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## Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

### Meeting Agenda

November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

[Meeting Materials](#)

### Virtual Meeting Information

Meeting Link: [Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 239 918 316 219

Passcode: BMKqhT

Phone: +1 202-991-0477,,731227393# US

Calendar page: <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/agriculture-workgroup-meeting-november-2024>

### Workgroup Areas of Focus

**Accounting & Reporting • Implementation • Innovation**

**Data & Modeling • CBP Assignments**

### Intro & Announcements

10:00 **Welcome, roll call, review meeting minutes**

*Kathy Brasier, AgWG Chair*

- Roll call of the governance body - *Please enter name and affiliation under “Participants” or in “Chat” box*
- Roll call of the meeting participants - *Please enter name and affiliation under “Participants” or in “Chat” box*
- **Decision requested:** Approval of [minutes](#) from the October AgWG meeting.
- **Decision requested:** Approval of updated governance document language.

### CBP Assignments

10:05 **AgWG Governance Document Update – 5 minutes (presentation and vote)**

*Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator*

Eric will review minor edits made to the AgWG Governance Document that will support the District of Columbia’s appointment of a formal workgroup member.

#### **AgWG Voting Item:**

The group will be asked to vote to approve the updated governance document language.

### Data & Modeling

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**10:10 PA DEP Remote Sensing BMP Verification Pilot Project Update – 10 minutes (presentation and discussion)**

*Ashley Hullinger & Scott Heidel, PA DEP; Tom Howard, Resolve Hydro*

The Pilot Project Team will provide a summary of recent progress and decisions, including the selection of a sampling approach after consideration of five methods in coordination with the Project Advisory Committee and CBPO staff and the limited release of a pre-beta Conservation Tillage Dashboard visualizing historic transect survey data in 34 counties of Pennsylvania's portion of the Bay watershed. Current project work is focused on determining the criteria for acceptance and rejection of model results, as well as segmentation of masked imagery to generate field boundaries and model training.

## **Innovation**

**10:20 Biochar Opportunities in Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry – 45 minutes (presentation and discussion)**

*Chuck Hegberg, RES, LLC / Infinite Solutions (STAC Biochar Workshop Chair); Dr. Brandon R. Smith, Allied Soil Health Services, LLC (STAC Biochar Workshop SME)*

This presentation will center on the potential of biochar to advance water quality and climate resilience within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The presentation will focus on how biochar can be strategically deployed in agriculture and forestry to improve soil health, reduce nutrient runoff, and support carbon sequestration. Based on the findings and recommendations from the STAC Biochar report (2024), it highlights the science-backed benefits of biochar, identifies practical applications, and addresses key research and implementation gaps. The presentation provides actionable recommendations to standardize biochar use, expand its adoption through policy and community partnerships, and align its application with the Chesapeake Bay goals.

**11:05 Unpacking CESR: Findings and Implications for Agricultural Nonpoint Sources – 55 minutes (presentation and discussion)**

*Dr. Kurt Stephenson, Virginia Tech (STAC member and CESR Report co-editor)*

Dr. Kurt Stephenson, STAC at-large member and CESR Report co-editor, will present an overview of the CESR report and highlight key takeaways related to ag nonpoint source pollution. This presentation will help inform the Ag Workgroup's effort to identify topics of interest to explore in coming years. Come prepared with questions!

- **Note:** There will be time for discussion at the end of this presentation. We ask all to be mindful of the importance of having a balanced discussion in which all members are able to share their views in the relatively limited time that we have.

## **Wrap-up**

### **New Business, Announcements & Updates**

- **Agricultural Modeling Team**
  - The AMT has decided to change the methodology for determining acres for two Land Uses in CAST Phase 7.
    - These include Grains with, and Grains without manure.

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- The AMT has begun to discuss potential improvements to the simulation of inorganic fertilizer to the ag sector for Phase 7.
- **2025-2026 At-Large Membership**
  - The terms of 6 at-large members expire in the coming months
  - Call for nominations was distributed after the October AgWG meeting
  - Self-nominations and renomination of members with expiring terms are accepted
  - Please submit all nominations to Caroline Kleis ([kleis.caroline@epa.gov](mailto:kleis.caroline@epa.gov)) and Eric Hughes ([hughes.eric@epa.gov](mailto:hughes.eric@epa.gov)) by **COB Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.
    - Include nominee name, affiliation, email address, and short resume, C.V., or bio
- **Mid-Atlantic Planning Collaboration Webinar: “Climate-Smart Agriculture: Planning for a Resilient, Sustainable and Innovative Agricultural Future”**
  - Nov 21, 2024 12:00 PM
  - “Agriculture is one of the biggest industries and largest land uses in the Mid-Atlantic region. In this webinar, planners will learn about the impacts of a changing climate on agriculture and proven resilience strategies to help the agricultural community mitigate impacts and adapt to future conditions. Case studies will help attendees understand how planners can have a role in supporting climate smart agriculture and fostering a resilient, sustainable and innovative future for agricultural communities.”
  - [Register here](#)
- **Chesapeake Agroforestry Network (CAN) Meeting**
  - Jan 7, 2025 10:00 AM
  - The Agriculture Workgroup has been invited to participate in the Chesapeake Agroforestry Network meeting scheduled for January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025. This will be an **optional, joint meeting of the AgWG, Forestry Workgroup, and CAN**, and will feature presentations relevant to our group. Agenda forthcoming.
  - If you are interested in attending, please reach out to Ruth Cassilly ([rcassilly@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:rcassilly@chesapeakebay.net)) and Katie Brownson ([katherine.brownson@usda.gov](mailto:katherine.brownson@usda.gov)) for more information.
- **STAC Report- “The State of the Science and Practice of Stream Restoration in the Chesapeake: Lessons Learned to Inform Better Implementation, Assessment, and Outcomes”**
  - STAC recently released a [report](#) on their findings from a three-day workshop in March 2023 geared toward stream restoration. To download the publication or to learn more about the related workshop, visit their workshop publications [page](#).
- **Other Announcements?**
  - Send to Caroline Kleis ([Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov](mailto:Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov)) for inclusion in “Recap” email.

12:00 **Review of Action and Decision Items; Adjourn**

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024: 10:00AM-12:00PM (Virtual)

#### **Acronym List**

AgWG- [Agriculture Workgroup](#)

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AMT- [Agricultural Modeling Team](#) (Phase 7)  
BMP – Best Management Practice  
CAST- [Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool](#) (user interface for the CBP Watershed Model)  
CBP- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)  
CBPO- Chesapeake Bay Program Office  
CBW- Chesapeake Bay Watershed  
CTIC – Conservation Technology Information Center  
CVN – Conservation Validation Network  
EPA - [United States] Environmental Protection Agency  
FSA – Farm Service Agency  
MLRI – Modeled Load Reduction Indicator  
NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service  
NFWF – National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
ORISE – Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education  
PADEP – Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection  
PSC – [Principals’ Advisory Committee](#) (CBP)  
PSU- Penn State University  
SWCD – Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
WQGIT- [Water Quality Goal Implementation Team](#)  
UMD - University of Maryland  
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture  
USGS – United States Geological Survey  
USFS – United States Forestry Service