



**Management Board  
Program Update  
July 15, 2021**

**CBPO Calendar**

July 20	Urban Stormwater Workgroup
July 21	Nontidal Network Workgroup
July 22	STAR Team meeting - Healthy Watersheds Quarterly Progress Dry Run
July 22	Criteria Assessment Protocol Workgroup
July 26	Water Quality Goal Implementation Team Conference Call
<b>July 27</b>	<b>PSC Special meeting on Conowingo WIP Finance Strategy</b>
July 28	Budget and Finance Workgroup Quarterly Meeting
Aug 2	Status and Trends Workgroup August meeting
Aug 3	Wastewater Treatment Workgroup Conference Call
Aug 4	Forestry Workgroup meeting
Aug 4	Communications Workgroup August meeting
Aug 4	Land Use Workgroup Conference Call
Aug 5	Watershed Technical Workgroup Conference Call
Aug 5	<b>Conowingo WIP Steering Committee meeting</b>
Aug 9	Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT
Aug 11	Toxic Contaminants Workgroup Conference Call
<b>Aug 12</b>	<b>Management Board Quarterly Progress Meeting for Healthy Watersheds Cohort</b>
<b>Sept TBD</b>	<b>Principals Staff Committee Fall meeting</b>
<b>Oct 1</b>	<b>Chesapeake Executive Council Meeting (Virginia Beach, Va.)</b>

**Program Updates**

**NFWF Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund 2020 Annual Report**

- Highlights: Awarded more than \$10 million through 26 Small Watershed Grants – Implementation and \$6.9 million in Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Program grants to implement restoration projects in the Bay.
- Awarded \$1.1 million through 23 Small Watershed Grants – Planning and Technical Assistance Program for planning and design work that enhances local capacity for restoration.
- Awarded more than \$1.2 million in eight grants through the Pennsylvania Local Government Implementation Grants Program to implement restoration projects in selected Pennsylvania communities.

For more information see MB July 15 meeting materials

**Conowingo WIP Nearing Completion**

A revised draft of the final CWIP will be submitted soon to the CBP Principals’ Staff Committee for their final review and approval. Once the PSC approves it, EPA has committed to review and evaluate the final CWIP, as it has done with all three phases of the jurisdictions’ WIPs and with the draft CWIP.

Contact: Lucinda Power, [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto:power.lucinda@epa.gov)

### **New Pact Opens Door to Major Funding for Agriculture Projects**

EPA and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have signed a "decision memorandum" opening the door to joint funding for agricultural projects critical to restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and local waters. The action allows EPA Chesapeake Bay grants to be used as matching funds in most cases for applications under the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The RCPP provides up to \$10 million for projects and requires an equal partner contribution. The joint action by EPA and NRCS will help non-profit groups, conservation districts, state agriculture departments and others better compete for RCPP funds that support practices by farmers and ranchers to reduce nutrients and sediment loads to local streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

Contacts: Kelly Shenk, 410-267-5728; Tom Damm, 215-814-5560

### **Blue Crab Advisory Report Released**

On June 30, the CBP released the 2021 Blue Crab Advisory Report. It found that the overall Chesapeake Bay blue crab population is not being overfished and is not depleted. Experts from the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee reviewed the results from the annual Bay-wide Winter Dredge Survey (released in May 2021 by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science) and harvest figures from the previous seasons to provide an in-depth picture of the Chesapeake's blue crab population and to make suggestions for any needed changes to regulations. The Winter Dredge Survey found that the blue crab population (males and females alike of all ages) in the Bay—which varies naturally from year to year—decreased from 405 million in 2020 to 282 million in 2021. In 2021, the population estimate of adult females increased to 158 million from 141 million in 2020. This number is above 72.5 million, which is the minimum acceptable level for female blue crabs in the Bay, but lower than the target of 196 million. In the 2020 blue crab fishing season, 19% of all female crabs were harvested—safely below the science-based target (28%) and threshold (37%) levels for the 13th consecutive year. Resource managers focus on maintaining a healthy stock of female crabs to ensure continued resiliency of the population in this and future years.

Contact: Rachel Felver, 410-267-5740

### **Region Satisfies Sturgeon Reporting Requirements**

On June 30, EPA Region 3 provided a letter to the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) satisfying an annual requirement to confirm dissolved oxygen (DO) conditions in the Bay have not fallen below levels necessary to prevent unnecessary harm to shortnose sturgeon, a federally-protected species. The most recent water quality data and reports suggest DO criteria did not fall below the minimums specified by NMFS.

