



Climate Resiliency Workgroup

July 20th, 2023

1:30-3:00 PM EST

Event webpage:

<https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/climate-resiliency-workgroup-meeting-july-2023>

This meeting will be recorded for internal use to assure the accuracy of meeting notes.

Workgroup Actions

- *Follow-up with Nicole Carlozo (Maryland DNR) to see where any assistance is needed with integrating the GIT-Funded Marsh Adaptation Project into the Letter of Intent for the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge.*

Partner-Partner Connections

- *Bruce Vogt (CBP Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team Coordinator) is willing to connect CRWG Members and Interested Parties with fisheries experts when developing project ideas and proposals for the NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience funding opportunity. His email is bruce.vogt@noaa.gov.*
- *Breck Sullivan (USGS) offered support in connecting Nicole Carlozo with CBP scientists to support the development of the Letter of Intent for the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge*

Minutes

1:30 PM **Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Announcements – Mark Bennett, Co-Chair (USGS), Jackie Specht, Co-Chair (MD Department of Natural Resources), Julie Reichert-Nguyen, Coordinator (NOAA), and [5 minutes]**

Focus of meeting:

- *Share recent funding opportunities that support climate adaptation and resiliency work and discuss potential opportunities to pursue this funding*

Workgroup Announcements:

- **New USGS Data Release – Compilation of multi-agency water temperature for streams for Chesapeake Bay Watershed**
 - Clune, J.W., Colgin, J.E., and Zimmerman, T.M., 2023, Compilation

of multi-agency water temperature observations for streams within the Chesapeake Bay watershed: U.S. Geological Survey Data Release, <https://doi.org/10.5066/P92SHG66>.

- [Coastal Wetlands Plan](#) released for the York River, Piankatank River, and Mobjack Bay developed by the York River & Small Coastal Basin Roundtable Habitat Restoration Steering Committee. The Plan intends to enhance coordination and collaboration among partner organizations and landowners to respond to threats to coastal wetlands and the communities they support.
- [Registration](#) for MACAN's Coastal & Ocean Acidification Workshop is now open. Workshop is from September 11-12, 2023 at the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET) in Baltimore, MD

1:35 PM **[NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation \(OHC\) Funding Opportunities](#) (Sean Corson, NOAA) [20 Minutes]**

Sean will present an overview of OHC's recent funding opportunities. The [Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants](#) prioritize habitat restoration actions that rebuild productive and sustainable fisheries, contribute to the recovery and conservation of threatened and endangered species, use natural infrastructure to reduce damage from flooding and storms, promote resilient ecosystems and communities, and yield socioeconomic benefits. [Here](#) is a list of programs funded through last year's funding.

The [Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Underserved Communities](#) program will engage underserved communities in habitat restoration activities that promote resilient ecosystems and communities. It will provide capacity for these communities to more fully participate in developing future transformational habitat projects. This engagement is intended to ensure that communities are integral to the visioning and decision-making for coastal habitat restoration projects affecting their communities, and that the benefits of such projects flow back to underserved communities. [Here](#) is a list of programs funded through last year's funding.

Summary

Sean Corson presented on NOAA's habitat restoration and resilience funding opportunities. He started by mentioning that there are a good number of funding opportunities, beyond what he presented, through NOAA, which are supported by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The presentation covers a subset of these opportunities that relate to climate resilience and habitat restoration.

The funding opportunities presented by Sean are led by NOAA's Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Office of Habitat Conservation (OHC). OHC has funded several projects such as the large-scale oyster restoration work and the fish passage work, which are both led by the Chesapeake Bay Program. BIL and IRA funds have increased funding for habitat restoration and

fish passage to \$891 million over five years and with an additional \$484 million added by IRA funds.

There are four different competitions that are utilizing BIL and IRA funds (i.e., Fish Passage, Tribal Fish Passage, Transformational Habitat Restoration, and Habitat Restoration for Underserved Communities). The two most relevant opportunities for CRWG's efforts are the Transformational Habitat Restoration and Habitat Restoration for Underserved Communities. In Round 1, two projects in the Chesapeake Bay region were successful in receiving funding through these two opportunities. Furthermore, less than half of the projects submitted for round 1 funding were successful in receiving funding. Few projects were funded in the Mid-Atlantic; Sean emphasized that having geographic parity is important, which could give this region an advantage in round 2. Additionally, a large portion of round 1 projects focused on hydrologic restoration.

Round 2 Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) should be released later this summer. There is the potential for the funding caps to be raised, allowing for larger projects or more projects funded. Sean emphasized that this is an important year to submit project ideas, as the mid-Atlantic has the potential to receive a good portion of funding and the funding caps are higher.

