



**Chesapeake Bay Program
Management Board
Program Update
March 11, 2021**

CBPO Calendar

March 12	BMP Ad Hoc Action Team Conference Call
March 15	Sustainable Fisheries Executive Committee Meeting
March 15	Climate Resiliency Workgroup Meeting
March 16	Urban Stormwater Workgroup Conference Call
March 17	Trading and Offsets Workgroup Conference Call
March 17	Enhance Partnering Leadership and Management GIT Meeting
March 18	Agriculture Workgroup Conference Call
March 18-19	Local Government Advisory Committee Webinar
March 22	Water Quality Goal Implementation Team Conference Call
March 23-24	STAC Quarterly Meeting
March 25	STAR Team Meeting
March 31	Quarterly GIT Chairs and Leadership Meeting
April 8	Management Board Meeting

Program Updates

Bay Barometer Release Expected March 17

On Wednesday, March 17, 2021, The Chesapeake Bay Program will release its annual, science-based summary of progress, the *Bay Barometer: Health and Restoration in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (2019-2020)*. A media call has been scheduled with subject matter experts ready to answer questions regarding the most recent scientific data on the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including its rivers, fisheries and habitats. Participants include: Matthew Strickler, Secretary of Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Virginia and Chair; Sean Corson, Director, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Chesapeake Bay Office; Scott Phillips, Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, U.S. Geological Survey and Shannon Sprague, Environmental Literacy and Partnerships Manager, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Chesapeake Bay Office.

Contact: Rachel Felver, 410-267-5740

EPA, NFWF Announce \$1.2 M for Bay-Linked Waters in PA

On Wednesday, February 10, EPA and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) announced the award of approximately \$1.2 million for eight projects in Pennsylvania to improve rivers and streams that connect to the Chesapeake Bay. The funds are part of nearly \$5 million provided by EPA as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 to the six Bay watershed states and the District of Columbia for the implementation of restoration projects by local governments. The Pennsylvania funds,

administered by NFWF, will generate more than \$2.2 million in matching contributions for a total impact of nearly \$3.5 million.

Contact: Greg Barranco, barranco.greg@epa.gov

Bay Program Basics Outlined at Media/Public Session

The Chesapeake Bay Program communications staff sponsored a webinar for the media and other interested parties on Wednesday, February 24, to provide an overview of the Bay Program partnership and the communications services it offers. The staff explained how the partnership works together, and described the information available to the press, including data, access to experts and content (including photos and videos), and websites on general Bay Program matters and specific issues like wetlands, tree canopy and forest buffers, among others.

Contact: Rachel Felver, 410-267-5740

Top EPA Official Addresses PSC - Dr. Vicki Arroyo, EPA's Associate Administrator for Policy, addressed the Chesapeake Bay Program's Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) meeting on Tuesday, March 2, providing information about President Biden's Executive Order on "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad" and related topics. During the meeting, PSC members also discussed next steps in its climate change and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts, and heard updates on the draft Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan and financing strategy, and the status and funding needs of the monitoring program. **Tom Damm, 215-814-5560**

Advisory Committee Updates

Local Government Advisory Committee

The purpose of the LGAC is to advise the Executive Council on how to effectively implement projects and engage the support of local governments to achieve the goals of the Bay Agreement.

LGAC will hold its next Quarterly Meeting March 18-19 virtually. This is the annual meeting where elections occur, by-law revisions are considered and strategic priorities are identified. Members will discuss regional partnerships to address local priorities, provide input to CBP staff on land use resources and local engagement, discuss trading and offsets of nutrients, and hear about federal restoration efforts as well as CBP updates.

LGAC Members and/or staff are participating in the following action teams: DEIJ Action Team, BMP Verification Ad-Hoc Action Team, and Plastic Pollution Action Team. LGAC members are also providing detailed review of the watershed education modules being developed using GIT funding. Finally Members have volunteered for jurisdiction association panels at annual conferences to discuss topics impacting local governments such as stormwater, climate and collaboration opportunities with farmers.

LGAC still seeks a New York representative.

