

Public Access Workgroup Conference Call Minutes

Date: June 25, 2019

Time: 11:30am-1:00pm

Conference Line: 866-704-1637, pass code: 269 490#

<https://epawebconferencing.acms.com/git5>



Summary of Actions:

Action: Drew will send out site reporting data for 2018.

Action: Revisit Management Approach 6 and consider revising.

Action: Mark will confirm with NY to see the status of Management Approach 3's implementation and report back to Drew.

Action: Lisa will provide Drew with a summary of MD's proximity analysis of populations to water access points.

Action: Jackie will touch base with Bob Campbell and provide workgroup with information on Gateways funding moving forward as soon as the status is known.

Action: Jackie will check with PA DCNR and PFBB on their outreach programs.

Action: Mark will call parks and confirm with Drew whether parks are recording outreach programs.

Action: Workgroup members will send any tools to Drew related to GIS that might be helpful in tracking outreach programs.

Action: Workgroup members will provide comments to Drew on Public Access GIT Funding proposal by close of business Friday, July 12.

Action: Mark will check on whether or not NY DOT and DEC have MOU or other coordination process.

Action: Jackie, Amy, and Drew will determine next workgroup meeting based on next steps.

Update on Public Access Team Membership (Workgroup)

- Jack Whalen-New representative for West Virginia

Report out from CBP Biennial Strategy Review System Meeting & Review of 2017-2018 Public Access Workplan/2019-2020 SRS Calendar (Amy Handen & Drew Pizzala, CBP)

What is the status on the actions we committed to? What are the issues that need to be addressed?

Overview: The Chesapeake Bay Program Goal Implementation Teams (GITs) adopted a strategy review system framework where each of the thirty one outcomes under the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement went through a process to evaluate actions that will help achieve teams' committed goals. Public Access Site Development Outcome: By 2025, add 300 new public access sites, with a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for boating, swimming and fishing, where feasible. The workgroup identified an action plan to make sure this happens.

Action: Drew will send out site reporting data for 2018.

Management Approach 4: Enhance public access for a diverse population.

- Erik Zlokovitz: Third or fourth year of Es Mi Parque Hispanic Outreach Program in MD – 4 to 5 events per year for fishing.
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<https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2017/06/21/es-mi-parque/>

<https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2018/06/05/hispanic-outreach-program-kicks-off-at-sandy-point-state-park/>

Management Approach 5: Carry out and support more detailed assessments and project design for potential sites.

- Danette Poole: Can we check in on Gateways Funding for further support?
- Jackie Kramer: Guidelines are under review and decisions will not be made until a new superintendent for the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office is established.

Management Approach 6:

- Lisa Gutierrez: With all of the fluctuation with NPS, how much activity are we going to see related to the trails listed? Are they going to have financial resources and staff to provide?
- Jackie Kramer: We may choose to revise this management approach. This is a capacity issue.
- Danette Poole: In VA, long term campsites require permanent bathroom facilities and the Health Department cracked down on a primitive campground that had a porta john. Cited permanent campgrounds within 500 feet of a bathroom gives access without breaking state laws.
- Lisa Gutierrez: More people want day-time use and are less concerned about overnight camping and bathroom facilities. Leave no trace/site overuse is the biggest issue we push. MD has not seen proof that primitive camping facilities are in demand.

Action: Revisit Management Approach 6 and consider revising.

Management Approach 9: Engage in hydropower relicensing processes to expand public access.

- Danette Poole: How many states have hydropower facilities?
- Lisa Gutierrez: We do this in MD but it is slow moving – Conowingo Dam
- Jackie Kramer: PA is also involved in Conowingo project.

Status Update on 2019 GIT Funding Project Proposal (Amy Handen, NPS)

Overview: Every year, EPA allocates money for the Chesapeake Bay Program and partners to help advance Goal Teams' work plans and break down barriers.

The project has 2 phases:

1. Develop and conduct a randomly generated survey to observe how people currently access public access sites. How are they using them? If they are not using them, why not?
 2. Holding focus groups/identifying demographic groups and populations to get a better understanding of the barriers. Identify solutions that would help more residents access the water.
- Lisa Gutierrez: In a way, we have tried to address this question by doing SCORPS. What we found is that survey instruments are not getting at the heart. More questions coming from officials about the economic impact of water access? Health benefits? Marry stewardship ethic with behavior change we want to see in water access. Getting more information on how to deal with overuse would be helpful. Maryland has more diverse groups using its parks so this is not as much of an issue. More concerned with how to manage carrying capacity.
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- Amy Handen: We are in power to generate the questions and tailor this to our needs, working with a contractor qualified in this field.
 - John Davy: We are seeking to find out what types of people do not use public access and what their barriers are? Look at differences in perception among users and non-users.
 - Lisa Gutierrez: How do we tailor our message to users coming to use sites for different purposes? E.g. educational purposes.
 - Jackie Kramer: Looking at how to get users of different demographics to use sites.
 - Lisa Gutierrez: We are good at encouraging visitation from diverse communities. Now we message that it needs to be enjoyed respectfully and maintained.
 - John Davy: Carrying capacity of sites continues to be a major issue and a difficult one to address/manage.
 - Lisa Gutierrez: We need to address carrying capacity and set goals for specific sites early on.
 - Jackie Kramer: Consider framing management approaches by looking at carrying capacity and keeping up sites that undergo heavy use.
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Discussion: How has the Public Access Goal benefited the community at large? Is there anything we should change in how we do business? What are the barriers/issues? Where are the new opportunities? (Workgroup)

This is a self-check to ensure we are doing what we set out to do and decide if any tweaks should be made. Are there any new projects that have been funded by new federal or state sources?

