

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM
WATER QUALITY GOAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM
February 8, 2016 CONFERENCE CALL
Meeting Minutes

Summary of Action and Decision Items

DECISION: The WQGIT approved the proposed mapping protocol for tree canopy versus forest lands, and the elimination of the ‘tree canopy over scrub shrub’ land cover class in the Phase 6.0 Model. Maryland and Virginia will work with the CBP land data team to compare the new method with their current methods and determine which method provides the most accurate data.

DECISION: The WQGIT approved the proposed point source data project. The WQGIT asked that additional work be done on establishing a timeframe for full implementation of the tool.

ACTION: Dave Montali and James Davis-Martin will set up a planning call with leadership from the WTWG and the AMS in order to create a more detailed Phase 6 review plan.

ACTION: The Modeling Workgroup will host a webinar to provide an overview of the Phase 6 Model documentation once the documentation is closer to being completed.

ACTION: Once the charges for the STAC reviews of Scenario Builder and the Watershed Model are developed, they will be circulated to the WQGIT for review and comment.

Welcome/Confirm Call Participants/Workgroup Updates – James Davis-Martin, Chair

- Davis-Martin: We have started talking about a possible F2F meeting on September 26-27 at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation facilities in Virginia Beach, VA.

Proposed Change to Tree Canopy Mapping Protocol – Peter Claggett, USGS and Rebecca Hanmer, FWG

Peter and Rebecca gave a presentation on a proposed new mapping protocol to differentiate between forest and tree canopy classes. This new process would also involve eliminating the ‘tree canopy over scrub shrub’ land cover class from the Phase 6.0 land cover.

Discussion:

- Rebecca Hanmer: The Forestry Workgroup (FWG) considers this methodology a real advancement in classifying land uses in an accurate way. The FWG agrees completely with the principles that underpin the recommendations here.
- Norm Goulet (NVRC): The Urban Stormwater Workgroup (USWG) fully supports the proposal as well.
- Tanya Spano (MWCOCG): I commend the three workgroups for collaborating on this decision. Technically, this is a very sound recommendation. For communication purposes, it is important to make sure that the open space definition is clarified so that it is understood what that represents in the Watershed Model.

- P. Claggett: We could call it “unclassified”, “mixed open” etc. and each name has pros and cons. The Land Use Workgroup (LUWG) will solicit suggestions and vote on the name that makes the most sense in terms of clarifying what we’re mapping.
- Sarah Diebel (DOD): Is tree canopy over turf one of the land use classes, and if so, is that turf considered managed or unmanaged?
 - P. Claggett: All turf lands are assumed to receive fertilizer, but the global application takes into consideration that some are either unmanaged or managed at a lower level, which brings down that number.
- Dinorah Dalmasy (MDE): MDE has discussed this with Peter, but for now, this method won’t apply to Maryland until CBP and Maryland determine whether the methods are reasonably similar to what we have already done.
 - P. Claggett: Yes, MDE has been using statistical methods and have data that others don’t have. So in the light of using the best available data, once we have compared our methods with theirs in more detail, we can make that decision.
- Marel King (CBC): Is this method changing the total number of tree acres, or shifting around the categories?
 - P. Claggett: Compared to what we did in Phase 5.3.2, we are finding more acres of trees than we thought were there, and also doing a better job of making inferences about the understory. For Phase 6, every jurisdiction should end up with more trees than we had before because we can identify them explicitly.
- Davis-Martin: The Virginia land cover classification project is not using this identical method for assessing the difference between tree canopy versus forest, so there may be some need to take a look at how the data compares, and figure out from there if the Virginia process is similar enough.
 - P. Claggett: Yes, we are prepared to apply this method everywhere, but we can certainly go through the same process with Virginia as we are with Maryland to compare the new method with what Virginia has gotten so far.
 - Spano: If that is the case, the characterization of this decision should be framed that way.
 - P. Claggett: To clarify, Maryland and Virginia haven’t said that they won’t use this method, it is just that they want to evaluate it further in comparison to their current methods.
- Jennifer Sincock (EPA R3): When will Maryland and Virginia have these decisions made? Will there be any impacts on the Watershed Model development or the Midpoint Assessment?
 - Dalmasy: We will make sure it has no impact.
- Davis-Martin: Does the WQGIT accept the proposed methodology? Any objections to moving forward?
 - None were raised.