Questions about LGAC activities should be directed to LGAC Coordinator Jennifer Starr at jstarr@allianceforthebay.org. To be added to the Interested Parties list, please contact LGAC Staff at lgac@allianceforthebay.org.

Citizens' Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is charged with responsibility for representing residents and stakeholders of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in the restoration effort and advising the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership on all aspects of restoration.

The CAC held their quarterly meeting on February 25-26, 2021 and welcomed 7 new members to their first meeting. The main themes were updates on progress toward the 2025 water quality goals and other outcomes in the Watershed Agreement with a preview of the Bay Barometer, and climate change impacts on the Bay TMDL. Members heard updates and offered feedback on the draft DEIJ Implementation Plan, outreach plan and the proposed Community Advisory Board options. Members had break-out groups to discuss priority topics for the coming years.

There are 2 PA gubernatorial vacancies, 3 MD gubernatorial vacancies and 1 DC mayoral vacancy.

The CAC officers are Julie Lawson (DC), Chair and Ann Jurczyk (VA), Vice-Chair.

To be added to CAC's Interested Parties List, please contact: Adam Bray abray@allianceforthebay.org for program questions, contact Jessica Blackburn jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) provides scientific and technical guidance to the Chesapeake Bay Program on measures to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay.

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

For any inquiries, or to be added to STAC's Interested Parties list, contact STAC Coordinator, Annabelle Harvey (harveya@cheapeake.org)

Visit the STAC website at www.chesapeake.org/stac

FY2021 STAC Workshop RFP

STAC released the FY2021 STAC Workshop Request for Proposals on December 1st. Proposals are due to STAC Coordinator, Annabelle Harvey by February 16th, 2021.

[STAC FY2021 Workshop RFP](#)

STAC December Quarterly Meeting

STAC held its final meeting for 2020 on December 14-15, 2020 over Zoom. STAC received updates from the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). All three advisory committees have continued to improve communication and collaboration, and this update

gave STAC an overview of the committees' current priorities and projects. Representatives from CBP leads of the Clean Water SRS Cohort provided STAC with the latest science needs for discussion and received feedback on filling these gaps from the membership. Along with this presentation, Breck Sullivan (CRC, STAR) gave a preview of the new Science Needs Database, which will allow STAC members to easily engage with the CBP science needs.

In STAC's continued effort to better communicate with decision-makers and the public, Caitlyn Johnstone and Rachel Felver (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Communications Workgroup) presented the various tools and products that the CBP Communications Workgroup can assist with developing for various STAC efforts. Day 1 wrapped up with a presentation from Rebecca Murphy (UMCES) and the CBP Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT) on the tidal water quality long-term trend data. Day 2 of the meeting was dedicated to reviewing drafted sections and identifying key messages of the STAC Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR—formerly SGA).

Materials and presentations from the December meeting can be found on the [STAC December Webpage](#).

Upcoming March Quarterly Meeting

STAC's next quarterly meeting will be held virtually on March 23-24th. The agenda, call-in information, and materials can be found on the [STAC March Meeting Webpage](#).

STAC will discuss upcoming membership vacancies, FY21 Workshop Proposals, and continue to work on the STAC Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response report (CESR). The membership will also receive updates on the CBP DEIJ efforts, and the STAR science needs identification process.

STAC 2021 Quarterly Meeting Dates

STAC has approved the following dates for their 2021 Quarterly Meetings. All meetings are planned to be virtual, but STAC Staff will continue to monitor the possibility of in-person meetings in 2021.

March 23-24, 2021

June 15-16, 2021

September 13-14, 2021

December 7-8, 2021

STAC-Sponsored Workshops

STAC has held one workshop thus far in FY2020, which runs from June 1, 2020-May 31, 2021

1. Advancing Outreach Effectiveness to Improve Conservation Practice Adoption

January 26-28, 2021, Virtual

This workshop fostered interactive discussions among farmers, outreach practitioners, and experts in behavioral economics to improve outreach capacity and address farmer concerns about conservation practice adoption. Along with funding partners from the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR), The Nature Conservancy, and the Walton Family Foundation, this STAC virtual workshop utilized facilitation and online survey software to best

understand barriers to implementation of agricultural practices and to provide guidance to overcome these barriers to reach restoration targets. The findings and recommendations from this workshop will be released in a report to the Partnership.