Contact: Lee McDonnell, 410-267-5731

### **Revised DEIJ Plan Under Review**

The CBP Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Action Team reconvened on Friday, July 2, to kick off their review of the re-drafted DEIJ Strategy Implementation Plan, developed earlier this year. Once the plan has been reviewed and updated, the Action Team will announce a public comment period through the CBP website and will solicit feedback on the plan and the CBP's DEIJ efforts through direct outreach with community organizations. Concurrently, the DEIJ Action Team is developing recommendations for an implementation/accountability framework, which would define a reporting structure, including performance measures, tracking and implementation lead, and a process for regularly updating the plan. The accountability framework recommendations will be presented with the implementation plan to the PSC in September.

Contact: Bo Williams, 301-922-9023

### **New Study Demonstrates Importance of SAV Biodiversity on Ecosystem Health**

A landmark study funded in part by the National Science Foundation and published earlier this year in the journal of *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, Chesapeake researchers from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and colleagues from universities across the country found that the many different varieties of grasses growing in the water—from our rivers and streams to the bay—are critical in helping our ecosystems to endure changes. The study noted that As you move from the fresh, low-salt rivers at the top of the watershed down to the salty waves of the open Bay, you will find different species of underwater grasses in the fresh, brackish and salty habitats. Salinity levels, measured in parts per thousand (ppt), differentiate the different habitats.

More information:

[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the\\_more\\_the\\_merrier\\_when\\_it\\_comes\\_to\\_underwater\\_grass\\_species\\_in\\_the\\_bay](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the_more_the_merrier_when_it_comes_to_underwater_grass_species_in_the_bay)

### **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 has no updates for July.

Questions about LGAC activities should be directed to LGAC Coordinator Jennifer Starr at [jestarr@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:jestarr@allianceforthebay.org). To be added to the Interested Parties list, please contact LGAC Staff at [lgac@allianceforthebay.org](mailto: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.*

CAC is beginning to plan an in-person quarterly meeting for September 16-17 in PA. Over the next couple of months members will work to reconstitute their CAC Subcommittees focused on three main topics: 2025 Water Quality Goals; Outreach and Engagement; and Emerging Issues. CAC Members continue to serve on the DEIJ Action Team and the BMP Verification ad hoc Action Team.

Maryland Governor Hogan recently appointed Abel Olivo, the co-founder and Executive Director of Defensores de la Cuenca.

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

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](mailto:abray@allianceforthebay.org) for program questions, contact Jessica Blackburn [jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org)

## **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](mailto:harveya@cheapeake.org))

Visit the STAC website at [www.chesapeake.org/stac](http://www.chesapeake.org/stac)

### ***STAC June Quarterly Meeting***

STAC hosted its second meeting of 2021 virtually on June 15-16, 2021. Presentations, the agenda, and materials can be found on the [STAC June Meeting Page](#).

STAC Chair, Andy Miller (UMBC) introduced background information on the development of the Conowingo WIP and Exelon agreement to prepare for a series of more detailed presentations and discussion at the September STAC meeting. Members received an overview of the STAC COVID-impact sessions, which were focused on impacts to local government, fisheries, and nutrients in the Bay. Jeremy Testa (UMCES) presented an update on the STAC-sponsored Climate Synthesis entitled *Quantifying the impacts of past and future climate and eutrophication on the dynamics of dissolved oxygen in the shallow waters of the Chesapeake Bay*.

The CBP Local Action Cohort presented their science needs and surveyed STAC members on the best ways to engage during the CBP Strategic Science and Research Framework process. STAC Staff outlined updates to the STAC membership recruitment process, which aims to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion of the membership and their activities. The second day of the meeting opened with EPA Acting Regional Director of Region 3, Diana Esher introducing herself and answering STAC's questions. The rest of the meeting was dedicated to continuing the STAC Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR).

