



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

**Chesapeake Bay Program  
Principals' Staff Committee  
August 2019**

**Program Update**

**CBPO Calendar**

Aug 15	<i>Management Board: Healthy Watersheds SRS Quarterly Progress Meeting</i>
Aug 19	Water Quality GIT conference call
Aug 19	Climate Resiliency Workgroup meeting
Aug 21	Forage Action Team meeting
Aug 22	Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting (STAR) Team meeting
Aug 23	Final Phase III WIPs due to EPA; posted on Jurisdiction websites
Sept 4	Land Use workgroup in-person meeting
Sept 5	Chesapeake Executive Council Meeting (Oxon Hill, Md.)
Sept 10-11	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) quarterly meeting (Annapolis, Md.)
Sept 11-12	Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) quarterly meeting (Shepherdstown, Wv.)
Sept 12-13	Chesapeake Bay Commission quarterly meeting (Pennsylvania)
Sept 18-19	Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) quarterly meeting (Baltimore, Md.)
Sept 19	Management Board meeting
Sept 23	Conowingo WIP Steering Committee in-person meeting

**Updates**

**Annual Request for Budget Data in Compliance with CBARA**

On July 3, Chesapeake Bay Program Jurisdiction partners received an email from EPA Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio requesting budget data submissions, in compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2014 (CBARA). The jurisdictions were asked to return their completed spreadsheets by August 2, 2019; all submissions were received.

Contact: Jim Edward at 410-267-5705, [edward.james@epa.gov](mailto:edward.james@epa.gov)

**CBP Launches ChesapeakeDecisions Website**

On July 2, the CBPO launched ChesapeakeDecisions, a new website designed to help implement adaptive management toward achieving the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement goals and promote transparency in the partnership's work. The website includes: an overview of the Strategy Review System (SRS), document due dates and status of SRS documents, and meeting dates and document deadlines and other important information.

Visit the site at: <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/decisions>

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

**Report Shows Underwater Grass Growth Abundance Strong in 2018**

The Chesapeake Bay Program issued a press release on July 24 showing strong submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) growth in 2018, despite record rainfalls. An estimated 91,559 acres of underwater grasses were mapped in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries in 2018. If unmapped areas are

considered, the acreage could be as high as 108,960 – a record. This is a good indication that the underwater grasses are resilient to stresses and that restoration progress is taking hold.

Because grass beds are important for protecting blue crabs, underwater grass abundance is also one of several factors influencing the health and stability of blue crab populations. Earlier this month, the annual Blue Crab Advisory Report found that the overall blue crab population increased nearly 60% from 372 million in 2018 to 594 million in 2019.

Contact: Rachel Felver, [rfelver@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:rfelver@chesapeakebay.net), (410) 267-5740

### **Annual Chesapeake Executive Council Meeting Set for September 5**

The annual meeting of the Chesapeake Executive Council will be held on Thursday, September 5, 2019 from 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in Prince George's County, Maryland. The public meeting will take place at Oxon Hill Manor from 12:35 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Contact: Rachel Felver, [rfelver@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:rfelver@chesapeakebay.net), (410) 267-5740

### **Maryland DNR and CBPO Officials Participate in Water Quality Monitoring Demonstration**

On August 6, CBPO Director Dana Aunkst, Deputy Director Jim Edward and Branch Chief Carin Bisland joined Maryland Department of Natural Resources Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and officials from both agencies aboard the *RV Kerhin* for a demonstration of Chesapeake Bay water quality and habitat monitoring. The afternoon demonstration followed a briefing on water quality conditions, living resources, underwater grasses and 2019 results for summer hypoxia, dissolved oxygen and high flow events.

Contact: Dana Aunkst, 410-267-5710

## **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.*

- Stormwater: LGAC Chair Ann Simonetti represented local governments on a Stormwater panel, "Stormwater: One Word, Many Challenges," at the Beaver County Regional Council of Governments Local Government Conference called "Rivers of Opportunity" July 31-August 1.
- New York representative: LGAC still seeks a New York representative. LGAC has sent a letter to Governor Cuomo with a recommendation but has not received a reply.
- Next meeting: LGAC's next meeting is September 11-12 at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia. The first day of the quarterly meeting, LGAC will host the Local Government Forum. This year the Forum will delve into the topic of Workforce Development by looking at current green infrastructure training programs and seeing which could possibly be replicated and expanded. A key focus will be exploring efforts to create a pipeline to viable jobs.

