**Stream Health Workgroup**

Meeting Minutes

10/25/16

CBPO, Fish Shack

**Participants:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Rich Starr, EPR (Co-Chair) | Matt Meyers, Fairfax County |
| Mike Lovegreen, USC (Co-Chair) | Josh Burch, DC DOEE |
| Kyle Runion, CRC (Staff) | Alana Hartman, WV DEP |
| Jennifer Greiner, USFWS | Claire Buchanan, ICPRB |
| Denise Clearwater, MDE | Zachary Smith, ICPRB |
| Lea Rubin, IWLA | Bill Seiger, MDE |
| Danielle Donkersloot, IWLA | Neely Law, CWP |
| Jinnie Monismith, Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring | James Leitner, WV Conservation Agency |
| Chris Spaur, USACE Baltimore | Rob Shreeve, MD SHA |
| Scott Stranko, MD DNR | Adam Wright, DoD |
| Anne Hairston-Strang, MD DNR | Mike Galvin, Johnson, Mirmiran, & Thompson |
| Alison Armocida, MD DNR | Jim Morris, Johnson, Mirmiran, & Thompson |

**Action and Decision Items:**

**Decision:** The April 2016 meeting minutes are approved.

**Action:** Questions from the Stream Health Workgroup will be sent to Tetra Tech: (See full questions in minutes)

**Action:** If you would like to volunteer to score BMP co-benefits for Stream Health, please email Kyle Runion. Scoring will be due on November 9th, compiled and distributed for workgroup review November 10th with final comments due November 17th for submission to Tetra Tech.

**Action:** Workgroup chairs and staff will work to get in contact with Serena McClain and Scott Lowe, who had previously said they would be interested in participating with the pooled monitoring action.

**Action:** Meyers will get in contact with Virginia agencies and groups regarding any pooled monitoring in Virginia.

**Decision:** Burch: Volunteers for lead of the Permitting Committee.

* Group members: Wright, Seiger, Lovegreen, Armocida, Starr, Meyers, Freyermuth

**Action:** Law will provide a summary of interviews which were conducted during the development of the Management Strategy regarding needs of permit needs of practitioners or regulators to, and Starr will provide summary of CBT and EPA permit issues identified to the group lead and members.

**Action:** Law will draft and submit a recommendation for an expert panel on key action 9 and present to the urban stormwater workgroup with the help of Spaur, Stranko, Morris, and Clearwater (or other MDE representative).

**Action**: Stranko will follow up to Bill Stack and Greg Bush to find any progress on key action 10.

**Action**: Law will send state regulatory contacts (key action 10) to Runion & Stranko.

**Action:** Please review each of the subcommittee tasks and contact Runion and the group lead if you are interested in leading or participating.

* Subcommittees: Permits, Monitoring, BMP Co-Benefits, TMDL Impairments, & Training.

**Welcome and Introduction**

* At our [last meeting in April 2016](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/23888/), we reviewed the [biennial workplan](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/documents/22039/stream_health_workplan_4.14.16.pdf) and asked for leads and volunteers for each key action.
	+ **Decision:** The [April 2016 meeting minutes](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/23888/shwg_4.21.16_meeting_minutes.docx) are approved.
* [All materials are available online](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/24353/); please email runion.kyle@epa.gov with any questions.