DECISION: The WQGIT approved the proposed mapping protocol for tree canopy versus forest lands, and the elimination of the ‘tree canopy over scrub shrub’ land cover class in the Phase 6.0

Watershed Model. Maryland and Virginia will work with the CBP land data team to compare the new method with their current methods and determine which method provides the most accurate data.

Point Source Data Project – Laura Free, EPA and Megan Thyng, EPA

Laura and Megan updated the WQGIT on a project to document the current process for receiving and correcting point source data that is fed into the Watershed Model. They outlined an approach presented on the November 3rd Wastewater Treatment Workgroup (WWTWG) call, which proposes a pilot project to pull and review data directly from ICIS-NPDES for significant facilities and other facilities with data available in ICIS-NPDES. Laura and Megan also provided a description of the expected level of effort and a tentative schedule for the development of the pilot project.

Discussion:

- Spano: Our hope is this project leverages existing processes to help ease the resource burden on the jurisdictions. The WWTWG is supportive of this effort. It won't solve everything but it is certainly a step in the right direction.
- Diebel: It seems like most effort will be focused on the jurisdictions' point source data groups. Will there be any need for discussion with federal facilities?
 - Thyng: I don't anticipate any interaction with the facilities directly. I would leave that up to the states if there was a specific case where it was needed, but I don't see that coming up.
 - Ning Zhou (VT, CBPO): We don't contact facilities directly. That is the states' job and they usually prefer for us to go through them.
- Diebel: It seems similar to the tool development for BMP tracking, and I'm curious if there is something planned for this tool that would track and distinguish federal data from non-federal data.
 - Thyng: I don't think we make that distinction in point source data the same way we do with BMP submissions. I think facilities report directly to ICIS-NPDES, and the states QA/QC that data.
 - Zhou: That's correct, but we do have a list of federal wastewater treatment facilities so if we do need to do load analysis, we can do that. But when we do overall data analysis, we don't specify a federal load.
- Davis-Martin: So the project is referred to as a pilot, but if it is a pilot, why would it be in the draft grant guidance?
 - Free: We wanted to look at a number of possible approaches for tackling this issue. First, we wanted to address the facilities that already have data available in ICIS-NPDES, and build some QA/QC tools and a submission path from the jurisdictions to the Model. Later, we hope that would be expanded so that if some data is not available in another database, we would be able to allow a jurisdiction to load that data directly into the tool. That second piece is a bigger undertaking and we wanted to manage the ICIS-NPDES link first, so that is why we were considering this a pilot.

- Dave Montali (WV DEP): I also had some concerns reading the grant guidance language because it says you would use the data in 2017, but 2017 Progress starts in the summer of 2017. I thought it was supposed to help ease the burden, not be a one size fits all approach that everyone has to use.
 - Thyng: We tried to make the language more flexible, but the spirit of this effort is to work with the states to get this right, in a timeframe that makes sense for everyone. We don't want this to make anything harder for anyone.
- Ben Sears (NYSDEC): Could you just walk through how you envision this changing what we do for Annual Progress reporting?
 - Free: I think the only change would be that your current process would be facilitated through an online system rather than being done manually, offline. We are trying to automate anything that could be easily automated, and have a submission pass so that there is a record of what was submitted. It also would allow all the jurisdictions' data to be in one place rather than scattered across multiple emails.
- Davis-Martin: So it is like moving towards a NEIEN-like reporting system for point source data?
 - Thyng: Yes, I think that is a good characterization.
- Davis-Martin: It sounds like there's agreement on the tool development, just some concerns over timing. Are there any objections to support the continued development of this tool with the understanding that additional work will be needed to determine the timing for full implementation?
 - None were raised.
- Tesler: I have some hesitation about the inclusion of the grant guidance in this proposal.
 - Davis-Martin: Yes, the 2016 guidance is already out, and my qualification offered is intended to allow us to continue to work through timing issues such as the point at which use of this tool would be considered mandatory in the grant guidance.