Questions about LGAC should be directed to LGAC Coordinator Jennifer Starr at [jestarr@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:jestarr@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 meeting will be on September 18-19, 2019.
- 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, Annabelle Harvey ([harveya@cheapeake.org](mailto:harveya@cheapeake.org))

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

STAC will hold its second quarterly meeting of FY19 on September 10-11, 2019 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Annapolis, MD. More information will be made available on the [September meeting webpage](#).

### ***Workshops:***

STAC will be hosting four workshops in FY2019, listed here in order of anticipated date. Planning is underway for several of these activities. Information regarding recent workshops- including agendas, presentations, and reports (as they become available) can be found on the [workshop homepage](#).

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

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

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)
- 11) Integrating Science and Developing Approaches to Inform Management for Contaminants of Concern in Agricultural and Urban Settings (FY2018)

*\*Please note that the STAC Website is undergoing a major update and some links may not be accessible during this time. If you are unable to access a page, please contact STAC Staff.*

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

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

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

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Statement of Status/Progress</i>	<i>Link</i>
Blue Crab Abundance	Between 2018 and 2019, the abundance of adult (age 1+) female blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay increased 30 percent from 147 million to 191 million. This number is above the 70 million threshold, which is considered to be the minimum sustainable level for female blue crabs in the Bay, but lower than the target of 215 million. Because of natural variability in annual blue crab populations, blue crab abundance fluctuates from year to year.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/blue-crab-abundance">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/blue-crab-abundance</a>
Blue Crab Management	According to the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC), an estimated 23 percent of the female blue crab population was harvested in 2018. For the eleventh consecutive year, this number is below the 25.5 percent target and the 34 percent overfishing threshold. The Chesapeake Bay's blue crab stock is not depleted and it is not being overfished.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/blue-crab-management">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/blue-crab-management</a>
Protected Lands	According to data collected through early 2019, nearly 1.36 million acres of land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/conserved-lands/protected-lands">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/conserved-lands/protected-lands</a>

	permanently protected since 2010. This marks an achievement of 68 percent of the land conservation goal adopted in the <i>Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement</i> and brings the total amount of protected land in the watershed to 9.16 million acres.	
Public Access	Between 2010 and 2018, 176 boat ramps, fishing piers and other public access sites were opened on and around the Chesapeake Bay. This marks a 59 percent achievement of the goal to add 300 new access sites to the watershed by 2025 and brings the total number of access sites in the region to 1,315.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/engaged-communities/public-access">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/engaged-communities/public-access</a>
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)	According to preliminary data from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), 91,559 acres of underwater grasses were mapped in the Chesapeake Bay in 2018. However, 22 percent of the Bay was not fully mapped due to prolonged turbidity, weather conditions and security restrictions. Using 2017 levels for the unmapped areas, it is estimated that the Bay may have supported 108,960 acres of SAV in 2018. This is a 4 percent increase from 2017 figures and 59 percent of the partnership's 185,000-acre goal.	<a href="https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/sav">https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/abundant-life/sav</a>

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

- Oysters – final 2018 data (will be updated the week of August 12, 2019)

Contact: Doreen Vetter, 410-267-5780, [vetter.doreen@epa.gov](mailto:vetter.doreen@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: Following the June 2019 Fisheries GIT biannual meeting, the Fisheries GIT Executive Committee and CBSAC members agreed to meet October 7 for joint decision-making around how frequently future stock assessment updates are needed, what process should be used for peer-review of the update report, and how to prioritize blue crab science needs. The blue crab stock assessment update showed that the current management strategy is successful and biological reference points remained unchanged with updated data.

