**Forestry Workgroup Briefing Paper**

2/1/2012

**BMP Review Process**

There is a new round of BMP efficiency review underway. The last time, in 2007, riparian forest buffers, along with other BMPs were reviewed and somewhat discounted. The current review is being done with the assistance of Tetratech, and will include a literature review, a panel of experts for each BMP, and a recommendation to go forward to the Watershed Technical Committee at CBP. The review could also include suggestions for BMP verification. The FWG will work with Tetratech to usher one or two forest-related BMPs through the process. At this time, the FWG will weigh-in on which BMPs will be reviewed and suggest experts to sit on the Panel. There will be another opportunity for contract help to review some of these BMP’s in the next year or two in preparing for a revised 2017 efficiencies.

Some options listed below are proposed new BMPs (with \*) identified by the Forestry Workgroup, and some are current BMPs that are in need of review. Some thoughts on “pros” and “cons” have been added, but these are by no means complete.

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| **BMP OPTIONS** | **Pro: Reasons to look at this** | **Con: Reasons not to** |
| Forest Stewardship/Plan\* | Ideal to get this to incentive planning/stewardship. Some work already done on this. Many, worsening threats to unmanaged forests. | May be very little benefit if any in the first 100 years. Literature may be scarce. Focus on the multiple benefits. Existing plans the easiest thing to measure but they are indirect. |
| Urban tree planting | Urban tree planting is credited as a land use conversion from pervious urban to forest land loading. Scientific documentation for this efficiency is needed.  | We know this is a good BMP and the “credit” that is received is generous.  |
| Grass buffers | A review of grass buffers has never been done. This was called-out in the last review as a need. Lots of grass buffers are currently put on the ground, in some cases, in lieu of forest buffers. | Not forestry per se. |
| Targeted riparian forest buffers, including width adjustment and in-stream processing\* | We know that even within a physiographic region, buffers in landscapes with certain characteristics are better than others—better buffers need incentives. Minimum width buffers need discounting. | Is there ample literature to quantify the benefits of certain of these above and below a standard? Would entirely rework buffer crediting that was reviewed in 2007.  |
| Riparian forest buffer/Swale Treatment Train\* | Some work already done on this by Judy Okay. Swale gives buffer added effectiveness certainty. | Not much increase in credit for this treatment train, and may not be many places to apply it. |

\*proposed new BMPs for 2017 model runs

**Verification**

There is a growing demand for BMP implementation and tracking, and new partners, businesses, and individuals doing them. This expanded program calls for strengthened verification of the installation and maintenance of the array of pollution prevention and reduction practices. Given the ever increasing importance that accounting for implemented practices is taking on within the partnership—Bay TMDL reasonable assurance, two-year milestones, offsets, tradable credits, etc.

See presentation posted to this FWG meeting for more details on what forestry protocols may look like. Also, the Ag Workgroup has provided a draft template from the as yet not finalized NACD non-cost share practice and verification report. It may be a starting place for the Forestry Workgroup of the various forest practices and their reliability.

For more general information on the CBP Verification process, see <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/17704/>

**Forest BMP Tracking Follow-up**

Very much connected to the Verification discussion, is the follow-up from the December 1st Forest BMP Tracking meeting. Several themes of work needed to shore up the tracking of these BMPs emerged at this meeting and will be presented for comment/confirmation. Follow-up work with individual states will also be taking place. Look for separate document posted to FWG website with notes and themes from the Dec 1st meeting.