**Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management Goal Implementation Team (GIT 6)**

**Proposal to Establish a Budget and Finance Workgroup**

Chesapeake Bay Program

January 12, 2016

**Workgroup Purpose:** Support the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) in achieving the goals established in the Chesapeake Watershed Agreement by serving as a focal point for coordination, innovation, and accurate reporting related to budgeting and program finance.

**Guiding Principles:**

* The workgroup will have a defined set of responsibilities and work activities that will be reviewed and approved through the CBP management structure
* The workgroup will not infringe on the fiscal discretion of partners with regard to their organization’s budgets and spending decisions
* The workgroup will begin with the first priorities listed below and decide on additional work activities following the 2016 Finance Symposium (April 25-26) to ensure appropriate coordination with symposium outcomes

**Scope**

The following work categories are proposed for consideration as the workgroup’s charge is developed:

First priorities:

* Provide support and assistance to CBP partners related to sources of information useful in identifying existing resources, gaps in those resources, and opportunities to align resources for CBP Outcomes including from key sources including but not limited to federal and jurisdiction agencies.
* Coordinating the appropriate partnership response to requests for accurate, consistently-reported budget and funding information to support partnership needs such as the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act (CBARA), work plans, and providing data needed to support the ChesapeakeStat suite of accountability products.

Other possible work activities (to be considered after the April 2016 Finance Symposium):

**Category 1:** Chesapeake Watershed Agreement Support

1. Participating in finance-related commitments in the Chesapeake Watershed Agreement (e.g., Local Leadership Outcome – “implementation of economic and policy incentives”).
2. Coordinating and facilitating a process for distribution of discretionary GIT Funding.

**Category 2:** Innovation in Finance and Organizational Improvement

1. Serving as a resource for stakeholders and the interested public on matters of funding and innovative environmental finance for Chesapeake Bay watershed restoration and protection.
2. Providing input on scope and implementation of CBP grant-funded projects focused on funding and financing issues.
3. Promoting discussion among CBP partners on individual funding and opportunities for collaboration among funding organizations where needs and opportunities are identified.

**Category 3:** Reporting and Communication

1. Identifying opportunities for including and improving funding information in other CBP products.

**Workgroup Development**

* The workgroup would structurally located under GIT 6.
* The workgroup should be open to representatives of all CBP signatory partners and the advisory committees. It should also include experts in finance and budget management. The members should have a personal or professional interest in funding issues.

**Next Steps**

* Comments from GIT Chairs and heads-up to the Environmental Finance Center (completed).
* Discussion with Management Board (ongoing).
* If consensus is reached on creation of a workgroup, the MB and GIT 6 would move forward with membership criteria and workgroup formation.
* Development of a workplan with clear objectives and linkages to CBP management strategies and the priorities listed above.