- Invasive Catfish: Plans are ongoing for an in-person meeting of the Invasive Catfish Workgroup in fall 2019, to develop objectives and agree on actions that begin to address the concerns raised at the June 2019 Fisheries GIT biannual meeting. The workgroup is currently reviewing an expanded membership list to include representation from a broad array of sectors, including academic science, management, recreational and commercial fishery, and seafood processing.
- Oysters: The [2018 Maryland Oyster Restoration Update](#) is available online, along with [2018 Virginia Oyster Restoration Update](#).
- Forage: The Forage Action Team is planning a meeting for August 21 to review progress toward a forage indicator and discuss the suggested indicator framework.
- Fish Habitat: Fish Habitat Action Team will meet to develop the next 2-year workplan in mid-September and will learn via webinar from a recent fish habitat assessment in the Great Lakes to inform the Chesapeake Bay regional fish habitat assessment.
- GIT-Funding: Two project proposals put forward by the Fisheries GIT received positive feedback and support to move forward from the July 30 GIT chairs meeting. One proposal is to conduct an assessment of juvenile striped bass nursery habitat condition and availability, to map areas of good and bad habitat quality in the Chesapeake Bay. The second proposal is to develop communications content for coastal landowners education on shoreline protection options, including permitting guidance and considerations for living shorelines.

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.*

#### **Updates**

- August 27 – Fish Passage Prioritization webinar
- GIT funding: The Habitat GIT submitted a GIT funding proposal titled *Targeted Local Outreach for Green Infrastructure in Vulnerable Areas*. The project was unanimously approved for funding at the Expanded GIT chairs meeting on July 30th. It was advised that as this proposal is developed, details are included to distinguish this project from the TSP proposal in the Choptank, which the HGIT is co-sponsoring along with the Maintain Healthy Watersheds GIT. Collaboration with the fisheries GIT, to potentially establish a Virginia community location, was also advised.

### **Brook Trout Action Team Updates**

- The Brook Trout Action Team presented at the July 25th STAR meeting to practice for the SRS Quarterly Review Meeting on August 15th. The team has been using the comments made at the July 25th meeting to refine and edit their presentation and Narrative analysis.
- The Brook Trout Action Team is planning to transition to full Workgroup status after the completion of this SRS cycle.

Contact: Julianna Greenberg; [greenberg.julianna@epa.gov](mailto:greenberg.julianna@epa.gov)

### **Stream Health Workgroup Updates**

- The Stream Health Workgroup has been using feedback from their July 25th STAR meeting presentation to refine their materials for the SRS Quarterly Progress Review Meeting on August 15.
  - The WG is considering beginning the process of changing their indicator and will meet with the Indicators Coordinator when the position is filled.
- The WG is planning a phone call for the week of August 19th to summarize factors affecting stream health as part of the WG 2-year plan.
- In late August the workgroup will begin work on revising their 2-year plan based on comments received at the last WG meeting.

Contact: Julianna Greenberg; greenberg.julianna@epa.gov

### **Fish Passage Workgroup Updates**

- The Fish Passage Workgroup has been working to prepare for their SRS Quarterly Progress Review Meeting on August 15. The group presented at the STAR meeting on July 25 and has been working on updating their supporting materials in accordance with suggestions made at the meeting.
- The Fish Passage workgroup submitted a GIT funding proposal titled *Development of the "Maryland Stream Crossing Design Guidance": A Fish-Friendly Stream Crossing Design Handbook*. At the Expanded GIT chairs meeting on July 30th, the proposal was approved unanimously. Suggestions were made to ensure that the handbook would be transferable to other states pending success in Maryland.
- The WG is planning a phone call for late August or September to discuss the current state of best practices in fish passage with a focus on fish ladders and dam removal. A date is not yet set.

Contact: Julianna Greenberg; greenberg.julianna@epa.gov

### **Fish Habitat Workgroup Updates**

- The Fish Habitat Workgroup has been preparing for their Strategy Review System (SRS) meetings. The WG has been refining their Narrative analysis and presentation based on the input received at the July 25th STAR meeting.
- The WG is planning to meet in September to draft a new 2-year work plan but a date is not yet set.
- In September, the steering committee will meet to map out specific actions to take after the results of the regional Chesapeake Bay Assessment are released. No date is currently set.

