



Communications Workgroup April 6, 2017 Minutes

Participants

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Deb Klenotic, PA DEP
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Kristin Reilly, CCWC
Kristin Saunders, UMCES
Darius Stanton, CRC
Jennifer Starr, ACB
Guy Stephens, UMCES
Tom Wenz, EP

Welcome and roll call

- Our next retreat in July and we're looking for a few volunteers for a planning committee.
 - 3-5 hour time commitment per month
 - The planning committee will help determine venue (does not need to be Annapolis), lunch and a training option.

Action: If you would like to volunteer for the retreat planning committee, please email [Joan](#).

Review of priorities (Catherine Krikstan, UMCES Chesapeake Bay Program, [presentation](#))

- *Provide a forum to experiment with new communications tools*
 - What other communications tools are out there that we could work with?
 - Is there something in particular that we want people to experiment with?
 - Is there a particular need we're trying to meet that a tool could help out with?
- It'd be nice to see what other organizations are planning on a *shared, private calendar*
 - We need to be coordinating our efforts, keep in mind federal activities
 - We try to get updates from people during editorial calendar review, round robin, but it hasn't worked out that way
 - Add events to our [Chesapeake Network calendar](#)
 - Even small events that are related only to one state or jurisdiction would be good to be aware of
- *Create a communications corps for high school students*
 - Maryland Monitoring Council: trying to incorporate more college/grad students into their council, but consistency between students over time is difficult to address
 - There is a science teacher in Delaware starting a science and environmental task team with students and would like to involve other organizations

Chesapeake Bay Program messaging (Kristin Reilly, Choose Clean Water Coalition)

- Choose Clean Water Coalition
 - Nonprofit made up of 227 members throughout the watershed
 - Coalition formed to be the voice for all of these organizations
 - Focuses: advocacy work, legislative, communications
 - In response to budget proposal
 - Prepared coalition members response
 - CCWC Workgroup:

- Coordinate among members' communications professionals
 - Provide support to those who don't have communications capacity
- Press release and Dropbox of materials (example tweets, photos, #BayStrong, funding information)
- Press calls, interviews
- Created relationships with press from that release
- NPR (Baltimore) series: traveling around watershed and talk to people who have received funding, show projects that would not have happened without this money (South River Federation, Baltimore, Eastern Shore, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia)
- April 5: annual day on the Hill
 - Over 90 individuals at 39 meetings; 12 Congress members showed up to lunch from both parties; MD, PA, VA
 - Many members had been on tours of grant projects
 - 13 press members show up including: WAMU, Baltimore Sun, Bay Journal, Prince George's County Sentinel; some couldn't make it but did interviews afterwards
- CCWC: focusing on appropriations
 - West Virginia
 - Three members on appropriations committee
 - Two are on Interior appropriations subcommittee (which deals directly with EPA)
 - Working on more letters to the editor, op-eds, tours, etc.
 - Eastern Shore
 - Governors: signed on to Bay Agreement
- No other hashtags outside of #BayStrong and regular #ChesBay, etc.
- Chesapeake Bay Program
 - Promote the work we're doing, focusing on economic benefits, jobs
 - Blog highlighting:
 - Grant projects
 - [Businesses](#) and [industries](#) in watershed that need clean water
 - [Signs of resilience](#)
 - Social media: *This is Progress*. (Social media kits [one](#) and [two](#))
 - [Chesapeake Stories](#): Contact Will with people who might be good to feature
 - Caitlyn has been reaching out to other EPA offices that have been zeroed out, asking what they have been doing
- Legislators stressed need to emphasize economic benefits of Bay: good angle, information to highlight in stories, etc.
- PA's involvement in Hill Day
 - G.T. Thompson was at lunch and spoke, saw manure containment facility at an Amish farm and supports Bay grant funding
 - State lead in PA: PennFuture
 - Conservation Voters of PA is on steering committee
- Is there any information the Bay Program provide to help with messaging? Specific projects?
 - UMCES Chesapeake Bay report card in May
 - Want to highlight what watershed partnerships are doing
 - Public access information: communicate that info, graphically

