



Forestry Workgroup Meeting

October 6, 2021

9:00am-11:00am

Meeting Materials: [Link](#)

Attendees

Jackie Pickford, CRC
Rebecca Hanmer, Chair
Julie Mawhorter, USFS
Carin Bisland, EPA/CBPO
Aaron Holley, TNC
Katie Brownson, USFS
Terry Lasher, VDOF
Patti Web, DNREC
Ranier Lucas, USC

Iris Allen, MD DNR
Frank Rodgers, WV
Eric Greenfield, USFS/UCF
Aanthony Deez
Paul Emmart, MD
Gregory McHale
Matt Poirot, VA DOF
Kesha Braunskill
Rosey Santerre, WV DOF
Sarah Mconald, USFS

Matt Keefer, PA
Peter Hoagland, PA NRCS
Taryn Davidson, DE
Anne Hairston-Strang, MD
Lara Johnson
Jim Woodworth, DOEE
Cassie Davis, NYDEC
Lydia Brinkley

Welcome and Introductions, *Rebecca Hanmer, Chair*

- Climate Directive was signed by the Chesapeake Executive Council (CEC): linked [here](#).

Intro to Forest Carbon Offsets, *A. Holley, The Nature Conservancy*

Aaron Holley introduced the Family Forest Carbon model and its rollout in the Chesapeake watershed. He discussed forest carbon offsets and how they are measured, as well as gave an overview of The Nature Conservancy's programs to utilize carbon markets, followed by Q&A and discussion.

- **Katie Brownson:** Can you share some of the lessons learned in PA that you'll apply in MD and VA?
 - **Aaron Holley:** The first lesson was that we were offering a certain amount to offset the initial cost to landowners, but it wasn't enough. Our staff is trying to get involved in writing those management plans, while still offering the opportunity to use a management plan that the landowner already has if they have one. Lesson two was figuring out a workaround to the issue of whether or not landowners are locked into a price per ton as soon as they sign on or if they will see a profit in the future.
- **Patti Web:** Do you see this project moving to Delmarva peninsula?
 - **Aaron Holley:** The reason we started in the Appalachians is because this program is based on region-specific practices. It starts to change as we move towards the coastal plain. But the ultimate goal is to have this move country-wide. Right now we're in the financial pilot. Most carbon programs are paid annually, but this program pays upfront.
- **Frank Rodgers:** What if a farmer is already managing their land well?
 - **Aaron Holley:** Most of these programs work on an opportunity cost philosophy where the baseline is what the farmer *could* have done to their land. We also can compare the land to control plots outside of the property to see if they are going above and beyond what similar properties would be.

- **Frank Rodgers:** What about a situation where the landowner doesn't intend to forest? For example, the coal company example is overburdened, could they put that into the carbon bank and hope something grows? Is that possible?
 - **Aaron Holley:** It's possible but risky.
- **Anne Hairston-Strang:** In terms of future potential carbon markets, is there a role for the CBP?
 - **Aaron Holley:** Absolutely. There is increased scrutiny on the carbon markets per Frank's question about what the baseline is. We need to demonstrate that these plantings wouldn't occur at the same level as with carbon funding.
- **Lara Johnson:** I can share the information about the voluntary carbon market projects we've worked on in Virginia if folks are interested.
 - **Terry Lasher:** In VA we've started the sample initiative "Healthy Watershed Force Program" which is starting to use carbon markets and aggregation of landowners as a proxy for water quality improvements. Can you speak about the importance of scale in this project? What would you need to make a dent in the carbon market with an individual land owner?
 - **Aaron Holley:** It varies so widely by property.
 - **Terry Lasher (in chat):** Is it safe to say that demand for credits is currently out pacing availability Thus driving the voluntary market over the regulatory?
 - **Aaron Holley:** The demand for credits is absolutely skyrocketing. Ecosystem marketplace just did a webinar on this. I'll put a link in the chat.
- **Rebecca Hanmer:** The FWG will talk about pursuing this subject in the future. We can stay in touch with Aaron about inviting him back on an annual basis to present on his gains.

Forest Buffer Workshop, Carin Bisland, EPA/CBPO

Carin Bisland discussed the potential for organizing a forest buffer workshop with the Outcome Attainability Team.

- **Katie Brownson:** As we've reflected on the SRS process, one of my fears is that we go through the workshop but then there won't be any follow-up or action from the Management Board (MB). Maybe we could actually start doing some of the work that they've agreed to at the workshop, potentially on a state by state basis via breakout sessions.
 - **Carin Bisland:** I think the MB isn't always the right group of people to reach out to. For the workshop, we'd have to make sure the right people are in the room. I know forest buffers are major in the state WIPs so I'm hoping their attention will be on that.
- **Anne Hairston-Strang:** I encourage high-level leadership engagement with this issue because that's what is needed to push staff involvement and funding. This is an important time to be having this discussion because of all of the potentially significant investments.
- **Lydia Brinkley:** I agree with what Katie said. If we pull together a list of people that we want to attend, could this workshop be conditional on those people attending? Otherwise we'll just be having the same meetings as we've been having, as Katie mentioned previously.
 - **Carin Bisland:** That's a good point Lydia, it's critical to have the right people there.
 - **Rebecca Hanmer:** Let's ask Diana Esher to be one of the attendees.
- **Matt Keefer:** I think the timing is really critical. Maybe we need PSC members there instead of MB members. Maybe we need legislature folks to attend. I think we need to prepare for the

meeting as well - understanding if the funding sources are legitimate, how we could use different funding sources for different components, etc.