Contact: Julianna Greenberg; greenberg.julianna@epa.gov

### **Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species (MAPAIS) Updates**

- MAPAIS is in the process of planning a joint meeting with Northeast Regional Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species to take place this fall. The location and date are not yet set but it is currently expected to take place in New York state in the last week of October or the first week of November.

Contact: Julianna Greenberg; greenberg.julianna@epa.gov

### **Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Workgroup Updates**

- The SAV Workgroup submitted a GIT Funding Proposal titled *SAV Restoration Protocol Development for local jurisdictions and NGOs*. WG chair Brooke Landry presented this funding proposal at the Goal Team Chairs and Leadership Expanded Meeting on July 30<sup>th</sup>. The proposal was approved with no questions, issues, or recommendations, and is moving on to Table 2.

Contact: Megan Ossmann; [ossmannm@chesapeake.org](mailto:ossmannm@chesapeake.org)

#### **Black Duck Action Team Updates**

- The black duck action team is translating the Black Duck Decision Support Tool (DST) from kcal to acreage to inform the black duck outcome. There will be a small meeting on August 6 to discuss this further. Since they are changing to a habitat-based indicator, a meeting with the Status and Trends Workgroup will be needed to discuss and approve this change.

Contact: Megan Ossmann; [ossmannm@chesapeake.org](mailto:ossmannm@chesapeake.org)

#### **Wetlands Workgroup Updates**

- On July 31st, a Wetlands BMP Expert Panel webcast was held to discuss the report written by the expert panel addressing nontidal wetland creation, rehabilitation and enhancement BMPs. The webcast link and recording was shared with the workgroup. A workgroup meeting is being planned for early September to gain workgroup approval of the report, as well as discuss progress and plans for the WG.

Contact: Megan Ossmann; [ossmannm@chesapeake.org](mailto:ossmannm@chesapeake.org)

Habitat GIT Contact: Jennifer Greiner, [jennifer\\_greiner@fws.gov](mailto:jennifer_greiner@fws.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 a conference call on July 8. A subset of topics is included below:**

- WQGIT approval of the proposed oyster restoration denitrification and oyster restoration nutrient assimilation interim BMP for inclusion in CAST for planning purposes only, pending any issues raised by the WTWG.
- A demo of the updated Watershed Data Dashboard: Build-Your-Own-Storyline feature with request for feedback and volunteers for user testing from the WQGIT.
- A jurisdictional discussion on BMP Verification Needs and Priorities.
- An update on BMP costs under development for CAST and request for feedback from the WQGIT.
- A briefing on the transition plan for 2020-2021 milestone period updates to CAST where a schedule for development and release was presented.

#### **The WQGIT will hold a conference call on August 19. A subset of topics to be discussed includes:**

- Considering Emerging Technologies
- Maryland's Verification Program
- BMP Products to Assist with 2-Year Milestones
- CAST Updates
- Overview of Geospatial Award
- Pending Changes to Model Base Conditions for 2020-2021

Contact: Lucinda Power, [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto:power.lucinda@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.*

