



LGAC Members Present: Markus Batchelor, Richard Baugh, Patty Bubar, Daniel Chao, Mark Dobbins, Amy Dubois, Sheila Finlayson, Jasmine Gore, Penny Gross, Josh Hastings, Michael Helfrich, Donna Iannone, Leo Lutz, Andria McClellan, Brianne Nadeau, Don Phillips, Robin Rich-Coates, John Thomas, Ann Simonetti, James Wheeler, Emeritus Phil Briddell, Emeritus Bruce Williams representing Jake Day and LGAC Staff: Ola-Imani Davis and Jennifer Starr

Speakers/Guests Present: Carin Bisland (EPA), Jessica Blackburn (Alliance), Patti Bohnsack (Alliance), Laura Cattell Noll (Alliance), Ruth Cassilly (CBP), Meg Cole (CRC), Joel Dunn (Chesapeake Conservancy), Jim Edward (EPA), Matt Ehrhart (CAC), Liz Feinberg (NFWF), Rachel Felver (CBP), Kate Fritz (Alliance), Jeremy Hanson (Virginia Tech), Annabelle Harvey (CRC), Lauren Imgrund (PA DCNR), Paula Jasinski (Green Fin Studios), Caitlyn Johnstone (CBP), Megan Lehman (PA DEP), John Maleri (DC DOEE), Andrew Miller (STAC), Shannon Moore (Frederick County), Matthew Pennington (WV), Tuana Phillips (EPA), Cassidy Rasnick (VA), Ryann Rossi (CBP), Kathy Stecker (MDE), Emily Trentacoste (CBP), Jim Sullivan (DE DNREC), Ashley White (CCAP), Justin Williams (VA DEQ)

Thursday, December 3, 2020

Call to Order: Greetings and Introductions

Chair Ann Simonetti called the virtual quarterly meeting to order at 10:01 am. She welcomed and introduced new LGAC Maryland delegation member, Joshua Hastings, Councilmember with Wicomico County.

Outdoor Recreation as a Chesapeake Watershed Economic Resource

Panelists: Joel Dunn, Chesapeake Conservancy, Lauren Imgrund, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Cassidy Rasnick, VA Department of Commerce and Trade for Rural Economic Development

Panelists discussed regional priorities regarding outdoor recreation.

- Joel reported that in response to the billions of dollars consumers spend relative to outdoor recreation, which in turn directly supplies 7.6 million jobs nationwide (around 990,000 in the watershed), Congress recently passed two bills including, “The Great American Outdoors Act,” which doubles federal funding for conservation; and, “America’s Conservation Enhancement Act,” which renews various conservation organizations such as the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) and National Parks Service. He also discussed eco-tourism strategies from a watershed-wide point of view and offered case study examples of eco-tourist programs in MD and VA.
- Cassidy described VA’s newly established office of outdoor recreation and one of its focuses of “talent attraction and retention,” which refers to the economic impact of business recruitment and sustaining their workforce. She also noted that their office works with manufacturers to expand and maximize impact of outdoor recreation-related businesses according to VA’s geographic diversity. Other priorities of their office include highlighting VA’s brand as an outdoor destination and coordinating agencies’ work with industry.
- Lauren reported PA has the 5th largest state outdoor recreation economy with significant amounts in consumer spending, wages and salaries, and state / local tax revenue, generated annually. During the COVID-19 pandemic, PA saw a significant increase in residents engaging in outdoor recreation activities which has led to an impact on outdoor businesses. In support of this economy, Lauren noted PA’s plan for outdoor recreation including establishing an official office, analyzing health, wellness, and recreation for all, incorporating sustainable systems and technology, and continuing grant programs that support community conservation.

LGAC emphasized the consideration of outdoor recreation businesses as green jobs, public equitable access, and the importance of incorporating signage, emphasizing water quality, around recreational sites. Members also considered

supporting legislation for the proposed Chesapeake National Recreation Area (by the Chesapeake Conservancy), which will bring together natural assets of the watershed to better leverage outdoor recreational economy for local communities, in the form of a possible recommendation to the Executive Council (EC) (which some members of the EC have already endorsed).

Action: Members suggest developing an Executive Committee recommendation around the support for green jobs in outdoor recreation that would, in addition, attract a more diverse workforce.

