



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
*A Watershed Partnership*

**Chesapeake Bay Program  
Management Board  
May 2019**

**Program Update**

**CBPO Calendar**

May 20	Climate Resiliency Workgroup in-person meeting
May 20	Diversity Workgroup in-person (Baltimore, Md.)
May 20-22	Choose Clean Water Conference (Baltimore, Md.)
May 21-22	Habitat GIT Meeting (Havre de Grace Maritime Museum)
May 22-23	Citizens Advisory Committee meeting (Baltimore, Md.)
May 29	Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting (STAR) meeting
June 5	Land Use Workgroup in-person meeting
June 5-6	Local Government Advisory Committee meeting (Selinsgrove, Pa.)
June 6	Healthy Watersheds GIT in-person meeting
June 7	EPA Evaluation of Phase III WIPs released
June 11	Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management GIT quarterly meeting
June 11-12	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee meeting (Blacksburg, Va.)
June 13	Management Board meeting
June 19-20	Agriculture Workgroup in-person meeting
June 26-27	Sustainable Fisheries GIT Biannual meeting (Cambridge, Md.)
June 27	Environmental Literacy Summit (Woodbridge, Va.)
Aug. 9	Final Phase III WIPs due to EPA; posted on Jurisdiction websites

**Updates**

**2019 Blue Crab Winter Dredge Survey**

The 2019 Blue Crab Winter Dredge Survey results were announced on May 6 and the news is positive. Both the juvenile and spawning age female numbers increased in 2019. The number of spawning age female crabs remains above the recommended threshold of 70 million. The total crab abundance levels also increased. It is estimated that the blue crab population is now 594 million—223 million more crabs than reported last year.

The winter dredge survey—conducted in cooperation between the University of Maryland Chesapeake Biological Lab and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science—produces information that is essential for the management of the species, such as an estimate of the number of crabs over-wintering in the bay and the number of young crabs entering the population each year. Also calculated is the estimated number of females that could spawn within the year, which is an important indicator of future spawning potential.

**Draft Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans Issued**

On Friday, April 12, all seven of the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions posted their *draft* Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) for public review. The Phase III WIPs include the specific steps each jurisdiction intends to implement between 2019 and 2025 to meet Bay restoration goals. EPA is

evaluating the plans based on the criteria that was communicated to the jurisdictions in a June 20, 2018 “expectations letter”. EPA will provide formal comments to the jurisdictions on June 7. Links to each of the jurisdictions’ websites through the EPA TMDL site at: [www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl](http://www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl).  
Contact: Lucinda Power, (410) 267-5722, [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto:power.lucinda@epa.gov)

### **BMP Verification Letters Sent to Jurisdictions**

On Tuesday, April 9, CBPO Director Dana Aunkst sent letters to each of the seven Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions advising them that EPA completed its review of their BMP verification and progress data submitted for the 2018 assessment. In accordance with the Partnership’s Best Management Practice (BMP) verification protocols, procedures, and schedule, jurisdictions are expected to submit verification information to EPA to demonstrate that BMPs were being implemented on the ground and functioning as intended. CBPO staff will be reaching out to the jurisdictions to schedule a discussion regarding potential enhancements that would need to be completed no later than September 30, 2019, so that the information can be reviewed prior to the final December 2, 2019 progress submission.

Contact: Dana Aunkst, (410) 267-5710, [aunkst.dana@epa.gov](mailto:aunkst.dana@epa.gov)

### **Bay Barometer Release**

On Tuesday, April 2, the CBP Partnership announced of the release of the 2017-18 Bay Barometer, an annual report on restoration efforts in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. For the first time, the assessment also tracks the impact that a changing climate has on the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Bay Barometer tells a story of resilience—the highest water quality score since monitoring began more than 30 years ago, a record-breaking abundance of underwater grasses and significant progress on oyster restoration, fish passage, and protected lands. Efforts on stream health, toxic contaminants, wetlands and forest buffers continue to lag behind, however, and require more focused attention.

For more information:

[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the\\_latest\\_bay\\_barometer\\_tells\\_a\\_cautionary\\_success\\_story\\_about\\_bay\\_restora](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/the_latest_bay_barometer_tells_a_cautionary_success_story_about_bay_restora)

### **CBP Released Water Quality Standards Attainment Indicator**

On March 26, the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) announced that water quality in the Chesapeake Bay met its highest standard for water quality since monitoring began in 1985, besting its previous record reported in 2017. An estimated 42 percent of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries met clean water standards for clarity (measured by observing underwater grass abundance), dissolved oxygen, and chlorophyll-a between 2015 and 2017.

