



## Meeting Minutes

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

December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 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)  
Jenny McGarvey (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)  
Luke Cole (DC DOEE)  
Anne Hairston-Strang (MD DNR)  
Dakota Durcho (MD DNR)  
Lauren Townley (NY DEC)  
Jeff Speich (NY DEC)  
Mark Hockley (PA DCNR)  
Judy Okay (VA DOF)  
Matt Poirot (VA DOF)  
Herb Peddicord (WV DOF)  
Frank Rodgers (WV Cacapon Institute)  
Keshia Braunskill (DE FS)  
Earl Bradley (Sierra Club)  
Nancy Sonti (USDA FS)

#### 9:00 Welcome and introductions

Rebecca Hanmer welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed participants.

#### 9:10 Year In Review

During 2016, the FWG worked on preparations for the 2017 midpoint assessment of the TMDL and the Phase 6 Land Use Model which will include high resolution imagery. This will result in several different layers which required the group to define parameters and review BMPs. The end of this year also marks the halfway point for two year work plans; with this in mind, Sally suggested members provide updates twice a year to highlight accomplishments and inform the group of assistance needed. Sally reminded the group that any needs can be brought to the WQGIT or the Management Board. Sally recapped specific work done by the FWG during 2016 and invited members to share their highlights from the year as well.

In the winter and spring, tree canopy was accepted as a new mappable land use with distinct loading rates and BMPs. Justin Hynicka and Marion Divers created document on loading rate of tree canopy which was accepted into the model by the WQGIT. Definition for “forests” and “tree canopy” were made in order to distinguish and map the two land uses for the model. The first annual Riparian Forest Buffer was held and new Riparian Foresters from Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia attended.

Another forum is being planned for 2017 and Pennsylvania and New York are currently hiring Riparian Forester positions. Forest for the Bay have been working on outreach and education programs for forest landowners and updated the FWG on efforts throughout the year.

In the late spring and summer, Justin Hynicka and Eric Sprague were recognized with the new FWG “Crown Achievement” award. This award will go out to more recipients in 2017. The Tree Canopy Expert Panel report was approved by the FWG and later by CBP. This approved credit for the tree canopy BMP and a second BMP on urban forest plantings was added. The FWG also began development of priority forest conservation layers to help CBP determine forests of high value and determine future work. These layers are available for review; more work needs to be done and communication points regarding their use should be made.

In the late summer and fall, the FWG worked with TetraTech on their project “Quantifying the Impact of BMPs on Management Strategies.” The FWG worked with the Farm Service Agency and Penn State to conduct a study on landowner attitudes toward restoration and the Report of Findings was released. Two proposals: one of multi-functionality of buffers and one on wetland protection, were endorsed by the FWG were approved and received funding. A survey of grant recipients for riparian buffer projects was done and funded by NFWF to better understand recipient needs. The New York CREP amendment was approved and they are able to spend their \$1million award. An update and preliminary results of the Healthy Watershed TMDL/Forest Retention project in Virginia was presented to the FWG; the project has extended to Pennsylvania and the FWG will continue to assist with the project.

The FWG looked at E3 and a final E3 document will be completed in December 2016. Lindsey Gordon provided preliminary information on the amount of existing buffers and amount of bufferable acres in the watershed. The amount of bufferable acres will be used in the final E3. This information can also be broken down into state and county which will be helpful in WIP planning.

During 2016, the FWG did not fully address how state verification protocols are working, the high value forests for water quality maps, and some actions in work plans and strategies. These will be priorities for 2017. Phase III WIPs will also be important topic during 2017, and Sally proposed compiling all forestry related tools that states can use as a resources when developing their WIP.

More information on FWG work from 2016 can be found [here](#).

#### Questions and Comments

- Julie commented that more time was spent on tree canopy loading rates and BMPs than anticipated and that 2017 actions still need to be developed with urban state coordinators, but the completion of tree canopy loading rates and BMPs will provide a good foundation for future work.
- Rebecca asked if everyone in the FWG has seen and reviewed the maps for the Phase 6 Land Use Model. Julie responded that the land use data for the states are now online and that a press release was made this week on the dataset. The press release and information on webinars regarding the dataset were emailed to the FWG. Work with the Chesapeake Conservancy is also being done to create a tree canopy assessment dataset which will be used in iTree Landscapes; the dataset will be complete January. Members suggested running through dataset tools at a future meeting. Anne suggested starting with the Urban Stormwater Workgroup and looking at trees in stormwater ponds.

**ACTION:** Revisit Priority Forest maps in 2017

### **10:00 Round Robin**

- Maryland: Dakota Durcho has started as the new Chesapeake Forester at DNR. MD cost share programs through MACS were not funded this year which could affect spring plantings.
- Pennsylvania: Applications for the forester position closed in November and applicants are now being contacted for interviews. Pennsylvania is in the modeling phase of the Healthy Watershed project, using BayFast to model for forest retention. In 2017, an urban riparian grant will be offered. Mark commented on presenting PA tree map at the next FWG meeting.
- West Virginia: CRP foresters were hired. The importance of the new land use data was reiterated; this dataset has helped show the extent of forest removal due to a proposed highway project. The Growing Native program has also made progress during 2016; Sally will add this to the FWG 2016 Retrospective document.
- New York: Upper Susquehanna Coalition will be hiring a riparian forester. USC finalized an agreement with NRCS to complete 40 conservation plans. There will be a new RFP for easements on riparian areas and LRS grants for Trees for Tributaries program will be available in early 2017.
- DC: A new urban tree canopy assessment should be out in early 2017. A RFP for tree canopy is in the process and is expected to launch in spring. In FY16, 9,000-10,000 new trees were planted and another 3,000 is expected by end of the fiscal year.
- Virginia: Three riparian specialists were hired and have been working. All CRP reenrollments have been approached and it appears that a couple will be dropping out. New publication with FSA has been made and will be used as outreach materials for new enrollment attempts. A GIS employee at FSA has been using aerial imagery of farms with contracts other than riparian buffers as a way to find new potential landowners to contact for CRP enrollment.
- Tom Ward announced he will be retiring in February, and will be asking a NRCS forester to fill in during vacancy.

### **10:30 Adjourned**