***Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Discussion***

***CAC Quarterly Meeting***

***February 18, 2016***

**Background:** Through the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, its associated grants programs, and other directed projects and activities, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) provides roughly $10-12 million in support of Chesapeake Bay protection and restoration efforts annually. Collectively, these programs support on-the-ground implementation of restoration activities, capacity-building for local partners engaged in restoration efforts, and peer-to-peer learning to help local partners and restoration practitioners share successful models for advancing water quality and natural resource improvement.

**Opportunity for Input:** Today, NFWF is seeking CAC’s input on the delivery the Stewardship Fund and how it can be best aligned to address CAC’s priorities for advancing local Bay restoration and protection efforts. Specifically, NFWF is seeking feedback on the following:

* What are CAC’s specific priorities for protection and restoration activity, local capacity-building, and peer-to-peer networking? How well do these align with NFWF’s existing priorities?
* Are NFWF’s current programs and processes designed effectively to address these priorities through the delivery of financial, technical, and capacity-building assistance?
* How can these priorities be better integrated into NFWF’s existing investment vehicles?
* How can CAC members be more effectively and efficiently engaged in reviewing NFWF grant requests?

**2016 Grants Review Schedule (Tentative):**

**Mid-August:** NFWF notifies awardees

**Mid-July:** NFWF determines final grant awards

**Mid-May:**

NFWF initiates technical and stakeholder grant review process

**May 1st:**

Grant applications due to NFWF

**Mid-June:** Technical and stakeholder reviews due to NFWF

**March 1st:** NFWF issues implementation Grants RFP

**Stewardship Fund Priorities and Associated Programs/Investments:**

1. **Technical Assistance and Capacity Building** to advance local partner’s ability to implement effective restoration projects.

**Programs/Investments:** Technical Capacity Grants Program, CBFN Capacity-Building Initiative, Restoration Project Management Training, Field Liaison(s)

1. **Financial Assistance for On-the-Ground Actions** to improve water quality and associated natural resources.

**Programs/Investments:** Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants Program, Small Watershed Grants Program

1. **Networking and Information-Sharing** to facilitate transfer of information and models to the broader stakeholder community.

**Programs/Investments:** Chesapeake Watershed Forum/ForumPlus, Agricultural Networking Forum, Stormwater Partners Retreat, Local Government Forum, Chesapeake Network, On-Demand Communications Support