**Minutes:**

**Chesapeake Bay Program’s Quantifying BMP Benefits project**

* The Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (GIT) is working with Tetra Tech to assign impact scores of co-benefits (other than N, P, and S) for each BMP in the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Watershed Model for each of the [CBP Management Strategies](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/managementstrategies), including Stream Health.
* A scoring [spreadsheet](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/24353/bmp_scoring_sheet_20161010_habitat_git.xlsx) and descriptive [pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/24353/mgmtstrategy_descriptions.pdf) are posted. Please read over the ReadMe tab in the spreadsheet before diving into the scoring.
	+ The spreadsheet provides tabs for directions, scoring guidelines, sector BMP descriptions, and BMP definitions. This should include all the required materials for the workgroup to complete this exercise. [Further BMP information is available online](http://www.bayfast.org/About.aspx).
		- The scoring guidelines tab and pdf both provide descriptions of the scoring scale, from most harmful to most beneficial.
	+ The spreadsheet is divided into columns of sector, BMP, and Management Strategies
		- Many of these BMPs impacts can be answered with “it depends” based on multiple factors including land use. Directions from Tetra Tech: “**Please consider the BMP to be in working order and in a general, non-specific location**”
			* Some BMPs are given a general land use in the sector category. For example, the forest buffer BMP is posted under both the agriculture and urban/forestry sector.
* The scores are based on best professional judgement (BPJ) rather than data. The base of the project is to encourage conservation/restoration actions that are beneficial to outcomes additional to those of water quality, and to be cautious of those that are harmful to other outcomes.
	+ Stranko: Having a layer of data behind the scores would be helpful to reinforce our confidence.
	+ Starr: If the outcomes of this project is for prioritizations of projects, BPJ is fine; if it is used for model calibration, then there may be an issue.
	+ Hairston-Strang: This exercise can help spread light on our data gaps – some of these BMPs have data to back up our thoughts, but others require BPJ because of a lack of data.
	+ The spreadsheet can include notes for Tetra Tech via comment function. Comments can be written in an email when submitting scores, which will be passed on to Tetra Tech.
	+ Spaur: The language provided by Tetra Tech, “contributing to stream health improvement” is dependent on what is the stressor.
		- We may not be able to differentiate land use down to a descriptive level such as acid mine, but the sector gives a general land use.
* Stranko: We should consider recommending that a concrete number isn’t our output as we are running into so much variability and uncertainty.
	+ Greiner: This will be a gradient for emphasizing/deemphasizing practices that accomplish more outcomes than water quality.
* **Action:** Questions from the Stream Health Workgroup will be sent to Tetra Tech:
	+ How to grade BMPs that are extremely site specific such as abandoned mine reclamation? Assume the practice is at the most effective land use? (Spaur)
	+ Should we be scoring the BMPs as if they are a single practice? Such as there will be no combination of practices or should the usual route of business should be assumed (install BMPs then stream restoration project then...)? Some practices are only helpful in combination but may exacerbate a problem if done solo. (Shreeve)
		- Greiner: This is the first attempt at such a scoring project, so our thought is that Tetra Tech is looking at this as a baseline, rule of thumb for each practice rather than trying to score stacked practices.
		- Lovegreen: Some combinations may be built in to the standards and specifications as they may be required together or commonplace.
	+ Is the sector column the primary land use of the watershed or site specific? (Starr)
* **Action:** If you would like to volunteer to score BMP co-benefits for Stream Health, please email Kyle Runion. Scoring will be due on November 9th, compiled and distributed for workgroup review November 10th with final comments due November 17th for submission to Tetra Tech.
* Volunteers to score BMPs within their expertise:
	+ Lovegreen, Shreeve, Clearwater, Starr, Meyers (urban), Morris (agricultural)

