



## Meeting Minutes

### Chesapeake Bay Forestry Workgroup (FWG) April Conference Call

April 5, 2017 9:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

#### Meeting Participants

Rebecca Hanmer, *FWG Chair*  
Sally Claggett (USFS), *FWG Coordinator*  
Katherine Wares (Chesapeake Research Consortium)  
Julie Mawhorter (USFS)  
Luke Cole (DC DOEE)  
Anne Hairston-Strang (MD DNR)  
Paul Amert (MD)  
Marah Vecenie (PA DCNR)  
Tracey Coulter (PA DCNR)  
Teddi Stark (PA DCNR)  
Matt Keefer (PA DCNR)  
Matt Poirot (VA DOF)  
Greg Evans (VA DOF)  
Barbara White (VA DOF)  
Lara Johnson (VA DOF)  
Judy Okay (VA DOF)  
Herb Peddicord (WV DOF)  
Tanner Haid (Cacapon Institute)  
Earl Bradley (Sierra Club)  
Jennifer Miller-Herzog (Land Trust Alliance)  
Craig Highfield (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)

#### 9:00 Welcome and Introductions

Sally welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed participants.

#### 9:10 Forest Conservation Maps

Sally gave an overview of the Conservation Goals mapping project with the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership. There are 5 conservation goal categories: farms, forests, habitat, heritage, and human health. These conservation goals were chosen because they encompass many values and are interconnected. The five categories are being mapped and will be overlaid, minus protected lands, to identify long-term conservation goals for the Chesapeake region. The goal for forest conservation priorities is to: protect the Chesapeake watershed's most ecologically and economically valuable forest land from conversion. Four mappable aspects were identified for the forest goals: headwater and riparian forests, large forest blocks, multiple value woodlots, and forests conducive to timber harvests layers were chosen to map. There were some issues with defining these four layers. The Forest map depicts the overlapping of these layers. Due to forest patch size criteria, Large Forest Blocks and

Woodlots are mutually exclusive, as are Productive Timber Growing Areas and Woodlots; therefore, the maximum overlapping value for the composite is three. The three overlapping value areas are mostly in the headwaters, but other areas with a 1 or 2 overlapping value should still be considered a priority. From the layers, 22,124,849 acres of important forest land for conservation were identified which is about 54% of the Chesapeake watershed. About 31.3% of this forest land is already conserved. Work is currently being done to finish the other goal maps and overlay them to create a composite map. This spring and summer, influences (growth, climate impacts, agricultural expansion, energy infrastructure, regional focus areas, and protection status) will be included to identify areas of most opportunity and urgency. After analysis is complete, the maps will be updated as necessary and priority areas will be adapted. More information and the conservation layers can be viewed on LandScope Chesapeake's [website](#).

#### Comments and Questions

- Members commented that they think this mapping project could be useful for planners and programmatic planning, but process of identifying areas of “urgency and opportunity” will be important. Members noticed that some major areas were not given higher values on the Forest map which could be due to how headwaters was defined. While these areas could have a higher value in the composite map, Sally will look into how Headwaters was defined and possibly remapped. The maps can be revised in the future.
- Sally asked members when they would like to have follow up on this project. Greg Evan said he would like to follow up now due to the ongoing to the general assembly and economic discussion.
- Rebecca commented on taking a look at the definitions for timber harvest as well.
- Sally said forest mapping for water quality will be addressed for another time.

**ACTION:** Sally will follow up with Andy about the definition of headwaters and access to GIS files.

#### 9:40 WIP III Planning

Julie discussed the creation and packaging of forestry materials for state WIP III planning. In preparation for states developing their phase III WIP targets later this year, Julie and Sally are going to put together a 2-3 page document that includes tools, resources, and information about forestry BMPs. Julie showed a table that listed forest and tree canopy cover by acreage and percentage for each county in the watershed. Another table will be made that focuses on buffer acreage and percentage. Projected loss of tree canopy and forest based on model outputs and the estimated load increases associated with the losses could also be included.

#### Comments and Questions

- Julie asked the group if they thought this table and information regarding detailed land use land cover data at the county level could be helpful to states and if anyone had additional ideas for helpful information to include in a WIP planning guide.
- Matt Keefer said that the table is useful and that they are having an event the first week of June so having some of these materials by then would be helpful.
- The Chesapeake Conservancy has found that they might be over estimating some buffer areas which should be discussed.
- Members also suggested addressing buffer tracking and assessment challenges and including a summary of all forestry BMPs that are credited. Julie said that these can be added to the guide.

