Dr. Chris Pyke, Chair

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee

US Green Building Council

2101 L Street, NW Suite 500

Washington, DC 20037

Dear Dr. Pyke:

The Partnership’s Management Board expresses our appreciation and gratitude to the Chesapeake Bay Program’s Scientific and Advisory Committee (STAC) for their efforts in developing the March 2011 workshop report entitled, “Integrating the Social Sciences into Chesapeake Bay Restoration.” This report clearly articulates the needs and challenges associated with integrating social science principles and research priorities into Bay restoration and the Partnership’s program and decision-making framework. We understand the importance of such an integration as we continue to strengthen partnerships in the Bay community; utilize innovative approaches to Bay restoration that promote enhanced community engagement; and adapt our management priorities as new scientific information arises.

Overall, we agree with the key conclusions and challenges highlighted in this report. Although there were several next steps proposed for the Partnership’s consideration, three specific cross-cutting themes emerged that we believe would be worthwhile for future investigation in addressing these challenges:

* improved communication and collaboration with the social science community;
* understanding how social science theory and research can inform restoration strategies; and
* focus on education to demonstrate how social science adds value to developing and implementing the Partnership’s priorities.

**Partnership’s Response to the STAC Workshop’s Conclusions & Challenges**

***Continued dialogue, communication and institutional support are necessary to convert the new interest in the social sciences into a sustained social science research effort.***

Continued support and dialogue are key to advancing any social science agenda that would be of use and benefit to Bay restoration. The CBP Partnership is committed to exploring the formation of an Action Team of the Management Board to develop recommendations on how social science disciplines could fit into the Chesapeake Bay Program’s various Goal Implementation Teams and a road map for integrating the social sciences into our research priorities. Building off the research needs assessment and interviews that a committee of social scientists conducted prior to the March 2011 workshop, this Action Team could also be charged with understanding how local environmental values can lead to more informed decision- and policy-making. We look forward to exploring this opportunity with STAC.

***Managers should continue to explore the variety of social science research available by creating organizational and program opportunities to utilize regional social science expertise.***

Prior to recognizing and tapping into these organizational and program opportunities, there first needs to be a common understanding of the basic tenets of the discipline, and how social science can fit into our Bay restoration work. How does one recognize and incorporate social science components into research activities? We propose that the Action Team’s first task, in coordination with STAC, is the development of briefing materials – a primer – on what specific social science disciplines would best integrate and inform our decisions related to Bay restoration. These materials could also provide a list of case studies where social science research and practice has made a valuable contribution to restoration of the Bay or other large aquatic ecosystems.

***Bay leaders and others need to truly value what the social sciences can offer in terms of helping to provide an understanding of human behavior and how to affect human behavior change. This will require both increased intellectual and financial support for social science research throughout the region.***

We agree that understanding human behavior and how this understanding can be used to affect change has great potential for leading to environmental improvements in the Bay. The myriad of local environmental values and uses adds complexity to an already multi-dimensional set of issues. However, while recognizing the various resource constraints at hand, the importance of addressing this complexity should not be overshadowed by other competing natural science priorities; both can be addressed in tandem so that Bay leaders and communities can become better invested in developing solutions to key restoration challenges. Understanding these behaviors can also help structure those policies that would have the most resonance to local communities. We recommend that a pilot be conducted in the Bay watershed to further investigate what types of human behavioral change can positively contribute most to restoration efforts, and what mechanisms or approaches would work best in leading to that behavioral change, including the measurement of how this change can lead to increased local engagement.

We would appreciate STAC’s continued involvement in this effort to bring social science to the forefront of our Bay restoration priorities. As such, we will look to STAC to coordinate a series of social science workshops that will explore the different dimensions of social science and Bay restoration interactions.

The Management Board would like to express its appreciation to Dr. Michael Paolisso for his thought provoking presentation at our March 6, 2012 meeting. Thank you again for developing this report, which provides key areas for further exploration based on insights from both the research assessment and workshop proceedings.

Sincerely,

Nicholas DiPasquale, Chair

Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership Management Board

Cc: Chesapeake Bay Program Goal Implementation Team Chairs