

1. Forestry/Forestry Workgroup
2. We have 3 overall goals we are tracking: forest conservation, riparian forest restoration, and urban tree canopy. Most of these are spurred on because of their water quality benefits, but a bigger role for habitat benefits is welcome. We will be creating management strategies for each of these goal areas in 2014-15. The FWG has been developing Verification Guidance for the 2 goals that are also BMPs (buffers and UTC).

The FWG meets every month. Here's an outline of our 2014 Workplan:

**a) New Bay Agreement – Develop Management Strategies for Forestry goals:**

- Riparian Forest Buffers – as a follow up to the recently released Forest Buffer Status Paper, a Task Force will be convened to develop new strategies to meet buffer goals and a Forest Buffer Leadership Summit will be held (state/USDA/key partners)
- Urban Tree Canopy – work with states/partners on strategies to achieve and track the new acreage goal for expanded urban tree canopy (2400 acres by 2025)
- Forest Conservation – build on recent work Working Lands Conservation Strategy to identify specific actions to achieve and track forest conservation goal (695,000 acres by 2025)

**b) BMP Verification Guidance**

- Comments from Verification Panel have been addressed and need approval from FWG (due early February 2014)
- Guidance will then be delivered to States so they can write Protocols for Verification

**c) Midpoint Assessment - BMP Expert Panels & New Land Uses Mapped and Loadings Ascribed**

- Loads for new land uses (riparian/floodplain forest and UTC)- (contract?)
  - Coordinate with USGS/Land Use Workgroup
- Urban Tree Canopy and Riparian Buffers Expert Panel Reports
- New Expert Panel on Forest Harvesting– FWG is in-house Expert Panel?
- Review definition of the Forest Conservation BMP (associated with Maryland's Forest Conservation Act) to see if it needs to be changed and/or expanded

**d) Chesapeake Forest Restoration Strategy (released Dec. 2012)**

- FS will be working on web content/resources to support the Strategy and will seek input from the FWG and Strategy team members
- Continue periodic calls with Strategy teams to work on action items identified in 2013 (agroforestry, mine lands, brownfields, urban/community, habitat)
- Available online: <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/post/New-Forest-Restoration-Strategy-for-the-Chesapeake-Watershed.aspx>

**e) Chesapeake Working Lands Conservation Strategy**

- Draft Strategy is posted for public comment through Feb. 14
- Final Strategy will be released in the spring; ongoing collaboration on working lands conservation will be coordinated through the Working Lands workgroup of the Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership that is led by the National Park Service and the CBPO Land Conservation workgroup (contact: Sally Claggett)

- f) **Land Image Analyst (LIA)** – A new open-source software tool designed to facilitate land use classification using high resolution imagery (e.g., NAIP), in 2014, will be refined based on pilot test feedback, and webinar trainings will be offered to make the tool accessible to local governments, watershed groups, and other users.
- g) **Growing Native** program discussion, NFWF update, other program actions

3. Brief background information

Here's a snapshot of the 3 forestry goals and current areas of work:

Forest Conservation— Tracking progress from data provided by state forestry agencies.

Working with Renee Thompson, USGS, to improve tracking and integration of goal using the protected lands layer.

Riparian Forest Buffers—Trying to really ramp it up this year to see if we can get feds and states put a concerted effort together. FWG has put together a Status Paper on the riparian forest goal. Will be having a Leadership Summit/task force established in each state. NRCS and EPA leadership is on board.

Urban Tree Canopy--Starting to track acres of new urban forest. This is a new paradigm as we have been tracking number of communities with UTC goals and assessments prior. We will be working with the states on new tools for reporting and verification. FWG is also developing an urban canopy land use with Land Use Workgroup. We are working to distinguish the relative loading rates of new forested land use classes (probably via contract with Tt or VT). Also helping to host the STAC Perviousness workshop Feb 12-13. Lots of new stuff to focus on in urban arena.

4. The Forestry Workgroup is looking for areas of collaboration with the Habitat GIT. What habitat goals do you have for forestry?