1:55 PM Funding Q&A (Sean Corson, NOAA) [10 Minutes]

Summary

Bo Williams was wondering which entities were receiving these grants. Sean responded by saying successful applicants included nonprofits, state and local governments, and federally recognized Tribes. Bo followed up by asking what criteria is used to evaluate these entities. Sean responded that because the NOFOs are led through NMFS, it is important that the projects be anchored in habitat and fisheries. Particularly with the Transformational Habitat opportunity, it is important to emphasize how the project incorporates fisheries and fish habitat. He highlighted that it would be important to look at which fish stocks are federally managed by NMFS to build it into applications and project ideas. He discussed that during Round 1 many applications in the mid-Atlantic focused on upland marsh projects, but connected it to marine fisheries as an afterthought. For the Habitat Restoration for Underserved Communities competition, many projects funded in round 1 connected with students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) to lead the efforts, worked directly in underserved communities, or helped increase capacity for underserved communities, and tied fisheries or habitat restoration into the effort.

Fredrika Moser asked if Sean could elaborate on the connection between habitat restoration and underserved communities. She asked if he could provide some examples. He highlighted that many communities who are grappling with challenges like flooding or erosion tend to be historically underserved communities. So projects that were successful addressed how to increase resiliency in those communities and also could provide benefit to fish habitat. He also highlighted that the Mattaponi Tribe was successful in receiving funding and that the award

focused on helping build capacity to support a living shoreline project on their tribal lands. He also highlighted the other successful in the Chesapeake Bay region, which was funded through the Transformational Habitat opportunity. While this opportunity is not solely focused on working with underserved communities, the project focuses on working with communities in south Baltimore to develop a fisheries bounty program for invasive species.

Julie asked if there were requirements for a fish monitoring component for the Transformational Habitat opportunity. She wanted to understand what level of detail regarding impacts to fish habitat needed to be built into applications. Sean responded that they look for three main components to a proposal (fish habitat, resiliency, and connections with underserved communities). He said a strong proposal would focus on benefits to fish habitat and/or underserved communities and that have a resilience component. He thought that projects that are primarily focused on resiliency might be better suited for the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge. He also added that a lot of successful proposals included requests for monitoring programs to be established. The proposals can also be strengthened by drawing connections to how the projects could potentially support the habitats of important fishery species.

Julie also asked if there is opportunities for CRWG members to connect with members of the Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team if there was interest in pursuing these funding opportunities; this way CRWG members can work with fisheries experts to strengthen their project ideas. Sean said that there is opportunities for this; the community working in this space in the Chesapeake Bay is small, and there are opportunities to work with academic institutions, organizations, and agencies who do have that fisheries expertise. Sean stated that if anyone is looking for a fish connection to their work, he would be happy to help make that connection with someone working in that space.

2:05 PM [NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge](#) (Darlene Finch, NOAA) [20 Minutes]

Darlene will present an overview of [NOAA's Climate Resilience Regional Challenge](#), which offers approximately \$575 million in grants for projects designed to build the resilience of coastal communities when faced with extreme weather and other impacts from climate change.

Summary

Darlene started the presentation by showing all the various funding opportunities that are currently supported through NOAA. Under BIL, NOAA was given \$3 billion over five years to invest in habitat restoration, coastal resilience, and weather forecasting infrastructure, and under IRA they were given \$2.6 billion to invest in a framework to protect coastal communities and restore marine resources. She highlighted the National Coastal Resilience Fund, which is managed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and focuses on investments in nature-based solutions that benefit coastal communities.

Darlene then discussed the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge (CRRRC). When developing this challenge, they incorporated feedback from groups working within the resilience and adaptation space. They found that these groups need funding to support underlying coordination efforts of the planning process and funding to support implementation. For this project, they are looking for nature-based solutions that are integrated with other approaches to coastal resilience. Lastly, when developing this challenge they emphasized that despite being a greater risk, marginalized communities have not been included in preparing or adapting to climate threats.

The Climate Resilience Regional Challenge provides ~\$575 million in grants at ~\$70 million in technical assistance for projects that build resilience of coastal communities to extreme weather and other impacts of climate change. Proposals should address the four main priorities of this challenge: (1) risk reduction to coastal populations, infrastructure, economies, and ecosystems from future weather and climate impacts; (2) regional coordination and collaboration to promote regional action to identify and pursue a shared vision for resilience; (3) equity and inclusion to ensure that equitable adaptation strategies and actions are led by or with Tribes and disadvantaged communities; and (4) enduring capacity for addressing climate change that can be sustained into the future.