For more information: <https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/clean-water/water-quality>

### **Magothy River sees slight rebound**

The Magothy River Association recently announced that the Magothy River received a “D” grade in its latest health assessment. Located in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, the river received a score of 30 percent, an improvement over its 2017 score of 22 percent. More significantly, this year’s score saw an increase in the water quality of the river for the first time in more than three years. However, this remains far below the 80 percent threshold needed for an “A” grade. This year’s score was due in large part to an increase in water clarity. Experts thanked an explosion of dark false mussels, which help to filter pollutants and sediment, allowing for a higher abundance of underwater grasses.

For more information, visit the Magothy River Association (<http://www.magothyriver.org/>).

### **ShoreRivers Releases Combined Report Card**

ShoreRivers, a non-profit organization that works to protect and restore the waterways of Maryland's Eastern Shore, recently released its first-ever combined report card, presenting the latest data and information on the Sassafras, Chester, Miles and Wye and Choptank rivers. While the report card presents individual information about each of the rivers, this combined view helps paint a larger, regional view of the overall water quality on the Eastern Shore.

The rivers and streams of the Eastern Shore suffered last year due to the heavy rainfall that fell across the region, increasing the agricultural and stormwater runoff that flowed into the waterways. However, it is important to note that many of the rivers showed higher levels of pollution upstream, rather than at their mouths, indicating that poor water quality can be attributed to local sources.

The Chester, Choptank, Miles and Wye Rivers all received grades of C+ while the Sassafras River received a grade of B-. After the region received nearly six feet of rain in 2018, the Choptank, Miles and Wye River's scores suffered. It is important to note that many of the rivers showed higher levels of pollution upstream, rather than at their mouths, indicating that poor water quality can be attributed to local sources.

### **Oyster Sanctuary Protection Debate Continues**

A recent bill in Maryland prevents five oyster sanctuaries from being opened for oyster harvesting without legislative approval. The bill applies to oyster sanctuaries in Harris Creek and the Tred Avon, Little Choptank, St. Mary's and Manokin rivers. Though several environmental groups supported the bill, Maryland watermen were in strong opposition, arguing that the bill would negatively impact their harvests and livelihoods. The oyster industry contributes significantly to the local economy—the 1.19 million pound oyster harvest in 2015 was worth more than \$15 million, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Maryland Governor Hogan vetoed the bill in response to the watermen's concerns, but the legislature overrode the veto.

The Chesapeake Bay Program set a goal in the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, to restore oyster reefs and populations in 10 rivers—five in Maryland and five in Virginia—by 2025. According to a July 2018 restoration update from Maryland, 716 acres of oyster reefs are considered complete, with Harris Creek fully restored, and 222 acres of reefs remain to be restored in the Tred Avon and Little Choptank rivers. Native oyster populations are still at less than one percent of historic levels.

### **Second CBP Biennial Strategy Review Meeting Held in March**

On March 13-14, the partnership held its second Biennial Strategy Review Meeting in Richmond, Virginia. CBP Management Board members, Goal Implementation Team, Workgroup and Advisory Committee Chairs, along with other staff also participated in the two-day meeting. The meeting was designed as a look back at the partnership's progress toward meeting the goals and outcomes of the 2014 Watershed Agreement, science and finance innovations, adaptive management implementation, and improving efforts and process in the coming two-year implementation cycle.

Contact: Greg Barranco, [\(410\) 267-5778](tel:410-267-5778), [barranco.greg@epa.gov](mailto:barranco.greg@epa.gov)

### **Advisory Committee Updates**

#### **Local Government Advisory Committee**

*The purpose of the LGAC is to advise the Executive Council on how to effectively implement projects and engage the support of local governments to achieve the goals of the Bay Agreement.*

- Governor Hogan appointed two new Members to LGAC: Mayor of Salisbury Jacob Day and Deputy Director of Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection Patrice Bubar.
- Filling gaps to address WIP Implementation: LGAC finalized its report summarizing the September 26, 2018 invitation-only Local Government Forum on “Filling Gaps to Advance WIP Implementation”. To address both the insufficient staff capacity and technical assistance provider capacity limitations, LGAC and Forum participants recommend the establishment of a Circuit Rider Network, or set of networks, tailored to regional and/or state needs across the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Furthermore, LGAC recommends additional analysis be conducted as to whether a formalized Technical Assistance Collaborative is feasible, realistic, and necessary.
- Tappahannock round table: Virginia LGAC members hosted one local elected official roundtable with their peers in Tappahannock on April 10th. This roundtable was an opportunity to better engage local decision makers in watershed protection and restoration.
- PA Draft Phase III WIP: Pennsylvania LGAC, along with PA CAC members met April 18th with PA DEP to review and discuss PA’s draft Phase 3 WIP. This meeting followed an April 15th Stormwater 101 session hosted by Members at the PA State Association of Township Supervisors annual conference.
- Next meeting: The next LGAC meeting will be held June 5-6, 2019 in Selinsgrove, PA. Topics for discussion include using Community Development Block Grants for water quality credit, providing feedback on the WIP Data Dashboard and welcoming Dana Aunkst to LGAC. LGAC still seeks a New York and Pennsylvania representative.