**Biennial Workplan Comments and Key Action Leads**

* Our goal is to find out where we are in terms of progress on the workplan and develop strategies to move forward in actions that are stagnant.
* Key Action 1: Buchanan: ICPRB will shortly have a final report to distribute to the technical advisory group for review. An updated database was submitted to Mike Mallonee at the CBP this past spring and he has been working with IT people. All metrics have been tested and refined and index sensitivity improved. The new data that has been brought in has populated the underrepresented bioregions well. A slight boost is seen with genus level rather than family level attributes.
* Key Action 2: Buchanan: This action is for the workgroup’s collective decision with ICPRB after the report from action 1 is distributed.
* Key Action 3: Buchanan: ICPRB holds a six year grant from CBP to support Mike Mallonee at CBP, which ends in June 2017. We have received the RFP for the grant renewal and are working on our proposal. The job description in the new RFP has an added responsibility in living resources data. ICPRB has technical experience in house with adding biological data to the database structure. The RFP has extra funds, which we are proposing to use for ICPRB staff some accept data and insert into database and develop a program for states to do this themselves in the future. If our proposal is accepted, by next June ICPRB could begin working on this process to standardize the data submission process.
	+ Starr: ICPRB should be sure to include in the RFP that this action in the Stream Health Workplan is dependent upon receiving renewal of CBP grant money. This should also be brought to attention at the Habitat GIT meeting.
* Key Action 4: Ongoing action as materials come to us, such as the previous discussion.
* Key Action 5: Starr: The pooled monitoring group with CBT is underway. They have just recently awarded a second round of proposals and is reviewing at a second set of questions, Sadie Drescher (CBT) is leading the effort and the group’s goal is to have the next RFP out by end of 2016.
	+ Stranko: New funding partners have been brought in, including SHA along with DNR and CBT.
	+ Lovegreen: Regarding expanding the pooled monitoring effort into other states. Pennsylvania has a bay monitoring initiative expanding to New York with CBT and ACB involved; a conference coming up shortly on this project.
	+ **Action:** Workgroup chairs and staff will work to get in contact with Serena McClain and Scott Lowe, who had previously said they would be interested in participating with this action.
	+ Meyers: Fairfax County is interested but unsure of any specific actions; **Action:** Meyers will get in contact with Virginia agencies and groups regarding any pooled monitoring in Virginia.
	+ Starr: The pooled monitoring group learned of a similar initiative in Washington State. CBT is in discussions with this group to hear lessons learned and such. One strategy the Washington group is utilizing is to have folks who required to do monitoring pay into a larger group who organizes monitoring, such as in in-lieu-fee program. The larger group can then answer the collective questions about monitoring.
* Key Action 6: The Stream Restoration Permit Committee has not yet been formed & we are still looking for a lead.
	+ **Decision:** Burch: Volunteers for lead. Concerned about jurisdictional differences of permitting throughout the watershed.
		- Group members: Wright, Seiger, Lovegreen, Armocida, Starr, Meyers
		- **Action:** If you would like to participate in the permitting committee group, please contact Kyle Runion and Josh Burch (josh.burch@dc.gov)
		- Armocida: Possibility of subcommittees for each state?
			* Burch: The objective of the first meeting could be to determine if there is a need for these breakout groups while perhaps the larger group focuses on federal permitting.
		- **Action:** Law will provide a summary of interviews which were conducted during the development of the Management Strategy regarding needs of permit needs of practitioners or regulators to, and Starr will provide summary of CBT and EPA permit issues identified to the group lead and members.
		- Group members: Wright, Seiger, Lovegreen, Armocida, Starr, Meyers
* Key Action 7: Streamlining the permitting process
	+ Seiger released guidelines for permitting MS4/TMDL related restoration projects and a form from MDE to help streamline the process for any projects. These guidelines were distributed to the group and [available online](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/24353/guidelinesrestore8-5-16.pdf).
		- Any questions can be sent to Runion or Bill Seiger (william.seiger@maryland.gov)
		- This could be an action of the group for action 6, or could be another spin-off.
* Key Action 8: Establish minimum stability monitoring requirements for restoration projects
	+ Kirk Mantay has volunteered as the lead and is ready to begin work with the group in January/February.
		- Group members: Starr, McClain, Seiger, McDonald, Leitner, Armocida, Burch
		- **Action:** If you would like to participate in the stability monitoring group, please contact Kyle Runion and Kirk Mantay (kirk@southriverfederation.net)
* Key Action 9: Law: We are currently at step 1, which is identifying representatives from the stream health and urban stormwater workgroup to figure out total effect on stream health of BMPs and how to incorporate co-benefits ... not necessarily group of people meeting but requesting funding or expert panel to look at this particular element... could be short group to recommend EP.
	+ **Action:** Law will draft and submit a recommendation for an expert panel on key action 9 and present to the urban stormwater workgroup with the help of Spaur, Stranko, Morris, and Clearwater (or other MDE representative).
* Key Action 10: recommendations for TMDL
	+ Bill Stack led effort to develop this action. The folks at MDE related to seeting TMDL impairments are willing to examine related biological parameters.
	+ **Action**: Stranko will follow up to Bill Stack and Greg Bush to find any progress.
	+ **Action:** Please contact Runion and Starr if you are willing to lead or participate in key action 10 (addressing TMDL impairments not associated with a pollutant).
		- Participants: Spaur
	+ **Action**: Law will send state regulatory contacts (key action 10) to Runion & Stranko.
	+ Hairston-Strang: The Healthy Watersheds GIT may have resources to share.
* Key Action 11: Stream trainings
	+ Potential for collaboration with the urban stormwater workgroup.
	+ **Action:** Please contact Runion and Starr if you are willing to lead or participate in key action 11 (stream trainings).
		- Participants: McClain, Hartman, McDonald, Leitner, Lovegreen, Burch, Morris, Armocida
* As these groups begin work on each action, the workgroup will be kept updated. Expect the next meeting to take place in January/February.

