



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Agriculture Workgroup

July 2024

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Overview of Proposed Ag Advisory Committee

Ag Advisory Committee (AAC)

- State Ag. Secretaries and Commissions for Bay states sent letter to EPA Regional Administrator Adam Ortiz recommending the formation of an Ag. Advisory Committee
- Dec 2023 PSC action: Establishment of a Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Action Team to Pursue the Formation of an Agricultural Advisory Committee to Chesapeake Executive Council
- Action team, chaired by Maryland, met over several months to develop bylaws for proposed AAC

June PSC Update

- The PSC concurs with Ag Action Team's three recommendations: 1) establish a CBP AAC; 2) finalize bylaws that establish the procedures and membership of the AAC; and 3) convene a meeting with EPA Regional Administrator Ortiz to explore budgets and funding to financially support the AAC.
 - Action: **The PSC directs the Ag Action Team to develop an Executive Council Directive that formally establishes the AAC.** The Directive will be reviewed and discussed by the PSC at its September 17 meeting and will be brought up for approval at the PSC's October 25 meeting with final adoption by the Executive Council at its December meeting.

Elements of AAC Bylaws

- Statement of Need

- “... it has been determined that there is a need for the agricultural sector, including urban agriculture, to be **more actively engaged in providing policy recommendations to the CBP partnership’s** Executive Council, the Principals’ Staff Committee, and the Management Board in order **to accelerate the adoption and implementation of conservation practices and management strategies.**”

Elements of AAC Bylaws

- Charge

- Advise the EC, PSC, and MB on strategies and opportunities for the diverse agricultural operations of the CB watershed to more effectively meet watershed restoration and conservation goals
- Facilitate greater engagement of ag sector in partnership decision-making process
- Serve as voice to CBP leadership to increase understanding of ag
- Focus on high-level policy issues, avoiding overlap with technical work conducted by other partnership bodies

Elements of AAC Bylaws

- Membership
 - 14 voting members (2 from each Bay jurisdiction, appointed by Secretary/commissioner of ag in each jurisdiction; DC's members appointed by director of DOEE)
 - Encouraged to appoint at least one producer per jurisdiction
 - Guest members may be appointed to serve for limited period of time (non-voting)
 - Members serve for four years or until successors are appointed

Elements of AAC Bylaws

Membership Criteria

- Has knowledge about the agricultural industry and the challenges related to the protection, conservation, and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including local water quality;
- Has knowledge or experience with farm production systems in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and some knowledge of the CBP partnership;
- Will proactively coordinate with their agricultural network to represent the diverse views and needs of the agricultural sector to the AAC;
- Will regularly update their agricultural network on the goals and progress of the CBP partnership;
- Is able and willing to attend regular quarterly meetings;
- Is not a registered lobbyist; and
- Voting members will live and/or work in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Elements of AAC Bylaws

- Meetings
 - Quarterly, scheduled at the convenience of the AAC members.
 - At least one meeting each calendar year will be held in-person.
 - All meetings shall be open to the public and posted to the CBP partnership's calendar of events in advance.
 - Annually, the AAC will host the Secretary or Commissioner of Agriculture from each Bay jurisdiction and the Director of DOEE to ensure information exchange.



Discussion



**Beyond 2025 Updates:
Draft Steering Committee Report
and Public Feedback Period**

Recommendations to Note

- **EC Recommendation #2:** The Beyond 2025 Steering Committee recommends strengthening the Chesapeake Bay Program by identifying ways to simplify and streamline the partnership's structure and processes, including potential changes to the Chesapeake Bay Program's Governance and Management Framework to ensure that partner commitments can be met
 - "...ensure a program structure poised to implement the updated Watershed Agreement effectively and efficiently, acknowledging that existing structures, including the Management Board, Goal Implementation Teams, workgroups and action teams may likewise require streamlining to better meet partnership goals."

Recommendations to Note

- Science
 - Optimize monitoring, modeling and analysis
 - “The Steering Committee recommends better utilizing our monitoring and assessment capacity, with increased emphasis towards characterizing watershed health at the local level as well as for the entire basin”
 - Prioritize research that addresses knowledge gaps in existing and emerging challenges

Recommendations to Note

- Restoration and Conservation
 - Improve the partnership's holistic approach to planning, prioritization, progress-tracking and accountability
 - “The Steering Committee recommends developing and adopting approaches to better incentivize practices that maximize benefits to living resources and people”

Recommendations to Note

- Partnership
 - Enhance capacity building and administrative/technical assistance through local networks.
 - The Steering Committee recommends enhancing the Program's structure so it can better serve as a partnership of networks that connect local implementors with data, tools, resources and technical assistance that build capacity at the local level.
 - Enhance communications and transparency to foster long-term success.