The following workshops are in the process of planning.

1. **Understanding Genetics for Successful Conservation and Restoration of Resilient Chesapeake Bay Brook Trout Populations** (Received extension due to COVID. Plan to hold workshop in the fall)
2. **Overcoming the Hurdle: Addressing BMP Implementation Through a Social Science Lens**
3. **Assessing the Water Quality, Habitat, and Social Benefits to Green Riprap** (Received extension due to COVID. Plan to hold workshop in the fall)

STAC Reports

Upcoming Reports:

STAC is working to finalize the following six reports. Information regarding workshops held prior to January 2018 can be found on the [STAC archived workshop homepage](#). STAC Staff and the Executive Board are working with leads of reports from prior to FY2018 to potentially produce fact sheets or other products that would quicken the process of getting recommendations out to the Partnership.

1. Linking Wetland Workplan Goals to Enhance Capacity, Increase Implementation (FY2015)
2. Assessing Uncertainty in the CBP Modeling System (FY2015)
3. Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making (FY2015)
4. An Analytical Framework for Aligning Chesapeake Bay Program Monitoring Efforts to Support Climate Change (FY2016)
5. Chesapeake Bay Program Climate Change Modeling 2.0 (FY2018)
6. Linking In-Field and Edge-of-Field Water Management to Soil and Watershed Health (FY2019)
7. Incorporating Freshwater Mussels in the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership (FY2019)
8. Satellite Image Integration for the Chesapeake Bay SAV Monitoring Program (FY2019)

Several workshop steering committees are in the process of drafting activity reports and other workshop outcomes that will be distributed to the Partnership over the next few months. More information on recent workshop reports can be found on the [STAC past workshop webpage](#).

STAC Recommendations Database

Development of the CBP requested STAC Recommendations Database has continued to make substantial progress this quarter. STAC staff has tagged each recommendation with key words and categories, organized by the CBP Goal Implementation Team and workgroup structure. The CBP Data Team has released the test site, which is fully functional and is under Beta-testing by STAC members until February 2021. STAC Staff will then release the website to partners and present its functionality at various partner meetings throughout the beginning of 2021. The test website can be found [here](#).

STAC Synthesis Update

The STAC-sponsored Science Synthesis project continues progress and in September, due to COVID-related setbacks, Jeremy Testa (UMCES, lead PI) requested a no cost extension (NCE). Details can be found below in Testa's rational. The STAC EB approved the NCE during their November 2020 meeting.

Research Activity and Progress (*Jeremy Testa, UMCES*): Despite of our delayed research activity, we plan to continue to present our progress to the Chesapeake Bay Program so that lessons learned from our synthesis can be communicated to the restoration partnership as early as possible. In fact, we hope the frequency of our presentations to the CBP will communicate our findings to the community in a similar timeframe as originally proposed, or envisioned. We have already made two oral presentations at the Chesapeake Bay Modeling workgroup Quarterly Meetings in May and July 2020, and we are committed to making two additional presentations in fall 2020 and winter 2021. Since our last update in April 2020, we have continued our statistical analysis (CART, GAM) to determine climate and biogeochemical controls on daily oxygen depletion metrics, (b) computing metrics of ecosystem metabolism (e.g. primary production, respiration) from each station's oxygen time series, and (c) assembling and collating the data necessary to perform these analyses.

For any inquiries, or to be added to STAC's Interested Parties list, contact STAC Coordinator, Annabelle Harvey (harveya@cheapeake.org)

Visit the STAC website at www.chesapeake.org/stac
Contact: Katheryn Barnhart, Barnhart.Katheryn@epa.gov

Goal Implementation Team, STAR and Communication Workgroup Updates

Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team

The Sustainable Fisheries GIT focuses on advancing ecosystem-based fisheries management by using science to make informed fishery management decisions that cross state boundaries.