### ***Upcoming STAC 2021 Quarterly Meeting Dates***

September 13-14, 2021: In-person, Maryland

December 7-8, 2021

### ***FY2021 STAC Workshop Approved Proposals***

1. Improve the Understanding and Coordination of Science Activities for PFAS in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (State of the Science Workshop)
2. Evaluating a Systems Approach to BMP Crediting (Programmatic Workshop)
3. Improving modeling and mitigation strategies for poultry ammonia emissions across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (Programmatic and State of the Science Workshop)
4. Rising Watershed and Bay Water Temperatures—Ecological Implications and Management Responses (Programmatic Workshop)
5. Advancing Monitoring Approaches to Enhance Tidal Chesapeake Bay Habitat Assessment including Water Quality Standards for Chesapeake Bay Dissolved Oxygen, Water Clarity/SAV and Chlorophyll a Criteria (Programmatic)

### ***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. All three received extensions due to the challenges of COVID and must now hold workshop by December 2021, at the latest.

- 1. Understanding Genetics for Successful Conservation and Restoration of Resilient Chesapeake Bay Brook Trout Populations** (Received extension due to COVID. September 28-29, 2021)
- 2. Overcoming the Hurdle: Addressing BMP Implementation Through a Social Science Lens** (Received one-month extension due to COVID. Set for July 13, 14, and 20, 2021)
- 3. Assessing the Water Quality, Habitat, and Social Benefits to Green Riprap** (Received extension due to COVID. Set for September 15-16, 2021)

***STAC Mini-Workshop Series: COVID Impacts on Bay Restoration Efforts—One session remaining!***

[COVID-Impacts STAC Webpage](#)

The impacts of COVID-19 have played out in many ways across the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. To better understand these impacts, STAC has brainstormed potential impacts during its meeting, then reached out to Bay Program committee and partners for additional observations and areas of interest.

Based on the feedback from these discussions, STAC developed 3 “mini workshops” to examine individual topics more closely. The sessions were focused on the following:

1. Local Government and Funding Impacts: Co-hosted with LGAC and the Local Leadership Workgroup
2. Fisheries and Aquaculture Impacts
3. Nutrient Dynamic Impacts

STAC is now collating major themes and recommendations from each session and will produce a report intended to inform the management community on the impacts that COVID has had on multiple pieces of Chesapeake Bay restoration.

***STAC Reports***

***Upcoming Reports:***

STAC is working to finalize the following 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. **Reports in bold are undergoing final review stages and will be released within the next quarter.**

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)**

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](#).

#### **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.*

- **Summer Membership Meeting** - The Fish GIT recently hosted its biannual membership meeting. With over 80 participants and 15 guest presenters, our membership discussed outcome updates, connections between observational capabilities and living resource management, and decision support tools that are under development. Our Fish GIT leadership and Executive Committee also facilitated a first conversation surrounding diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice at the Bay Program and in our GIT. Some great ideas were shared, and it was evident that more conversations will need to be hosted in the near future.
- **Fish Habitat Action Team (FHAT)** - The FHAT workgroup chair, Gina Hunt, will be stepping down in order to fill her new role as the Habitat GIT chair. Fish GIT leadership and FHAT members are discussing potential replacements. Any suggestions for a new chair would be welcome, and nominees should be sent to Justin Shapiro ([justin.shapiro@noaa.gov](mailto:justin.shapiro@noaa.gov)).
- **Chesapeake Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC)** - The CBSAC recently completed its annual Blue Crab Advisory Report (which was fully endorsed by the Fish GIT Executive Committee). The annual report shows low juvenile and male abundance, but female abundance and exploitation rates are well within the accepted range, leading the CBSAC to recommend no management actions at this time. The full report can be read [HERE](#).

Contact: Bruce Vogt; [bruce.vogt@noaa.gov](mailto: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.*

- Gina Hunt (MD DNR) has replaced Christine Conn as Habitat GIT co-chair. Gina's nomination received approval at the June Management Board meeting.
- Katlyn Fuentes is the new Habitat GIT co-staffer. She started on June 21st and will be staffing the Brook Trout, Fish Passage, and Stream Health workgroups, as well as the Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species.
- Chris Guy has accepted the permanent position of HGIT Coordinator (as opposed to his current "acting coordinator" role) and will officially begin in mid-August.
- The Stream Health WG, Fish Passage WG, and Brook Trout WG are a part of the Healthy Watersheds cohort and will be participating in the SRS dry-run presentations at the July 22nd STAR meeting.
- The Fish Passage WG is searching for a new co-chair.