Questions about LGAC should be directed to LGAC Coordinator Jennifer Starr at [jstarr@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:jstarr@allianceforthebay.org). To be added to the Interested Parties list, please contact LGAC Staff at [lgac@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:lgac@allianceforthebay.org).

### **Citizens’ Advisory Committee**

*The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is charged with responsibility for representing residents and stakeholders of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in the restoration effort and advising the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership on all aspects of restoration.*

- Next meeting: The next CAC quarterly meeting will be in Baltimore, MD on May 22-23 and will overlap the annual conference of the Choose Clean Water Coalition.
  - The CAC members will work on building consensus around their annual report of recommendations.
- Leadership: CAC officers are Matt Ehrhart (PA), Chair and Julie Lawson (DC), Vice-Chair.

To be added to CAC’s Interested Parties List, please contact: Adam Bray [abray@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:abray@allianceforthebay.org) for program questions, contact Jessica Blackburn [jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org)

## **Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)**

*The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) provides scientific and technical guidance to the Chesapeake Bay Program on measures to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay.*

For any inquiries, or to be added to STAC's Interested Parties list, contact STAC Coordinator Rachel Dixon [dixonr@chesapeake.org](mailto:dixonr@chesapeake.org) or STAC Staff Annabelle Harvey [harveya@chesapeake.org](mailto:harveya@chesapeake.org).

### ***Upcoming Meetings:***

STAC will hold its first quarterly meeting of FY2019 on June 11-12, 2019 at the Inn at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA. More information will be made available on the [June meeting webpage](#).

### ***Workshops:***

On April 24-25, STAC hosted a workshop titled "Microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay and its Watershed: State of the Knowledge, Data Gaps, and Relationship to Management Goals". This workshop provided a forum to discuss research, policy, and data needs in regards to the prevalence of microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay and their potential effects on the entire ecosystem. It gathered experts in diverse backgrounds from across the watershed to foster collaboration and advance understanding of this issue. More information can be found [here](#).

One additional workshop will be hosted this spring on May 22-23 in Baltimore, MD, titled "Integrating Science and Developing Approaches to Inform Management for Contaminants of Concern in Urban Settings". More information on this upcoming workshop can be found on the [workshop website](#).

### **Results of the FY19 Request for Proposals (RFPs)**

At their March meeting, STAC agreed to support the following 4 workshops in FY2019:

- 1) Incorporating Freshwater Mussels in the Chesapeake Bay Partnership
- 2) Satellite Image Integration for the CB SAV Monitoring Program
- 3) Target Non-Point Source BMP Implementation
- 4) Linking In-Field and Edge-of-Field Water Management to Soil and Watershed Health

### ***Upcoming Reports:***

STAC has recently released the following two reports. STAC activity reports can be found on the [STAC publication page](#).

- 1) [Chesapeake Bay Program Modeling in 2025 and Beyond: A Proactive Visioning Workshop](#)
- 2) [Legacy Sediment Riparian Corridors and Total Maximum Daily Loads](#)

STAC is working to finalize the following reports. Information regarding workshops held prior to January 2018 can be found on the [STAC archived workshop homepage](#).

- 1) Linking Wetland Workplan Goals to Enhance Capacity, Increase Implementation (FY2015)
- 2) Assessing Uncertainty in the CBP Modeling System (FY2015)
- 3) Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making (FY2015)
- 4) An Analytical Framework for Aligning Chesapeake Bay Program Monitoring Efforts to Support Climate Change (FY2016)

- 5) Understanding and Explaining 30+ Years of Water Clarity Trends in the Bay's Tidal Waters (FY2016)
- 6) Revising Coastal Land-Water Interactions: The Triblet Connection (FY2017)
- 7) Chesapeake Bay Program Climate Change Modeling 2.0 (FY2018)
- 8) Establishment of Multifunctional Riparian Buffers (FY2018)
- 9) Assessing the Environment in Outcome Units (AEIOU): Using Eutrophying Units for Management (FY2018)
- 10) Microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay and its Watershed: State of the Knowledge, Data Gaps, and Relationship to Management Goals (FY2018)

For more information regarding any of the reviews above, visit the [review homepage](#) or contact STAC Coordinator Rachel Dixon at [dixonr@chesapeake.org](mailto:dixonr@chesapeake.org)

