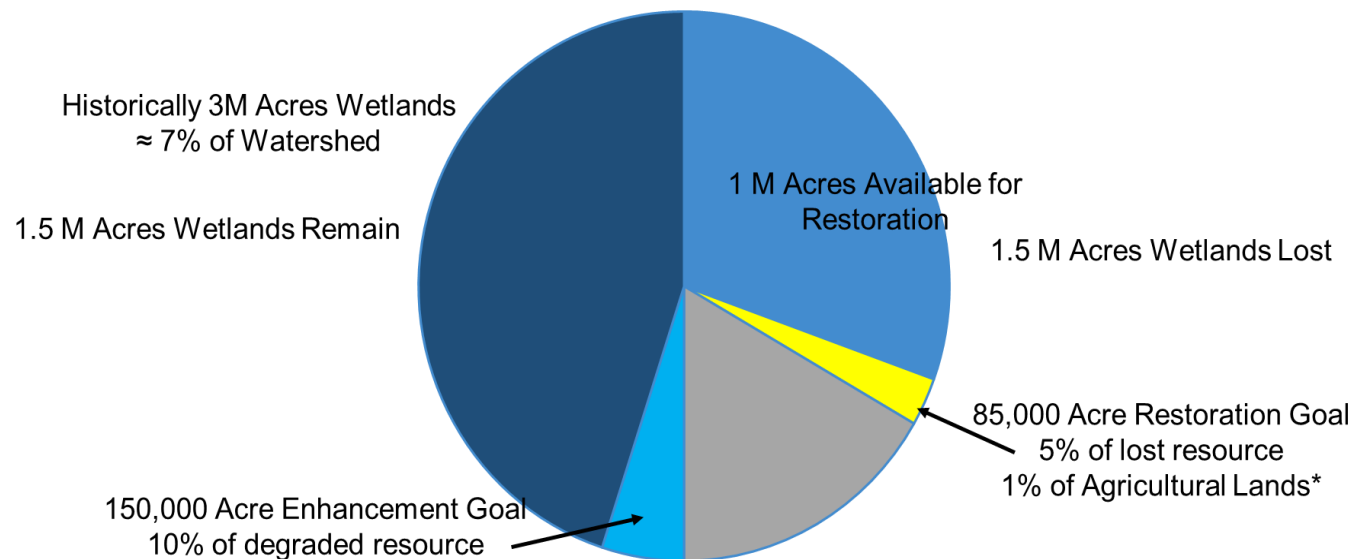


Pamela Mason
Chair Wetlands Workgroup
Stakeholder Advisory Committee
December 6, 2023

Wetlands Context

- Historic Chesapeake Bay losses: over 1.5 million acres of tidal and nontidal wetlands
- Wetland outcome of 85,000 acres of created or restored tidal and nontidal wetland and another 150,000 acres of wetlands would be enhanced by 2025 in the watershed by 2025.
- Outcome was developed from Watershed Implementation Plans 1.



Wetlands Action Planning Framework

- The Chesapeake Bay Program (Bay Program) Outcome Attainability Team
- Two outcomes off target: wetlands and forest buffers
- Management Board requested the Habitat Goal Implementation Team sponsor a workshop to identify actions for nontidal and tidal wetlands.

Wetlands Action Plans

- 2 day workshop 2022
- Office hours follow-on
- Jurisdictional Plans completed 2022
 - Jurisdictional leads
 - 7 Plans
 - Delaware
 - District of Columbia
 - Maryland
 - New York
 - Pennsylvania
 - Virginia
- Plan implementation update 2023



Delaware

Strategic Planning

- Recently established DE Restoration Work Group (DRWG)
- DRWG will identify capacity needs and partners
- Look to increase projects and efficiencies
- **DRWG meets biannually – making some progress on connecting practitioners and programs/agencies; sharing project information**

