Communications Workgroup Minutes

Attendees:

Mike Land (Chair) Jessica Blackurn, LCAG

Samantha Kappalman (Vice Chair) Andrew Stacy, WVCA

Margaret Enloe (Coordinator) Rich Batiuk, EPA

Jenna Valente (Staff) Darlene Pisani, MD DNR

Catherine Krikstan, ACB Matt Ellis, STAC

Tom Wenz, EPA Leila Mitchell, NY

Phil Miller, DNREC Mary Gattis, LGAC

Jessica Blackburn, CAC

Round Robin:

WVCA:

* The Agreement signing did not get a lot of press coverage in West Virginia
* The milestones release got more press coverage than the Agreement signing
* Recently completed a Water Words that Work training with Eric Eckl

MD:

* DEP, DNR and the Governor’s office are putting on an event called [Data Bay](http://databay.splashthat.com/?utm_source=Bay+Brief&utm_campaign=4c35811d5b-Bay_Brief6_7_2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_69e9ffe1b6-4c35811d5b-): A Reclaim the Bay Innovation Challenge. It’s a civic hackathon to promote civic engagement
* The event is happening at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Annapolis Aug1-3
* There will be a lot of data sets provided for people to choose to work off of
* The grand prize will be the Governor’s Cup awarded by Governor O’Malley
* Partnering with UMD
* Speakers include: Peyton Robertson

DNREC:

* Finished new stormwater video and will share it with the workgroup
* Action: Phil share stormwater video with the workgroup
* DNREC put on an eco-paddle last month had a great turn out. Partners came out to speak about water quality and restoration projects on the Nanticoke River
* Nanticoke Riverfest is this coming weekend (7/11-7/12)
* Holding a recycled cardboard boat regatta on 8/9 as a part of the “Reclaim Our Rivers” series

PA:

* Saw good mediacoverage on the Agreement signing

CAC:

* Quarterly meeting will be held in Harrisburg, PA on 8/21-8/22

LGAC:

* Discussed communications during June meeting and will share decisions with CBP communications and Communications Workgroup

NOAA:

* Will be hosting congressional staffers at the Oxford Lab on 7/11
* Working with journalists on project about oyster reef ecosystem modeling –will be demonstrating fish trapping for them

NPS:

* Version 2.0 of the free NPS mobile app [Chesapeake Explorer](http://www.chesapeakeexplorerapp.com/) is available
* A lot of little things have been fixed, and one big thing added:  a "what's nearby?" feature
* NPS is involved in supplying comments on Dominion Power's proposed transmission line crossing of the James River and the 18 transmission towers (up to 295' tall). We have conducted field visits to assess the impact of the proposed project on evocative landscapes along the John Smith Trail. Project is under permit review by the Army Corps of Engineers.

CCW:

* Working on Waters of the US Projects

EPA:

* Working on milestones evaluations
* Will be sending out a quarterly newsletter to local governments. To subscribe, send an e-mail to R3\_LOC\_GOV@epa.gov

CBP Communications:

* Press release and blog about CBSAC crab population report
* Blue crab management and abundance indicators are all up to date on the Bay Program website
* The wetlands abundance indicator will be updated at the end of July after a 9-year hiatus – a new release can be expected in early August
* Currently reviewing applications for the vacant multimedia specialist position
* EC meeting was a success – all signatories signed on to the goals and outcomes

STAC:

* Upcoming reports:
	+ On Site Septic Systems report: embargoed copy to be released on 7/21
	+ Management Effects on Water Quality Trends report: under first review complete mid august
	+ Peculiarities of Perviousness report: expected release in September
	+ Stream Restoration report: expected release in September
	+ Action: Margaret share M3.2 report with the workgroup

BMP Verification:

* From a communications perspective this effects a lot of people living in the Bay watershed
* We need to effectively communicate this because of the diversity of people living here
* Over the past two years, the PSC has tasked CBP to enhance the level of transparency and competency across the Bay watershed about BMP verification
* Want to focus on getting our practices on the ground
* We need to understand where these practices are already working and are in place
* The BMP verification committee and 13 experts from around the country have worked together to create this framework and figure out how thousands of these practices are working and have longevity
* Cost-share programs will help people install BMPs. Once their installed, BMP inspectors will periodically check the property to ensure that the practice is still in place and working
* What is being targeted:
	+ Agriculture
	+ Stormwater
	+ Forestry
	+ Wastewater
	+ Streams
	+ Wetlands
	+ Any practice yielding nutrient/sediment pollutant reductions reported for credit
* More than 170 individual practice definitions are recognized by CBP currently
* Who is going to be effected by this?
	+ State and county agencies
	+ Municipal authorities
	+ Conservation districts
	+ Local elected officials
	+ NGOs
	+ Individual farmers (78,000 in watershed)
	+ Home owners
* We want to ensure that tax payer dollars are actually being used in the manner that they are communicated
* The goal is transparency – if someone wants to see what’s out there already, we should be able to provide that information
* Suggestion: before the final draft famework is distributed it would be wise to have the Communications Workgroup look at it and make it more public-friendly. Maybe even develop a sub-workgroup (like the Agreement Editorial Board) to help develop the basic framework language and core messaging.
* Action: If you would like to be apart of the sub-workgroup please reach out to Margaret Enloe or Samantha Kappalman as soon as possible because this project will have a very fast turn around
* Action: representative from Communications Workgroup will sit in on 7/31 phone call with GITs and advisory committees
* Should we create a public-friendly executive summary of the document? (Similar to the New Insights report)
* The framework document is written with implementers/planners from all watershed states as the audience
* We should focus on targeting implementers and planners over the next year before shifting our focus to all of the other audiences
* When communicating BMP verification to the public use a success story
* Should we call it a BMP or something else? Conservation practices? (When releasing this to the public)
* Action: Rich will share committee materials with the workgroup
* What is needed from the Communications Workgroup?
	+ Take March 2014 draft communications strategy and turn it into a real, workable communications and outreach plan
	+ Help flesh out the key messages
	+ Determine roles/responsibilities of individual jurisdictions vs. partnership outreach and communications
* We need to be able to explain that there is a reason why we are doing this
* What are our primary messaging goals?
	+ Work on targeting top level audiences (implementers and planners)
	+ Explain what people are going to gain from this
* Use MB and PSC as our first communications audience
* Action: August 4th: comments back on framework document and communications strategy.
* Action: Messaging due September 4th. Someone from the communications workgroup should present the strategy to the MB
* Action: The workgroup would like regular updates from the BMP verification committee. Put Samantha, Margaret and Mike on e-mail chain.
* Next Communications Workgroup meeting: August 7th