- The GIT hosted a successful membership meeting in January. A summary of presentations, outcome progress, and takeaways can be found [here](#). Our presentations focused on workgroup updates, on-going research, and connections between observations and living resource management.
- The Forage Action Team is scheduled to meet this Thursday March, 4th. Our team will hear from VIMS about a recently completed forage habitat suitability index. The goal is to use these results to begin working towards a habitat suitability indicator available on the Bay Program Progress website.
- The Sustainable Fisheries Executive Committee convened last week to begin discussions about DEIJ in the Bay Program, and how our staff and members can begin incorporating these themes into our GIT strategy/goals. It was the first of many productive conversations around the subject.
- The Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) has nominated Pat Geer (VMRC) to serve as its new chair. The Fisheries Executive Committee officially approved this nomination as of last week. A big thank you to Glenn Davis (MDNR) for his leadership of CBSAC, as he stewarded this group over the last four years.

- Contact: Bruce Vogt; bruce.vogt@noaa.gov

Habitat Goal Implementation Team

The Habitat GIT works to restore a network of land and water habitats to afford a range of public benefits and to support priority species.

- The Habitat GIT is searching for a Co-Chair to replace Christine Conn. Her last Management Board meeting will be in June.
- The Stream Health Workgroup held their bi-monthly meeting on February 19th, 2021. The group received updates on ongoing work being conducted by USGS to identify stressors to stream health and the Healthy Watersheds Assessment
- The Fish Passage Workgroup has updated their webpage at https://www.chesapeakebay.net/state/fish_passage to reflect the best available science.
- The Wetland Workgroup held their bi-monthly meeting on February 16th, 2021. The agenda featured updates on wetland mapping efforts, GIT funding projects, and other ongoing projects within the workgroup.
- The Wetland Workgroup has submitted a proposal for a STAC workshop titled “Evaluating a Systems Approach to BMP Crediting.” They are currently seeking additional members for the steering committee.
- The SAV Workgroup held its annual meeting on February 17th, 2021. The agenda featured updates on workgroup actions and activities and member presentations on current research/projects.
- The Black Duck Action Team is holding a “revitalization” meeting on March 30th, 2021 to refocus the action team and determine priorities of the group going forward. The agenda will focus on the recent updates made to the workplan, the current status and efforts of workgroup projects, and updates from members.
- The Stream Health workgroup, Brook Trout workgroup, SAV workgroup, and Wetland workgroup are participating in the team for the STAC workshop titled “Rising Watershed and Bay Water Temperatures—Ecological Implications and Management Responses.”

Habitat GIT Contact: Julianna Greenberg and Megan Ossmann
(greenberg.julianna@epa.gov; ossman.megan@epa.gov)

Water Quality Goal Implementation Team

The Water Quality GIT works to evaluate, focus and accelerates the implementation of practices, policies and programs that will restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries to conditions that support living resources and protect human health.

The WQGIT held a meeting on February 22, 2021. A summary of topics discussed is below.

- The WQGIT approved new At- large members
- The WQGIT approved AgWG’s new Vice- chair, Jeremy Daubert, and 6 new At- large members.
- The WQGIT endorsed letters of support for the Improving Ammonia Air Modeling STAC Workshop proposal and TCW’s PFAS STAC Workshop Proposal.

- Lucinda Power lead a discussion of the 2025 WIP Outcome Science Needs
- Peter Claggett gave an update on progress producing the 2017 Land Use dataset
- Joe Wood summarized the findings from the “*Incorporating Freshwater Mussels into Chesapeake Bay Restoration efforts*” STAC Workshop Report
- Ecosystem Market Consortium (ESMC) provided an overview of how it could benefit the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

The WQGIT will hold a conference call on March 22, 2021. A subset of topics to be discussed includes:

- Midpoint update on CAST 2021 Workplan and BMP Verification Ad Hoc Action Team
- Update on progress producing 2017 land use dataset
- Atmospheric Nitrogen Deposition

Contact: Lucinda Power, power.lucinda@epa.gov

Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team

The goal of the Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT 4) is to maintain local watershed health across a range of landscape contexts. With this goal, GIT 4 intends to bring attention to the challenge of protecting streams and watersheds that are healthy today. This initiative complements the "dirty waters" approach which focuses on restoring impaired waters.