Capacity Building

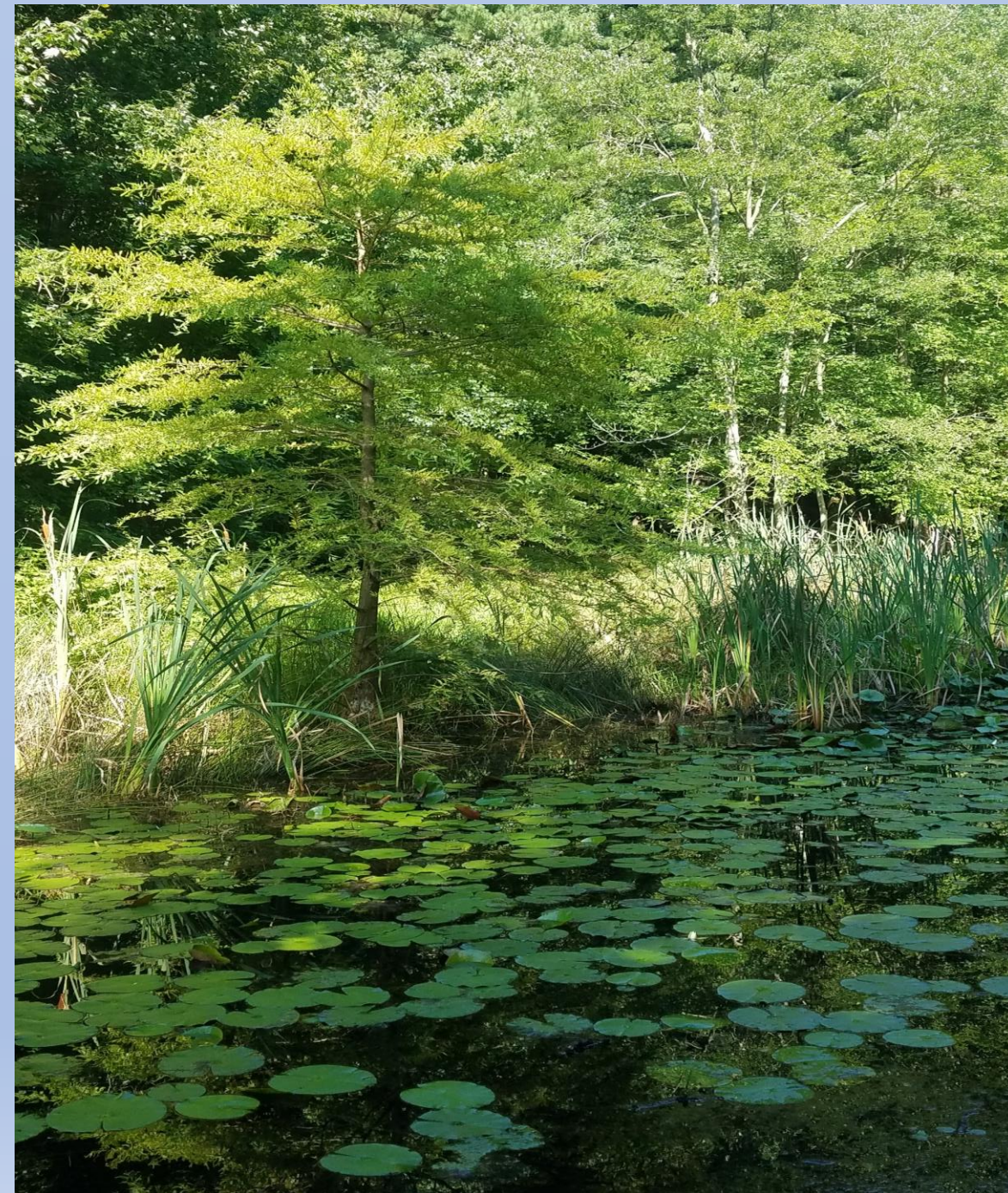
- Significant need for funding to support new staff
- Identify and tap into non-traditional funding sources for projects
- **No real progress – and staff retention/turnover a significant issue**

Outreach

- A current strength - great opportunities for outreach at multiple events statewide – **In the past year, have reached thousands of citizens at the State Fair, Water Festival, Earth Day events, etc.**
- Will be creating new materials that explain cost share and how to deal with competing influences for land – **coordinate with programs that have direct landowner contacts to increase wetland restoration and conservation**

