**FWG Meeting Minutes 4/4/2**

**Participants**: Rebecca Hanmer, Anne Hairston-Strang, Tim Culbreth, Craig Highfield, Lou Etgen, Julie Mawhorter, Gary Speiran, Matt Poirot, Judy Okay, Rebecca Moore, Derrick McDonald, Chris Peiffer, Josh Zimmerman, Jen Powers, Tracey Coulter, Tom Ward, Anna Stuart Burnett

**Action Items**

Sally/Julie will send out the Draft Forest Restoration Strategy by early May

Once draft is out please provide written comments from your agency/organization regarding any suggestions you have to improve it

Next FWG meeting will be a face to face on **TUESDAY, May 1**, at CBPO in Annapolis

Send ideas for future meeting agenda topics to Sally

NFWF grant proposals are due May 16th

FWG will submit to present on Forest Restoration Strategy at the Chesapeake Watershed Forum

**Comments on the BMP verification draft were due March 22.**

**Updates/ follow up action items**

1. NFWF Stewardship grant proposals are due **May 16th**
	1. This is an important year to encourage strong partner proposals that promote forest buffer outreach and technical assistance, as there is additional money for that in this year’s funding ; View the RFP here [www.nfwf.org/chesapeake](http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake) ;
	2. Any proposals FWG has heard about? Upper Susquehanna Coalition is putting together a proposal for NY that will include some focus on forest buffers; MD proposal in the Gunpowder watershed will involve forest buffers
2. Marcellus Shale Tour – May 23-24
	1. 13 participants signed up; still some spaces open so contact Tracey Coulter (trcoulter@state.pa.us, 717-783-0381) if you are interested
3. May 15-17 will be agroforestry training, working in conjunction with Penn State
	1. Webinar on May 16th for landscaping with local plants
	2. April 21-22 and 27-28, there will be a planting at Flight 93 Memorial (although not within the Bay watershed)
	3. Email was sent to FWG on 4/4 with additional information on the workshops ; contact Tracey Coulter with questions
4. 1st week of May and June are options for future FWG conference calls or an in-person meeting
	1. June is close to Marcellus Shale Tour date
	2. Do people have a preference?
	3. PWP may 5th
	4. Lou recommends an early May face to face and June conference call (others agree)
	5. **Suggested May 2nd**, does anyone want to host it? Otherwise it will be held at CBPO
	6. **Agenda ideas**? TMDL progress, WIP update, Working Lands Conservation Strategy
	7. **ACTION: let Julie know if you want to host the face to face meeting**

**DRAFT Forest Restoration Strategy PPT – view online in FWG meeting materials**

1. Goal from EO Strategy
2. Timeline: Draft will be released early May; finalize the strategy this summer
3. Strategy Outline
4. Wildlife habitat: importance of forest hubs and corridors, how do we expand this network, have priority data for MD, VA, and DE
	1. Riparian buffers target reforestation, important brook trout areas
	2. Consider submitting this as a presentation in the Watershed Forum (Lou Etgen)
5. Mine Lands
	1. Appalachian Regional Reforestaion Initiative is key partner
	2. Tree plantings, need to be planned with bird communities
	3. Thank you to Tim Culbreth for analysis and pulling maps together
6. Agroforestry
	1. Tom Ward has been a leader
	2. Highlighting environmental, economic, and social benefits
	3. Silva pasture is not being used much in the Bay
	4. Consequences: shade, deeper roots, increased diversity
	5. Highlight efforts in PA to promote agroforestry
	6. Suggestion (David Wise) – cover issue of CREP forest buffer reenrollment in the Strategy somewhere
7. Urban/Community Forests
	1. Highlight tree canopy assessment/goal/implementation efforts
	2. Tie tree planting into MS4, TMDL goals
8. Brownfields
	1. Targeted areas for tree plantings
	2. There is a need for more technical guidance
	3. Suggestion (Rebecca H) – these sites are regulated by federal and state agencies, more than any of the other sections; therefore the program direction to do more reforestation needs to come from those agencies
9. Targeting overlapping priorities
	1. COAST Forest Mapping tool, will be developed this year but not completed when the Strategy comes out
10. FRS Draft Actions
	1. Suggestion - 3rd point under Wildlife section “Green Infrastructure” - include “Greenway Plans”?
11. Brainstorm/ Discussion
	1. Who should we work with to get this implemented?
	2. State agencies:
	3. Local governments are the most important because of WIPs and the TMDL; they are looking to others for leadership and funding
	4. Local watershed groups: are going to go where the money is. What projects will grants pay for?
	5. Ideas for ways to engage with local governments more on a forest restoration strategy?
		1. Highlight local governments that are doing positive things in this area
		2. Different messages for different types of local governments
		3. Need to pursue the basic economics, can people afford it?
		4. Strategy vs an action plan: FWG needs to motivate an action plan that won’t happen on its own
		5. Donna: in the Great Lakes, brownfield reclamation is spearheaded by city Mayors
	6. Need to make CREP forest buffers a pre-condition or ranking criteria for other Ag cost share funding programs (state/fed)
	7. Promote Bay Bank as a tool for local govts to find good project locations; buffers have great potential in trading opportunities
	8. One example for how to engage local governments in the Strategy is the workshops being held by the Chesapeake Bay Trust on forest mitigation plantions (under MD Forest Conservation Act)
	9. Draft Strategy will be going out in early May to the FWG, other agencies, and for public comment, it will be finalized later in the summer. The 2013 action plan for the Strategy will be drafted this summer.

**Round Robin**

1. MD
	1. Doable model on the small scale, giving 60-100 “buffers in a bag” to the public
	2. Wrapping up a long term response plan for Emerald Ash Borer, getting some funding to support it
	3. Working with landscape scale stewardship project– this would be a good topic for a future FWG meeting
2. VA
	1. Completed 2 gravel roads workshops, very successful and well attended, trying to hold a 3rd
	2. Phase II WIP has been submitted
	3. Resource management plans: giving farmers safe harbor, will be open to public review
	4. Finished training new district directors for SWCDs
3. PA
	1. Relationship with CREP partners, making sure partners will qualify for reenrollment
	2. Have developed some new innovative education/outreach materials for landowners on bufferse
	3. Doing some monitoring of existing buffers: 90-95% are implemented as expected (some smaller than expected)
4. Forestry for the Bay
	1. Hosted two landowner workshops titled “Woods in Your Backyard”
	2. Held in La Plume and East Stroudsburg, PA
	3. 160 landowners participated