- How partnerships around the watershed are improving communities, health
 - UMCES
 - President Don Boesch has been outspoken about climate change and Bay funding (social media, op-eds in Baltimore Sun and Bay Journal)
 - Article from Horn Point director
- CCWC focuses
 - Bay Program funding
 - Clean water state revolving fund
 - Farm Bill funding
- Does CCWC share information about what the CBP office does, what they provide that the states don't/can't?
 - CCWC shares funding numbers for each state and database for grant projects
 - [CBC transition briefing letter](#)
 - [CAC](#) and [LGAC](#) sent letters to EC of support for Bay Program

Action: We will use [our Chesapeake Network page](#) as a centralized place to share messaging information with the workgroup.

Local Government Engagement Initiative

- LEGI held a meeting in Annapolis on March 22 where they heard updates from jurisdictions and discussed communications, resource needs.
- Two updates coming up for LGEI review about jurisdiction needs and case studies

Round robin

- Meeting time survey: there's not a standout option that works for everyone, so we'll review and report back
- CBP Web team
 - Brought on a new User Experience analyst
 - Hoping to release new Bay Program site soon
- CBP Comm Team
 - Press release next week on oyster restoration in MD and VA
 - Should be [out for workgroup review](#) tomorrow
 - Multimedia trips planned:
 - Bee survey at Patuxent River Research Reserve
 - D.C. River Corps home inspections
 - SouthWings trip (Bay Bridge to Smith Island)
 - NFWF grant story: National Aquarium, collecting milkweed at Poplar Island to be planted at Masonville Cove
 - Gill net survey with MDNR
 - Trip to West Virginia for public access sites and a tree planting
 - Trip to Norfolk, Suffolk, visit Elizabeth River Project
 - Bay 101 on Monitoring and Modeling
 - Feature on Pleasure House oyster Company
- Fisheries GIT: spring meeting June 19-20 on lower Eastern Shore
- Habitat GIT: spring meeting May 9 in Harrisburg
- Water Quality GIT
 - Communications Office is working on a Midpoint Assessment communications plan
 - There will be a change to the Midpoint Assessment timeline

- EPA
 - Cannot talk about anything budget-related that has not been previously published, so they are referring people to the states
 - Interim evaluation of 16/17 milestones are underway
 - Will be finalized few days before EC meeting,
 - No associated media with rollout
- Stewardship GIT: getting ready to release indicator data in early June
- CAC and LGAC
 - Wrote letters to EC supporting maintained funding for CBP
 - CAC: meeting May 24-25 in Charlottesville, VA
 - LGAC: June local government forum on land use and decision making process
- Diversity Workgroup: planning next workgroup meeting in June
- STAC
 - Past workshops:
 - March 28: blue crab day of the climate change monitoring workshop
 - March 29-30: quantifying ecosystem services
 - Upcoming workshops:
 - April 24-25: legacy sediment
 - April 25: SAV portion of the climate change monitoring workshop
 - April 26: oyster portion of climate change monitoring workshop
 - May 2-3: water clarity workshop (part 2)
 - June 13-14: quarterly meeting, likely in Annapolis
- Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative
 - Presenting March deliverables to relevant STAR workgroups, GITs, etc.
 - Prioritization report is particularly important
 - Great resource
 - Want to get the word out
 - Presenting at Integrated Monitoring Network Workgroup and May STAR meeting
- DOEE
 - April 9: Anacostia River Festival
 - *Where is DOEE* flyer – every two weeks
 - What will D.C. do if the budget is cut?
 - Keep implementing MS4 permits
 - Mostly regulatory: have to do it anyway
 - Use MS4 permit as guide; connect to milestones and WIPs
 - Covers a lot: tree planting, tearing up asphalt, school activities
- Continuing Resolution for federal agencies expires at end of April
- Something to talk about in May: how do we communicate if there's a shutdown? What does that mean? If there's preparations for an anticipated budget cut, how to we communicate with each other?
- June 4-11: Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week
- June 8: EC meeting

Next call: **May 4**