

Chesapeake Bay Program Forestry Workgroup (FWG) Conference Call

June 4th, 2014

10:30 AM – 12 PM

Participants: Sally Claggett, Brian Ellis, Sally Kellogg, Tracey Coulter, Herb Peddicord, Anne Hariston-Strang, Kesha Braunskill, Matt Poirot, Judy Okay, Gary Speiran, Phil Rodbell, Eric Greenfield, Tuana Phillips.

Announcements and Updates:

Pennsylvania:

- The Chesapeake Agroforestry Team met on May 7th – 8th at King's Gap Environmental Education Center in Carlisle, PA. The notes from the meeting will be posted on the FWG webpage and shared with FWG members.

West Virginia:

- Herb Peddicord (WV Division of Forestry) shared with the group that WV's State Forester is aware of the June 19th Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Initiative Leadership Summit. A representative from DEP and another representative from Department of Agriculture will be present at the Summit.

Maryland:

- MDNR State Forest Service is currently accepting applications for State Forester.
- Anne Hariston-Strang is seeking permission to fill in Tim Culbreth's Chesapeake Forester position.
- MD is working on outreach for the Lawn to Woodland Program. This year's spring plantings were successful, and DNR will continue to expand the program for next year.
- MD is working on a Harvest BMP project. This project will help inform MD and DE harvest bmp implementation rates for Chesapeake Bay Program reporting.
- MD is starting a mine lands and reforestation habitat project in western MD for the benefit of the Golden-winged Warbler.
- MD is starting a new grant for landscape and watershed planning centered on drinking reservoirs. MD is working closely with PA, TNC, and local groups with interest in forest and water supplies.
- Emerald Ash Borer work is wrapping up for summer.
- MD is working on invasive projects to identify ways to address invasive plants and figure out best approaches.

Virginia:

- Bettina Ring has been appointed State Forester by Governor Terry McAuliffe.
- Virginia Tech hosted a Symposium on Forestry Best Management Practice Effectiveness in the Eastern United States. The event took place on May 12th – 15th in Blacksburg, Virginia.
- VA is working with VA Tech on a BMP implementation project and other projects related to BMPs and identifying research needs.

- VA is working on restoring habitats within a refuge and reducing carbon dioxide from swamp environments.

Other updates:

- The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay convened a Riparian Forest Buffer Innovator's Roundtable meeting on May 21st. The purpose of the meeting was to find several clear actions that will accelerate the rate of and improve the success of forest buffer projects. Meeting participants shared their stories of projects and programs that have worked, and identified barriers such as maintenance issues. The information gathered from this meeting will be taken to the Leadership Summit.
- The Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Initiative Leadership Summit will meet on June 19th at the U.S. Capitol Visitor's Center in Washington, DC. Approximately 70 people are expected to attend.

Discussion – RCPP Opportunities

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in the new Farm Bill combines the Agriculture Water Enhancement Program, Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative, and the Great Lakes Basin Program into one. The Chesapeake Bay is one of the 8 “Critical Conservation Areas,” and therefore qualifies for about 35% of the overall funding. Funding authorities will be through EQIP, Conservation Stewardship Program, and Agriculture Conservation Program. About 40% of the funds can go to multi-state projects.

- Sally remarked that the RCPP opportunity is wide-ranging in terms of what can be done. USDA is encouraging proposals that involve multi-partner or multi-state collaboration. Leveraging other dollars and finding a match is preferable.
- Sally asked FWG State representatives if any RCPP conversations are happening at the state level.
 - In Maryland, conversations are happening at the higher level (staff of MDA, MDR). This topic is also on an agenda of an upcoming CREP Advisory meeting.
- Sally also announced that there are a number of upcoming trainings about RCPP.
- The RCPP is similar to the CCPI program in the previous Farm Bill.
- The FWG will have another conference call in the near future to discuss these opportunities. Sally encouraged states to start talking and gathering information.

Presentation on iTree Canopy – Eric Greenfield

iTree Canopy has been discussed and identified as a good tool to use for Verification of the Urban Tree Canopy BMP in the Chesapeake Bay Program. Eric demonstrated the tool and discussed its strengths and weaknesses.

- For a link to his presentation:
 - http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/21774/webinar_itreecanopy.pdf
- For a link to the iTree Canopy website:
 - <http://www.treetools.org/canopy/index.php>

- Eric noted that Internet Explorer has problems with the website. He suggested using Google instead. He also recommended saving your work as often as possible.
- For a link to a document on iTree Canopy Technical Notes:
 - http://www.itreetools.org/canopy/resources/itree_canopy_methodology.pdf
- Other Questions and Discussion Points:
 - Eric shared that he is happy to provide technical assistance for iTree Canopy. He can be contacted at ejgreenfield@fs.fed.us or 315-448-3214.
 - Sally requested state members to share this information with those who work on urban tree canopy.
 - Sally asked if it would be useful to provide an iTree Canopy training to urban tree canopy folks. A member remarked that some urban tree canopy folks are already familiar with the program.
 - Eric clarified that imagery is a representation of the landscape within a 5 year period.
 - The real value of the tool is that local jurisdictions could potentially use as a reporting and verification mechanism.
 - The iTree tool website has a lot of useful tutorials. Instructional videos can be found at: <http://www.itreetools.org/resources/videos.php>
 - The next Smart Growth Conference will be January 29-31, 2015 at the Hilton Baltimore Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland.

The FWG will not have a conference call in July. The next face-to-face meeting will be in September.