- Quarterly Meeting: The HWGIT met on June 6 to discuss completed and ongoing GIT funded projects, prepare for the second round of the SRS and assess progress on the logic and action plan. Tetra Tech's Preliminary Healthy Watershed Assessment (PHWA) - renamed Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment, developed a framework of quantitative indicators to assess current watershed condition, track future condition and assess vulnerability of these watersheds to future degradation. MDE is looking to utilize the findings from the PHWA to assess the vulnerability of Maryland's Tier II watersheds and incorporate it into the Tier II workplan (a GIT funding project is being developed).
- Quarterly Meeting: Chesapeake Conservancy continues to complete contractual work related to hydrography, land cover and land use change and other stream corridor characteristics. These "diagnostic" measures of streams, flow, incision, nutrients etc. along with other "risk" factors related to land use and population change for example, combined can inform multiple outcomes such as Land Use Methods and Metrics Outcome, which calls for quantifying the impacts of land conversion on water quality, healthy watersheds, and communities. This information can also be applied to overall watershed health and inform vulnerability and resilience in healthy watersheds. HWGIT members are moving forward with developing a strategy for communicating with and engaging local government by consolidating CBP workplan actions that require local government engagement to find common messages. The FY 18 GIT funding project, Phase III results of the Healthy Watersheds Forest Project which fosters high quality forest and agricultural land retention through a pilot carbon market in Virginia is well underway. The HWGIT is hoping to integrate some of this work into the Local Engagement Strategy. Additional information on these topics can be found here: [:https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/maintain\\_healthy\\_watersheds\\_git\\_meeting\\_june\\_2019](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/maintain_healthy_watersheds_git_meeting_june_2019)
- GIT Funding: HWGIT leaders have developed 2 proposals for GIT funding projects, one aimed at Improved technical service delivery to landowners through technical workshops. This project was developed in partnership with the Habitat GIT. The other project developed is to carry the Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment project forward in MD to better understand how to update data for a specific jurisdiction or update regional data as needed and to meet Tier II outreach and communications needs for MDE and healthy watersheds in Maryland.
- Strategy Review System: In July, HWGIT leaders completed and submitted SRS materials to STAR and presented to STAR members in preparation for the upcoming quarterly progress meeting with the Management Board August 15th.

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.*

- Education Workgroup: The Chesapeake Bay Program Full Education Workgroup Meeting was held in Annapolis on Thursday, August 1. A big focus of the meeting was identifying ways for each state and the workgroup to integrate DEIJ into their work. Tuana Phillips and Francesca King of the Diversity Workgroup presented some of the key features from the EJ Screening Tool map that showed potential demographic areas that may serve as areas of focus as we think about MWEE implementation.

### **Diversity Workgroup**

- Partners: Diversity Workgroup staff continue to meet with partners to learn about ongoing efforts and discuss opportunities to collaborate and further the goals of the diversity workplan. Tuana Phillips, coordinator, and Francesca King, staffer, met with DNREC and DOF in Delaware, DOEE in DC, and colleagues at Maryland DNR and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in Annapolis, Maryland. They have also spoken to Clean Water Action, Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. (SERCAP), and the coordinator of the EPA Region III Diversity and Inclusion Workgroup.
- Steering Committee: Kristen Diggs (CBF) and Ola Davis (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay) have joined the Diversity Workgroup's Steering Committee. Other Steering Committee members include Amy Handen (NPS), Mariah Davis (Choose Clean Water Coalition), Ruby Stemmler (EcoLatinos), and Caitlyn Johnstone (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay).
- GIT Funding: The Diversity Workgroup's proposed GIT funded project, *Enhancing Cultural Competency within the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership*, was approved and received valuable feedback at the July 30<sup>th</sup> Goal Implementation Team (GIT) Chairs meeting. The project asks for additional cultural competency trainings to enable partnership members and staff to have improved capacity and skills to embrace diversity and create an inclusive environment.
- Next meeting: The workgroup will next convene on September 18<sup>th</sup> for a two-hour conference call. The call will include a presentation by Sarah Anderson (American Forests, Lillie Leaf Solutions) on her environmental justice and urban tree canopy work. It will also include a review of workplan progress to date and upcoming deadlines for the biennial Strategy Review System.

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 Strategy Review System**

ChesapeakeDecisions was launched in July 2019 in support of the Strategy Review System (SRS).

[ChesapeakeDecisions](#) is a tool that promotes transparency and guides the Chesapeake Bay Program's [Goal Implementation Teams \(GITs\) and Management Board members](#) through the Strategy Review System; a structured process that applies adaptive management to our work toward

the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. All SRS documents, including schedules and materials relating to the Quarterly Progress Meetings, can be found on ChesapeakeDecisions. The link to ChesapeakeDecisions is available here: <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/decisions> Contact: Doreen Vetter, [vetter.doreen@epa.gov](mailto:vetter.doreen@epa.gov)