HWGIT is revising the management strategy and logic and action plan for the Land Use Options Evaluation (LUOE) outcome, working closely with the Local Action cohort, as well as developing tutorials for using the Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment (CHWA) mapping application. The [CHWA](#) will be demonstrated at the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB) May 7th webinar to promote sustainable land and water resources management in the Potomac basin. HWGIT coordinator will be serving on the steering committee for the proposed STAC workshop on Rising Watershed and Bay Water temperatures. The team is continuing work with Tetra Tech to develop and finalize the strategy for the MDHWA, and the next HWGIT [meeting](#) is scheduled for Monday, April 12, 2-4pm.

Healthy Watersheds GIT Contact: Hilary Swartwood; Swartwood.Hilary@epa.gov

Foster Stewardship Goal Implementation Team

The Fostering Stewardship GIT promotes individual stewardship, supports environmental education for all ages, and assists citizens, communities and local governments in undertaking initiatives to achieve restoration and conservation in the Chesapeake region. It aims to build public support of restoration efforts and increase citizen engagement and active stewardship.

Chesapeake Conservation Partnership

- The workgroup continues to add Chesapeake Conservation Success Stories to its new platform success.chesapeakeconservation.org. Management Board Members can email Olivia Wisner (wisnero@chesapeake.org) if they have a Conservation Success Story that they'd like to be developed.
- The CCP is proceeding with the FY20 GIT Funded Project titled “Developing Standards and Metrics to Target the Conservation of ‘Green Spaces’ in Diverse and Low – Income Urban Communities”.

Citizen Stewardship Team

- The Citizen Stewardship workgroup is proceeding with the FY20 GIT Funded Project titled “Chesapeake Bay Program Social Science Assessment and Integration Road Map Development” which will determine ways to strategically integrate social science into the Chesapeake Bay Program.
- The Stewardship workgroup has continued work on the web-based tool to house and promote the use of the stewardship index data set. This project (generously supported by GIT funding) will ensure the development of a hub for social science tools and information for the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Education Workgroup

- The Education Workgroup is beginning to prepare for the biennial Environmental Literacy Leadership Summit which provides federal, state, and regional partners with a forum for policy-level discussions and strategic planning to support efforts to ensure that students in the region graduate environmentally literate.
- The Education Workgroup is setting up meetings using the contacts that the Management Board provided after the Quarterly Progress Meeting in May of 2020.
- The Education Workgroup continues to develop the Regional Outdoor Learning Network (ROLN). ROLN aims to 1) increase communication across partners and local implementation networks to support environmental literacy, including more and better designed MWEs and 2) increase the number of teacher-supported systemic environmental literacy programs occurring in priority school districts.
- The Education Workgroup is working to finalize the [CBW Public School Stream BMP Evaluation Tool](#). This map tool provides information to help identify and prioritize public schools within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that have the greatest need for Best Management Practice installations taking into consideration stream health, environmental literacy, and equity considerations. The Stroud Water Research Center developed this online map tool, in cooperation with the Chesapeake Bay Program Education Workgroup and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office.
- The Education Workgroup has been working closely with the Chesapeake Bay Program Web Team to update elements of baybackpack.com, an Environmental Literacy teaching resource for formal and non-formal educators in the watershed.

Public Access

- The Public Access Workgroup is consolidating data from the jurisdictions to track public access site development in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
- The Public Access Workgroup is proceeding with the FY20 GIT Funded Project titled “Public Access Research - Benefits and Barriers Across the Watershed” which will determine how residents in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed utilize public access sites and what barriers prevent traditionally underserved populations from utilizing public access sites.