Habitat GIT Contact: Megan Ossmann  
(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 June 28, 2021. A summary of topics discussed is below.**

- WQGIT approved the Climate Narrative Document.
- WQGIT approved the following land use items:
  - WQGIT understands and accepts the process and schedule for the proposed land use change product through August 23, 2021 when the WQGIT will be asked to approve the change product for use in CAST21.
  - WQGIT understands the errors in the land use change product that will be fixed and those that cannot be fixed for the version to be released July 9<sup>th</sup> and proposed to be used in CAST21.
  - WQGIT understands that a 2013-2017 land use change product is proposed to be used in CAST-21, to replace modeled 2013-2017 change with measured change.
- WQGIT approved the edits to their Governance Protocols, including clarification that both signatory and at-large members vote for new membership.

**The WQGIT will hold a conference call on July 26, 2021. A subset of topics to potentially be discussed includes:**

- Land use change updates
- Systems BMP STAC Workshop
- Sediment Climate Targets
- Conowingo Dredging BMP Proposal

Contact: Lucinda Power, [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto: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 met on June 14 to hear findings from two completed GIT funded projects and a summary of the watershed element synthesis underway for the Rising Water Temperatures STAC Workshop. Staff presented an overview of their preparatory work for the workshop during the nontidal session at the June 21 Climate Resiliency meeting, and are continuing to gather and evaluate the existing information on watershed health and landscapes as they relate to water temperature. The Healthy Watersheds cohort outcomes will present on their progress at the next Quarterly Progress Meeting in August and staff are preparing by reviewing the healthy watersheds logic and action plan and developing a summary presentation and narrative analysis. We are requesting nominations for a new Chair to join the leadership team (*announcement coming soon*).

Healthy Watersheds GIT Contact: rthomps@chesapeakebay.net

### **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 / Protected Lands Workgroup

- 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."
- The Steering Committee of the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership met virtually on Friday June 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss upcoming initiatives and review next steps from the 2020 annual meeting. The Steering Committee of the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership also serves as the Protected Lands Workgroup. Two key discussion items included: (1) collecting feedback on a draft action plan for CCP, "Proposed Actions Focused on Public Health, Green Spaces and Equity," which will be aligned with the next 2-year action plan for the Workgroup; and (2) considering a role for the CCP in the new Chesapeake WILD Partnership.
- The Protected Lands Workgroup is preparing for its next Quarterly Progress Meeting with the Management Board on Thursday August 12th.
- The workgroup continues to add Chesapeake Conservation Success Stories to its new platform [success.chesapeakeconservation.org](https://success.chesapeakeconservation.org). Management Board Members can email Olivia Wisner ([wisnero@chesapeake.org](mailto:wisnero@chesapeake.org)) if they have a Conservation Success Story that they'd like to be developed.

Stewardship Workgroup

- The Stewardship Workgroup is currently seeking a chair to lead the workgroup alongside current chair Suzanne Etgen, Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy. Details for the voluntary position can be found on the [Stewardship Workgroup webpage](#). Please distribute this opportunity to appropriate candidates. The application deadline is July 30, 2021.



- The 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 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 hosted the biennial Mid-Atlantic Environmental Literacy Leadership Summit on July 15th. The Summit provided 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. Recordings from the Summit can be viewed on the [CBP YouTube channel](#).
- 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.
- In cooperation with the Education Workgroup and NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office, the Stroud Water Research Center created 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. A Stakeholder Interview Report is currently available on the [Education Workgroup webpage](#).
- 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.
- In partnership with the National Park Service, the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office and Education Workgroup are working to host an inaugural Chesapeake Bay Program Youth Initiative.

#### Public Access Workgroup

- 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. A small subset of the workgroup has agreed to work with the selected contractor OpinionWorks to advise this project as it goes forward.
- The Public Access workgroup leadership is in contact with the Protected Lands Workgroup about the connections between the two GIT Funded Projects that they’re both pursuing.

Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship contact: Olivia Wisner; [wisnero@chesapeake.org](mailto:wisnero@chesapeake.org)

#### Diversity Workgroup

Please join us in saying farewell to our coordinator Tuana Phillips and congratulating her on her new position with the EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality. She has played an integral role in the advancement of DEIJ efforts in the Bay Program and we are very appreciative for all the hard work she has done over the past two years. We wish Tuana the best of success in all future endeavors.