- Greg Evan suggested that Julie talk with Su Ann Shup at PA DCNR about what they've learned from working on the Healthy Watershed/Forestland Retention project.
- Julie commented that CAST tools will be coming out this summer so it can be determined later if a document about how to use CAST to look at forests should be development.
- If members have additional thoughts or comments on helpful tools or information for WIP planning contact Julie or Sally.

#### **9:50 Round Robin**

- DC is up to 38.7% canopy cover and is on track to meet its goal of 40% by 2032. DC will be putting out two requests for proposals in the near future: one for planting on large parcels that can take 25 trees or more and one for marketing and messaging campaign to highlight, among other programs, tree planting initiatives and incentives.
- Maryland DNR is working with their communications office for increasing publicity for the Backyard Buffer program, providing seedlings for homeowners to plant by streams and waterways. They are working on a USFS-funded long-term forest buffer monitoring project that augments the monitoring effort last summer with Penn State, Ag. Research Service, and Farm Service Agency to help evaluate the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP); it uses baseline data for CREP buffers that were planted around 2000 and will collect field data to determine the functions and values realized as these buffers mature. As part of the outreach component of that project, DNR is working with American Farmland Trust and their Women's Learning Circles to increase understanding of forest buffers and management. They are wrapping up a harvest BMP assessment project that covers Maryland and Delaware. They are also looking at NFWF grants to evaluate management responses to emerald ash borer damage and improving restoration techniques, how to maintain buffers function and health, possibly including a Potomac regional buffer strategy in this project.
- Pennsylvania has upcoming agroforestry trainings that focus on mitigating nonpoint pollution and riparian forest buffers. May 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, in Chambersburg, PA, there will be a training with Appalachian Sustainable Development on multifunctional buffers. June 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> there will be a training in Chester County, PA. In October, there will be a NE training with Cornell; part of the training will focus on agroforestry and black locust. Three people: Marah Vecenie, Todd Brajkovich, and Teddi Stark, have joined the buffer team. PA DCNR is developing a NFWF proposal on outreach and marketing in Southern PA to improve the communication with landowners regarding buffer plantings. Current buffer grants close April 12<sup>th</sup>. The TreeVitalize program will have an urban riparian forest buffer component in the next grant round. There will be an Arbor Day service event on April 28<sup>th</sup> in York, PA; the service day is focused on bringing professional arborist together. A steering committee met recently to flush out details for developing a statewide volunteer network for community forestry efforts. PA DCNR and partners are planning a Walk in the Woods Day on October 1, 2017 for every county to highlight all the working forests in Pennsylvania; there will be a website where people can sign up to host a walk in the woods and there will be a workshop on June 3 for volunteers on how to host a walk. The Governor convened a forestry taskforce to look at opportunities for economic development and jobs around forests; a report was released and PA DCNR is looking into some of the recommendations such as a conservation easement program, carbon offsetting, and additional educational awareness. Information on the green ribbon taskforce report can be found [here](#).

- Virginia Department of Forestry has started spring plantings. Awards for Virginia Trees for Clean Water have been finished; several HOAs applied for grants. A part time urban forestry position was hired and started today. Arbor Day celebrations are being developed. VA DOF is working on urban wood utilization; they've met with partners and had a forum for marketing strategies.
- In West Virginia, the Governor has expressed interest in hiring some of the forestry positions back, but it will have to go through the legislature in order to happen. West Virginia counties in the Chesapeake Bay watershed are the only counties still inspecting logging operations. There is now an opening for the CREP forester position. WV DOF is gearing up for spring planting season. CommuniTree had its first plantings Saturday and will have 18 more. Frank Rogers is at Bay Day in Washington DC. The Cacapon Institute is hiring two new positions, an education specialist and BMP specialist. Carla Hardy WV Project CommuniTree projects can be found by visiting the Updates & Events tab at [www.CacaponInstitute.org](http://www.CacaponInstitute.org) or by visiting this [map](#).
- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay is working on a variety of riparian and upland tree plantings projects this spring with the MD Forest Service and NRCS. They have just submitted for state grant funding to support more buffer upland plantings in collaboration with MD Forest Service. They are working with Trout Unlimited in West Virginia on tree buffer plantings at 3 farms. The Alliance is collaborating with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Headwaters SWCD to develop a new riparian forest buffer project in Augusta County, VA. A new Chesapeake Forests staff member was hired and will work out of the Alliance's Pennsylvania office.
- Sierra Club: Annapolis amended its Forest Conservation ordinance.

**10:30 Adjourned**