Darlene discussed that this opportunity has two distinct funding tracks. Track one focuses on building regional collaboration and strategy development. Examples of activities include building and expanding regional partnerships, engaging and partnering with Tribes and marginalized communities, assessing risk and vulnerability, planning resilience strategies and adaptation actions, and building community capacity for climate adaptation efforts. Track two focuses on the implementation of resilience and adaptation actions. Examples of activities include acquiring vulnerable land, building natural infrastructure, implementing gray-green infrastructure, strengthen public access to coastal natural resources, building region's capacity for ongoing actions that increase resilience, and updating state and local codes and policies. F

Darlene then elaborated on what they meant by "region." They are allowing applicants to define the region, but they must be in coastal states and territories. The communities within the region should face similar weather and climate impacts, share adjacent or overlapping geographical interests or administrative boundaries, and benefit from the same natural, social, economic, and/or infrastructure systems. She also elaborated on what is meant by "coastal." All communities in coastal states are eligible, however evaluation criteria considers the economic, social and/or environmental benefits to coastal communities and/or coastal ecosystems.

They are providing technical assistance for applicants through both the Letter of Intent Phase and Application Phase. This support is directed and customized to help applicants and funding recipients build their knowledge, ability, or capacity to adapt to climate change. Letters of Intent are due **Monday, August 21, 2023**. NOAA will then determine which qualify for funding and invite applicants to submit a full application. Full applications are due **Tuesday, February 13, 2023**. There are no matching requirements for this funding.

2:25 PM Funding Q&A (Darlene Finch, NOAA) [10 Minutes]

Summary

Julie thanked Darlene, and highlighted that the FAQ document for this funding opportunity is extremely helpful in providing guidance as well. She also mentioned that she was excited that the opportunity built in track one, as it will offer a greater number of folks the opportunity to pursue adaptation actions in the future.

Matt Konfirst was wondering if the CRRC will be an annual funding offering. Darlene responded by saying that since it is supported by the IRA, it is only a one time opportunity. This is part of the reason why they are investing in capacity building projects, so that people are better prepared to apply for other funding opportunities in the future.

Laura Cattell Noll thanked NOAA for making these funds available without matching requirements. She has heard from local governments about how this will open doors for many communities.

Taryn Sudol asked if a bigger, broader scoped project would be better, or should an applicant try to focus on a more narrow geography (e.g., VA Middle Peninsula versus the whole Bay), or specific issues (e.g., tidal wetlands conservation versus sea level rise adaptation strategies). Darlene does not think that there is a right or wrong choice with any of those options, but to look into the criteria laid out in the NOFO carefully to make sure the project aligns with the criteria. Taryn then asked if they are wanting to see definite products in place at the end of the grant term or more of a system in place to continually create projects. She asked if for Track One, are they looking for concrete designs at the end of the grant term or are they looking for a system that allows communities to apply for other funding opportunities. Darlene said that for Track One, they would like to see systems put in place by the end of the grant term, so that communities are able to have a solid collaborative partnership to successfully apply for future funding opportunities.

Julie asked if there were any restrictions on other federal partners providing technical assistance or modeling assistance for applicants. Darlene welcomes any federal agencies to assist but they are not eligible for funding. Jim George followed by asking about where the funds should be routed to in their work with the EPA assessing wastewater and stormwater infrastructure in the face of climate change. The EPA currently has hired contractors to carry out the work, so he wanted to see if they could apply for this funding. Darlene responded that the funds cannot go to EPA, but if awarded they can be given to a contractor doing the work through competitive bid process.

2:35 PM Brainstorming and Ideas Related to Funding Opportunities [20 Minutes]

This portion of the meeting will be open for the workgroup to generate or brainstorm project ideas that could be supported through these funding opportunities.

Summary

Nicole Carlozo discussed that the GIT-Funded Marsh Adaptation Project is currently moving into Phase 2. Through this project, they are using stakeholder outreach and a GIS analysis to identify some focus areas for marsh adaptation project identification (e.g., conservation, restoration, or management projects focused on tidal wetlands). Within the GIT-Funded scope, they will be holding a workshop later this fall to identify projects in two different focus areas in Virginia and Maryland. She thought the CRRC would be a good opportunity to work towards the implementation of some of these projects that are identified at the workshop and would also be a good opportunity to hold additional workshops for the other focus areas to start developing a larger project portfolio. She has been working with Coastal States Organization, who are facilitating discussions between Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia for a DelMarVa oriented Letter of Intent. She is trying to figure out if a continuation of this GIT-Funded Marsh Adaptation Project would be a good fit under that Letter of Intent, or if it is better suited as its own Letter of Intent, or even to combine forces with another organization to apply for this funding. She thinks that CRRC is a great opportunity and wants the workgroup's input on the best path forward.