The Healthy Watersheds cohort is the first cohort to participate in the second cycle of the SRS. The cohort consists of the following six outcomes: Healthy Watersheds, Fish Habitat, Fish Passage, Stream Health, Protected Lands, and Brook Trout. The cohort will present at the August 15 Quarterly Progress Meeting and will provide further details on any follow-up actions at the September 19 Management Board meeting. Contact: Dave Goshorn, [david.goshorn@maryland.gov](mailto:david.goshorn@maryland.gov)

#### **Quarterly GIT 6 Meeting – Summer 2019**

The GIT 6 summer quarterly meeting took place on Tuesday, July 23 at the CBPO Fish Shack. Agenda topics included completing the decision framework, Strategy Review System process and facilitation updates, the process for Executive Council Directives and updates from GIT 6 workgroups. The next quarterly meeting will take place on October 8, 2019 at the UMCES Office in Annapolis, MD. Contact: Dave Goshorn, [david.goshorn@maryland.gov](mailto:david.goshorn@maryland.gov)

#### **FY2019 GIT Funding**

The EPA will continue the GIT Funding program in FY2019 at a level of \$923,231. GITs and their respective workgroups submitted Table 1 proposals to GIT 6 and Chesapeake Bay Trust staff in mid-June 2019. After a peer review and revision period, GIT and program leadership, coordinators and staffers met on July 30<sup>th</sup> to review and provide feedback on final proposals. A final list of projects will be submitted to the Director of the Chesapeake Bay Program Office for review and approval in early August 2019. Contact: Greg Allen, [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov) or Chantal Madray, [madray.chantal@epa.gov](mailto:madray.chantal@epa.gov)

#### **Budget and Finance Workgroup**

The last workgroup meeting took place on July 31, 2019. Agenda topics included the final SAV Finance Report and Finance in the Strategy Review System, Goal Team Funding and the proposed financial component of the Conowingo project contract. The next workgroup meeting will take place on October 30, 2019 in the CBPO's 305 conference room. Jim Edward, [edward.james@epa.gov](mailto:edward.james@epa.gov); Dr. Elliott Campbell, [elliott.campbell@maryland.gov](mailto:elliott.campbell@maryland.gov)

#### **Local Leadership Workgroup**

The last workgroup meeting took place on July 10, 2019 in Frederick, MD. Agenda topics included feedback on the Watershed Handbook Project, consolidating CBP outcomes requiring local engagement, benefits beyond the Environment Communications Toolkit and workgroup membership. The Local Leadership Workgroup has a new Coordinator, Laura Cattell-Noll, who works out of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Office. Laura currently works out of the Annapolis, MD office and will be re-locating to the Lancaster, Pennsylvania office in the fall. The next workgroup meeting will take place on November 6, 2019 (location TBD) in Gettysburg, PA. Contact: Laura Cattell-Noll, [lnoll@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:lnoll@allianceforthebay.org)

GIT 6 Contact: Chantal Madray, [madray.chantal@epa.gov](mailto:madray.chantal@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.*

### **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 July 18 at the Chesapeake Bay Laboratories in Solomons. The meeting materials have been uploaded and can be found [here](#). The meeting was presided by the co-chair Bruce Michael, DNR. A summary of the Summer Hypoxia results was presented to the group by Bruce with specific details from the June monitoring cruise results. Also discussed was the Mid-Bay Hypoxia study. A brief update on the status of Tier III water quality monitoring program was provided by Caroline Donovan (UMCES). Two new groups, Arundel Rivers Federation and MDE are already collecting Tier III data, with Shore Rivers being targeted as a likely candidate in the near future. An assessment of Data Quality Indicators as a performance measuring tool for watershed-wide data was presented by Durga Ghosh, Chesapeake Bay Program QA Coordinator. Rebecca Murphy (UMCES) presented data from historical pH trends and posed the question of method/lab changes affecting these trends. Jerry Frank (CBL) discussed the Spring 2019 Blind Audit Results. Results for the Coordinated Split Sample Program were presented by Mike Mallonee (CBP Water Quality Data Manager), and USGS Reference Sample results Breck Sullivan (STAR staffer). The next quarterly meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 2019.