## **Goal Implementation Team, STAR and Communication Workgroup Updates**

### **Status and Trends (Previously Indicators) Workgroup**

The following indicators were updated since the February Management Board meeting:

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Statement of Status/Progress</i>	<i>Link</i>
Diversity	The partnership has set a target to increase the percentage of people of color in its program to 25 percent by 2025. The partnership has set a target to increase the percentage of people of color in its leadership to 15 percent by 2025.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/engaged-communities/diversity">https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/engaged-communities/diversity</a>
Toxic Contaminants Policy	In 2016, 82 percent of the Chesapeake Bay's tidal segments are partially or fully impaired by toxic contaminants. Chesapeake Bay Program partners have set a goal to observe no such impairments.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/clean-water/toxic-contaminants-policy-and-prevention">https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/clean-water/toxic-contaminants-policy-and-prevention</a>
Stream Health	In 2018, researchers and resource managers established the six years between 2006 and 2011 as the baseline period for our indicator of stream health.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/abundant-life/stream-health">https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/abundant-life/stream-health</a>
Forest Buffers	Between 2016 and 2017, about 56 miles of forest buffers were planted along rivers and streams in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. While this marks progress toward the outcome, it is 844 miles below the 900-mile-per-year target and the lowest restoration total of the last 22 years.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/abundant-life/forest-buffers">https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/abundant-life/forest-buffers</a>
Protected Lands	According to preliminary data collected in 2018, approximately 1,364,301 acres of land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been permanently protected from development since 2010.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/conserved-lands/protected-lands">https://www.chesapeakeprogram.org/conserved-lands/protected-lands</a>

Wetlands	Between 2010 and 2017, 9,103 acres of wetlands were established, rehabilitated or reestablished on agricultural lands. While this outcome includes a target to restore 85,000 acres of tidal and non-tidal wetlands in the watershed, 83,000 of these restored acres should take place on agricultural lands. The wetlands restored on agricultural lands between 2010 and 2017 mark an 11 percent achievement of the 83,000-acre goal.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/wetlands">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/wetlands</a>
Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Sediment Loads and River Flow	Between October 2016 and September 2017, river flow to the Bay measured a below-average 47.7 billion gallons per day. During this same time period, approximately 240 million pounds of nitrogen, 12.7 million pounds of phosphorus and 4.3 billion pounds of sediment reached the Bay: a 0.4 percent, seven percent and 14 percent decrease from the previous year, respectively.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/clean-water/water-quality">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/clean-water/water-quality</a>
Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring	According to preliminary data (without water clarity acres assessment), an estimated 42 percent of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries met water quality standards during the 2015 to 2017 assessment period: the highest estimate of water quality standards attainment since 1985.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/clean-water/water-quality">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/clean-water/water-quality</a>

Indicators that are likely to be updated before or close to the next Management Board meeting include:

- SAV – final 2017 & preliminary 2018 data
- Protected Lands – update to 2018 data
- Public access
- Reducing Pollution Indicator – modelled nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment loads

NOTE: an asterisk\* denotes new indicators that have been approved through the Status and Trends workgroup under STAR. The Indicators Coordinator provides notification to the Management Board and to STAR of these new indicators; members of either group may request additional information or a presentation at a meeting on these new indicators.

Contact: Daniel Giddings, [giddings.daniel@epa.gov](mailto:giddings.daniel@epa.gov)

### **Fisheries Goal Implementation Team**

*The Sustainable Fisheries GIT focuses on advancing ecosystem-based fisheries management by using science to make informed fishery management decisions that cross state boundaries.*

- Blue crab winter dredge survey: The blue crab winter dredge survey is completed for 2019 season, and the results are now being processed by state jurisdictions. The 2019 Advisory Report is expected by the first week of July, and communications will be coordinated with the Fisheries GIT June meeting, where the Advisory Report is expected to be approved. The Fisheries GIT recently incorporated a list of blue crab specific science and research needs identified by CBSAC into the larger Strategic Science and Research Framework list.
- Biannual meeting: The Fisheries GIT plans to host their biannual meeting June 26-27 at Horn Point Lab oyster hatchery in Cambridge, MD. The meeting will focus on blue crab science and management, fish habitat, forage, oyster science, and other emerging issues.
- Oysters and Phase III WIPs: Given the timing of Phase III WIPs release in draft form and the final report prepared by the BMP expert panel on oysters, the Fisheries GIT is working with Water Quality GIT, partners from Oyster Recovery Partnership and state fishery management jurisdictions, to determine feasibility of crediting oyster restoration and aquaculture as BMPs for denitrification in the Phase III WIPs.
- Invasive Catfish Task Force: The Invasive Catfish Task Force met on April 5 to approve new roles and objectives, and agreed to rename the group to Invasive Catfish Workgroup, reflecting the ongoing issue of blue and flathead catfish presence in the Chesapeake. The group also discussed new membership that can help better engage the commercial fishing industry, and methods to evaluate the magnitude of ecological harm by invasive catfish to managed species like blue crab and shad/herring.