The Diversity Workgroup held a meeting on June 25, where we discussed ongoing efforts within the workgroup and our various jurisdictions. We also had an important conversation about meaningful DEIJ metrics and are exploring the possibility of expanding upon how we track DEIJ amongst the partnership. For example, we created a document that tracks all the DEIJ efforts from all other GITS and workgroups. Thank you everyone for all your work towards this important goal.

Diversity workgroup contact: Briana Yancy (Staffer)

### **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**

All SRS documents, including schedules and materials relating to Quarterly Progress Meetings, can be found on ChesapeakeDecisions.

The Healthy Watershed's cohort is the first cohort to go through the current SRS cycle (3<sup>rd</sup> cycle). The SRS Planning Team has resumed its regular meeting schedule as it works to compile the recommendations that came out of the Biennial Meeting in May. Those recommendations that are approved by the Management Board at the July MB meeting will be implemented throughout the third cycle.

**Contact:** Doreen Vetter, [vetter.doreen@epa.gov](mailto:vetter.doreen@epa.gov)

### **Goal Team 6**

"The GIT 6 Summer Quarterly Meeting took place on June 16, 2021 as a conference call. Agenda topics included: a review of comments and questions related to the GIT's workplan, an overview of potential edits to the Governance Document proposed by the Governance Document Action Team (GDAT), reflection and discussion of proposed changes to the SRS process following the Biennial Meeting, and workgroup updates."

**Contact:** Dave Goshorn (Chair), [david.goshorn@maryland.gov](mailto:david.goshorn@maryland.gov); Carin Bisland (Vice Chair), [bisland.carin@epa.gov](mailto:bisland.carin@epa.gov); or Greg Allen (Coordinator), [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov)

**2021 GIT Funding Program** – Following an extensive review of the GIT Funding Program by a volunteer team of stakeholders, GIT 6 is finalizing the 2021 GIT Funding Program Manual. Changes for the coming round of funding include allowance for one project request per Outcome in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and an expanded set of project evaluation criteria. The manual should be released by mid-July 2021 and first draft project ideas will be due approximately August 20, 2021. Funding decisions will be made in Fall 2021 and project awards will be during first quarter of 2022.

**Governance Document Action Team (GDAT)** – The GDAT meets biweekly to work through needed adjustments to the CBP Governance Document. A draft of the revised document will be presented to the Management Board for concurrence in early Fall 2021. Example changes to the document include insertion of the DEIJ Directive, clarified responsibilities with regard to the Strategy Review System and refinement of guidance on decision making.

**Organizational Analysis** – A plan has been developed to use a published survey instrument to measure the culture of trust across the CBP. This initiative responds to several occasions when GIT 6 has gotten feedback that trust is an important factor in CBP member perceptions of the program. In addition, trust is known to be one of the essential factors in efficient, high-performing organizations. The survey is targeted to be released to CBP leaders and members in Fall 2021.

**Contact:** Greg Allen (Coordinator), [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov); and Kristin Saunders ([ksaunders@umces.edu](mailto:k Saunders@umces.edu))

### **Budget and Finance Workgroup**

The Budget and Finance Workgroup (BFWG) Summer Quarterly Meeting will take place on July 28, 2021 as a conference call. During the meeting, Maggie Cunningham from Region 03 will present on a new EPA Grant program and provide an update from the STAC/Local government mini workshop that took place in May.

**Contact:** Martha Shimkin (Co-Chair), [shimkin.martha@epa.gov](mailto:shimkin.martha@epa.gov); Dr. Elliott Campbell (Co-Chair), [elliott.campbell@maryland.gov](mailto:elliott.campbell@maryland.gov); or Michelle Guck (Coordinator), [guck.michelle@epa.gov](mailto:guck.michelle@epa.gov)

### **Local Leadership Workgroup**

The Local Leadership Workgroup (LLWG) Spring Quarterly Meeting took place on May 18, 2021 as a conference call. The “theme” for this meeting was Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ). The next LLWG meeting is scheduled for August 24, 2021 and will be themed around Climate Resilience. Efforts to roll out *A Local Government Guide to the Chesapeake Bay* continue in partnership with state agencies and local government associations.

