****

Communications Workgroup

Monthly Meeting

March 06, 2014

 9:45AM-11:00AM

Attendees:

Mike Land, NPS (Chair) Matt Ellis, STAC

Samantha Kappalman, MDE (Vice Chair) Mary Gattis, Alliance, LGAC

Margaret Enloe, Alliance, CBP (Coordinator) Darlene Pisani, DNR

Jessica Blackburn, Alliance, CAC, LGAC Kim Couranz, NOAA

Guy Stephens, UMCES Andrew Stacy, WVCA

Catherine Krikstan, Alliance, CBP Hannah Hamilton, USGS

Bill Hayden, VA DEQ Jenna Valente, CBP, CRC

Nita Sylvester, EPA Steve Droter, Alliance, CBP

Andrew Zemba, PA DEP Cindy Chance, NPS

Phil Miller, DNREC Leila Mitchell, NY DEC

1. Round Robin

**CBP Communications**:

* There are a couple of new blog posts up on [www.chesapeakebay.net](http://www.chesapeakebay.net) .
	+ [Photo Essay: Winter Wildlife in the Chesapeake Bay watershed](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/blog/post/photo_essay_winter_wildlife_in_the_chesapeake_bay_watershed)
	+ [Benefits of green infrastructure can outweigh costs](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/blog/post/benefits_of_green_infrastructure_can_outweigh_costs)
	+ [Severe weather pushes more waterfowl into region](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/blog/post/severe_weather_pushes_more_waterfowl_into_region)
* Tentative blog posts are:
	+ EPA’s ruling on waters of the U.S.
	+ EPA’s Report to Congress
	+ Restoration Spotlight: Waterfowl Habitat
* Tentative multimedia products:
	+ Bay 101: Ospreys
	+ From the Field: Black Duck Habitat Conservation
	+ Photo Essay: Traveling Shad Exhibit
	+ Photo Essay: Angling in the Watershed
* Indicators:
	+ The reducing pollution, Nitrogen, Phosphorus and sediment indicators that track how well the partners are doing in achieving their pollutant loads necessary achieve the TMDL will be updated this month.
	+ SAV monitoring data will be in at the end of March; public release of info in April
* Watershed Agreement
	+ **Comment period on Watershed Agreement ends on Monday, March 17th**
	+ Listening Sessions:
		- Management Board is meeting March 13 will include public listening session on the Agreement from 10-12.
			* People must sign up to speak ahead of time by sending an e-mail to Lauren Taneyhill (ltaneyhill@chesapeakebay.net).
			* Each commenter will have four minutes to speak.
		- Virginia has a public listening session scheduled for March 11th in Glen Allen, Virginia.
	+ The Issues Resolution Committee will meet next week to start working through all of the public/stakeholder comments.
* Other
	+ Communications office submitted a proposal to present a session at the RAE Summit.
	+ There has been some early discussion of CBP involvement in homeowner BMP recognition program for a couple of counties in Maryland.

**DNR**:

* Agreement Listening Session: Due to inclement weather, the public listening session did not get the turn out that was expected.
	+ Around 50-60 people showed up to the event.
	+ There was a lot of public engagement with the experts at the session.
	+ DNR will be continuing to push for public feedback on the Agreement via their [website](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/).
* Working with the White House on the Task Force for Climate Preparedness and Resilience.
	+ They are asking for [input](http://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2014/03/04/maryland-seeking-public-input-for-federal-action-on-climate-change-preparedness/?utm_source=Copy+of+Copy+of+News+Briefs+2-20-14&utm_campaign=DNR+News+Briefs+3-4-14&utm_medium=email) from the public until March 14th on what the feds can do to help the states move forward in meeting their milestones.

**EPA:**

* There will be a release from EPA in the June timeframe that is EPA’s assessment on whether or not states are meeting their TMDL-related milestones.

**CAC**:

* CAC’s quarterly meeting was last week and focused on the Agreement, environmental education, New Insights report, EPA’s budget and CAC’s upcoming priorities.

**WVCA**:

* Working on several workshops and outreach for the Eastern Panhandle.

**MDE**:

* Combining next week’s Groundwater Awareness Week with climate change, severe weather, flooding to do events.
* Doing an event at a school as well as in Western Maryland to connect drought and groundwater issues.
* Promoting severe weather awareness all month through the Climate Change Communications Consortium.
* Carroll County has come into compliance with how they plan on enacting the stormwater fees.

**NPS:**

* Beginning to build up towards the Star Spangled Spectacular event for the summer. There should be quite a few events surrounding that.
* NPS will be presenting about the two water trails on March 27th at an eco-tourism training class.
* June 7th is a big event sponsored by the Anacostia Watershed Society – the launch of the Anacostia Water Trail Mapping Guide – there will be a paddle-a-thon that day.
* NPS will be participating in the event as both the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Captain John Smith are near where the event is taking place.

