

## Summary of Major Revisions to the Urban Tree Canopy Expert Panel Report Based on Comments Received During the Public Comment Period and Subsequent Review by Work Groups (08/18/16)

The Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) panel's report was first released for review and comment by the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership on May 3, 2016. A Technical Memo, "Summary of Partnership Comments and Panel Responses to Draft Report of Recommendations from the Best Management Practice (BMP) Expert Panel for Urban Tree Canopy" was submitted to the Forestry Work Group and Partnership on June 23, 2016 summarizing the comments and responses received during the review period. That document was provided in accordance with the BMP Protocol, which instructs the Panel Chair and Panel Coordinator to develop a "response to comments" document that provides a response to comments received. A detailed table listing all the comments verbatim was also developed. Subsequent feedback from partners, including additional comments from VA DEQ were received requesting further clarification on issues such as the land use loading rates, rationale for the credit, definitions and applicability of the BMP, and verification process given future land use updates for the model. This document summarizes updates that have been made in response to this latest round of feedback following the initial revisions that were made in June.

Comments or suggested edits that pertain to grammar, spelling or formatting of the report are not included or addressed here, but the Coordinator has noted those comments for direct revisions to the report. Revisions already summarized in the June summary memo and response to comments table are not included here.

If there are any new or lingering comments or questions that could impact your ability to approve the recommendations for submission to the WQGIT, please email them to Jeremy Hanson, Ted Tesler, Matt Johnston and David Wood one business day or more in advance of the 9/1/16 conference call (i.e. by COB 8/29/16). This will help us prepare for and manage the workgroup's discussion more effectively.

### **Summary of Major Changes to the Expert Panel Report**

- Change of the recommended Phase 6 BMP name from "Urban Tree Planting" to "Urban Tree Canopy Expansion." The name of, and references to, the Phase 5 "Urban Tree Planting" BMP are unchanged.
- Recommendation from the FWG (with Partnership support) for a second (tier 2) BMP called Urban Forest Planting has been incorporated in the report and technical appendix (Appendix F). The definition of the panel's recommended BMP for Urban Tree Canopy Expansion, and various references to the Phase 6 BMP(s) have been adjusted accordingly throughout the report.
  - The report's recommendations from the Expert Panel as written pertain to the Urban Tree Canopy Expansion BMP and recommendations for an Urban Forest Planting BMP is provided as Appendix H to the report.
- An addendum to Appendix B (Derivation of the tree canopy land use loading rates) is provided that summarizes a list of items for the partnership's future consideration whenever the tree canopy land uses and loading rates are revisited for future updates to the modeling tools. Note: As of August 18 we are still waiting for internal feedback on the addendum before discussing it with VA DEQ and subsequently posting it. These future considerations are in direct response to feedback from VA DEQ and pertain specifically to future updates to the tree canopy land use loading rates and have no substantive effect on the currently proposed BMP(s) for Phase 6.
- Updated definitions for the Urban Tree Canopy Expansion and Urban Forest Planting BMPs (Section 2) per feedback from FWG and VA DEQ colleagues.
- Removed text that provides superfluous explanation of methods of updating the tree canopy land uses in the future. The specific method to update the land uses is to be determined by the

Partnership at a future date. The text was replaced with more generic language that requests the Partnership to define a decision rule(s) to avoid double-counting of acres of tree canopy as an existing land use defined by satellite imagery and that the acres from reported BMPs (see Section 5.1 and Section 6)

- A more complete description of the panel’s rationale and justification for the recommended canopy area credit of 144 ft<sup>2</sup> per tree planted as informed by i-Tree Forecast.
  - Data from <http://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/predictions/canopy.cfm> was added to the report to compare the i-Tree Forecast results with other databases
- Added an example calculation for Recommendation #4 (Section 5.4) that illustrates how the credit for Urban Tree Canopy Expansion can be estimated. It is pointed out that this calculation for land use change BMPs is for illustrative purposes only as the land use loading rates used in the example will differ in the calibrated modeling tools.
- An additional future research recommendation is added to section 7:
  - “This BMP, and others, need to consider how future research findings on land cover land use and conveyance systems affect material transport to streams and the Bay (e.g. Re-plumbing the Chesapeake Bay Watershed: Improving Roadside Ditch Management to Meet TMDL Water Quality Goals)”
- Expanded upon a management recommendation in section 7 as shown in **bold**, ‘Develop BMP’s that address the conservation and maintenance of existing tree canopy. Conservation BMP’s will reduce future pollutant loads by reducing the loss of tree canopy in future land use projections. Maintaining tree canopy has the potential to have a greater positive impact on local efforts and actions to address water quality than tree planting alone. **A cost-benefit analysis comparing the benefits of planting new trees with tree conservation should be a part of this research.**’