



Meeting Minutes

Chesapeake Bay Program Forestry Workgroup (FWG) April Conference Call

April 1st, 2015, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Conference Call Participants:

Rebecca Hanmer (Retired Citizens Advisory Committee), *FWG Chair*
Sally Claggett (USFS), *FWG Coordinator*
Tuana Phillips (Chesapeake Research Consortium)
Anne Hairston-Strang (MD DNR)
Craig Highfield (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Eric Sprague (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Marian Norris (NPS)
Jeremy Hanson (VA Tech)
Frank Rodgers (Cacapon Institute, WV)
Matt Poirot (VA DOF)
Tanner Haid (Cacapon Institute, WV)
Derrick McDonald (PA DEP)
Colin Jones (MDA)
Justin Hynicka (MD DNR)
Tracey Coulter (PA Bureau of Forestry)
Jenny McGarvey (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
Peter Claggett (USGS, Chesapeake Bay Program)
Jake Reilly (NFWF)

Welcome and Introductions

Rebecca Hanmer welcomed everybody to the meeting and confirmed participants.

Presentation: Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

Jake Reilly provided an overview of the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund RFP. He also provided tips for how to make a good proposal, and pointed out how forestry-related proposals could fit in. For more information, please read about the RFP on the [NFWF website](#).

Other presentation points, comments and questions:

- This year, like others, there is an emphasis on forest projects.
- NFWF has an open door policy. NFWF administers the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund. This is a big grant program for the entire watershed. The biggest pot of money involves on-the-ground projects. This year it looks like NFWF is awarding 10 to 12

million dollars in grants total. This will be a record high for projects on the ground. There are also larger-scale, nutrient/sediment reduction grants. These grants are 200,000 to 50,000 dollars, 3-year grants. State agencies, research institutions, non-profits, conservation districts, and local governments are eligible to apply.

- The RFP also has an emphasis on water quality and habitat goals. (e.g., protect in perpetuity places that have brook trout).
- NFWF was awarded Chesapeake Regional Conservation Partnership (RCPP) funding that can dovetail with Stewardship Grant proposals. More information on the RCPP can be found on the last page of the RFP pdf document. Riparian forest buffer projects are one focus of the additional funding.
- NFWF has a suite of priorities for accelerating green infrastructure and stormwater management projects in urban landscapes. NFWF funding can be used for projects related to the Urban Tree Canopy Management Strategy. Some of the specific proposals being sought include: looking for better opportunities to better integrate green infrastructure into local government programs and decisions.
- Currently there is a lot of momentum surrounding residential-scale stormwater BMPs. Within this momentum, there is an opportunity for forestry-related practices. NFWF worked with a host of academic partners to understand what motivates people to take certain actions. This work culminated into a document focused on social behavior change. It is titled "[Encouraging Sustainable Behavior, A Guide for National Fish and Wildlife Grantees to Implement Social Marketing Campaigns.](#)"
- The last big priority area of the RFP is really around innovation. This would be awarded through the Innovative Grants program. There are certainly opportunities for forest-related practices, quasi-research type of projects, goals for biological uplift, etc.
 - A priority NFWF identified this year is really around maintenance of forest buffers. Projects looking at places in the watershed with gaps in buffer implementation, where boots on the ground are needed, etc., are especially encouraged.
- The RCPP is offering multi-millions of dollars which could potentially be used toward riparian forest buffer work. If anyone wants to work through that grant, they are welcome to contact Jake Reilly to talk about ideas. NFWF may be able to generate flexibility with the funding.
- Multi-stakeholder, multi-partner projects are encouraged.
- Question: Are these proposals eligible for states? Answer: Yes, for two programs. But often proposals include at least one state agency partner.
- Comment: MDNR and TNC received funding through the Innovative Grants program for nutrient reduction work. This work involves walking through high-resolution data. It would be interesting to see a regional project for forest buffer maintenance.
- Comment: The FWG has an important role to make sure the Stewardship Fund is addressed in the partnership. Or if individuals have an idea they can talk directly with Jake/NFWF.
- Proposals are due May 14th.
- Comment: I agree with the previous comment that the FWG plays an important role as a workgroup in both the proposals and development of the RFPs but for the riparian forest projects we should look at the State Task Forces to see what is most important, who has the motivation and drive and who suggested focusing on maintenance projects. We

should work through those partners and that work to submit something through this RFP. We should also tap into the RCPP funding.

- Comment: The States are developing BMP verification protocols. I think one idea of maintenance is we can take some advantage of when verifying that buffers are still there and functioning.

Presentation: Recap of Forest Land Use Definitions for Phase 6.0

Peter Claggett spoke to the FWG in February on the various decisions being proposed by the Land Use Workgroup (LUWG) for defining forest land use classes in the next phase of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model (CBWM). Land use definitions in question include those for (urban) tree canopy, forest, open space, and scrub/shrub. Peter came back to the FWG during the April meeting to continue the discussion.

Other presentation points, comments and questions:

- Peter pointed out that there will be a chance in October to revisit and change the definitions/rules for 2016, but they really need to be locked down now.
- Peter reminded the group that these definitions are strictly for water quality function. In the Model, that is all we care about.
- As an example, one issue that needs to be addressed is whether small rural patches of trees should be called tree canopy or forest.
- In addition, how wide do we buffer? 30 ft. vs 100 (1 pixel vs. 3 pixels)
- Peter went over an example that demonstrated the differences and similarities between using local data vs. regional data.

The Forestry Workgroup spent some time discussing Peter's questions. The bullet points below summarize their decisions:

- Patches of trees that are not forest will be categorized as tree canopy; tree canopy will not be separated for rural and urban.
- Scrub shrub will be part of forest, herbaceous will be separate.
- Buffer size along streams: include a variable width buffer up to 300 feet, minimum of 30 feet.
- Keep the forest definition at 50% or more forested.

Announcements:

Maryland:

- FSC put chemicals on their land to help control emerald ash borer and other invasives.
- Justin Hynicka is deep in the literature researching forest loading rates and hopes to have a summary done soon to send around to group.

West Virginia:

- This year will mark the 7th WV Project CommuniTree. 18 projects are coming up next 3 to 4 weeks. About 600 trees will be planted with the Cacapon Institute. Around 11 to 12 hundred trees will be planted this spring.
- Now on the Cacapon Institute website you can click on the [publications tab](#) to find urban tree canopy assessments. Cacapon Institute is using these assessments to look at what the

land cover is and assist the counties. Our goal is to be able to track land use change over time, but at this time our primary goal is to get them engaged.

NPS:

- NPS has started working with the urban woodlands conservation/restoration community of practice. Park service will be hosting a virtual meeting later this year, if interested please contact Marian Norris.

Bay Program updates:

- Management strategies are out for review until April 30th.
- Most of you are probably working on the verification protocols, which will be due in the coming months. A webinar for more information will be held sometime in June.
 - Comment: This webinar information should go to the Agriculture Workgroup as well. A bigger audience is needed.
 - Question: for verification protocol development, what do states need to do?
 - Answer: The protocols are supposed to be written in plain language, and would probably look different from what grant procedure has looked like so far. The Water Quality Goal Implementation Team is leading this. In MD it might be going through MDE.
 - WVDEP will be the central hub in WV, and WVDEP is hiring a consultant to work on this stuff. We are hoping to look at guidance that came out of forestry workgroup, and enhance that. We will have to identify new trees and where trees are being infilled. We are now in third year follow-up of more than half of our projects.