Contact: Bruce Vogt; [bruce.vogt@noaa.gov](mailto:bruce.vogt@noaa.gov)

### **Habitat Goal Implementation Team**

*The Habitat GIT works to restore a network of land and water habitats to afford a range of public benefits and to support priority species.*

- Spring meeting: The Habitat GIT is planning its annual spring meeting for May 21-22 in Havre de Grace, Maryland. The meeting will feature updates on GIT Funded projects and discussion about tidal habitats (SAV, wetlands, etc.) in the context of the adaptive management cycle. Meeting materials will be shared as they become available. Please contact [Hobaugh.paige@epa.gov](mailto:Hobaugh.paige@epa.gov) with any questions.
- Wetland Workgroup revitalization: The Habitat GIT leadership and new Wetland Workgroup chair (Pam Mason, VIMS) led the workgroup revitalization meeting on March 6th. A core group of representatives from each jurisdiction and agency were invited, and participation was good. We will be bringing the discussions and ideas to the full workgroup on June 5. The main approach moving forward will be to focus on 4 areas: data and reporting; accelerating implementation opportunities and finance; technical information transfer; and outreach and education.
- Aquatic Nuisance Task Force: The Habitat GIT staffer will be attending the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) national meeting on May 7-9 in South Lake Tahoe, CA, offering support for

discussions and presentations related to the work of the Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species. Highlights from the meeting include discussions of state management plan approvals, vector assessment tools, and goal setting for the next Strategic Plan. For more information about ANSTF, please visit their website.

Contact: Paige Hobaugh, [hobaugh.paige@epa.gov](mailto:hobaugh.paige@epa.gov)

### **Water Quality Goal Implementation Team**

*The Water Quality GIT works to evaluate, focus and accelerates the implementation of practices, policies and programs that will restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries to conditions that support living resources and protect human health.*

#### **The WQGIT held conference calls on April 8 and April 22. A subset of topics is included below:**

- Development of a targeted focus for research on climate resilient BMPs, following the 2018 PSC direction to “... develop a better understanding of the BMP responses, including new or other emerging BMPs, to climate change conditions” so that in “2021, the Partnership will consider results of updated methods, techniques, and studies and revisit existing estimated loads due to climate change.”
- Updates to the beta tool for cost optimization of CAST BMP implementation scenarios
- The final 2018-2019 Management Strategy, Logic Table and Workplan for the 2017 WIPs, 2025 WIPs and Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring outcomes was submitted to the Management Board for approval at the May 16 Management Board meeting.

#### **The WQGIT will hold a conference call on May 13, 2019. A subset of topics to be discussed includes:**

- Demonstration of new features in the Watershed Data Dashboard.
- Further discussion of the proposed process and schedule for development of the Phase III sediment planning targets, and recommendation to the PSC whether to approve the proposal.

Contact: Jason Bernagros, [bernagros.jason@epa.gov](mailto:bernagros.jason@epa.gov)

### **Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team**

*The goal of the Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT 4) is to maintain local watershed health across a range of landscape contexts. With this goal, GIT 4 intends to bring attention to the challenge of protecting streams and watersheds that are healthy today. This initiative complements the "dirty waters" approach which focuses on restoring impaired waters.*

- Next meeting: The Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team will host a quarterly meeting in Annapolis on June 6.

Contact: Renee Thompson; [rthomps@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:rthomps@chesapeakebay.net)

### **Foster Stewardship Goal Implementation Team**

*The Fostering Stewardship GIT promotes individual stewardship, supports environmental education for all ages, and assists citizens, communities and local governments in undertaking initiatives to achieve restoration and conservation in the Chesapeake region. It aims to build public support of restoration efforts and increase citizen engagement and active stewardship.*

- Stewardship Online Tool: The Stewardship Team leads and Web Team are well into the design and mock up phases of the Stewardship Online Tool.
- Environmental Literacy Summit: The Education Workgroup has been preparing materials for the Environmental Literacy Summit to be held on June 27th at George Mason University's Potomac Science Center in Woodbridge, VA. Discussions will include advancing specific goals for the Sustainable Schools Outcome and the fact that we are not achieving consistent environmental literacy progress in all schools throughout the watershed. This event was organized in response to the unanimous vote at the Chesapeake Executive Council in August, 2018 that we must convene the region's education and natural resource leaders around these issues.
- Public access sites: The Public Access Workgroup announced 23 new sites opened in 2018 (12 in MD, 4 in PA, and 7 in VA), marking 176 total sites (59% of the 300 site goal). The team will be convening this summer to discuss next steps and dive deeper into enhancing the quality of public access sites.
- Conservation finance: The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership held their first round table focusing on private investments in land protection on April 29th in Baltimore. This was the first series of steps towards the GIT funded Chesapeake Watershed Conservation Finance Workshop being planned for fall, 2019.