### **Climate Resiliency Workgroup**

During July CRWG meeting, the WG members have provided feedback on the 2019 GIT funding proposal of Building a Baywide Scorecard to Track Climate Resilience for Watershed Communities based on the

presentation made by RAFT team. The WG also have been updated on the progress made by Modeling WG on the CBP 2019 Climate Change Assessment. The [next CRWG meeting](#) will be held on August 19<sup>th</sup>.

## **STAR**

At the [July STAR meeting](#), a representative from each outcome: Brook Trout, Stream Health, Fish Habitat, Fish Passage, Healthy Watersheds, and Protected Lands provided their SRS Biennial Review presentation planned for the August Management Board meeting. Participants at the STAR meeting provided constructive feedback on each presentation. STAR has also been working with these outcomes to review and update their associated science needs as part of the SRS process and Strategic Science and Research Framework. Next STAR meeting will be held on [August 22<sup>nd</sup>](#).

## **Modeling Workgroup**

The CBP Modeling Team is 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. During the July Quarterly Review meeting, held on [July 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>](#), major elements of the draft climate change simulation of the watershed and estuary were finalized by the Modeling Workgroup. In addition, a Technology Transfer Workshop on the CBP's water quality model code was held on July 21-24. The Technology Transfer Workshop provided the Bay Program's scientific and technical community operational hands-on training of how to use Bay Water Quality Model in a cloud environment. The [next Modeling WG conference call](#) will be held on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

## **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.

## **Integrated Monitoring Network**

The Integrated Monitoring Network kicked off this month with their first Non-Tidal Network Team meeting of 2019. The team discussed topics they would like to discuss over the year including data management, extreme event sampling and coordination, and special studies such as pesticides, hormones, microplastics, and more. The team also reviewed the resources in place for the standardization of protocols and training among the networks because defensible analyses rely on the consistency and integrity of data collections.

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### **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:

In-person retreat: The Communications Workgroup held its second in-person meeting of the year on July 9. This meeting offered a training on climate change communications from Coreen Weilminster (Maryland DNR) and had a speaker from the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (Jim Bass) to talk about how ESLC communicates climate change to elected officials and more conservative communities. We also discussed what approaches our organizations are taking to communicating about climate change. Our August meeting will be held Wednesday, August 7.

#### Communications Office and Web Team:

The Communications Office issued press releases in July on the [CBSAC report](#) and [SAV abundance](#). We will be issuing a press release August 13 on the selection of the Manokin River as the last of the 10 tributaries for oyster restoration.

Will Parson, our multimedia specialist, created a new [video](#) featuring the city of Hopewell, Virginia, and highlighting the actions their local government has taken to combine its pollution reduction goals with projects to revitalize the city and make it more livable for its residents.

The Communications Office published the following blogs in July:

- [Will the Baltimore checkerspot stay in Baltimore?](#) How climate change could affect the distribution of Maryland's official state insect
- [Blue crab population increases by 60%, stock considered sustainable](#): Experts recommend a cautious, risk-averse approach to resource management
- [Climbing toward a better future](#): A Pennsylvania program for inmates answers a growing demand for green jobs
- [Preventing a church's memory from washing away](#): Collaborative effort to prevent flooding in a historic cemetery inspires young stewards
- [The hemp doctor of Wyndridge Farm](#): An early adopter shows the promise of a misunderstood plant's return
- [Invasive fish offers anglers the opportunity for some friendly competition](#): Snakehead fish creates new challenges, demanding creative solutions
- [Despite record rainfall, underwater grass abundance remains strong](#): Experts believe more underwater grasses grew in Bay than mapped acreage suggests
- [A community advocate on improving nature and human health](#): Professor Sacoby Wilson helps communities advocate for environmental justice

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**Recent Meetings and Events**

July 15	Climate Resiliency Workgroup meeting
July 16- 17	Modeling Workgroup in-person meeting
July 18	Agriculture Workgroup conference call
July 23	Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management GIT quarterly meeting
July 25	SRS presentations at STAR meeting
July 30	Quarterly GIT Chairs and Leadership meeting (GIT funding meeting)
July 31	Budget and Finance workgroup quarterly meeting