**DNREC:**

* Just kicked off the Clean Our Rivers: Nanticoke Series which is a monthly series of events, workshops and recreational activities in the Nanticoke watershed that is geared towards getting residents to connect with their waterways.
* Recently conducted a Living Shorelines workshop. Next in the series are a couple of Certified Wildlife Habitat workshops and a rain barrel building workshop.
* There will be watershed events happening each month until October.

**NY DEC:**

* Have been doing some outreach about the new agreement.
* NY DEC was present at the Upper Susquehanna Coalition meeting last month – the Agreement was discussed and comments were drawn up.

**NOAA**:

* Working on ways to spread the word about the [CBIBS](http://chesapeakebay.noaa.gov/cbibs) buoy system and how people can use it to check the conditions before they head out on the water.
	+ Doing a presentation on Saturday, March 8 at the Coast Guard Auxiliary Station in Washington, D.C. about the buoys.
	+ Looking at the future of CBIBS data and content delivery (e.g. how to grow it and other ways the data can be used.)
	+ Aiming to hold a half day workshop where scientific and interpretive partners can collaborate to come up with new uses for the buoys and the data.

**STAC**:

* Distributed the Nutrient Trading report on March 3rd.
* Coastal Habitats and Multiple Management Models (M3.2) reports will be out in mid-late March. They are currently in their final review stages.
* STAC quarterly meeting will be on March 18-19 and the Management Effects on Water Quality Trends workshop on March 25-26 will be held at the Westin Annapolis Hotel.
* Contact Matt Ellis (Ellism@si.edu) if you are interested in receiving March 25-26 workshop agenda .

**LGAC**:

* LGAC’s quarterly meeting will take place next week in Richmond, VA.
	+ Part of the meeting will include a tour of the green infrastructure components of the Capitol Building.
	+ There will be a session at the meeting on monitoring and indicator communications to local government and elected officials.
1. Invasive Blue Catfish Communications
* April 10 will be the release of the invasive catfish informational signs at [Smallwood State Park.](http://dnr2.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/southern/smallwood.aspx)
	+ The signs will be installed at various public access locations around the state of Maryland and will provide anglers with information about the fish and what to do if one is caught.
	+ The day will kick off with the Management Board meeting and will include some presentations on catfish research followed by the sign release event.
* NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office is funding a number of research projects about invasive catfish.
1. Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Update
* PSC is planning a two day retreat in April to review the public comments on the Agreement and figure out how to resolve everything.
* The Editorial Board for the Agreement will reconvene after the PSC has reviewed and made decisions on the comments.
* The public comment period for the Agreement ends March 17th.
* Nick DiPasquale has written an [Op-ed](http://somd.com/news/headlines/2014/17916.shtml?utm_source=Chesapeake+Bay+News&utm_campaign=b14913d81b-Chesapeake_Bay_News4_23_2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_71ced15df1-b14913d81b-63832465) for circulation week of March 10 about the value of communication (talking across state lines, input, and working together).
* We need to develop a communications plan around the Agreement and the spring Executive Council meeting.
* The entire April meeting will be devoted to coming up with a communications strategy for the Agreement and Executive Council meeting.
* PSC members will nominate one member of their staff to be an Executive Council Planning Team representative as well as a communications representative. Although each jurisdiction will still only have one vote, a communications oriented perspective and voice will be at the table.
* The Communications Workgroup has been tasked with the following from the PSC:
	+ **Issue 2**: What is the process for engaging and including interested stakeholders in the GITs while they are developing the management strategies?
	+ **Issue Decision**: The Communications Workgroup will develop a basic framework to assure that stakeholders who are interested in the Goal Implementation Teams’ Management Strategy development remain informed throughout the process, and will offer suggestions for future outreach plans hosted by a third party, similar to what the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay had done in the past. Recommendations will be provided at the April Principals’ Staff Committee meeting.
	+ The first step should be reaching out to all of the GIT chairs to better understand what their needs are and how we can help with their Management Strategy development.
* **Action**: Mike Land, Samantha Kappalman and Margaret Enloe will come up with an action plan before the PSC and share with the group.
1. Procedure for Handling ‘Extinct’ Indicators
* There are a couple of ways to get to the indicators on the Bay Program’s website.
	+ [Track the Progress](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/trackprogress)
	+ [How is the Bay Doing?](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/track/health) (Upper right of the homepage)
* Plan is to make sure that records of previous indicators that are no longer tracked remain publicly accessible on the Bay Program website. They will remain on the website in the [Indicators A-Z section.](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/trackprogress)
1. Upcoming meetings

**April:**

1. Communications strategy for the Executive Council meeting and Agreement signing.