### ***Diversity Workgroup***

- New staff: The Diversity Workgroup has a new Coordinator, Tuana Philips, and a new Staffer, Francesca King.
- Next meeting: There will be an in-person workgroup meeting on May 20th in Baltimore, MD. At this meeting the workgroup will be introduced to the new Staffer and Coordinator and assess progress on the workplan. A portion of the meeting will be dedicated to workforce development and employment, one of the management approaches.
- Demographic profile: The Diversity Workgroup has recently collected information on the demographic profile of the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership and will use this information to assess progress towards the CBP target of increasing racial and ethnic diversity representation in the partnership from 13% to 25%, with 15% in leadership positions, by 2025.

Diversity workgroup contact: Francesca King; [king.francesca@epa.gov](mailto:king.francesca@epa.gov)

Contact: Drew Pizzala; [drew\\_pizzala@partner.nps.gov](mailto:drew_pizzala@partner.nps.gov)

### **Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management Goal Implementation Team**

*The goal of the Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management GIT is to continually improve the governance and management of the CBP Partnership.*

### **CBP Biennial Strategy Review System**

The Chesapeake Bay Program hosted the Strategy Review System Biennial Meeting on March 13-14, 2019 in Richmond, Virginia. The [SRS Planning Team](#) is working to synthesize the results of that meeting and other concurrent efforts to communicate changes to the cycle going forward. Discussions with the Management Board on various related topics are forthcoming.

Contact: Dave Goshorn, [david.goshorn@maryland.gov](mailto:david.goshorn@maryland.gov)

The ChesapeakeStat team is working on final details prior to launch of ChesapeakeDecisions in support of the Strategy Review System. A walkthrough demonstration is planned for the GIT Coordinators and Staffers on May 15. Pertinent updates to the Management Board will be shared as development and implementation continue.

Contact: Doreen Vetter, [vetter.doreen@epa.gov](mailto:vetter.doreen@epa.gov)

### **FY2019 GIT Funding**

The EPA will continue the GIT Funding program in FY2019 at a level of \$900,000.<sup>1</sup> GITs and their respective workgroups are working to develop project ideas, due to GIT 6 and Chesapeake Bay Trust staff in mid-June 2019. After a peer review and revision period, GIT and program leadership will meet in late July 2019 to review and score final project proposals. A final list of projects will be submitted to the Director of the Chesapeake Bay Program Office for review and approval in August 2019.

Contact: Greg Allen, [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov)

### **Local Leadership Workgroup**

The Local Leadership Workgroup has completed a revision of the Local Leadership Management Strategy and 2-Year Logic and Action Plan as part of the Strategy Review System process. Documents were posted for public input between March and April 2019, and will be accepted as complete by the Management Board pending the May 16, 2019 meeting. The next workgroup meeting will be held on July 10, 2019 in Frederick, MD (venue TBD).

Contact: Jennifer Starr, [jstarr@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:jstarr@allianceforthebay.org)

### **Budget and Finance Workgroup**

Jim Edward, EPA and Dr. Elliott Campbell, MD DNR will serve as Co-Chairs of the workgroup. This change in leadership was approved by workgroup members and the Management Board in April 2019. The workgroup held a quarterly meeting in April 2019, and discussed next steps to move forward with the recommendations in the Environmental Finance Advisory Board report *Illustrative Private Equity Capital Model: Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Project*. The workgroup is also considering options and recommendations from the draft *Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Financing Strategy* report as part of a larger effort to incorporate finance considerations into *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* outcome strategies and action plans.

Contacts: Jim Edward, [edward.james@epa.gov](mailto:edward.james@epa.gov); Dr. Elliott Campbell, [elliott.campbell@maryland.gov](mailto:elliott.campbell@maryland.gov)

GIT 6 Contact: Emily Freeman, [freeman.emily@epa.gov](mailto:freeman.emily@epa.gov)

### **Scientific, Technical Assessment, and Reporting Team**

*The purpose of STAR (Scientific, Technical Analysis and Reporting) is to facilitate productive deployment of scientific resources, to provide timely, quality information to managers, and to expand communication between workgroups.*

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<sup>1</sup> This amount may vary slightly based on overhead costs, as determined by the Chesapeake Bay Trust.

