



Habitat Goal Implementation Team Steering Committee

Conference Call Minutes

Thursday, September 27, 2012

1:00-2:30 PM

Conference line: 866-299-3188 Code: 267-5715

Participants: Jeff Horan (Chair, FWS), Jana Davis (Vice Chair, CB Trust), Jennifer Greiner (Coordinator, FWS), Hannah Martin (Staffer, CRC), Mary Ann Ottinger (UMD), Jim Hedrick (WVDNR), Debbie Hopkins (FWS), Bryan King (DDOE), Lee Karrh (MDNR), Denise Clearwater (MDE), Bernie Marczyk (DU), Dave Miko (PFBC), Wayne Lehman (DNREC), Karl Blankenship (Bay Journal) commitment

Action Items:

- Lee Karrh to propose Harris Creek Project to SAV workgroup at November SAV workgroup meeting. Brainstorm ways to contribute and report back at November Habitat GIT meeting.
- ALL-If you know someone in your jurisdiction that would want to be engaged in either the Wetland Action Team or the Streams Workgroup, please send contact information to Hannah Martin.
- Bernie Marczyk to follow up with Dave Miko about reaching out to Pennsylvania people to discuss potential wetland restoration projects.
- Jennifer Greiner to follow up with Doug and Callie from EBTJV about getting Brook Trout information to Mary Andrews for the Fish Passage Prioritization Tool.
- Hannah Martin to send out completed survey to steering committee members meant to highlight regulatory and permit issues that impact your agency or organization. Steering committee members should share the survey with appropriate members of their agency to be completed and returned to Hannah.
- Jim Hedrick to look into fall meeting planning at either Leetown Science Center or Cacapon State Park.

Updates:

1. GIT Chair Meeting

All GIT Chairs and Vice Chairs met on Thursday, September 20th. Parts of the meeting's discussion focused on regulatory/permitting issues as well as "place based projects". It is evident that the Chesapeake Bay Program is interested in attempting to resolve the very complex regulatory issue. There are several regulatory/permitting obstacles that are especially impacting stream restoration projects. The Habitat GIT is looking for opportunities on how to address and resolve some of those issues if feasible. The regulation and permitting of restoration projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed will be the main topic for our November 28th Fall GIT Meeting.

The other main focus of the GIT chair meeting was the topic of “place based projects.” Harris Creek has prompted the idea of selecting specific geographic locations to focus on and possibly create cross-GIT interests and actions. These case study examples could be used as guidance tools that project leaders could refer to for future projects.

- Question: Would this be a helpful approach for the Habitat GIT to get involved with to figure out how to solve some problems that our members are dealing with everyday?
 - The Habitat GIT is not directly involved with restoration projects; however it is compiled of individuals from different agencies that are involved with particular projects. The GIT has access to tools, such as the Fish Prioritization Tool and Green Print, which can be utilized to find an area of common interest across the GIT workgroups that may even encompass other GIT priorities. The GIT has the capability of bringing partners together to advocate and justify funding in certain areas.

2. Habitat GIT

- Brook Trout Task Group—The Brook Trout Task Group is continuing to work towards an updated indicator by December 2012 by translating the original watershed level indicator to a catchment level. The data managed by Mark Hudy has been obtained by the task group in CD format and the data is currently under review. All data for the Chesapeake Bay watershed is accounted for on the data CD except for New York. An October meeting is being scheduled in order for the group to fully understand the data and develop options and questions to present to a larger meeting in November (tentatively November 29). The November meeting will include USGS researchers and state partners and will help the states understand the new data and how they can apply it to decision making.
- Communications—The Habitat GIT, along with CBP, MDNR and WV partners, completed filming in West Virginia for the Brook Trout video story. This is one of two pilot video stories being developed by the Habitat GIT to educate about land use and how it affects habitat and different species. The Brook Trout video will include a landowner interview as well as an expert interview by Jim Hedrick. This 2.5 minute film will hopefully be ready for the fall meeting.

The annual Data Call is also scheduled for November 21, 2012. This is the data that the CBP requests from all partners in order to populate indicators that go into the communication pages on the CBP website, report card, progress report, etc. The data call will be issued in October with a 4-6 week turnover period for agencies to respond with appropriate data for the last water year.

3. Wetland Action Team (WAT)

Denise Clearwater (co-chair, MDE) is currently working on updating the Wetland Enhancement Indicator. An email has been sent out to state data POCs with the request for the data to update the indicator by the December timeline. Updating the membership list by removing inactive members and adding new members has also been a workgroup priority. Bernie Marczyk (co-chair, DU) has initiated discussions with the other states in the watershed about wetland restoration projects out of state. Dave Miko confirmed that this may be something that Pennsylvania partners would be interested in participating.

4. Stream Health Workgroup

The Habitat GIT (Chair, Vice Chair, Coordinator and staff) had a meeting with the Streams workgroup co-chairs Mark Secrist and Ron Klauda to focus on developing a membership list and prioritize activities. The Habitat GIT is requesting for steering committee members to help identify key stream experts within different jurisdictions that would want to be part of this group from different backgrounds (engineering, fisheries, habitat, etc).

5. Fish Passage Workgroup

The Fish Passage workgroup has finalized Version 1 of the Chesapeake Bay Fish Passage Tool and the tool will be available to the public by the end of this month. The workgroup plans to conduct webinars to showcase the tool's capabilities in the coming months.

6. SAV Workgroup Update

The results of the STAC 2011 review has sparked the interest of the CBP Management Board and in turn has inspired the SAV workgroup to update the group's work strategy. The SAV group is currently planning a workgroup meeting in October with hopes that the meeting will turn out a revised decision framework to present to Habitat GIT at the November GIT meeting for approval/comments and for recommendations to the Management Board by December 2012.

7. Planning our Fall Habitat GIT Meeting

The fall meeting will focus on regulatory/permitting issues and in order to make it as meaningful as possible the Habitat GIT with help from the steering committee will develop a survey focused on specific projects. By surveying multiple agencies and collecting a group of project examples, part of the meeting can be devoted to finding common themes throughout the projects and figure out how to absolve/prevent/smooth out the issues that arise.

- Jane and Denise were nominated to co-chair the fall meeting as it will center on the regulatory/permitting theme.
- A survey will be developed and sent out to steering committee members. Steering committee members will then share the survey with a member of their agency. This approach will bring in a large amount of diverse examples of restoration projects.