Communication Workgroup Monthly Meeting:

Samantha Kappalman (Vice chair), MDE Nita Sylvester, EPA Bill Hayden, DEQ
Tom Wenz, EPA Matt Ellis, STAC, CRC Phil Miller, DNREC.
Catherine Krikstan, CBP Comm. Kim Couranz, NOAA Guy Stephens, CBP/UMCES
Jenna Valente, CRC

I. **Round Robin:**

Catherine Krikstan:

* Working on a lot of stories about public access. Had a news release go out earlier this month accompanied with a blog post.
* Washington Post just ran an article about public access in the Bay as well as an Op Ed.
* CBP Communications put out a photo essay this week about Sandy Point State Park as a public access site.
* Will be going out with Solomon’s Island Heritage Tours to do a piece on watermen and heritage tours on the Bay.
* Monthly newsletter, Chesapeake Currents, and our weekly newsletter, Bay Brief, are redesigned and ready to put out today.
* Planning on putting out a news release in late August or early September about dissolved oxygen and water quality.
* 30th year celebration will be decoupled from the EC meeting and will be happening this fall around the second public comment period.

Nita Sylvester:

* Lessons learned release in September will be promoted by CBP Communications though a featured blog post on the website and by featuring specific success stories.
* Working on gaining more public attention to the dissolved oxygen indicator that was updated in July.
* The new water quality standards indicator will be posted on its own, new indicator webpage at the end of August or early September.
* Catherine, Jenna and Margaret will be working with the Communications Workgroup to put out a press release for the water quality indicator.
* For anyone who wants to view the dissolved oxygen indicator, there is a chart on CBP’s homepage in the upper right hand side with the new information on it.
* *Tom Wenz: A big thing for the water quality GIT is the monitoring funding shortfall. There is nearly a one million dollar shortfall for grants for the tidal and non-tidal water quality monitoring networks. How that is addressed is going to eventually need some communications consideration because the partners want us to shift attention away from the model and focus it towards more monitoring information but if the monitoring network is not receiving funds then things will be quite difficult.*
* *Nita: We will have to be really clear in the release when we talk about the dissolved oxygen and water quality indicators. Any press coming out that is related to funding cuts and water monitoring should not impact those indicators in any way. We should be proactive in getting that message out but we have some time to think about it and will want to be prepared for any media that will want to pick it up as a story.*
* *January 15th is deadline for each jurisdiction for the 2015 milestones submissions for InputEx and also for saying what kind of BMPs they are going to put in place to have us run it through the watershed model to figure out what the load reduction would be.*
* *January 15th would also be the deadline for submitting programmatic commitments for what each jurisdiction and federal agencies are going to be doing during the two year period. There will be more information will be presented and coming out from the milestones workgroup as we get closer to that date.*

Tom Wenz:

* The EPA and the partnership have been working with The Annapolis Capital Gazette. They are looking to write a comprehensive story about the Bay restoration efforts.
* EPA and partnership are trying to turn the tone around because their point is now that Maryland has spent 15 billion dollars to restore the Bay and it has failed. That is their starting point as of now.
* Trying to turn that around by pointing out the progress that has been made and by giving specific success stories and making it clear that restoration is a marathon not a sprint.
* CBF and the partnership are both receiving criticism from people who don’t think we’ve done enough and have spent too much money.
* Trying to show where we are making incremental progress.
* *Samantha: Would it be helpful to get them in touch with Bill Dennison at UMCES?*
* **Action**: Rich Batiuk is providing the reporters with contacts but if anyone in the Communications workgroup has ideas for success stories please touch base with them.
* Running a story about Bay restoration failure is not going to help us continue restoring the Bay.
* Shooting to run the story in September but they have not given a specific date yet.
* Report to congress has been delayed with the EC and new agreement. It’s a more extensive review process than previously anticipated.

Kim Couranz:

* In the midst of midsummer planning.
* Fish GIT has been working on stuff related to the new watershed agreement. They met last week and came to a consensus on the draft outcomes for blue crab, oysters, forest species habitat and more.
* Earlier this spring there was some outreach to commercial fishing community about CBIBS buoys and how everyone can use data from them to track trends in water quality parameters which can help explain where they are and are not seeing fish.
* Posted article on Monday with background on summertime dissolved oxygen and some information about how things are running this year.

Phil Miller:

* Gearing up for 2013 Race for our Rivers.
* Each year we will change it up a little bit by partnering with different nonprofit groups.
* Planning for 2014 Race for our Rivers with Delaware Nature Society. It will be a kayak race along Nanticoke River instead of a road race 5k and will highlight rainscaping and stormwater BMPs.
* Working on a series of presentations for the Boys and Girls Clubs and local gardening clubs

Matt Ellis:

* STAC report updates:
* Published and distributed the environmental literacy report on July 16.
* Lag times workshop report is in its final editing stage. An embargoed copy should be available August 12 with the final report available the following week.
* Oyster aquaculture review is in its final editing stages. The embargoed copy will be available August 19 with the final available the following week.
* Coastal habitats report is still in draft form and expected to be distributed by late August.
* Multiple management models (M3) will be available in late August/early September with an accompanied fact sheet.
* Nutrient trading report is in early draft form but ideally will be out out by early to mid September.
* Ellis.m@si.edu for any questions

Guy Stephens:

* Web team has changed structure now falls under Office of Partnership and Accountability (OPA) under Carin Bisland.
* Working a lot recently with the Bay Journal team trying to get them into a position to maintain a lot of their web content. They are a great source of information.
* Involved more with Chesapeake Stat. recently. The product is going to a big phase of discovery work and one of the evolution points of Chesapeake Stat is as the new agreement is forming it will be helpful to track accountability which is a primary push behind OPA. People can use Chesapeake Stat as an opportunity to track current information. The audience as of now is not the general public but that may change and evolve.

Samantha Kappalman:

* Climate change summit went very well; everyone was pleased with the outcome.
* Moving toward the August 27th event on Scoop the Poop about how pet waste effects water quality.
* Clean Water Trade Show is the second week of October. It is the 3rd annual event and will highlight innovative ways to complete stormwater projects as well as the sustainability forum that will talk about all of the great environmental accomplishments that occurred over the O’Malley/Brown administration.
* Working with DNR for new agreement.
* Starting a redesign of the newsroom on the website.
1. **New EPA Administrator.- Gina McCarthy**
* Visited with the EPA staff in Annapolis at the CBPO
* She pointed out that Bay restoration efforts have shown some great success over the years and are viewed as an example of how to implement restoration efforts across the country.
* We need to make people understand that this is not something that will turn around over night we need to be patient.
* Discussed challenges with sea level rise and climate change.
* There was a story that outlined most of her priorities in the New York Times.
* Shawn Garvin recently went on a tour of the eastern shore.
* Went to several points with eastern shore land conservancy and local officials
* Looking at designs for route 50 for stormwater management and creating a storm canopy. He also went to vacant warehouse in Easton that they are looking to turn it into a green building.
* They are also turning a site in Easton to an 11 acre waterfront park.
1. **Video Update 30th year celebration**
* Jenna and Catherine met with Al Todd yesterday.
* Steve is at VIMs getting footage for the video.
* He has finalized who the interview subjects are and what they are saying.
* We should expect an outline for the video soon to make sure our key messaging is there.
1. **New Agreement**
* Expecting some revisions from some of the GITs.
* Getting out to the editorial board all of the revisions in hopes that the editorial board will take the best of what’s out there then create language that will be easier for the public and media to understand.
* Sending out a timeline with the revisions back and forth with the intention of getting it to the Management Board at the meeting around September 12.