## **CAP Workgroup**

The most recent CAP WG meeting was held on 3/8/2019. Topics were:

- **James River chlorophyll *a* criteria updates.** The proposed updates to the James River chlorophyll-*a* criteria summarizing work from a seven year study have been published to the Virginia register of regulations <http://register.dls.virginia.gov/vol35/iss11/v35i11.pdf> . Tish Robertson (VADEQ) reviewed the proposal highlighting the remaining time for input as the public review and comment period was closing on 3/22/19.
- **Status of restoration variances – dissolved oxygen.** Gary Shenk (USGS) provides a summary of the process underway documenting the most recent variances that will be needed for 303d listing assessments and therefore also updating in the Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Standards Indicator score assessments.
- **K<sub>d</sub> Regression Updates** – In 2018, the CAP WG highlighted a desire to revisit the K<sub>d</sub> regressions used for water clarity acres assessments. The workgroup action item is documenting the updated technique on local calibration over regional calibration.
- for producing water quality acres assessments. **Assessing possible advances in SAV acreage assessment: a STAC workshop proposal** – Brooke Landry (MD DNR, Chair of SAV Workgroup) highlighted directions for advancing new protocols and procedures through workshop support. We anticipate some members on the workgroup will be participating in those workshop meetings if the proposal is funded.

## **Data Integrity Workgroup**

The Data Integrity Workgroup held its quarterly meeting on March 19, 2019 at the Fish and Wildlife Services in Annapolis. The meeting materials have been uploaded and can be found here. The meeting was presided by the co-chairs; Bruce Michael, DNR and Cindy Johnson, VADEQ. Bruce provided an update on new funding and leadership changes at DNR, and renewed commitment for working towards WIP goals and the Conowingo RFP. Monitoring updates were provided by all jurisdictions. A greener approach being implemented by VADEQ for field sheets was discussed and approved by the workgroup. Results for the Coordinated Split Sample Program were presented by Mike Mallonee (CBP Water Quality Data Manager). The final audit report for SRBC was submitted and important study highlights were presented by Durga Ghosh (CBP QA Coordinator). A discussion on guidelines for incorporating non-traditional labs as a part of Citizen Monitoring was initiated by Durga with all members providing input. The next quarterly meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 2019.

## **Climate Resiliency Workgroup**

The CRWG will be holding an in-person meeting on May 20th with a focus on resilience aimed at both having the jurisdictions provide updates on the climate narratives in the WIPS III as well as focused discussions on resiliency with other working groups. The WG is working with the modeling team and the Water Quality GIT and Modeling team on the PSC request and subsequent Management Board request for providing insight to the Bay Program on the impacts to BMPs from climate change. The CRWG's updated 2-year workplan, management strategy and logic table have been submitted as part of the SRS process.

## **STAR**

STAR has been working with the Goal Teams and STAC to integrate STAC recommendations into the science needs list as part of the Strategic Science and Research Framework. STAR has been engaging

with STAC on the framework and how STAC and its members can be involved during the SRS process. The [April STAR meeting](#) focused on recent progress of the modeling workgroup on climate change and the next steps to address the climate change effects on BMP efficiency. More details can be found in the [briefing paper](#). Next [STAR meeting](#) will be on Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at the IAN office.

### **Modeling Workgroup**

The Modeling Workgroup is working to make progress on the completion of the Phase 6 and WQSTM model documentation. The CBP Modeling Team is also actively working to complete, by the close of 2019, a fully operational model assessment system of the influence climate change has on Chesapeake water quality. The last Modeling Workgroup Quarterly was held on April 2nd and 3rd, and the presentations and meeting materials can be found [here](#). The first Beta release of CAST BMP optimization was presented and reviewed during this meeting. Next Modeling WG conference call is scheduled on May 30<sup>th</sup> 1 pm.

### **The Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT)**

- Between April and June 2019, ITAT organizers will work with STAR to establish future priorities and activities based on outcomes from the SRS process.
- Monthly ITAT jurisdiction webinars on research findings relevant to Chesapeake Bay management continue. The purpose of these webinars is to communicate management-relevant research findings to the CBP Partnership's natural resource managers. December 2018 – March 2019 presentation topics included:
  - Agricultural Conservation Practice Implementation in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Dean Hively, USGS)
  - A pilot implementation of high frequency nutrient monitoring to assess effects of large storms (Lora Harris, UMCES)
  - Assessing urban BMP function, performance, and delivery of co-benefits to stream ecosystems (Rosemary Fanelli, USGS)

Contact Jeni Keisman ([jkeisman@usgs.gov](mailto:jkeisman@usgs.gov)) for more information.

