



Forestry Workgroup Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2020

9am-11am

Attendees:

Nora Jackson, CRC, *Staffer*
Sally Claggett, USFS, *Coordinator*
Rebecca Hanmer, *Chair*
Katherine Brownson, USFS
Craig Highfield, Alliance
John Young, USGS
Anne Hairston-Strang, MD DNR
Iris Allen, MD DNR
Barry Frantz, NRCS

Tracey Coulter, PA DCNR
Jason Swartz,
Jim Woodworth, DOEE
Frank Rogers, CI
Patti Webb, DNREC
Greg Evans, VA Office of Governor
Judy Okay, VA DOF
Cassandra Davis, NY DEC
Teddi Stark, PA DCNR

GIT Funding Project Proposals

Sally Claggett and Katie Brownson, USFS

The Urban Stormwater Workgroup shared an external review on technical recommendations for reporting stream restoration projects and reducing adverse impacts to buffers, and it is open for comment through **June 19**.

Three proposals will be submitted for review, including the research and analysis of stream restoration effects on buffers, Julie Mawhorter's proposal for capacity building around urban heat island effects and environmental justice, and lastly from the Communications team identifying the gaps in communication materials on urban tree canopy and forest buffers.

Teddi Stark presented a proposal to help meet PA WIP goals by providing technical guidance and training for PA's watershed forestry lawn conversion program. They are pursuing alternative funding, and this will not be submitted for GIT funding.

Feedback on Table 1's due June 10.

Questions and Comments

- Anne commented that it is great to see a climate resilience and environmental justice focus in Julie's proposal. Maryland is looking to develop some options to assist local governments in climate resiliency planning, and it's even more important that we continue to focus on the importance of trees and their contribution to temperature control.
- Frank asked if anyone on the call is working with Julie on the environmental justice proposal. It seems to focus just on the urban heat impacts, rather than all the benefits of trees.

- Sally explained the need to focus on the public health and use of the EJ screen tool, since there is supporting information regarding the impacts of urban heat on minority populations. Also clarified that heat mapping is separate from the EJ screen tool.
- James Woodworth mentioned that DC is doing some extreme heat mapping to identify places that overlap with MS4-regulated areas

9:25 am

Review of Current Riparian Forest Buffer Workplan

Sally Claggett, USFS

Carin Bisland detailed the SRS process and timeline for reviewing barriers and progress with regards to our Riparian Forest Buffer Management Strategy and logic and action table (workplan). Helping to illustrate the process, she talked about how to review and assess the effectiveness of the actions the workgroup committed to doing in the workplan. The ultimate purpose of the evaluation is to provide an opportunity to reflect on the lessons learned from the actions, the barriers, and what the management board can do to help. The timeline, meeting dates, and more information can be found on [Chesapeake Decisions](#), and feedback is welcome to help improve this resource.

Questions and Comments

- Rebecca asked about incomplete actions, like the need for support from high levels of the bay program. This is a chance to refine those needs, and it's great to have Carin as the contact for the buffer outcome, to help guide the process.
 - Carin said it's important to continue to ask, since the Management Board (MB) is the ultimate responsible party that is accountable, it's not just on the workgroup.
- Matt Keefer added that while the benefits of buffers have been presented to leadership, we need to determine how can we keep the momentum going, to avoid ending up with the same result, identifying the same barriers.
 - Carin reframed the question, how do we as a workgroup think about the ask differently? Instead of saying "more money" or "more leadership", try to inspire the MB and the PSC to think outside of the box.
- Anne suggested including the work on financing approaches and encourage more engagement and education about finance so that workgroup members can use the information in their jurisdictions. Secondly, it should emphasize project coordination. There is room for improvement but what does that look like from a leadership or management perspective?
 - We should think about where our workgroup adds value to individual jurisdictional efforts
- Judy added that one of the things that the FWG can improve on is outreach to the other bay program groups.
 - That may be more of a solution that would be addressed later in the review process, and Carin suggested to focus on the key factors that you think will most improve your outcome.
 - Frank said it's been an ongoing effort to get the mental and physical health benefits of trees across to teachers and many are unaware of work in those sectors and getting this information out especially to other workgroups is critical.

Logic and Action Plan Review:

Sally walked through the workplan, asking FWG members to provide feedback on the progress and effectiveness of the listed actions, why they should be marked as complete/in progress/no action, or green/yellow/red.

Questions and Comments

- Judy mentioned a coordinated effort in VA between counties and other groups planting buffers, and that could count towards this goal. The performance targets and actions aren't new - We haven't revisited it a lot, but we had the ongoing RFB action team, and that came out of this workplan. A lot of this work is ongoing, based on funding and timing
- Rebecca said that the measurement of progress towards the RFB goal looks bad. The workplan looks bureaucratic, and we should think about it differently, think about solutions, this is the best time to also be thinking about how you're making improvements, not just what needs to be improved by why.
- Anne brought up the recent changes to CREP and the uncertainty regarding how to access support for buffer management without watering down CREP incentives, as envisioned in the 2018 Farm Bill.

10:15 am Round Robin

USFS- State allocations are updated and up on the website, and the Chesapeake Bay money, all the grant work should be rolled up at the end of the month.

PA- Held first buffer advisory committee virtual meeting, have CBIG money from EPA coming specifically for buffers for 2021, and the webinars from the UTC summit have over 4000 combined views! Tree-vitalize grants are in a holding pattern.

MD- Held first woody biomass webinar in a series, going through July 7 and a project mapping tree planting opportunities. Spring planting got a lot of trees in the ground, just not through volunteers.

VA- Healthy watersheds forest retention effort is going to be slower, but Fauquier is now the lead county, they are still working with planners on how to structure program and hopeful to get in the field quickly.

Congratulations to Greg Evans on his retirement!

WV- Completed a volunteer planting, have been working with the town of Bath on their Urban tree Canopy goal and town of Romney on Tree City USA. Charlestown recently revitalized their tree board, and working on their first environmental justice planting in Martinsburg this fall.

Adjourn