DECISION: The WQGIT approved the proposed point source data project. The WQGIT asked that additional work be done on establishing a timeframe for full implementation of the tool.

Phase 6 Review: Schedule, Roles and Responsibilities – Dave Montali, WV DEP

Following a request from the WQGIT face-to-face meeting in December 2015, Dave provided a more detailed schedule and process for the Phase 6 Review. Dave also provided a brief update from the January Modeling Workgroup Quarterly meeting.

Discussion:

- Spano: This is a huge amount of technical work and it isn't quite clear when there will be WQGIT decisions.
 - David Wood (CRC): The WQGIT Midpoint Assessment decision making calendar is available on the WQGIT webpage under the projects and resources tab. That calendar attempts to capture when those major WQGIT decisions are anticipated.

- Montali: I think there are natural focal points around March 1, June 1, and September 1 that might be good times to check in and see how the WQGIT feels about everything.
- Jeremy Hanson (VT, CBPO): Using the tree canopy land uses as an example, we are hoping to have them approved by the end of March, but if it isn't approved by mid-April, it would have to wait until the June version?
 - Gary Shenk (USGS): Even March 28 may be too late. We would like to have any changes in by March 1 in order to make sure we have time to get all of the changes into the April version.
- Natalie Gardner (CRC): When do you expect the STAC Scenario Builder review to take place?
 - Shenk: I think we will need to get together with the Scenario Builder team to get a firm date for that.
- Bill Angstadt (Angstadt Consulting): I thought we would talk more about what the review responsibilities were among the different groups. There are a lot of data errors and outliers in Scenario Builder and data entry assumptions that look flawed. The Agriculture Modeling Subcommittee (AMS) is working on some of these but I would like a much more detailed discussion of how we are going to fix these problems.
 - Montali: Any comments on problems with data entry in Scenario Builder should be made as soon as possible. If there are algorithms and processes that need refined in relation to agriculture, that is the purview of the AMS and improvements need to go through them.
- Angstadt: Has the soil P history method been finalized?
 - Shenk: I don't think that has been fully written into the documentation yet although it is in there with some Phase 5.3.2 Scenario Builder defaults. That is simply the nature of putting together such a complex model. We have to use what we have, and we have written that up as part of our transparent process. We are working on different versions all at the same time.
- Angstadt: I have two requests: 1) The Modeling team does an open webinar like Matt did for Scenario Builder, specifically on Sections 2, 7, 9 and 10 of the documentation, so we can see how it is all being handled; and 2) The charges for the STAC reviews be released to the WQGIT for review and comment.
- Davis-Martin: It seems like an "everyone-for-themselves" approach to the Phase 6 Model review, and I think we need a more clearly organized approach to addressing subsections of the documentation.
 - Angstadt: I agree.
- Spano: I think that the Modeling Team needs to share with the WQGIT a list of all the major concerns that are raised during the Model review period and their status in terms of whether they have been resolved to the commenter's satisfaction or not.
- Davis-Martin: Could the Modeling Team provide recommendations for which groups/jurisdictions/entities should be reviewing the various components of the Model to ensure a thorough review? Then organize the comments received and a status of resolution?

- Montali: The second part could potentially be the responsibility of the Modeling Team, but it seems the WQGIT should make the decision regarding which of its groups reviews each section of the Model. We can take it back and talk about it, but it seems pretty straightforward. For example, most of the Scenario Builder algorithms related to agriculture were developed by the AMS, so wouldn't they logically be the right group to check on where we stand?
 - Spano: That would seem to be true, but a lot of time the data then goes through the WTWG and the Modeling Workgroup (MWG), so there are a lot more steps.
 - Montali: Well that gets into the jurisdictions review, because it is their responsibility to make sure their data is being represented correctly. I can set up a conversation with the Modeling Team, James, Matt and some of the AMS team to put together a more strategic review plan to bring back to the WQGIT for review.
 - Davis-Martin: I will take up Dave's offer for an offline conversation.
- Montali: I think the Modeling Team can do a webinar, but I would need to discuss their resources, since it would compete with development time.
- Shenk: Slide 8 talks about the review responsibilities. The categories in red fall under the MWG. The ones in yellow come through the WQGIT workgroups. I don't think it would be a terribly large amount of work to do a briefing about where we are with all of these things, but we haven't really gotten the documentation together yet on some of these sections, so I think we can have a conversation about where to go with this, but to do a webinar like Matt did, we have more to flesh out with the documentation.
 - Angstadt: I am comfortable with waiting until the documentation is ready before holding a webinar. I think it is important for the WQGIT to have a shared understanding of the sections under the MWG purview.
 - Davis-Martin: Yes, while I agree that the MWG has the lead on making decisions on the red boxes, I disagree that it takes it out of the realm of the WQGIT.