Fostering Stewardship contact: Olivia Wisner; wisnero@chesapeake.org

Diversity Workgroup

Briana Yancy joined the Chesapeake Research Consortium as staff for the Diversity Workgroup. Briana graduated from the University of Maryland Baltimore County with a Bachelor's of Science in Geography and Environmental Science and a minor in Psychology. Briana is now pursuing her Master's degree in Biology online from Miami University. She recently completed a one-year term through the Chesapeake Conservation Corps, working with Maryland DNR, where she monitored submerged aquatic vegetation and helped develop training and outreach materials for the Chesapeake Bay SAV Watchers program. Briana is excited to join the Diversity Workgroup and help make access to the environmental resources more equitable for low income and traditionally underrepresented communities as she is passionate about conservation and believes that the best way to protect vulnerable ecosystems is to help everyone find their connection to nature.

The Diversity Workgroup will be hosting a special meeting [on March 17th from 1-2 pm](#) to discuss and provide feedback on the DEI Action Team's work. Within the next month, the Diversity workgroup will also start the GIT funding project, "Cultivating and Strengthening Relationships with Underrepresented Stakeholders." Finally, the workgroup solicited self-nominations for the workgroup Chair position and the workgroup's Steering Committee is in the process of making a selection.

Diversity workgroup contact: Tuana Phillips; phillips.tuana@epa.gov

Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management Goal Implementation Team

The goal of the Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management GIT is to continually improve the governance and management of the CBP Partnership.

Chesapeake Bay Program Strategy Review System

ChesapeakeDecisions was launched in July 2019 in support of the Strategy Review System (SRS). [ChesapeakeDecisions](#) is a tool that promotes transparency and guides the Chesapeake Bay Program's [Goal Implementation Teams \(GITs\) and Management Board members](#) through the Strategy Review System; a structured process that applies adaptive management to our work toward the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. All SRS documents, including schedules and materials relating to Quarterly Progress Meetings, can be found on ChesapeakeDecisions.

The Local Action cohort is the last cohort to go through the current SRS cycle (2nd cycle). The SRS Planning Team has temporarily merged with the Biennial Meeting Planning Team and 3rd Cycle Planning Team as we approach the Biennial Meeting date (mid-May 2021) and beginning of the 3rd SRS Cycle (June 2021). Contact: Doreen Vetter, vetter.doreen@epa.gov

Quarterly GIT 6 Meeting

The GIT 6 Spring Quarterly Meeting will take place on March 17, 2021 as a conference call. Agenda topics will include: Strategy Review System (SRS)-related updates, Governance Document Action Team (GDAT) updates (DEIJ and federally recognized tribes), GIT Funding Program updates, and workgroup

updates. Contact: Dave Goshorn (Chair), david.goshorn@maryland.gov; or Carin Bisland (Vice Chair), bisland.carin@epa.gov

FY 2020 and 2021 GIT Funding Program

FY20 awards to winning bidders will go out in March 2021. FY21 process/planning discussions are underway. Contact: Greg Allen (Coordinator), allen.greg@epa.gov

Budget and Finance Workgroup

The Budget and Finance Workgroup (BFWG) Winter Quarterly Meeting took place on January 27, 2021 as a conference call. Agenda topics included budget impacts (as a result of COVID-19), CWSRF follow-up discussion updates, Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion (DEIJ), and restoration economy action item updates. Contact: Bill Jenkins (Co-Chair), jenkins.bill@epa.gov; Dr. Elliott Campbell (Co-Chair), elliott.campbell@maryland.gov; or Michelle Guck (Coordinator), guck.michelle@epa.gov

Local Leadership Workgroup

The Local Leadership Workgroup (LLWG) Winter Quarterly Meeting took place on February 23, 2021 as a conference call. Agenda topics included: the impacts of COVID-19 on local governments, updates on the Educational Modules for local governments, and Quarterly Progress Meeting follow-up. Contact: Laura Cattell Noll (Coordinator), lnoll@allianceforthebay.org; Shannon Moore (Chair), SMoore@FrederickCountyMD.gov; Heidi Bonnaffon (Vice Chair), hbonnaffon@mwcog.org

GIT 6 Contact: Chantal Madray, madray.chantal@epa.gov

Scientific, Technical Assessment, and Reporting Team

The purpose of STAR (Scientific, Technical Analysis and Reporting) is to facilitate productive deployment of scientific resources, to provide timely, quality information to managers, and to expand communication between workgroups.