Management Approach 8: Public access managers and advocates should work with private sector funders where possible to develop access sites.

- Danette Poole: Mitigation money from DuPont Corporation was used to establish access to the Shenandoah River. Boating access is the uncertainty piece. This money may not always exist but expect that VA could add additional public access sites with this source in the future.
- Uwe Weindel: No progress unless you count funds derived from FERC relicensing of dams. FERC requires recreation plans to off-set impacts. Public utilities have to fund the recreation plan. VA has had success with Dominion Energy in doing different kinds of access and mitigation work.

Management Approach 3: Establish a process that ensures public access is considered in the planning of all appropriate transportation projects.

Action: Mark will confirm with NY to see the status of Management Approach 3's implementation and report back to Drew.

Management Approach 4: Enhance Public Access for a Diverse Population.

- Lisa Gutierrez: MD performs a proximity analysis of populations to water access points every five years and has that data.

Action: Lisa will provide Drew with a summary of MD's proximity analysis of populations to water access points.

Management Approach 5: Carry out and support more detailed assessments and project design for potential sites.

- Lisa Gutierrez: Statute in MD where MDOT transportation projects relate to water access. This has become a very detailed procedure and has slowed the process for developing sites that are connected to MDOT projects. There is no additional money attached so this and it is all done with existing resources.

Management Approach 6: Fill strategic gaps in access along water trails.

Action: Jackie will touch base with Bob Campbell and provide workgroup with information on Gateways funding moving forward as soon as the status is known.

Management Approach 8: Public access managers and advocates should work with private sector funders where possible to develop access sites.

- Erik Zlokovitz: Power companies like Dominion and Exxon may be useful in the future as they are interested in good PR. Power facilities are also good fishing locations but lack shore access such as Calvert Cliffs storm water discharge.

Management Approach 15: Climate Change

- MD – MD Coastal atlas identifies areas that are vulnerable to weather and SLR. There has been a push from permanent to floating docks. Shore line restoration projects are ongoing and looking at potential impacts on fishing and boating access. Also seeing some push-back from residents at sites where over-use is a problem. Limiting parking spaces is not the answer. This work is reported to the Climate Change work group. MD is stepping up game in living shorelines, reducing bulkheads, and utilizing more soft infrastructure. Lisa will share more info.
- VA Have been working closely with VDOT and Game and Inland Fisheries to see what can be done with a 30 foot easement to increase the number of parking spaces and shoreline access for fishing. Ongoing Ferc project on James River to establish boating access. VA Game Department is assessing facilities on the coast to determine which ones will have a 20 year lifespan.
- VA – Chesterfield county just completed a nice kayak launch and received the governor's award.
- Ongoing study with NOAA identifying vulnerability of public access sites. This data is used by the states.

Approach 17: Build opportunities for citizen stewardship

How do we want to report outreach programs being undertaken by workgroup members? Should they be recorded and tracked?

- Hispanic outreach does report out at the end of the year.
- Lisa is checking to see if DNR has record of outreach programs.
- Mark Hohengasser: Don't count numbers of programs. Some areas are more popular to access.

Action: Jackie will check with PA DCNR and PFBF on their outreach programs.

Action: Mark will call parks and confirm with Drew whether parks are recording outreach programs.

Action: Workgroup members will send any tools to Drew related to GIS that might be helpful in tracking outreach programs.

Other Items/Concerns Brought Forward by Team Members (All)

- Erik Zlokovitz: Shoreline work going on in MD due to SLR and issues with resilience. Has been following two projects on the Severn River. These areas are heavily fished but are predominantly fished by kayak. There are no standing areas on the shorelines so it can be hard to access climbing through rocks and grasses. Determine a path to get to a safe area to stand. We have popular piers for access but there is push back from local residents due to people parking on their properties at night, leaving trash behind (this is a large piece of the overuse aspect).
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Next Steps:

Action: Resend summary of sites opened in all states in 2018.

Action: Workgroup members will provide comments to Drew on Public Access GIT Funding proposal by close of business Friday, July 12.

Action: Mark will check on whether or not NY DOT and DEC have MOU.

Action: Jackie, Amy, and Drew will determine next workgroup meeting based on next steps.

Attendees:

Jackie Kramer, Public Access Chair, National Park Service

Amy Handen, Stewardship GIT Coordinator, National Park Service

Drew Pizzala, Stewardship GIT Staffer, Chesapeake Research Consortium

John Davy, Chesapeake Conservancy

Lisa Gutierrez, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Mark Hohengasser, New York State Parks

Michael Krumrine, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Danette Poole, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Uwe Weindel, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Jake Whalen, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

Erik Zlokovitz, Maryland Department of Natural Resources