Sustainable Funding

- Leverage funding sources from agencies/groups – **happening within the DRWG**
- Investigate opportunities with flood hazard mitigation funding **N/P**
- Evaluate benefits to acquiring large tracts for restoration – **preliminary discussions with conservation organizations (need additional staff to focus on proactive efforts)**



District of Columbia

Strategic Planning

- Wetland Program Plan 2021-2025
- Wetland Program Development Grant 2024-2026 (Proposal submitted)
- Anacostia River Corridor Restoration Project (ongoing)
- Wetland Conservation Plan (2020)
- Sustainable DC 2.0 (2019)
- DC State Wildlife Action Plan (2015)
- Current projects (Kingman, KPL, 36th PI, Fort Dupont, River Terrace)

Capacity Building

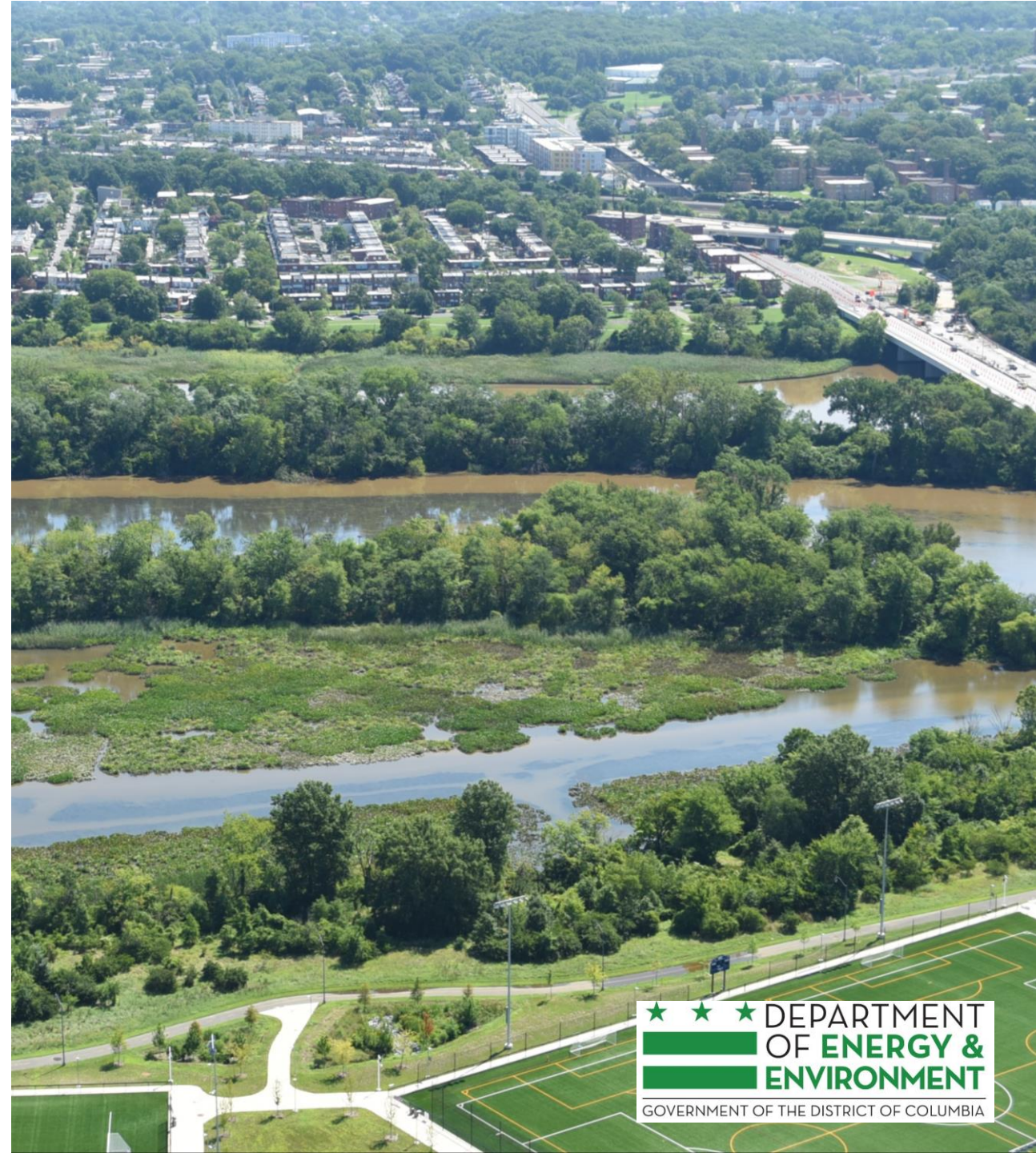
- Partnerships with NPS, environmental stakeholders
- Internal cooperation between DOEE Divisions