Discussion



Agroforestry EPEG Membership

Crediting Agroforestry Practices

- March AgWG meeting: presentation from Ruth Cassilly, Katie Brownson on implementation of agroforestry practices
- CBPO meetings to determine what process looks like
- Steps:
 - Discuss with AgWG, FWG, Chesapeake Agroforestry Network
 - Solicit information/research, names of experts
 - May-June: draft scope of work of expert panel establishment group (EPEG) for WG endorsement
 - July: vote on proposed membership
- EPEG report-out to AgWG (AgWG meeting time not spent in the weeds)

Discussion

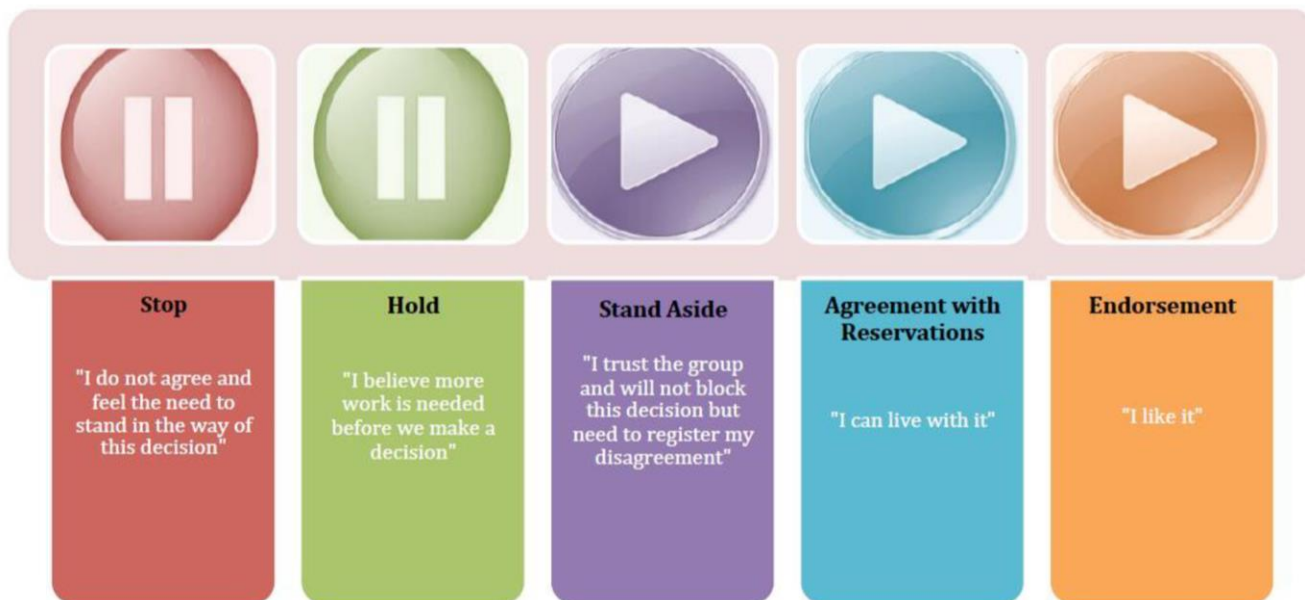
- Questions about proposed membership?
- Reservations?

Name	Affiliation
Austin Unruh/Joshua Greene	Trees for Graziers, Southeastern PA
Robbie Colville	PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Bureau of Forestry
Stesha Warren/Emilie Tweardy	Appalachian Sustainable Development, Farming with Trees
John Fike	Virginia Tech, Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences
Nick Miller	MDA
Elizabeth Hoffman	MDA
Brett Chedzoy	Cornell University
Mark Batcheler	NAC-USDA NRCS

Decision

The AgWG approves the proposed core membership list of the Agroforestry Expert Panel Establishment Group (EPEG).

Consensus Continuum



PA Remote Sensing Pilot Project: Updates and MDP Review

Questions about MDP?

- Draft Methodology Development Plan shared on July 10th
 - Feedback requested by July 24th
- Questions or comments to raise on this call?

New Business, Announcements & Updates



AMT Updates – Tom Butler



Thriving Ag Workshop

- Chesapeake Bay Beach Club
- July 23, 2024 – Optional reception/mixer in the evening
- July 24, 2024 – Day-long workshop (8:00-4:30)
 - Nutrient management and soil health
 - Economic and other incentives for conservation practice adoption
 - Nutrient flows across supply chain
 - Movements and markets for local food
 - Ag land preservation
- Workshop recommendations will be shared with CBP's Beyond 2025 Steering Committee

Anything else?

- Send to Caroline Kleis (Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov) and Eric Hughes (Hughes.Eric@epa.gov) for inclusion in “Recap” email

Thank you!

Any questions?

You can contact me at Hughes.Eric@epa.gov



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