Contact: Caroline Johnson (Staffer), [johnsonc@chesapeake.org](mailto:johnsonc@chesapeake.org); Laura Cattell Noll (Coordinator), [lnoll@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:lnoll@allianceforthebay.org); Shannon Moore (Chair), [SMoore@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:SMoore@FrederickCountyMD.gov); or Heidi Bonnaffon (Vice Chair), [hbonnaffon@mwkog.org](mailto:hbonnaffon@mwkog.org)

**GIT 6 Contact:** Caroline Johnson (Staffer) [johnsonc@chesapeake.org](mailto:johnsonc@chesapeake.org)

### **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**

For the [June STAR thematic meeting](#), STAR hosted a Social Science meeting with the help and coordination of the Chesapeake Bay Program Social Science Coordinator, Amy Handen. Presentations

focused on overviews of various types of social science research the Partnership has collected, lessons learned from community based social marketing projects, and the Social Science Assessment Goal Implementation Team funded project. STAR members provided feedback on interests and possible integration of social science in their goal teams, workgroups, and advisory committees' efforts. In June, STAR also hosted a special session on the Chesapeake Bay Program Microplastic Science Strategy. The Plastic Pollution Action Team (PPAT) completed the Microplastic Monitoring & Science Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay assigned to them by the Management Board in 2019. [Here](#) is a link to the document. STAR members have until July 15<sup>th</sup> to send PPAT any comments on the strategy. There is continuous progress on the PSC request to review the CBP monitoring network. The monthly monitoring newsletter includes information on activities/discussions accomplished at the previous meeting, homework assignments for groups, and tentative agenda items for the next meeting. The newsletter is available on the [CBP STAR webpage](#). The June newsletter is available [here](#), and the July one will be released soon.

### **Modeling Workgroup**

The Modeling Workgroup Quarterly Review Meeting was held on [July 6<sup>th</sup>](#) and [July 7<sup>th</sup>](#). The first day focused on the development of the Phase 7 Watershed Model which will be fully operational by December 2023. An additional presentation centered around quantifying co-benefits of ecosystem services associated with BMPs with results communicated via CAST. The second day focused more on the estuary with presentations on SAV nutrient cycling, finer scale tidal bay models, analysis of marine discharges in the Bay, and more.

### **Integrated Trends and Analysis Team (ITAT)**

Working through the ITAT, several Chesapeake Bay science partners collaborated to compile tributary basin summaries for 12 major tributaries or tributary groups in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. These documents provide for each tributary:

- how tidal water quality has changed over time, and
- how factors expected to drive those patterns have changed over time.
- a vehicle to generate insights connecting changes in aquatic conditions to their drivers.

ITAT partners included the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, United States Geological Survey, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, with additional support from Devereux Consulting, Perry Statistical Consulting, and Tetrattech.

All the materials for the tributary strategies have been posted on the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST) Website: <https://cast.chesapeakebay.net/Home/TMDLTracking#tributaryRptsSection>

### **Climate Resiliency Workgroup**

The [June Climate Resiliency Workgroup](#) meeting supported the Rising Water Temperatures STAC Workshop Project. It was the first step in summarizing major findings on the ecological impacts of rising water temperatures in nontidal and tidal waters. Session leads shared their collected information on current understandings of temperature increases, their ecological implications, any recognized temperature change thresholds, and current understanding of actions being taken to actively prevent,

mitigate or adapt to rising water temperatures. The next step is to identify a range of possible actionable recommendations to be considered and discussed at the STAC workshops that will be scheduled in 2022.

**Nontidal Network Workgroup**

The [June meeting](#) included a round robin for all the jurisdictions to comment on network operations and meeting sampling plans in 2021. There was also a discussion on monitoring gaps for the network, what monitoring needs might be missing, and how network efforts may help address monitoring needs for other Chesapeake Bay Program Outcomes. The upcoming meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup> will focus on a network optimization assessment and translating a collection of recommendations for monitoring needs to actionable items.

**Bay Oxygen Research Group (BORG)**

The [June meeting](#) discussed stakeholder requirements and methods underpinning the tool which should be included in the updated interpolator. Peter Tango also reviewed existing monitoring efforts and new vertical profiler deployments for consideration on how to support data needs of the interpolator. No July meeting while case studies are underway by the analysts.