Taryn asked if they are considering Track One or Track Two. Nicole responded that Track Two, as the project scope can still include Track One activities (e.g., project planning and generating ideas), but also implement concrete projects that will be identified later this year through the GIT-Funded Project.

Erin McNally asked if they have been collaborating with the DelMarVa Restoration and Conservation Network (DRCN) for focus areas and project identification. Nicole responded that there are folks affiliated with the DRCN on the project's Steering Committee. The committee is meeting in early August to narrow down the regional focus areas. She also mentioned that they will check at the meeting if there is anyone else they need to reach out to. Julie added that to be competitive for Track Two, the proposal needs to include rationale on how they can finish the implementation of projects within five years. Nicole was thinking that if there are projects identified by the fall, then they would be able to speak to implementation more concretely if they are invited back for the full proposal. Julie mentioned that through the outreach in this project, there has been partner interest in the CRRC opportunity, and she agrees that there is still a discussion about how best to proceed with submitting a Letter of Intent and whether to bundle it in with other efforts.

Jackie Specht asked that with how the project is currently moving along to achieve two of the criteria for the project (i.e., equity and inclusion and risk reduction). She asked if things will need to be shifted in how the project is being designed. Nicole thinks that those requirements can be incorporated into the workshop when discussing project ideas and potential funding sources. In terms of equity and community engagement, she thinks they may need to build out conversations with local communities, which has been a challenge thus far as they have not narrowed down the focus areas yet. Jackie asked if there is any role for the Maryland Capacity Network in this effort. Nicole responded that she thinks the Maryland Capacity Network has been focused on communities requesting help and then working with those communities, while

this project is different as it is identifying the areas first and then engaging with communities to hear what their needs are.

Julie highlighted that Darlene mentioned in that the various projects need to be coordinated or connected. Nicole thinks that a connection can be drawn as the projects are both in the Bay watershed and addressing the CBP Wetlands Outcome. Julie likes that approach, especially with the effort around tidal wetlands in the CBP. Breck commented that she really appreciated how the idea complements and forwards the needs of the CBP. If anyone is thinking of a project, it would be helpful if it connected to the needs of the Chesapeake Bay Program, which can be found in the [database](#). She also offered support in connecting Nicole with CBP scientists to support the development of the proposal.

Jim George asked if Nicole has connected with Rachel Lamb or Allison Jaden (Spelling) at the Maryland Department of the Environment. Jackie mentioned that there is a call that was being attended by Christine Conn on the effort, and that they would bring this idea to the conversation. Nicole mentioned that they are tracking the various Letters of Intent in the area for this funding, so to connect with her about MDE's conversations as they do not want to duplicate efforts. Jim also discussed how it would be beneficial to see if local governments are intending to apply for this funding as well. Julie mentioned that there are local governments within Envision the Choptank who are looking into applying for the CRRC. There could be existing partnerships already tied into local governments that are developing project ideas.

Julie mentioned to Nicole that she is more than welcome to reach out to the workgroup to brainstorm or connect as she works on this Letter of Intent. Nicole mentioned that at this point she is going to look into integrating this idea into the DRCN's current Letter of Intent.

Laura commented that, through the Local Leadership Workgroup, she shared this funding opportunity with many of the municipal leagues and county associations in the watershed and asked them to share the opportunity with their members.

2:55 PM Partner Announcements and Wrap-up [5 Minutes]

3:00 PM Adjourn

Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Taryn	Sudol	MD Sea Grant
Mark	Bennett	USGS
Julie	Reichert-Nguyen	NOAA
Allison	Brown	
Emily	O'Keefe	NOAA/CRC

Rebecca	Murphy	CBP
Kate	McClure	MD Sea Grant
Darlene	Finch	NOAA
John	Denniston	
Jim	George	MDE
Sean	Corson	NOAA
Jamileh	Soueidan	NOAA/CRC
August	Goldfischer	CRC
Amy	Freitag	NOAA
Jackie	Specht	MD DNR
Cindy	Osorto	MDE
Jeff	Yang	MDE
Bailey	Robertory	NOAA/CRC
Breck	Sullivan	USGS
Nicole	Carlozo	MD DNR
Brooke	Landry	MD DNR
Amanda	Poskaitis	NWF
Fredrika	Moser	MD Sea Grant
Bo	Williams	EPA
Erin	McNally	EA Engineering
Matt	Konfist	EPA
Ben	McFarlane	HRPDC
Chris	Feinman	
Kate	Allcock	EPA
Laura	Cattell Noll	Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Lisa	Wainger	UMCES
Katie	Dyer	MWCOG
Yi	Liu	
Grace	Hansen	HRPDC