



**Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting (STAR) Team Meeting**  
**10:00AM – 1:00PM February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**MINUTES**

**Welcome, Introduction, Updates, and Announcements – William Dennison (STAR Chair), Mark Bennett (STAR Vice Chair), Peter Tango (STAR Coordinator)**

STAR Leadership gave an introduction and requested updates from the Goal Implementation Teams (GITs).

*Announcements:*

- [National Water Quality Monitoring Council Conference, April 28<sup>th</sup> – May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014](#)
- [Restore America's Estuaries 7<sup>th</sup> National Summit](#)
- The [New Insights Report](#) was released.
  - STAR Members are encouraged to distribute the report information. Margaret Enloe, CBP Communications Director, will attend the Coordinators/Staffers Meeting to distribute this information to the GITs.
- The Chesapeake Bay Program office released the final draft of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement for public comment. The public comment period will run through March 17, 2014 as agreed.
  - The Agreement webpage is now updated and ready to accept comments. It is located at: [www.chesapeakebay.net/watershedagreement](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/watershedagreement).
  - And, all press materials are available at the CBP Press Center [www.chesapeakebay.net/presscenter](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/presscenter).
  - All CBP Communications Workgroup members have been provided with these materials and we encourage each partner to use them as a template for developing your own state, agency or organization media release.
  - If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Enloe, CBP Communications Director at [menloe@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:menloe@chesapeakebay.net)

**Communications Discussion – All**

STAR members discussed communication ideas including upcoming reports, studies, and videos to recommend to the Communications Workgroup.

- The [New Insights Report](#) was released.
  - STAR Members are encouraged to distribute the report information. Margaret Enloe, CBP Communications Director, will attend the Coordinators/Staffers Meeting to distribute this information to the GITs.
  - STAR suggested a presentation to the Management Board and Principle Staff Committee about the release, collaboration on the release, lessons learned, and next steps.
  - The Communications Workgroup would like to work with STAR to produce reports such as this on more frequent biases.
    - Expand beyond water quality (i.e. habitat, fisheries, watershed)
    - Focus on other local markets (i.e. Harris Creek)

- Successes of the report:
  - Collecting and distributing bullet proof data and creating a clear message.
  - Including good and bad news.
- Promotion of the success of this report could engage more interest groups with scientific information to include in the next report.
- [Zhou, Scavia and Michalak. Nutrient loading and meteorological conditions explain interannual variability of hypoxia in Chesapeake Bay.](#)
- Fisheries and Habitat GITs will be working together on a full watershed three part fish and habitat story.
- Challenges of the restoration. For example, oyster poaching in Harris Creek.

### **Evolution of STAR and STAR Workgroups – STAR Leadership** [Attachment](#)

STAR Leadership introduced the envisioned evolution of STAR and request feedback from STAR members and STAR workgroups.

#### *Discussion:*

- Factors Affecting Status and Trends
  - The factors affecting status and trends workgroup should focus on explaining ecosystem status and trends, not just water quality. Then there could be a group under it that focuses on water quality.
  - The STAC Workshop in March “Enhancing Approaches to Explain Management Effects of Water Quality Trends” will help focus the group.
  - Product drives the collaborative process. Creating milestones will help focus the group.
  - Need to determine how the GITs are currently collecting their data. This data is being used within the Bay Program and should be incorporated.
    - What is in it for the other monitoring groups?
      - Information management and collaboration.
      - If their monitoring data is essential to a Bay Program indicator, it will help them continue receiving funding, etc.
  - How will STAR incorporate issues other than water quality without becoming overwhelmed?
- Communication and integration of the GITs within STAR needs to improve.
 

*Initial ideas:*

  - STAR Leadership will have a discussion with the GITs about possibly integrating the staffers into the meetings and discussions. Staffers are incorporated into every meeting at the Bay Program and this knowledge should be utilized.
  - STAR Leadership will discuss with the GITs and conduct research to find publications about monitoring within the partnership.
  - Quarterly Meetings between the staffers, coordinators, and technical folks to focus on discussions.
    - Staffers could give lightening round updates from the GITs at the beginning of the meeting.
    - The meetings would focus on integration of science and technical needs.
  - Although STAR will continue to contact the staffers and coordinators when topics are relevant to their groups, STAR would also like to incorporate the GITs into the regular discussions.