**Criteria Assessment Protocol Workgroup (CAP WG)**

June meeting was postponed with scheduling conflicts. The July meeting will be held on July 22<sup>nd</sup> with topics on spring sampling for the Bay benthic macros and initiating assessment of criteria discussions for the PSC review.

STAR Contacts: Breck Sullivan; [bsullivan@chesapeake.org](mailto:bsullivan@chesapeake.org) and Tom Butler; [butlert@chesapeake.org](mailto:butlert@chesapeake.org)

**Indicators**

The following indicators were updated since the June Management Board meeting:

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Statement of Status/Progress</i>	<i>Link</i>
Blue Crab Abundance	<p>In November 2020, the three jurisdictions (Maryland, Virginia, and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission) formally adopted new female-specific reference points generated by the 2017 blue crab stock assessment update, which included more recent survey and harvest data. The threshold abundance of 70 million mature adult female crabs (age 1+) increased to 72.5 million, and the target abundance of 215 million adult females decreased to 196 million.</p> <p>Between 2020 and 2021, the abundance of adult (age 1+) female blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay increased 12% from 141 million to 158 million. This number is above the new 72.5 million threshold which is considered to be the minimum sustainable level for female blue crabs in the Bay, but</p>	<p><a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/abundant-life/blue-crab-abundance">https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/abundant-life/blue-crab-abundance</a></p>

	<p>lower than the new target of 196 million. Blue crab populations exhibit natural variability due to their biology and environmental factors such as temperature, coastal currents, weather patterns, and predation. Blue crab abundance in the Chesapeake Bay is expected to exhibit annual fluctuations as a result of this natural variability, as seen in recent years.</p>	
Blue Crab Management	<p>In November 2020, the three jurisdictions (Maryland, Virginia and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission) formally adopted new female-specific reference points generated by the 2017 blue crab stock assessment update, which included more recent survey and harvest data. This was an update to the previous reference points that had been recommended in 2011 and implemented in 2012. As a result of this update, the target female exploitation rate, or percentage of female crabs removed by harvest, increased from 25.5% to 28%, and the threshold increased from 34% to 37%. According to the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC), an estimated 19% of the female blue crab population was harvested in 2020. This is below both the target (now 28%) and overfishing threshold (now 37%) for the 13th consecutive year since female-specific management measures were implemented in 2008, which suggests that management has been effective. The Chesapeake Bay's blue crab stock is not depleted and it is not being overfished.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/blue-crab-management">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/blue-crab-management</a></p>

*In addition, we anticipate finalizing the following indicator updates in advance of the August MB meeting:*

- *SAV – update with preliminary 2020 data and post final 2019 data*
- *Water Quality Attainment Standards – update with 2019 data*
- *Water Quality Loads and Flow – update with 2019 data*
- *Reducing Pollution Indicator - update with 2020 data*

NOTE: an asterisk\* denotes new indicators that have been approved through the Status and Trends workgroup under STAR. The Indicators Coordinator provides notification to the Management Board and to STAR of these new indicators; members of either group may request additional information or a presentation at a meeting on these new indicators.

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 July 7, the Communications Workgroup held its monthly meeting where we coordinated shared messaging around National Ice Cream Month and Shark Awareness Day. Additional shared messaging content can be found at:

[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel\\_files/41864/07\\_july\\_comwg\\_shared\\_messaging.pdf](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/41864/07_july_comwg_shared_messaging.pdf)

Nabila Chami, National Aquarium and Jamie Kopko, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture presented best practices for social media content creation and engagement. Kim Couranz, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, provided an overview of Habitat Month activities and materials to share.

Meeting materials can be found here:

[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/communications\\_workgroup\\_july\\_meeting1](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/communications_workgroup_july_meeting1)

The following jurisdictions were represented on the call: Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

### **Communications Office:**

On June 21, the Communications Office published a press release for the hypoxia forecast.

- Access the press release here:  
[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/pressrelease/for\\_the\\_second\\_year\\_in\\_a\\_row\\_smaller\\_chesapeake\\_bay\\_dead\\_zone\\_forecast\\_for](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/pressrelease/for_the_second_year_in_a_row_smaller_chesapeake_bay_dead_zone_forecast_for)

On June 30, the Communications Office published a press release for the 2021 Blue Crab Advisory Report.