ACTION: Dave Montali and James Davis-Martin will set up a planning call with leadership from the WTWG and the AMS in order to create a more detailed Phase 6 review plan.

ACTION: The Modeling Workgroup will host a webinar to provide an overview of the Phase 6 Model documentation once the documentation is closer to being completed.

- Davis-Martin: I don't think the STAC reviews fit neatly into our purview, but sharing those charges with us seems fair.
 - Angstadt: For me it is more about whether or not STAC plans to address some of the past concerns with the Model.
- Davis Martin: Can the STAC charges be circulated for shared review and comment?
 - Shenk: Yes, that is the procedure.

ACTION: Once the charges for the STAC reviews of Scenario Builder and the Watershed Model are developed, they will be circulated to the WQGIT for review and comment.

Oyster BMP Crediting Framework Update – Jeff Cornwell, UMCES and Julie Reichert, ORP

Jeff and Julie provided an update from the Oyster BMP expert panel on a potential crediting framework for oyster practices.

Discussion:

- Ann Jennings (CBC): What are the plans for a coordinated review of this framework with the Fisheries GIT and the Habitat GIT?
 - Reichert: We have distributed the briefing paper to the Habitat and Fisheries GIT and asked for their review in the same timeframe as the WQGIT review. They were also invited to participate in this conference call. We are looking for all of those comments collectively by February 15th.
- Spano: Are any of these practices considering mortality from disease, etc.?
 - Cornwell: Yes, it is being considered. For the panel, it is a matter of how to deal with that in terms of an impact on the nutrient and sediment reduction efficiencies.
- Spano: You may not be able to quantify all of those type of impacts, but they should be acknowledged in the report. I also am wondering about the relative significance of these reductions. If they impact the nutrient loadings, it would seem to encourage more oyster efforts. Finally, I think the panel should make note of the geographic applicability of oyster practices, as they may be more important for certain jurisdictions.
 - Cornwell: I definitely agree. In smaller reaches and specific locations, there is some indication that these oyster practices could definitely be of some benefit.
- Beth McGee (CBF): In step 2, one decision point is determining whether there is sufficient data available. I would encourage you to define how you determine what level of data is sufficient. We had that issue with nutrient management and I think it would be good to have that clearly established. My second comment, also on step 2, is that when encouraging the incorporation of new information in the future, we have to be careful that it doesn't violate the BMP protocols. For example, there have been multiple panels on cover crops as more data becomes available. My last point is on the 8 categories of oyster efficiency protocols. I recognize that the assimilation of nitrogen and phosphorus into the shell happens, but I wonder if it puts us at odds with our goal of putting shells back into the Bay as part of the effort to build reefs.
 - Cornwell: Many of those discussions have already started. The efficiency doesn't seem very high at this point. It is not a net removal of nitrogen or phosphorus unless it is permanently removed or we have some reason to believe it is permanently buried.
- McGee: Regarding step 3, please do not short change all of these other considerations from the BMP Protocols. With regard to the baseline, do we need a better estimate of how many oysters are out there right now?
 - Cornwell: I think it will depend on the particular practice. Some practices may need a baseline number or location of the oysters in order to determine an

efficiency, while others may not. It is part of the discussion but I don't know that we have concluded anything yet.

