

Chesapeake Bay Program
Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)
Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 14th, 2024
10:00 AM to 10:40 AM

[Meeting Materials](#)

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Action: WTWG Members who would like to submit a nomination for WTWG Chair (self-nominations welcome) should email Auston Smith, EPA and Sushanth Gupta, CRC (smith.auston@epa.gov and Gupta.sushanth@epa.gov).

Action: Auston will send out a poll regarding availability for the verification calls by the end of this week.

Meeting Minutes

10:00 **Introductions and Announcements** – Auston Smith, EPA (15 min).

- *Please put your name and affiliation in the chat box for attendance purposes. Thank you!*
- **Decision requested:** Approval of October Meeting Minutes.
 - The October Meeting Minutes will be approved at the December WTWG Meeting.
- Call for WTWG Chair – WTWG Leadership

Action: WTWG Members who would like to submit a nomination for WTWG Chair (self-nominations welcome) should email Auston Smith, EPA and Sushanth Gupta, CRC (smith.auston@epa.gov and Gupta.sushanth@epa.gov).

- Phase 7 Timeline Update – Auston Smith, EPA
 - Auston let us know that he hopes to have a working draft of the timeline by December to show the WQGIT.
- Forest Harvesting Practices BMP Update – Auston Smith, EPA
 - Last month, Katie Brownson, USFS and Lorenzo Cinalli, USFS presented on updating the Forest Harvesting Practices BMP. Based on feedback, they are making updates to the report and drafting a Technical Appendix (TA) for consideration by the WTWG at the December Meeting.
- WTWG Land Use Task Force Update – Auston Smith, EPA
 - Although delayed, WTWG Leadership plans on setting this Task Force up over the coming weeks.
- Bill Keeling, VA DEQ commented on cut off or excess and asked that in Phase 7 the concept of redistributing the excess when verified implementation is happening is implemented, particularly for VA cover crops where almost 20,000 acres of excess are effectively thrown away. Bill expressed VAs desire to investigate redistributing excess BMP acreage in Phase 7 to ensure full credit.
 - Auston asked about the specifics of redistributing acreage to adjacent counties, and Bill said that using HUC12 boundaries it could be put in the surrounding HUC12 counties.

The scale of reporting would also be a factor in these decisions. Bill elaborated that in Phase 6 this was deemed unfeasible and thus he is hopeful that there is enough time for it to be considered for Phase 7. Auston mentioned this topic could be relevant during the WQGIT's forthcoming discussion on Phase 7 scale.

10:15 Progress Schedule Update – Auston Smith, EPA (10 min)

Auston Smith, EPA provided an update on the Progress Schedule including items coming up over the next quarter. This included that the Land Use Dataset updates have been received and that the updated 2024 QAPPs have been reviewed. Teams have been sent memos regarding the QAPP reviews for point, nonpoint, and combined updates. Auston is planning to reach out to partners to determine a good time for the initial verification calls, which are planned for late December or early January. This will allow a window for additional NRCS data submissions ahead of the December 2nd deadline.

Discussion:

Bill Keeling: When can we expect delivery?

Auston Smith: My understanding is that it may be an up to or around two-week delay. Others on the call may be able to provide additional insight, but if a longer delay is expected, we will continue to issue updates at the WTWG so that the progress schedule can adapt as needed. We understand this is a serious constraint your team is under, so we are flexible to meet your needs.

Bill Keeling: Last year we got it on October 31st, so does that mean this week? I'm not remembering there being a static date for getting NRCS data, sometimes end of October, sometimes early December.

Auston Smith: Let's call it November 21st, and if we don't expect it by then, I can send an update to the WTWG on an expected date.

Bill Keeling: I'm afraid at that point we may be pushing it into next year's reporting.

Auston Smith: Understood, we are going to try our hardest to help your team prevent that, but we understand that's not what anyone wants. We'll be in touch with the WTWG regarding that and any resulting schedule shifts.

Samuel Canfield: Depending on how big of a shift in NRCS data, there may be an extended timeline for NEIEN submission.

Auston Smith: We'll be in touch about that – obviously if you don't get the data by December 1st, we will extend the timeline for getting it in. We will be nimble about setting up verification calls when we know a major dataset has been submitted.

Samuel Canfield: I had a question about the QAPP – when are the signatures due?

Tyler Trostle (in chat): Much appreciated from PA on NRCS Data, Auston.

Auston Smith: It's not December 2nd, don't worry about them right now. Between December and February, we will work to ensure everything is finalized, and that's when signatures are. It will be in the new year.

Action: Auston will send out a poll regarding availability for the verification calls by the end of this week.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 3rd, 2024, from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

Participants

Alicia Ritzenthaler, DC DOEE
Arianna Johns, VA DEQ
Auston Smith, EPA
Bailey Robertory, UMCES
Bill Keeling, VA DEQ
Chris Brosch, DDA
Christina Lyerly, MDE
Dylan Burgevin, MDE
Emily Dekar, USC
Eugenia Hart, Tetra Tech

Helen Golimowski, Devereux Consulting
Jeff Sweeney, EPA
Jessica Rigelman, J7
Matthew Kofroth, LCCD
Normand Goulet, NVRC
Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting
Samuel Canfield, WV DEP
Sushanth Gupta, CRC
Tom Butler, EPA
Tyler Trostle, PA DEP

Acronym List

BMP: Best Management Practice
CBP: Chesapeake Bay Program
CRC: Chesapeake Research Consortium
DDA: Delaware Department of Agriculture
DOEE: [DC] Department of Energy and the Environment
DEP: [PA or WV] Department of Environmental Protection
DEQ: [VA] Department of Environmental Quality
EPA: [US] Environmental Protection Agency
GIT: Goal Implementation Team
LCCD: Lancaster County Conservation District

MDE: Maryland Department of the Environment
NEIEN: National Environmental Information Exchange Network
NRCS: [USDA] Natural Resources Conservation Service
NVRC: Northern Virginia Regional Commission
QAPP: Quality Assurance Project Plan
UMCES: University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
USC: Upper Susquehanna Coalition
USFS: United States Forest Service
WTWG: Watershed Technical Workgroup