



## Communications Workgroup November Minutes

November 6, 2019 | 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

305

### Participants

Deb Klenotic, PA DEP (Chair)  
Rachel Felver, ACB/CBP (Coordinator)  
Rebecca Chillrud, CRC/CBP (Staff)  
Greg Barranco, EPA CBPO  
Michael Bowman, NPS/CC  
Kim Couranz, NOAA  
Ola Davis, ACB/LGAC  
Kelly Donaldson, PA Sea Grant  
Aaron Ferster, EPA-ORD  
Lucy Heller, ACB  
Darius Johnson, ESLC

Lisa Jones, MDE  
Rebecca Long, CBF  
Nathan Miller, UMCES IAN  
Phil Miller, DNREC  
Andrew Overton, CBF  
Amy Pelsinsky, UMCES  
Emily Ramirez, UMCES  
Natalia Sanchez, EFC  
Melinda Shultz, PMAA  
Joan Smedinghoff, ACB/CBP  
Chad Thompson, WV DEP

### I. Welcome

### II. Shared Messaging ([Presentation](#))

- We planned shared messaging around Native American Heritage Month, Thanksgiving and #OptOutside day.

### III. Member Round Robin

- Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association
  - Statewide legislative and regulatory agenda was adopted recently, with a few Bay-specific items:
    - Encouraging EPA and DEP to focus on ag/non-point source pollution
    - Advise EPA and DEP that PA wastewater sector is already in compliance ahead of schedule
- PA DEP
  - About to announce a Growing Greener grant round opportunity – around \$30 million total pool, with a large portion targeted to counties in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to fund projects as part of their watershed implementation plans
- DNREC
  - Just finished biennial nonpoint source training and meeting
  - Recently hired new CREP coordinator and are updating outreach materials
  - About to release new video with aerial shots highlighting Delaware's portion of the Chesapeake watershed
- WV DEP
  - West Virginia Chesapeake Bay Program is trying some new things to boost visibility and engagement. One strategy is to highlight various small watershed associations each month through social media, monthly newsletter, etc.
- CBPO

- Management Board meeting is next Thursday, will be focused on the aquatic life cohort's strategy review system updates.
  - Working to set a date for next Principal Staff Committee meeting.
- NOAA
  - Working on a few science reports – oyster reef ecosystem services, oyster reef monitoring
  - Working to move content from chesapeakebay.noaa.gov to fisheries.noaa.gov
- Ches. Conservancy/NPS
  - Recap of Gateway Summit: met at NCTC in West Virginia on Oct. 23-24
    - Helped provide vision on how to move forward with Gateway and how to promote diversity and inclusion
- LGAC
  - Wandering Virginia's Waterways program happened a couple weeks ago. 14 participants got out on the water and looked at living shorelines, community redevelopment, oyster hatcheries, etc. Great opportunity to get elected officials out on the water. Many attendees were from central Virginia, so didn't previously feel an immediate connection to the Bay. Hope to host next one in Maryland in 2020. Alliance sent out a press release and [blog](#) highlighting the event.
- UMCES
  - New VP for Strategic Initiatives: Stuart Clarke – previously Executive Director of Town Creek Foundation
  - Study accepted for publication in Estuaries and Coasts on the Conowingo Dam and its impact on the Chesapeake Bay
  - IMET in Baltimore is hosting [screening](#) of Paris to Pittsburgh climate film December 3 from 5:30-7:00. Will have a panel discussion following the screening.

#### **IV. January In-Person Brainstorm**

- What topics should we cover at our in-person meeting? Where should we have it?
  - Technology
  - Graphics
  - Video
- More updates to come at December meeting

#### **V. WIP Engagement Action Team Communications Kit:**

- This communications kit focuses on the community and economic benefits of water conservation projects. Our aim is to help local leaders reach out to and engage stakeholders--such as municipal officials, farmers, and business owners-- who cannot or will not prioritize environmental benefits.
- We originally began developing this communications kit with local Phase 3 WIP planners in mind. But as it evolved, we realized this kit can help any community leaders and organizations who are working to convince local stakeholders to implement water quality restoration projects.
- Materials:
  - Comprehensive spreadsheet of water quality conservation projects completed across the watershed – currently includes 70 projects
    - Hope to eventually have this online and searchable.
    - Each project includes CAST topic areas for local WIP III planners, BMPs installed, brief description, locality, contact information, list of non-environmental benefits, list of environmental benefits, partners/funders

and a link to a one-page summary with more information about the project.

- Success stories
  - These highlight conservation projects in communities around the watershed that had specific community/economic benefits. These are made to be handed out at any outreach moments for local stakeholders.
  - The stories give all the basics about benefits you can get, projects that were installed, things to consider, partners/funding, etc.
- Top 10 Benefits list
  - Provides a list of top non-environmental benefits that conservation projects can provide: reduced flood damage, increased property value, improving herd health, strengthening sense of community, etc.
- Talking points
  - Internal document of basic messages that can be provided to local leaders, who can draw from it when doing presentations, email outreach, one-on-one outreach, etc.
- Where will this be located?
  - For now, these will be located on the [WIP Engagement Action Team page](#), which is attached to the [Comm. Workgroup page](#)
  - We will also be working to build these in to the CAST website and WIP data dashboard site
- Discussion
  - Success stories are great and can be useful outside of WIP planning
  - Take a minute to look through these on the website and share any thoughts in the google group. How can we use these to tell the stories about community and economic benefits?
  - Pennsylvania Land Trust/EAC network could be a good audience – have motivation and are tied in to local governments

## **VI. Wrap Up**

**Next meeting:** December 4 from 1:00-2:00 pm