- Reichert: The Oyster Recover Partnership is currently undergoing efforts to better quantify oyster biomass in the Bay to help fill some of those knowledge gaps.
- Paula Jasinski: I didn't see any reference to the difference between triploid and diploid oysters. Are there potentially differences in efficiencies?
 - Cornwell: That has come up and the key will be if we have the information to distinguish those differences with the information we have available.
- Jasinski: Effectiveness estimates will be out for review in April?
 - Reichert: It would be more of an update and opportunity for feedback in April. There will be a briefing paper and presentation like we have done today. The more complete review will hopefully be in June.

Toxics Reports – Tom Schueler, CSN

Tom presented two reports that were developed as part of an FY14 GIT funding project to review the existing literature on the potential toxic reduction benefits from traditional nutrient and sediment BMPs. The first report examines the urban sector, while the second report addresses the agricultural and wastewater sectors.

Discussion:

- Diebel: As part of the industrial stormwater permitting process, there are other types of BMPs that are recommended for industrial activities. Did you take a look at some of the programmatic/non-structural BMPs, or was it mainly structural BMPs that you looked at?
 - Schueler: There was a section on urban toxics that looked at potential for non-structural practices to reduce toxics. I think it is a significant strategy to try to target some of the pollutant sources.
- Spano: The Wastewater Treatment Workgroup received this briefing earlier this month and I think it is important that Tom gets the support needed to reflect any comments or concerns received over the next month. Even if the report doesn't require WQGIT approval, everyone is sensitive to toxics issues, and I feel some framing statements and additional wording is needed. MWCOG are going to provide fatal flaw type feedback within the next few weeks.
 - Davis-Martin: I don't know that the contract established to do this work included a lot of opportunity for that feedback and re-writing, but certainly I think it is reasonable to provide the comments and then the partnership can either provide additional contract support to do make those revisions, or can negotiate with Tom otherwise.
 - Schueler: The contract expired on February 1st, so as long as the comments aren't too extensive we can hopefully make the changes without having to do any contract restructuring.

Adjourned

List of Call Participants

Member Name	Affiliation
James Davis-Martin (Chair)	VA DEQ
Teresa Koon (Vice-Chair)	WV DEP
David Wood (Staff)	CRC
Lindsey Gordon (Staff)	CRC
Bill Angstadt	Angstadt Consulting
Seung Ag Byun	Brandywine Conservancy
Jessica Blackburn	CAC
Ann Jennings	CBC
Marel King	CBC
Beth McGee	CBF
Sue Kreibel	City of Virginia Beach
Natalie Gardner	CRC
Kyle Runion	CRC
Neely Law	CWP
Chris Brosch	DDA
John Schneider	DE DNREC
Sarah Diebel	DOD
Mary Searing	DOEE
George Onyullo	DOEE
Marty Hurd	DOEE
Jennifer Sincock	EPA R3
Chris Day	EPA R3
Megan Thyngge	EPA, CBPO
Laura Free	EPA, CBPO
Greg Allen	EPA, CBPO
Jeff Sweeney	EPA, CBPO
Emilie Franke	ERT
Rebecca Hanmer	FWG
Jenny Tribo	HRPDC
Jamie Mitchell	HRSD
Mary Gattis	LGAC
Bruce Michael	MD DNR
Dinorah Dalmasy	MDE
Jim George	MDE
Tanya Spano	MWCOG
Zoe Johnson	NOAA
Norm Goulet	NVRC
Ben Sears	NYSDEC
Julie Reichert	ORP
Ted Tesler	PA DEP

Kristen Wolf	PA DEP
Kevin McGonigal	SRBC
Jeff Cornwell	UMCES
Mark Dubin	UMD, CBPO
Sally Claggett	USFS, CBPO
Scott Phillips	USGS
Gary Shenk	USGS, CBPO
Russ Baxter	VA Secretary of Natural Resources Office
Jeremy Hanson	VT, CBPO
Ning Zhou	VT, CBPO
Dave Montali	WV DEP
Alana Hartman	WV DEP
Tolar Nolley	
Andy Lacatell	
Chris Moore	
Kathy Brohawn	
Ken Paynter	
Lauren Torres	
Paula Jasinski	