Outreach

- Federal partners (National Park Service)
- Environmental stakeholder groups
- Public outreach (negative perceptions)

Sustainable Funding

- Short-term and long-term, especially exploring grants (NFWF, Chesapeake Bay Trust, USFWS, other federal agencies)
- Especially needed for maintenance (e.g., *Phragmites* control)



Maryland

State Wetlands Team- Interagency team formed and met quarterly in 2023. Charged with making progress towards the goals of the Wetland Action Plan.

Planning- Wetlands Team has outlined a Wetland Adaptation Strategy for Maryland. Planned completion by the end of 2024. Blue carbon included as a component in Maryland's GHG Reduction Plan, to be released CY 2023.

Capacity Building- Maryland partnered on several proposals to access federal dollars for wetland restoration, preservation, and regional planning

Outreach- Integrate public/landowner outreach into plans and align wetland outreach with other landowner engagement efforts (ongoing)

Sustainable Funding- Maryland DNR partnered with TNC on a Blue Carbon Feasibility Study, to be completed by the end of 2023

Science- Monitor blue carbon; improve wetland mapping; and systematically connect science to policy (ongoing, will be a focus of the Wetland Adaptation Plan)



Pennsylvania

Implementing Phase 3 WIP and Milestone Commitments using four themes:

1. Sustainable Funding

Limiting Factor, Existing and Possible Future Funding Streams

2. Strategic Planning

Defining Restoration, Understanding Historic Losses, Targeted Restoration Techniques

3. Capacity Building

Collaborative Approach to Education, Mapping, Modeling, Data Analysis and Reporting

4. Outreach

Conservation Groups and Landowners

➤ Actions Taken Towards Progress

Existing sources of revenue (Growing Greener) are being utilized

Identified the predominant loss of wetlands across PA has been from legacy sediment deposition during 1700-1900's period. Use this understanding for wetlands work

The Division of Wetlands, Encroachments, and Training is evaluating a potential revenue stream that would provide dedicated funding of wetland restoration projects through legacy sediment removal on a continuous basis.

Develop and provide training on using an evidence-based approach to developing quality restoration initiatives

Clean Water Academy will form the core of the Wetlands Program outreach



2023 Virginia Wetlands Action Plan Progress

Wetlands Tracking

- Effective reporting and accounting system
- Define activities that count towards outcome
- Jurisdiction-specific targets for tidal and non-tidal wetlands

Strategic Planning

- Work with existing diverse regional partnerships
- Acknowledge changing environment and focus on at-risk areas
- Seek to restore/enhance habitat for SCGN species
- Implement on both private and public lands with emphasis on private lands
- DWR to lead diverse partnership focused on wetlands outcome

Capacity Building

- Increasing staff focused on wetland restoration
- Low barrier applications for voluntary efforts
- Expand native nursery / other restoration capacity

Outreach

- Landowner interest is critical
- Identify and promote demonstration sites
- Target grant funding focal areas
- Train existing staff and coordinate with SWCDs

Sustainable Funding

- Current funding increases for private and public
- Match is limiting factor
- Need to establish dedicated funding source