STAR Contact: Cuiyin Wu; [cwu@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:cwu@chesapeakebay.net)

### **Communications Workgroup**

*The Communications Workgroup provides strategic planning and expert advice to support the communication needs of the Chesapeake Bay Program partners, and spur public action through consistent messaging, expanded media coverage, use of multimedia and online tools, comprehensive branding and promotion, outreach to stakeholders, and coordinated internal and external communications.*

#### Communications Workgroup:

Monthly meeting: The Communications Workgroup held our monthly meeting on May 1. We coordinated shared messaging around American Wetlands Month and National Endangered Species Day. We heard updates from our Phase III WIP Engagement Action Team and Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week Action Team. The theme of this year's Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week (June 1-9) will be "All Hands" and will highlight a different group that contributes to the success of watershed

restoration each day of the week. The groups are: agriculture; watermen/aquaculture; small businesses; nonprofits/volunteers; local governments; stormwater/wastewater; military; recreation/sportsmen; and you. We will be issuing a press release and creating a social media toolkit, as well as a calendar of events that will be hosted on the Chesapeake Bay Program website.

We also heard from Caroline Donovan on the upcoming UCMES Chesapeake Bay Report Card release that is scheduled for May 21 and discussed initial plans for our July in-person meeting.

#### Communications Office and Web Team:

Bay Barometer: The Bay Barometer, which was released April 2, continues to generate media interest. A reporter for NBC Washington wrote an in-depth story on the report and the inclusion of climate change indicators that was picked up in Chicago and San Francisco. In addition, Rachel Felver, director of communications, will be appearing to discuss the Barometer on live radio in Washington, D.C., on May 7.

Fish Consumption Advisory project: Caitlyn Johnstone, outreach specialist, is continuing to work on the Fish Consumption Advisory project team. The Fish Consumption Advisory GIT-funded project has been several years in the making and is reaching the finish line. Infographics were developed with the help of a contractor, a full advisory committee, and feedback from the community. A comprehensive user guide (to be completed in May) will accompany the infographics to guide partners in creating effective change. The infographics and guide will be presented with a request to disseminate throughout networks to the diversity, toxic contaminants, local leadership, and water quality workgroups over the summer. Greg Allen will be presenting on this project at an upcoming Management Board meeting.

Revitalized rain garden: As part of the new Chesapeake Bay Program Green Team, Will Parson, our multimedia specialist, spearheaded the revival of the rain garden on Fourth St., next to the Bay Program offices. Will obtained two grants for plants and materials (thanks to Unity Gardens and the City of Annapolis' GreenScape program) and recruited volunteers to plant more than 100 native plants the long-empty plot. See before and after photos below.

The Communications Office published the following blogs in April:

- [The latest Bay Barometer tells a cautionary success story about Bay restoration](#): The Chesapeake Bay Program's annual report includes climate change impacts for the first time
- [On a stream and a prayer](#): Pope Branch has benefited from restoration and caring residents
- [The secretive eastern black rail is losing vital habitat](#): Development and climate change threaten marsh birds
- [Green infrastructure benefits extend beyond stormwater](#): Practices like rain garden curb extensions can help cities, pedestrians and residents alike
- [Weigh in on plans to improve your local waterways](#): Draft Watershed Implementation Plans now available for public comment
- [Should restored oyster reefs be opened to harvesting?](#) Oyster sanctuaries continue to be a debated issue
- [A 'green street' leads to renewal in Cambridge](#): Stormwater management is integral to the city's revitalization effort
- [Six of the Chesapeake's endangered species success stories](#): These critters have made impressive recoveries

- [Taking the foam out of food containers](#): Maryland becomes the first state to ban the much-debated material
- [Low-tech and high impact](#): Communities turn to trees to help with infrastructure needs
- [Celebrating state trees of the Chesapeake](#): These six native trees provide numerous benefits

Communications Contact: Rebecca Chillrud; [rchillrud@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:rchillrud@chesapeakebay.net)

**Rain garden project:**



**Before**



**After**

## **Recent Meetings and Events**

March 6	Land Use Workgroup face-to-face meeting
March 11	Water Quality GIT call
March 13-14	Biennial SRS meeting (Richmond, Va.)
April 15	Climate Resiliency Workgroup meeting
April 17	Integrated Monitoring Network Workgroup meeting
April 24-25	STAC Workshop: Microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay (Woodbridge, Va.)
April 25	Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting (STAR) meeting
April 30	Expanded GIT Chairs and Leadership meeting* (Columbia, Pa.) *In person only
May 2-3	Chesapeake Bay Commission meeting (Washington, DC)