

GIT 4 Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2013

Participants: Anna Stuart Burnett, Kevin Anderson, Lee Epstein, Sally Claggett, Emilie, Ann Hairston-Strang, Mike Fritz, Mark Bryer, Dan Baldwin, Fred Suffian, Gene Yagow, Owen McDonough, Todd Janeski, Pat Buckley, Diane Wilson, John Schneider, Dan Murphy, Andy McCoy, Ben Sears, Jack Frye, Melanie Frisch, Bill Jenkins

Updates:

- Bay agreement: timeline
 - GIT 4 had conference call in Aug. to discuss comments about GIT 4 goal and outcome
 - Will need to have another meeting to talk about the second wave of comments in November
 - The new agreement is getting criticism for not covering conservation as well as it could
- Owen McDonough: EPA Pilot Project Funding
 - Going to be funding through grant program next summer and fall, which will be easier to access than through the pilot projects
 - Looking for local scale projects to do implementation
 - Looking to do conservation or on the ground watershed work
 - Pilot projects will be easier to implement at the smaller scale
 - Consortium type management level
 - Leveraging funds from outside partners
 - Looking for a bid to run the program
 - P. Buckley: Do you have to go through the healthy watershed assessment process to have access to the funding? Response: The applicant needs to prove that they have taken the first step towards identifying areas to protect to ensure the applicant will be using the funds in the most effective way possible.
- Communication updates
 - Two sessions at the Watershed Forum on Friday
 - Planned video PSA
 - Please send ideas for an informational video to Donnelle Keech

PRESENTATION: Kevin Anderson: Coldwater Land Conservancy Fund

- Prefer to work on native brook trout habitat
- “Protect, Reconnect, and Restore”
- Coldwater Land Conservancy Fund
- Paisley Conservation Easement:
 - Funding was critical

- Some opportunities for restoration work
- Camp Snyder Acquisition
 - Defunct summer camp
- Ballard Conservation Easement
 - Best for protection watershed
 - Requested buffer was at least 100'
- What makes a good CLCF project?
 - Financial need, leverage, partnerships, access, resource value!
- Looking at the catchment scale for brook trout occupation
- CB watershed agreement calls for 8% increase in patch size by 2025
- Plan to continue funding into the future
- Looking to get healthy streams under permanent protection
- SEND more info to GIT on prioritization index
- Problem with climate change is groundwater recharge

Presentation: William & Mary Local Land Use Policy Report

- Contacted localities within state-identified watersheds
- Focused on MD, VA, and PA
- GIS is the primary watershed management tool, the others are not really used
- The team created policy recommendations
 - Need to utilize community resources
 - Recommend completion and integration of watershed management plans into county comprehensive plans
 - Need to use watershed-based zoning
 - Localities need to establish risk aversion measures
 - Incentivize developers to reduce impervious cover
 - Needed more education and outreach
 - Many localities had long term conservation programs for natural resources protection, but they didn't follow them
 - Areas that got buy-in from ag landowners were a lot more successful
- Zoning ordinances: cluster development was most frequently used, but not always specifically for watershed conservation
- LID was most used for development management
- Cooperative relationships
 - Relationships need significant growth
 - More efforts between counties and NGOs
- The study tests the assumptions behind strategies; e.g., giving info doesn't always lead to behavior change.

Discussion: 2013 GIT4 Strategy

- Apply adaptive management
- Consider factors influencing achievement of the GIT's goal/outcome
- Reflect on the GIT's 2013 strategy – both state-specific and collective strategies
- Identify, celebrate and learn from 2013 progress
- Suggested 2014 activities
 - Communicating and promoting the protection of HW is a theme GIT 4 should explore (most timely and effective)
 - What are the opportunities for new types of resources to put towards protection?
 - Some lack of understanding of terminology (“healthy waters”); need to talk about the conservation of valuable resources
 - PA is referring to healthy “waters”, not interested in coming up with a common definition for the entire watershed
 - States have strategies, but can't afford to spend money on collective activities
 - Collective resources include: CBP GIS team, STAC, CRC staff, coordinator, etc.

Brainstorming ideas for the GIT4 management strategies (two breakout groups)

- Phone discussion breakout group ideas:
 - Certain states not looking for additional activities
 - Influencing NFWF grants (American wetlands, north American ... wetland, section 6?) protection of high quality resources
 - Need matching non-govt money
 - FWS will do bulk of writing
 - Need capacity of people to write grants
 - Gene Yagow: agreement that a communications strategy needs to be developed
 - What are healthy waters?
 - Case studies might be helpful
 - How do we make an active group if states won't do collective actions?
 - Hope GIT can create the better coordination of interstate programs
 - Helping promote HW programs
- In-room breakout group ideas:
 - Communication
 - Infographics (new staffer project, bill Dennison)
 - Info doesn't filter down to locals
 - Peer to peer matching (state, local govts)
 - Land conservation
 - Land retirement that can be converted to easement
 - Only the ag workgroup is looking at that
 - Shine more of a spotlight on strong local economies

- Need 70% of watershed in a rural state, promote private rural land
 - Focusing on gaps that have been identified in the bay agreement
- SEND IDEAS TO GIT 4 FOR PRIORITIZATION AND DISCUSSION OF DETAILS

Presentation: Modeling Updates, Gary Shenk, EPA

- Model gives TMDL by river and by state
- Used to track progress
- CBC crediting conservation report and model requests
- STAC report asking to upgrade the watershed model to deal with small-scale effects in natural landscapes, add new land uses
- Two ways to credit conservation
 - Offset programs
 - “Forest conservation act” BMP that alters projected growth
 - GET SUMMERY FROM SWEENY ABOUT THIS, FWG IS ALSO WORKING ON IT
- Scale issues are not a priority for the phase 6 model
- Small scale effects is going to be very difficult
- May change modeling segmentation
- Trying to work with collaborators (less of a processed based model)
 - CWP: trying to separate out the land contribution of sediment and stream erosion contribution
- Take home:
 - Huge queue for model updates (WQ GIT is in charge of setting up that agenda)
 - Some adaptations that are possible in the next few years, but will require collaboration with the modeling workgroup and their capacity to work on them

Presentation: Urban Development and Forest Loss in the CB Watershed: Peter Claggett, USGS

- Assessment of vulnerability of resource lands (forest, wetland, and ag land)
- Alternative future development scenarios

Announcements and Next Steps

- The Chesapeake Watershed is at the end of the month; includes 2 healthy watershed sessions
- GIT4 staff will be in touch as the new agreement comment period closes
- GIT4 staff will start working on 2014 GIT 4 strategy, will discuss at next GIT meeting in December