 level. These data are often used to help the public make informed decisions based on rapidly changing conditions, and it may not be necessary to pursue Tier 3 status. The next Data Integrity Workgroup meeting will be on June 13th, 2024.

#### **Bay Oxygen Research Group (BORG) - 4-D Water Quality Interpolator**

The Bay Oxygen Research Group (BORG) met for their quarterly public meeting on May 20, 2024. Rebecca Murphy (UMCES) provided an overview of the process used to pull data into the 4-Dimensional interpolator tool development for, including a comprehensive overview of what data sets are used for exploring patterns to inform development; development and testing; validation; and application. Following this, Elgin Perry gave an overview of how he was approaching stochastic components of daily mean and small scale variability in the interpolator development. Both presentations included a thorough question and answer period. The meeting wrapped up with more discussion on topics such as the interpolator grid, and areas lacking data. The next BORG meeting will be a development team meeting on July 15, 2024 and they will not meet in June.

#### **Nontidal Network (NTN) Workgroup**

The Nontidal Network (NTN) Team of the Integrated Monitoring Network Workgroup had a combined meeting with ITAT on April 24, 2024. The next meeting of the NTN WG will be on June 20, 2024.

#### **Hypoxia Collaborative Team**

The Hypoxia Collaborative Team met on March 4, 2024. Partners shared updates on their ongoing work. Then, NOAA Chesapeake Bay Program Office (NCBO) team shared the proposal for the 2024 hypoxia station deployment locations with justification for the proposed placements. This proposal was followed by a robust discussion of the proposed two geographical areas. The collaborative was given an additional week to provide feedback or follow-up thoughts on the proposed locations. Peter Tango (USGS) then went over a proposed model-assisted optimization analysis for a high frequency sensor water quality sampling design strategy for long term and near term to support bay habitat and criteria assessment at the segment scale. This analysis would be proposed for GIT funding.

#### **Criteria Assessment Protocol (CAP) Workgroup**

The CAP workgroup met on May 6, 2024. The meeting opened with Peter Tango (USGS) sharing his thoughts on his investigations into past documentation discussing short duration criteria assessment methods and a discussion on this topic. Then Elgin Perry gave a presentation to the group on approaches for incorporating uncertainty into criteria assessment. Elgin went over 4 approaches, their pros and cons, and answered questions about each of them. The meeting wrapped up with more discussion on approaches for addressing uncertainty. The next CAP WG meeting will be on June 18, 2024 and there will be an in-person CAP meeting in August, exact day TBD.

#### **Status and Trends Workgroup (STWG)**

The STWG met on January 29th to foster cross-outcome learning and discuss STWG plans for 2024. The meeting began with a presentation on the Forage Status and Trends Report, which synthesized all research findings and projects completed since 2014 in support of the Forage Outcome. This was followed by a presentation and discussion on the ongoing conversation to develop the Oyster outcome post 2025. The meeting wrapped up with an overview of the STWG plans and objectives for 2024. The full workgroup will next convene as needed while individual teams continue to meet to work on new

indicator development projects. The sea level rise indicator team will have a broader discussion with partners at the tidal convening of the Wetlands Workgroup on May 21st, 2024.

**Climate Resiliency Workgroup:**

Workgroup members and leadership attended and supported the STAC Climate Model 3.0 Workshop. The workgroup has also been working on a number of initiatives and efforts. In June, the workgroup will be holding a special working meeting on June 17th, focused on community resilience. This is a continuation of the discussions that took place at the March Meeting, with the goal of the meeting being to inform current community resilience efforts occurring within Virginia and Maryland, with discussions focused on understanding and identifying common themes around the utility of current tools and metrics to inform decision making and engagement with communities to discuss thresholds or tipping points for resilience actions. We are hoping to come away from this meeting with a greater understanding around what aspects of community resilience tools and metrics provide the greatest utility to communities and a broader perspective around how to engage with communities around the topic of tipping points.

Additionally, the workgroup will be holding a meeting on June 20th, focused on hearing updates on various partner and Chesapeake Bay Program efforts, including the Beyond 2025 Effort, the Community Resilience Working Meeting, the Chesapeake Community Research Symposium, and the STAC Climate Model 3.0 workshop, as well as presentations from partners on community resilience efforts.

Lastly, workgroup leadership is supporting a special session at the Chesapeake Community Research Symposium, "Tackling Ecosystem-Level Impacts from Rising Water Temperatures in the Tidal Waters of Chesapeake Bay," to bring together research that align with recommendations from the Rising Water Temperature STAC Workshop. Presentations range from impacts to key living resources and habitats (e.g., striped bass, Atlantic sturgeon, oysters, and seagrass), research around marine heatwaves and their impacts in the Chesapeake Bay, and communication of environmental conditions' impacts on key fishery species.

**Strategic Engagement Team & Communications Office Updates**

*No updates to report to the Management Board.*

**Advisory Committees Updates**

**Local Governments Advisory Committee**

*The purpose of the LGAC is to advise the Executive Council on how to effectively implement projects and engage the support of local governments to achieve the goals of the Bay Agreement.*

LGAC's 2024 Local Government Forum: Looking Beyond 2025 is coming up on [July 11th, 2024 at the Turf Valley Resort](#) in Ellicott City, Maryland. LGAC's next quarterly meeting will be the following day, July 12th, also at the Turf Valley Resort. Agendas for the Forum and July LGAC meeting will be posted on the meeting page this week.

LGAC still seeks a New York representative.

If there are MB requests to get LGAC feedback during future quarterly meetings, please contact the LGAC Coordinator, Laura Cattell Noll at [lnoll@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:lnoll@allianceforthebay.org). To be added to the Interested Parties list, please contact LGAC Staffer, Kayli Ottomanelli at [lgac@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:lgac@allianceforthebay.org).

### **Stakeholders Advisory Committee:**

The Stakeholders' Advisory Committee held their spring quarterly meeting in Columbia, MD on May 22-23, 2024. The meeting theme was: Understanding the history of the CBP's role in land use. Members hosted a panel to collectively reflect on the land use goals in Chesapeake 2000, how and why they were scaled back in the 2014 Watershed Agreement, where the challenges lie in the current land use outcomes, and the challenges with a federal/state voluntary program's influence on land use decision made at the local level.

The members also met with PSC Chair, Josh Kurtz, and EPA Regional Administrator, Adam Ortiz to discuss topics related to their 2024 priorities. Lastly the members heard updates on the draft path forward for the Beyond 2025 effort.

The Stakeholders' Committee's 2024 Priorities that will drive the quarterly meetings include: (1) engagement in the Beyond 2025 work and a deeper dive into accountability for the Bay TMDL; (2) a broad understanding of the policies and incentives across the watershed for key outcomes with a focus on forest cover and land conservation with an intent to identify gaps; (3) continued engagement on equitable access to grants and capacity building; (4) intentionally learning and development of internal Committee guiding principles that advance inclusivity of all members.

The next Stakeholders' Committee meeting will be in PA on Sept 18-19, 2024.

There are 2 PA gubernatorial vacancies.

The Stakeholders' Committee officers are Chair- Chuck Herrick (DC) and Vice-Chair Donna Harris-Aikens (VA).

### **Scientific Technical Advisory Committee**

*No updates to report to the Management Board.*