[**Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative**](https://allianceforthebay.org/our-work/connecting-people/chesapeake-monitoring-cooperative/), Lea Rubin, IWLA

* The [Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/24353/stream_health_wg_cmc_rubin_and_donkersloot_10.25.16.pptx) (CMC) is made up of four organizations who work with volunteer monitoring: Izaak Walton League of America, Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, and IAN (office of UMCES).
* The goal of the CMC is to incorporate non-traditional monitoring (riverkeepers, universities, citizens, etc.) into CBP monitoring. CMC is serving as middle layer to act as data gatherers between nontraditional monitoring groups and CBP to increase the amount of quality data available. This requires:
	+ Comparability – consistent and comparable field and lab methodologies
	+ Quality assurance – three tiered data system with increasing QA standards
	+ Technical support and resources for data collectors and users
	+ Share Data – a central database for Chesapeake volunteer monitoring data
* In the spring of 2017 methods manuals, QA plans, data quality rubrics, and trainings are expected to be completed. By summer 2017, a beta version of the database will be completed.
* State indicated priority areas and potential uses: data gaps, under represented, impaired, high frequency data, bmp effectiveness, bmp implementation plans, report cards, targeted restoration/pollution hotspots.
* Donkersloot: We’ve found several opportunities for collaborations within the stream health workplan.
	+ Key action 1: CMC has concerns in existing monitoring, specifically honing in on final assessment scores metrics. There is a score deficiency in limestone and coastal plain streams. One-size fits all doesn’t work with specific bioregions.
	+ Key action 8: BMP effectiveness in minimum stability requirements – there is information that may help fill this gap.
	+ Key action 11: The CMC may be a strong help with training needs.
	+ Key action 12: Again with training needs, different audience.
* Please reach out to Lea with any project related questions. With questions about the technical aspects of monitoring, please reach to Donkersloot (ddonkersloot@iwla.org) or Jinnie (monismij@dickinson.edu).
* [Sign up for the quarterly e-newsletter](https://allianceforthebay.org/our-work/connecting-people/chesapeake-monitoring-cooperative/)

**Member Updates**

Lovegreen: New York has developed a [stream corridor assessment guide](http://www.u-s-c.org/html/Draft_Stream_Corridor_Assessment_Guide9-6-16.pdf) in response to flooding, funded through Albany resiliency dollars.

* + NFWF has funded seven capacity building projects in the Susquehanna watershed
	+ 41 workshops with the Susquehanna basin regarding emergency stream intervention program have reached about 1500 people, a quarter of which are state and federal agencies.
* Stranko: [The Maryland Water Monitoring Council takes place on December 2](http://dnr2.maryland.gov/streams/Pages/MWMC/conference.aspx). One session features stream restoration talks throughout the day.

**Next Steps**

The next meeting will take place around January/February.

**Stream Health Sub-Groups**

**Stream Health Permit Committee**

Key Action 6

Group lead: Josh Burch

Group members: Wright, Seiger, Lovegreen, Armocida, Starr, Meyers

**Stream Health Monitoring Committee**

Key Action 8 – establish minimum stability monitoring requirements

Group lead: Kirk Mantay

Group members: Starr, McClain, Seiger, McDonald, Leitner, Armocida, Burch

**Stream Health BMP Co-Benefits Committee**

Key Action 9 – develop guidance to align stream restoration BMP protocols for nutrient and sediment loads delivered downstream to optimize improvements in stream health and function

Group lead: Neely Law

Group members: Spaur, Stranko, Morris, Clearwater

**Stream Health TMDL impairments**

Key Action 10

Group lead: No lead

Group members: Spaur

**Stream Health Training Committee**

Key Action 11 – provide training to regulators and practitioners

Group lead: No lead

Group members: McClain, Starr, Hartman, McDonald, Leitner, Lovegreen, Burch, Morris, Armocida