Chesapeake Bay Program Updates

Carin Bisland, EPA Chesapeake Bay Program

Carin provided updates on:

1. The *EPA CBP funding summary* explaining the current \$85 million budget allocated to the CBP, how it is distributed to grantors, and the 15% of that amount that is allocated to Partnerships and Management Support (which supports LGAC). She also discussed the Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grants (CBIG) (which supports all goals and outcomes established under the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement with emphasis on nutrient and sediment reduction), the Chesapeake Bay Regulatory and Accountability Program Grants (CBRAP) (which assesses the amount of work each watershed state is mandated to do to achieve the goals and outcomes), and the individual breakdowns of FY2019 - FY2021 funding allocations to the Local Government Implementation Fund (which provides 5 million annual dollars in funding to the states through either CBIG or CBRAP to be used especially for local entities).

Action: Staff to provide fact sheet on CBIG / CBRAP funding.

2. The *Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP)*, sharing the establishment of a steering committee, and the continuance of the WIP financing strategy timeline beginning Dec 2020, out for comment by March 2021 and ending with the implementation of the strategies from winter 2022-2023. The timeline of action is subject to change.
3. *Climate Policy decisions* for consideration by the Principal's Staff Committee (PSC). Providing context, she explained how the PSC asked CBP in 2017 to look into including climate change in the Phase III WIPs, understand the science behind the impact of climate change on the ability to reduce nutrient and sediment and incorporate climate change data into 2-year milestones. Carin identified recommendations and feedback that will be made to the PSC based on this model, beginning in 2022, where jurisdictions will begin to account for nutrient sediment loads due to climate change in their WIPs / two-year milestones, and detail their current understanding of their projected 2035 climate conditions.

Jurisdiction Lunch Meeting Report-Outs and Member Updates

The *At-Large* delegation discussed funding for stormwater challenges, a poultry farm project to enhance water quality monitoring, the local government implementation fund and DNREC's current Requests for Applications.

Maryland discussed Member delegation changes, and the consideration of Patty Bubar as incoming delegation Vice Chair, identified data and information delivery methods, in which the state disseminates through MD's Department of the Environment, local public works/planning departments/community organizations and other relative groups and websites, and considered outdoor recreation as an economic resource, fostering partnerships among local leaders, and including the work of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) as possible topics for the 2021 Local Government Forum.

Pennsylvania explained how information is funneled from the EPA to the state (in this case PA Department of Environmental Protection). Delegation Members then communicated that information to state associations. PA considered the topics of flooding and its impacts, stormwater challenges, financial and reporting strategies to handle environmental challenges, and the effects of climate change for the 2021 Local Government Forum. Finally, PA discussed the Conowingo Dam, and how it is 90% full of sediment, and the effects of development on the Bay.

Virginia described how the sharing of stories resonate more than the sharing of scientific data with local elected officials. VA also considered the ideas of a 2021 Local Government Forum around agriculture (including aquaculture and urbanism) and outreach and partnerships.

Local Benefits to Chesapeake Watershed Restoration and Conservation

Emily Trentacoste, EPA Chesapeake Bay Program

Emily introduced the current CBP project of looking into the environmental co-benefits (benefits) of restoration and conservation to local headwater and coastal communities, how those benefits align with local priorities, and how to communicate those benefits. The goal of this project is to foster local communities' understanding of restoration and conservation practices in order to use that understanding to address priorities and inform decision-making. LGAC Members suggested CBP deliver through their trusted sources, demonstrate how information fits in with current data already received, offer a conservation "playbook" of best practices that transcends regional environmental and geographic complexities, and understand the comprehensive plans (of sorts) of each locality before making any recommendations.

2020 Local Government Forum Recommendations and 2021 proposed Local Government Forum

Jennifer Starr, LGAC Coordinator

Jennifer summarized the 2020 Local Government Forum and identified the key recommendations determined including:

1. LGAC recommends encouraging and incentivizing more dedicated funding, financing, and revenue streams for flooding projects.
2. LGAC recommends supporting efforts that improve the incorporation of engineering, education, and documentation into local ordinances.
3. LGAC recommends promoting more innovative partnership opportunities that result in stronger collaboration and cooperation.
4. LGAC recommends promoting more partnerships that result in adopting more innovative approaches.
5. LGAC recommends that local elected leaders make social justice a platform and that we prioritize equity on important issues like flooding.
6. LGAC recommends increasing funding, fairness, and efficiency of flood mitigation programs by expanding the cost benefit analysis to include consideration of social equity based on projected damaged and based on future conditions.