STAR

The February STAR meeting focused indicators. The associated topics included 1) Identifying work plan priorities and needs for additional resources for the newly convened Status and Trends Workgroup, 2) providing feedback for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Report card indicators, 3) providing feedback for the Climate Resiliency Workgroup's efforts to define the management utility for current and new indicators. STAR members will continue discussion of indicator development at an upcoming STAC meeting. The Integrated Monitoring Networks WG discussed concerns about losing nontidal stations, needed for nutrient and sediment trends, due to funding constraints.

Data Integrity Workgroup (DIWG)

The Monitoring Program Networks are following CDC protocols to continue monitoring efforts. They are able to accomplish almost everything they were doing prior to the pandemic. In the DIWG held on December 2nd, they discussed a potential STAC proposal for updating the Tidal monitoring and assessment program. Peter Tango is leading the STAC proposal effort to help the monitoring capacity issue which is influencing the Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring Outcome. The workgroup also discussed the new advancement in Continuous Water Quality Monitoring and gave a 2020 summer hypoxia update. The Chesapeake Bay had the second least amount of hypoxia this

summer on record, and only one cruise had above average hypoxia. This was the late July cruise, and it was the hottest July on Maryland record. The hypoxia for 2020 seems to follow the forecast. [Here](#) is a Press Release from the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP). The DIWG is planning to meet in March of 2021. *In addition the DIWG has attached the link for the first video in a series of short instructional sampling materials:*

<https://teams.microsoft.com/#/files/General?threadId=19:c7c7af1fa0894f50b007223acc1fc266@thre.ad.tacv2&ctx=channel>

Criteria Assessment Protocol (CAP) Workgroup

The Criteria Assessment Protocol WG met on February 4th, 2021. The agenda included an analysis of designated use classification for Chesapeake Bay CB6 and CB7 segments in Virginia (Tish Robertson VADEQ), design review for Maryland's case study on criteria assessment for all published criteria reflected in the Bay TMDL related water quality standards (Matt Stover MDE), and a draft 2021 STAC workshop proposal on updating the monitoring and assessment framework of the CBP partnership with new data sources, new technologies and advances in assessment frameworks (Peter Tango USGS). The final STAC Workshop proposal on Advancement Monitoring and Assessment opportunities and options was submitted to CBP-STAC on February 26th for their consideration of support. The proposal will receive review and consideration from STAC during March 2021. (Coordinator: Peter Tango, USGS@CBPO)

Integrated Monitoring Networks Workgroup

The Integrated Monitoring Network WG met on Wednesday February 17, 2021 to continue discussion on a prioritization in planning for addressing network size and operation connected to available, level funded resources. the CBP Nontidal network across the watershed under present levels of funding resources available. The next meeting is scheduled for March 17th, 1:00-2:30PM which will provide and update on network funding, continue to focus on the Nontidal network prioritization and revision criteria and strategy to address short-term immediate decision-support on station vulnerability and network integrity, and long-term adjustment planning under a level funding scenario.

A second meeting of IMN WG interests was held on February 19th, 2021 regarding high frequency hypoxia monitoring. This group is evolving to follow-up on the charge with STAR in 2019, and subsequent pilot test of new, reliable, robust, cost-effective technology for water column monitoring for hypoxia and growing community investments in high-frequency vertical profile monitoring of water quality in the bay needed to support water quality standards attainment and fish habitat health assessments. Justin Shapiro (NOAA - CRC Staffer) is establishing a web link to the work of this group. (Coordinator: Peter Tango, USGS@CBPO).

Modeling Workgroup

The Modeling Workgroup continues to develop next generation airshed, watershed, and estuary models to support CBP partners and decision makers in the consideration of “results of updated methods, techniques, and studies in 2025 to revisit existing estimated loads due to climate change to determine if any updates to 2035 load estimates are needed.” In addition, the following article was published on the 100 year (1950 to 2050) estimated loads of atmospheric deposition of nitrogen in the Chesapeake watershed showing the key importance of the reductions from this source to the Chesapeake restoration efforts [Atmospheric nitrogen deposition in the Chesapeake Bay watershed: A history of change | Elsevier Enhanced Reader](#).