Eastern Shore Wetland Projects

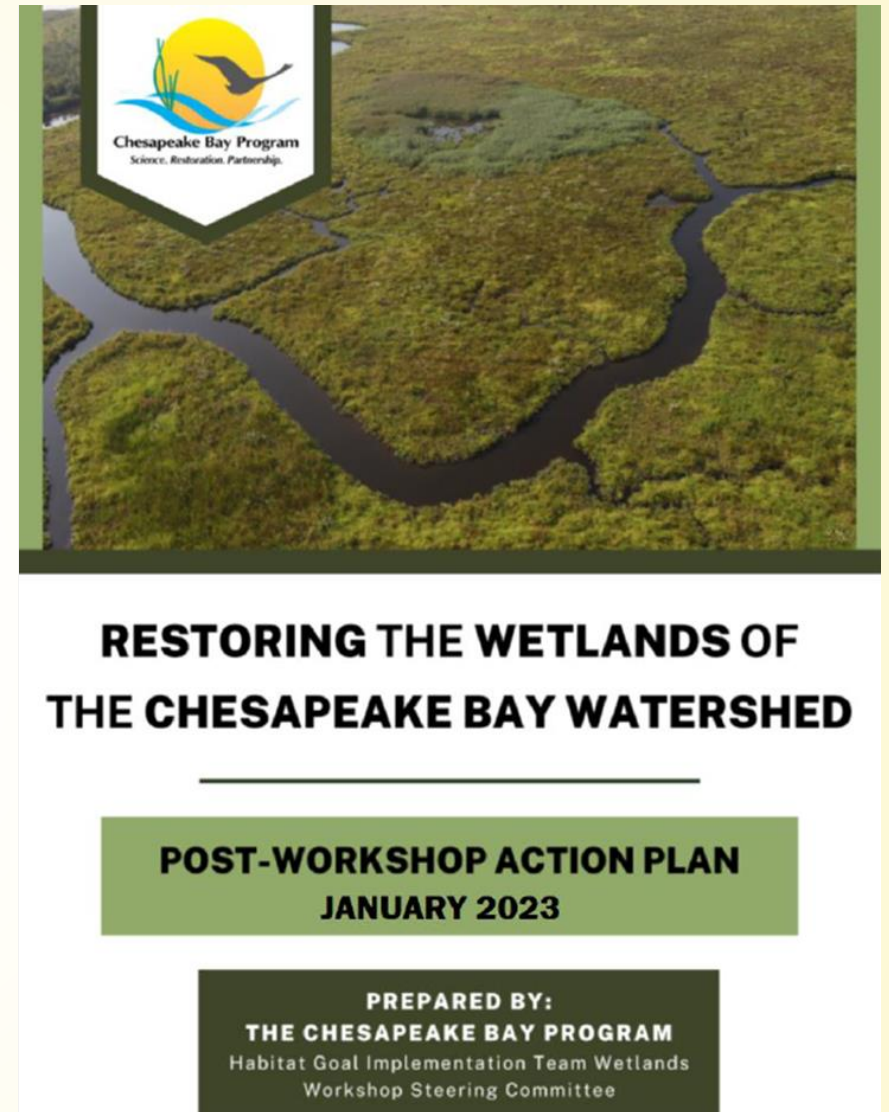
1. 147-acre Wetland Enhancement – With DU
2. Eastern Black Rail C-SWG Project with ACJV
3. Over 100-acre Forested Wetland Restoration and Enhancement

Mattaponi WMA Wetland Enhancement

NRCS, DU, & the Working Lands for Wildlife Black Duck Initiative

Wetland Projects in Pursuit

- Hog Island WMA
- Ragged Island WMA
- Guinea Marsh
- Pocomoke Sound Restoration Initiative
- Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediment



Recent Wetlands Efforts

Evaluation of the Outcome/Indicator

Wetlands Project Tracker

Wetland Workgroup (WWG) Reorganization

GIT-Funded Projects

Marsh Migration

Wetland Condition

Mapping in Headwaters

Mowing, Wetland Enhancement

Capacity Grant with Chesapeake Bay Trust

**Best Management Practice Verification Ad-Hoc
Action Team**

Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response

**Black Duck outcome and process will be integrated
into the WWG process.**