- Could be beneficial to contact their technical support to be a part of STAR.
  - Request that each GIT suggests and helps coordinate a topic and speaker for one STAR seminar per year.
  - Use the “New Insights” reports to integrate the GITs into STAR.
- ACTION: Amanda Pruzinsky will devise a list of questions to discuss with each GIT and bring it to STAR Leadership for approval. Questions include: what are the products the GIT partners on or produces, where is the science headed, what are the data needs and who currently provides the data, etc.
- Instead of creating a new group to coordinate and synthesize communications information, STAR and the Communication’s WG need to work together to release scientific information and stories to the public and managers (for example, the New Insights Report).
- Where does the Modeling Workgroup fit into the restructure?
  - “Mid-point assessment support” does not reflect the true potential and resources that the Modeling Team and Workgroup currently provide.
- ACTION: STAR will need to have a more in depth conversation about how to incorporate citizen science.
- ACTION: Topic for next STAR meeting: New Workgroup Structure.

#### **FY14 Funding Update – STAR Leadership**

STAR Leadership updated STAR members on the status of funding for FY14 and open a discussion on the next steps of Building and Sustaining Integrated Networks (BASIN).

#### *Discussion:*

- Congress is discussing an increase in funding for the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership, to bring the monitoring network up to previous funding levels. Vast majority of the increase in funding is towards the jurisdiction grants for implementation and innovative nutrient reductions.
  - Monitoring Network funding increase.
  - Additional funding for the SAV survey.
  - Funding for the benthic macroinvertebrate IBI recalibration.
  - Possible competitive GIT funding to allow opportunities from within the GITs.
- Continuing conversations with the states and USGS for their contributions.
- Rich Batiuk requested that STAR Leadership contact him with staff needs:
  - Analyst position is an immediate need.
  - Future options:
    - Staff with science integration and synthesis skills.
    - A RFP for Citizen Science is being proposed.

#### **Seminar and discussion**

**BASIN Review Phase II – Dr. William Dennison (Vice President for Science Applications, IAN UMCES)**

[Attachment](#)

William Dennison provided a comparison of approaches used by a suite of water quality monitoring programs to operate and sustain their monitoring activities based on the first two panel discussions of the STAR BASINs review process.

*Discussion:*

- Could there be a transition or increase in funding by using a “user pay” revenue stream like the “flush fee” or making the permitted (sewage and stormwater operators).
- Using the word “monitoring” does not communicate how important this network is – rebrand to get attention and intrigue funders.
  - “Vital signs” – Tangible and relatable. Connects monitoring to human health.
  - “Intelligence gathering”
- Need to continue communication with other monitoring networks around the world.
- Must be able to continue to have an adaptive monitoring program.
  - What needs to be monitored to determine success and if we are not successful what are the reasons why?
  - How does each monitoring element that being added relate back to our outcome, strategies, and goals?
  - When changing the monitoring data, must discuss with the data collectors and analyzers to ensure they can transition too.
- ACTION: Lea Rubin will work with STAR Leadership to reframe the questions for the third BASIN panels.
  - New questions:
    - What are you planning to do differently in the future and why?
    - How have you seen the monitoring alter management strategies in your basin?
  - Do not include the question about governance structure.
- ACTION: Lea Rubin will email Kevin Sellner about Baltic Monitoring Program.
- EPA funding and USGS resources are being exhausted everywhere.
- Funding resource suggestions that have not been explored yet: water withdrawal, SRBC, over 400 significant and over 3000 non-significant wastewater treatment discharge (% of overall discharge), and counties and municipalities (adopt a station to maintain).
  - Work with the states to determine how to apply a small fee to these sources?
  - Would these cost go towards expanding the network, covering inflationary costs, transitioning funding, etc.?
  - Must make a business case to them.
  - Managing the expectations:
    - Must be clear about what the monitoring program can actually accomplish.
    - Characterize what monitoring detection can make.
- Use the past and current monitoring reviews to published scientific literature on the tracking and reviewing of the CBP monitoring networks.

- MARACOOS is considering become a water quality focused organization. Kevin Sellner (CRC) encouraged MARACOOS to partner with Chesapeake Bay Program and Delaware instead of competing. The CBP could continue to focus on water quality monitoring and they could address other areas (FDC, DMAC database necessary to partner with the federal accreditation).
  - ACTION: CBP, EPA, USGS, and NOAA should work on consistent message to partner with MARACOOS.
    - MARACOOS would also be a great partner when considering extreme weather event preparation, monitoring, and response.
    - MARACOOS is a new business partnership that has not been considered before.
- In addition to the BASIN review process the monitoring program could increasing partnerships, visibility, marketability, and peer effort sharing.

## PARTICIPANTS

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