CRWG

The CRWG met on February 17th and got feedback from workgroup members on the climate change indicators for the CBP Partnership to focus efforts on during the next 2-4 years. This feedback was further honed at the February 25th STAR meeting and was incorporated into an updated climate change indicators list. This list was submitted to the Management Board and will be part of a presentation which is being prepared for the Management Board meeting on March 11th.

The Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT)

This spring, the ITAT is focusing on two major goals: (1) develop and apply approaches to account for COVID-related gaps in 2020 data in this year's tidal trends analyses; (2) release summary information on trends in tidal water quality across the tidal Chesapeake tributaries along with summary descriptions of factors affecting them. These summaries will provide reference information for discussions with the research community and regional stakeholders to advance our understanding of these trends. Once available, summaries will be posted on the “Track Progress” page of the CAST website at [CAST - TMDL Tracking \(chesapeakebay.net\)](#). PDF maps of tidal water quality trends through 2019 can be downloaded from the ITAT website at [Integrated Trends Analysis Team | Chesapeake Bay Program](#). Trend results are produced by analysts at both MD DNR and VA DEQ (Old Dominion University) using a standardized method and co-developed software package. An interactive mapping tool called baytrendsmap is available at the following link for partners who want to produce their own customized maps of annual tidal water quality trends: [baytrendsmap R package v1.1.0.9003 \(chesapeakebay.net\)](#). Contact Jeni Keisman (jkeisman@usgs.gov) for more information.

STAR Contacts: Breck Sullivan; bsullivan@chesapeake.org and Tom Butler; butlert@chesapeake.org

Indicators

No indicators were updated since the February Management Board meeting.

Contact: Katheryn Barnhart, barnhart.katheryn@epa.gov

Communications Workgroup

The Communications Workgroup provides strategic planning and expert advice to support the communication needs of the Chesapeake Bay Program partners, and spur public action through consistent messaging, expanded media coverage, use of multimedia and online tools, comprehensive

branding and promotion, outreach to stakeholders, and coordinated internal and external communications.

Communications Workgroup

On March 3, the Communications Workgroup held its monthly meeting where we coordinated shared messaging around Women's History Month and the spring equinox. Additional shared messaging content can be found at:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/41860/03_march_comwg_shared_messaging.pdf

Marisa Baldine, Chesapeake Research Consortium provided an update on Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week planning. Marisa recruited members for a small subgroup to plan social content for Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week. Laura Cattell Noll, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and Paula Jasinski, GreenFin Studio provided an overview of the Cross Outcome Watershed Educational Materials for Local Officials that GreenFin is developing. Presentation materials can be found at:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/communications_workgroup_march_meeting1

Communications Office:

On March 24, the Communications Office held a public webinar providing an overview of the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership. The Communications Office staff shared how we can work with the media and what we can offer regarding data, access to experts and content (including photos and videos) and additional resources we maintain, such as websites to help restore wetlands and tree canopy, and plant forest buffers, among others. A recording of the webinar can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-Ot54ilQP8>

The Communications Office plans to publish a media advisory for the Bay Barometer on March 10, and publish the Bay Barometer press release on March 17.

Press Release

The following blogs were published in February:

- A feast for the eyes and for wildlife

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/a_feast_for_the_eyes_and_for_wildlife

- Three ways to reduce pollution while improving lives
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/three_ways_to_reduce_pollution_while_improving_lives
- It takes a village to monitor a watershed
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/it_takes_a_village_to_monitor_a_watershed
- Where a man of science predicted eclipses, raised crops and argued against slavery
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/where_a_man_of_science_predicted_eclipses_raised_crops_and_argued_against_slavery
- Planting seeds in the community: Five urban farming groups creating long-term change
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/planting_seeds_in_the_community_five_urban_farming_groups_creating_long_term_change
- Six Black-led organizations changing the face of outdoor recreation
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/black_led_organizations_changing_the_face_of_outdoor_recreation
- The buzz around buying native plants
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the_buzz_around_buying_native_plants
Counting on green space
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/counting_on_green_space

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