- Access the press release here:  
[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/pressrelease/2021\\_blue\\_crab\\_advisory\\_report\\_release](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/pressrelease/2021_blue_crab_advisory_report_release)  
[d](#)

At the direct request of the EPA Office of International and Tribal Affairs, Caitlyn Johnstone, Outreach and Communications Specialist gave a presentation on June 25 to Brazil's Agência Nacional de Águas during a joint EPA/ANA/USGS training.

On July 13, Caitlyn Johnstone, Outreach and Communications Specialist is presenting on science communication at the Maryland Land Conservation Conference in a joint panel with Lara Lutz (Bay Journal), Edwin Remsberg (Remsberg, Inc.) and Bryn Stole (Baltimore Sun).

The next virtual Chesapeake Bay Program public webinar on July 22 will focus on blue crabs. Speakers will address audience questions about the disconnect between good crab survey numbers and the crab shortage on the feast table.

- View previous webinars:  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRa28NrZJAF6wSTLTXyiO2P\\_wP2vO4R2v](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRa28NrZJAF6wSTLTXyiO2P_wP2vO4R2v)

#### **Published blogs:**

The following blogs were published in June:

- The eastern milksnake isn't venomous, it just wants you to think it is
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the\\_eastern\\_milksnake\\_isnt\\_venomous\\_it\\_just\\_wants\\_you\\_to\\_think\\_it\\_is](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the_eastern_milksnake_isnt_venomous_it_just_wants_you_to_think_it_is)
- 12 things to do during Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/10\\_things\\_to\\_do\\_during\\_chesapeake\\_bay\\_awareness\\_week](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/10_things_to_do_during_chesapeake_bay_awareness_week)
- Since before the Revolutionary War, agriculture has dominated Pennsylvania's economy
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/since\\_before\\_the\\_revolutionary\\_war\\_agriculture\\_has\\_dominated\\_pennsylvanias](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/since_before_the_revolutionary_war_agriculture_has_dominated_pennsylvanias)
- A trail of caves, karst and other wonders
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/a\\_trail\\_of\\_caves\\_karst\\_and\\_other\\_wonders](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/a_trail_of_caves_karst_and_other_wonders)
- The more the merrier when it comes to underwater grass species in the Bay
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the\\_more\\_the\\_merrier\\_when\\_it\\_comes\\_to\\_underwater\\_grass\\_species\\_in\\_the\\_bay](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the_more_the_merrier_when_it_comes_to_underwater_grass_species_in_the_bay)
- From cannons to conservation, marine police have a long history of protecting Bay resources
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Virginia\\_Marine\\_Police](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Virginia_Marine_Police)
- Nature lovers are welcomed to this researcher's refuge
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Patuxent\\_Research\\_Refuge](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Patuxent_Research_Refuge)



- Seven of our favorite spots for nature photography in the Chesapeake watershed
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/seven\\_of\\_our\\_favorite\\_spots\\_for\\_nature\\_photography\\_in\\_the\\_chesapeake\\_waters](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/seven_of_our_favorite_spots_for_nature_photography_in_the_chesapeake_waters)
- 'Sneaker Index' of 34 inches measured at Bernie Fowler Wade-In
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Bernie\\_Fowler\\_Wade\\_In\\_2021](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Bernie_Fowler_Wade_In_2021)
- Annual Chesapeake Bay Report Card notes slight improvement in estuary health
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Chesapeake\\_Bay\\_Report\\_Card\\_2020](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/Chesapeake_Bay_Report_Card_2020)
- Spring weather leaves researchers optimistic for a small summer dead zone
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/spring\\_weather\\_leaves\\_researchers\\_optimistic\\_for\\_a\\_small\\_summer\\_dead\\_zone](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/spring_weather_leaves_researchers_optimistic_for_a_small_summer_dead_zone)
- Getting to know the guardians of the Severn River
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/fishing\\_for\\_data\\_with\\_americas\\_oldest\\_river\\_group](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/fishing_for_data_with_americas_oldest_river_group)
- Annual Blue Crab Advisory Report finds the Bay's population of female blue crabs remains healthy
  - [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/annual\\_blue\\_crab\\_advisory\\_report\\_finds\\_the\\_bays\\_population\\_of\\_female\\_blue\\_crabs\\_remains\\_healthy](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/annual_blue_crab_advisory_report_finds_the_bays_population_of_female_blue_crabs_remains_healthy)