She solicited feedback from LGAC Members on topics for the next Forum proposed virtually in June 2021.

Action: Staff to begin developing the 2021 Local Government Forum around partnership development and opportunities.

Friday, December 4, 2020

Chair Ann Simonetti welcomed LGAC Members and guests to the second day of the LGAC Quarterly Meeting.

STAC and CAC Priorities

Andy Miller, Chair, Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) and Matt Ehrhart, Chair, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

STAC Chair Andy Miller and CAC Chair Matt Ehrhart shared their respective Advisory Committee perspectives.

- Andy identified the goals of STAC to provide scientific and technical advice, through reports, workshops, and position papers, in order to meet programmatic needs and identify emerging issues of concern to the Watershed partnership. From 2019-2020, STAC released various reports and held a number of workshops designed for the education and assessment of land and water quality challenges. STAC's future priorities include integrating DEIJ into the Advisory Committee and its projects and the continuance of workshops including a workshop developed around the COVID-19 impact on partnership outcomes, with hopeful input from LGAC.

Action: Staff to provide STAC survey to LGAC Members in order to identify a potential STAC-sponsored workshop LGAC may lead.

- Matt discussed the goals of CAC to advocate for the Bay Program to develop messages and communications that make the restoration effort relevant to the local level. CAC Membership includes a diverse background network of farmers, policy researchers and contractors, restoration practitioners, retired government, environmental philanthropists, and community organizers. CAC continues to prioritize providing consensus advice on select topics, having the opportunity to go beyond their backgrounds and tour local projects, integrating DEIJ throughout the Advisory Committee, getting CAC representation on CBP's Best Management Practice (BMP) Verification Ad Hoc Action Team, among many other projects.

CBP Local Leadership Workgroup Update

Shannon Moore, Frederick County and Paula Jasinski, Green Fin Studios

Shannon highlighted the work of the Local Leadership Workgroup (LLWG) in 2019 when VA LGAC members moderated the Peer-to-Peer bus tour in VA. Shannon also discussed the proposed LLWG two-year workplan which includes establishing a baseline to measure progress, develop, enhance and expanding leadership and training programs, and improving transfer of knowledge to local elected officials. Members looked forward to educational and training sessions.

Paula updated LGAC Members on the status of the Goal Implementation Team funded grant to develop Watershed Education Modules for Local Elected Officials. These modules are intended to be individual educational resources (in the form of fact sheets, PowerPoint slides and PDFs) that highlight the CBP outcomes in relation to Local Government priorities. The modules include:

1. How Your Watershed Works
2. Foundations of Clean Water and Clean Air
3. Healthy Environment is an Economic Engine
4. Benefits of Increased Tree Canopy
5. Land Conservation and Comprehensive Planning
6. Stormwater Resiliency and Community Infrastructure
7. Developing the Workforce of Tomorrow

Specific LGAC Members will be chosen to review these modules before they are set to begin delivery (by state associations and at conferences) March 31, 2021.

Business Meeting

- Approval of September 2020 Minutes – Penny Gross moved to approve the minutes seconded by Sheila Finlayson. Brianna Nadeau abstained.
- Executive Committee Report (Chair) – Ann participated in various meetings including Management Board, the PSC Quarterly Meeting, and presenting recommendations to the EC. She will attend the December 2020 PSC Quarterly Meeting and represent LGAC at CAC and STAC's December 2020 meetings as well.
- Coordinator's Report (Coordinator) – Jennifer reviewed plans to update LGAC Bylaws and 2-year Strategic Plan (set to be approved by Members at the March 2021 LGAC Quarterly Meeting), reported analytics for the first two staff-curated local government newsletters (to which LGAC felt was filling a gap and information is useful), clarified staff communications, explored more efficient ways to improve LGAC's onboarding and information sharing strategies, and shared that Daniel Chao will represent LGAC on the CBP's Diversity Action Team.

Action: Staff to provide the draft LGAC Bylaws and draft LGAC Strategic Plan for Members to review.

New Business/ Future Agenda Items

No new business or future agenda topics suggested.

Adjourn 12:15pm