### **Minutes**

# Public Access Action Team Meeting

## Tuesday, November 14, 2017

## 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**Location:**  CHBA Office-NPS, Suite 314, Large Conference Room

410 Severn Avenue

Annapolis, MD 21403

**Summary of Actions and Decisions**

**Action:** Andy will revise spreadsheet with the new field changes for the 2017 data call. The new spreadsheet will be sent out to action team members by the first of December for completion no later than January 12, 2018

**Action:** Elevate funding for planning, development and maintenance to the top of the “asks” slide to indicate it is the highest priority.

**Action:** Public Access Action Team to provide comments and any additions for actions on draft of new work plan by January 26, 2018. Drew and John will provide a working draft of new plan in early January.

**Action:** Drew and Amy will discuss with the Communications Office ways we can better illustrate the number of new CY2017 access sites opened by state on *Chesapeake Progress*.

The meeting agenda, Public Access presentation to the Management Board, and minutes are also available on the Chesapeake Bay Program [calendar](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/public_access_annual_meeting).

**10:00 Welcome and introductions (John Davy)**

**10:10 Review of revised inventory sheet for this year’s data call that would provide more information to potential users about the sites. (Andy Fitch)**

* Additional data fields were generated to inform the user of more site specific data such as: whether fees and permits are required, whether there are ramp capabilities for trailer access, number of parking spaces for cars and for trailers, if there is a paddle craft launch, and if there is a curtesy pier.

**10:30 Schedule and process for 2017 data call for new and potential sites (John Davy/Andy Fitch)**

**Action:** The process for the data call of new sites opened in the watershed during CY 2017 was discussed. The new data collection spreadsheet is to be sent to partners by the first of December and all states are to submit their completed spreadsheets of new sites no later than January 12, 2018. These are the new sites that will count towards the 300 new site goal by 2025.

**11:00 Review of** [**presentation**](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/25730/public_access_srs_quarterly_presentation_11_16_2017.pdf) **for Bay Program Management Board on Public Access Goal and refinements (John Davy)**

* John Davy explained the SRS Quarterly Review Process to the Public Access Action Team and what would be presented on behalf of the workgroup to the Management Board Meeting on November 16th.
* John walked the team through the presentation and collected feedback which emphasized the need for funding for planning, maintenance, and development of sites.
* States and localities need funding in order to match federal financial assistance programs such as Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancement, Land and Water Conservation funds, and the Gateways and Trails Program. It is noted, however, that the future and level of federal funding in these programs remains uncertain.
* The team suggested that the next iteration of public access data on [*Chesapeake Progress*](http://chesapeakeprogress.com/) be separated by state showing year to year comparisons.
* The team noted the importance of teaching proper etiquette to the various users of public access sites to help resolve user conflicts
* John defined the criteria for quality access sites as sites that are sustainable over time, have ample parking spaces, rest rooms, swimming, fishing, boating, etc.
* There are social and resource capacity issues relating to letting too many people into access sites, over exceeding capacity of management to maintain sights, and over exceeding the capacity to educate users on safety.
* There are instances when visitors who speak language other than English are breaking laws because they cannot read the signs, emphasizing the need for signage in the language of major user groups.
* Diversity layers were used on maps to show public access site locations with respect to diverse populations. This map was a product of the EJ Screen census data. More information on the dataset can be accessed [here](https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen/overview-demographic-indicators-ejscreen).

**11:45 Discussion of new biennial Work Plan development and MB member list (Amy Handen)**

* The group wasasked to review actions from our current work plan and identify those actions that are ongoing and which have been completed. This will be the first step in developing the next 2 year workplan.
* It is anticipated that there will be approximately 4 months after the Management Board meeting on November 16 to develop the new workplan. A full schedule and process is pending.

**Action:** Public Access Action Team to send comments on draft of new workplan to Drew and John by Friday, January 26th. Drew and John will draft up first.

**12:15 Update on the *Paddle the Potomac* and *Paddle the Susquehanna* sites (Mike Land)**

* Mike Land gave an overview to [*Paddle the Potomac*](https://www.paddlethepotomac.com/) which launched at the end of June, 2017.
* Mike is currently working on developing *Paddle the Susquehanna* and sees this expanding to the other major tributaries in the Watershed to offer the same resources.
* The sites connect people to the resource through heritage, types of access, and focuses on the experience by the user.

**12:45 Issues and concerns in developing new public access including such items as: Paddle in camping, new site identification, funding issues, maintenance issues, conflict concerns, anything else pro or con that affects our work (Group Discussion)**

* Carrying capacity issues in a number of states which required parks to close to new visitors early in day when capacity was reached.
* Governor Hogan announced Executive Order 01.01.2017.24 establishing the [Maryland Outdoor Recreational Economic Commission (MORE)](http://governor.maryland.gov/2017/10/14/governor-larry-hogan-announces-maryland-outdoor-recreational-economic-commission/). “This commission will be responsible for developing strategies and making recommendations to the governor to strengthen the state’s outdoor recreation industry and help ensure increased investment in our state’s outdoor recreation resources.”
* There is a need for new studies involving potentially the states and NPS that show the economic value of water trails and other related facilities. Such information could be useful in obtaining staff with a portion of their time dedicated to water trail development.
* Planning for water recreational resources is becoming more challenging particularly when sites are being driven by political pressure. Communities may be requesting amenities at a site but from a pure planning perspective it may not be worth pursuing because of Sea Level Rise or other environmental concerns. How do we communicate this to the general public? Where do we draw the line on funding projects that may be unusable before their life expectancy is reached? How do we communicate this to community members?

**1:15 Other thoughts/next steps (John Davy)**

* Updated spreadsheet of FY17 sites due to John before Friday, January 12th.
* Review of draft of workplan due to Drew and John before Friday, January 26th.

**1:30 Adjourn**

**Attendees**

John Davy, NPS, Chair

Amy Handen, NPS, Coordinator

Drew Pizzala, CRC, Staffer

Scott Bollinger, PA Fish and Boat Commission

Mark Hohengasser, NY State Parks

Andy Fitch, USGS

John Fog, VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Lisa Gutierrez, MD DNR

Jackie Kramer, NPS

Michael Krumrine, DE Division of Parks and Recreation

Mike Land, NPS

Janit Llewellyn, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Danette Poole, VA DCR

Kelly Rossiter, PA DCNR

Uwe Weindel, VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

John Wilson, MD DNR