- **Carin Bisland:** It might not be the MB members or the PSC members, but rather the program managers for the programs that are most likely to be funding the forest buffer restoration projects, whether it's USDA or others.
- **Rebecca Hanmer:** One of the missing elements for me is the systematic analysis across all the states of the state revolving loan funds. I want the people who have the biggest say in how NFWF funding is spent to attend the workshop or at least attract their attention to the workshop or preparatory materials.
- **Lydia Brinkley:** Is our focus going to be on a diversity of programs or are we still trying to focus on improving CREP?
 - **Anne Hairston-Strang:** I think we should include what the ask might be in order to fix CREP.
 - **Patti Web:** With CREP we have a structure to work upon so we wouldn't be starting from scratch.
 - **Rebecca Hanmer:** I think we need a paper on funding mechanisms that states are beginning to use or have started up in the past two to three years, how well they're working, and how they could be built upon. The workshop will need this basic information. Managers will want to know what we've been trying and what hasn't worked.
- **Anne Hairston-Strang (in chat):** Having this meeting after mid-April would probably be better for our higher level leadership, after the state legislature ends.

Action: FWG members will plan for a workshop next spring (potentially in April) and dedicate the December FWG meeting to preparation for that meeting. Please inform Rebecca Hanmer (rwhanmer@yahoo.com) and Sally Claggett (sally.claggett@usda.gov) by COB Friday, Oct 29th if you have any scheduling issues or deadlines that conflict with this meeting time.

Action: Carin Bisland, EPA/CBPO, will work with the Outcome Attainability Team to develop an agenda and facilitation materials for the Spring workshop.

GIT Funding Updates, Julie Mawhorter, USFS, and Katie Brownson, USFS.

Julie Mawhorter and Katie Brownson provided an update on the GIT Funding Proposals.

- **Anne Hairston-Strang:** It would be helpful to have a list of NFWF grants that relate to buffers and tree canopy.

Action: Please send any last minute feedback on the [Tree Canopy](#) proposal to Julie Mawhorter (julie.mawhorter@usda.gov) by **COB Friday, Oct 15th**. Please send any last minute feedback on the [Forest Buffer](#) proposal to Katie Brownson (Katherine.brownson@usda.gov) by **COB Friday, Oct 15th**.

Round Robin

VA: No updates.

MD: No updates.

DE: Just finished up CREP reenrollment.

NY: Fall planting season, chasing funding.

WV: Planting a little over 600 trees in Cacapon institute and an additional 400 in the town of Paw Paw. Still figuring out CREP acreage because two thirds of our land is up for renewal this year.

PA: No updates.

USFS: USFS is having us do reporting on outcomes of shared stewardship, so I'm putting together a report and will send out questions to each of the jurisdictions for feedback.

DC: Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS) folks presented to our Urban Forestry Advisory Council last week. We're counting trees for MS4 reporting. We're ramping up for fall planting season and to get a new green stormwater infrastructure maintenance program off the ground.

Meeting Chat

Frank Rodgers, Cacapon Inst, WV 01:00:34

Yes. And how many acres (or CO2 lbs) with this Amazon gift go? Is Amazon going to take the CO2 credits? Or is this a gift-gift?

Terry Lasher, VDOF 01:03:36

Is it safe to say that demand for credits is currently out pacing availability? Thus driving the voluntary market over the regulatory?

Aaron Holley - TNC 01:06:20

aaron.holley@tnc.org

Katie Brownson (she/her) 01:06:42

Patrick Maguire from Ecosystem Marketplace is doing a webinar today through the Forest Carbon Working Group: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/fcwg-learning-exchange-series-intro-to-and-status-of-the-voluntary-markets>

Anne Hairston-Strang 01:46:15

After mid-April would probably be better for our higher level leadership, after the state legislature ends.

Frank Rodgers, Cacapon Inst, WV 01:56:52

We need a NFWF for NFWF literature/grant review.

Jim Woodworth - DOE 01:58:15

the District's latest canopy analysis is due (overdue) to come out end of CY. if there's any backsliding in our progress, the timing would be conducive for a re-energizing effort.

Katie Brownson (she/her) 01:58:35

Paul- is that the Soil and Waters Outcome fund project? Didn't think they were funding forestry...

Paul Emmart 01:58:58

FYI - project recently announced for funding by NRCS under their ag program called the Regional Conservation Partnership Program's (RCPP) see:

[https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD18292](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1829258)

58 Project Description: Maryland Clean Water Commerce Outcomes Project (Maryland): Sand County Foundation. Will help scale up the pay-for-performance program and expand access to nutrient reduction funding to more producers, including historically underserved producers. Many of the practices and systems implemented by farmers to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed will have climate co-benefits. The award was for \$2.7M and will be used for nutrient reduction BMPs including forestry. For more information on the grantee see:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/americas-first-state-funded-program-purchase-outcomes-timothy-male/?trackingId=iPFJR9rKcgLCIw7DN4P6%2FQ%3D%3D>