



Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP)
Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)
June 2025 Meeting | Setting the Science Agenda for 2026
June 16-18, 2025

National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia
Rick Lemon Building, 161 Lemon
[Meeting Webpage](#)

Sunday, June 15th

Evening **S'mores Around a Bonfire** (starts at 7:30 pm)
Sit around the Lemon Fire Ring to enjoy s'mores and company!
The fire will be banked at 10:30 pm.

Monday, June 16th – "STAC's Strength and Strategy"

6:30 am **Breakfast** (hot food served until 8:30 am)

9:00 am **Archives Tour**
NCTC historian Mark Maddison will give a tour of the USFWS Museum and Archives house, with films, photos, and documents chronicling the rich heritage of wildlife conservation. Meet at the Fallen Comrades Statue at 8:50 am.

10:15 am **Call to Order, STAC Business – Larry Sanford (UMCES, STAC Chair), STAC Staff**

- Introductions (name, affiliation, expertise)
- Membership Updates
- STAC Liaisons
 - Kaylyn Gootman (EPA, Chesapeake Bay Program Office [CBPO] Coordinator), Breck Sullivan (USGS, STAR Coordinator), Rachel Felver (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Bay Program Communications)
- Recap of STAC March 2025 Quarterly Meeting
- Approval Requests:
 - March 2025 Quarterly Meeting Minutes
 - March Executive Board Call Minutes
 - April Executive Board Call Minutes
 - May Executive Board Call Minutes
 - Transition to new meeting structure
- Social Science Workgroup (SSWG) Update
- STAC FY24 Workshops
 - [Striped Bass Survey Assessment and Habitat Connections](#)
Convened February 13-14 in Annapolis, MD
 - [Leveraging Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to Advance Chesapeake Bay Research and Management: A review of status, challenges, and opportunities](#)
Convened February 24-25 in Annapolis, MD
 - Blueprint for Building Partnerships and Recommendations for Scaling Brook Trout Restoration in Stronghold and Persistent Patches
Convened May 29 in [DuBois, PA](#); June 3 in [Westminster, MD](#)
 - [Advancing Market-Based Approaches in the Agricultural Sector to Support Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration](#)
Scheduled July 8-9 in Annapolis, MD

- STAC FY25 Workshops
 - Challenges and Opportunities in Operationalizing Coupled Human and Natural Systems (CHANS) Research in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed
 - State of the Science of Salinity Risks in the Chesapeake Bay and Its Tributaries: Connecting Monitoring, Modeling and Management
 - Healthy Forests: Proactive Strategies for Managing Threats and Promoting Conservation
- Phase 7 Model Review
- Proposed Document Revisions and Amendments
 - Bylaws and Operational Guidelines
- Member Announcements and Updates

11:10 am **Goals and Objectives for the STAC June Meeting**
STAC will discuss the desired outcomes of the meeting.

11:40 am **The Future of the [C-StREAM Program](#) – Gabriella Giordano (CRC)**
Gabriella Giordano (CRC) will present an overview of the Chesapeake Student Recruitment, Early Advisement, and Mentoring (C-StREAM) program and discuss how the program will continue to support the career development of qualified students in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed through the current changing landscape.

12:00 pm **Lunch**

1:00 pm **STAC Lightning Talks**

- *Matt Baker (UMBC)*
- *Ben Hayes (Bucknell University)*
- *Greg Noe (USGS)*
- *Tess Thompson (VT)*

1:30 pm **Lightning Talk Discussion**
Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.

1:50 pm **Setting the Science Agenda for 2026: STAC in the Present**
PSC Response Letter to STAC's 2024 Recommendations to the EC – Larry Sanford (UMCES)

Video viewing: A collage of interviews from individuals with insights into STAC's role in the Bay Program and Chesapeake watershed conservation, created through [Green Fin Studio](#). The responses highlight the uniqueness and strengths of STAC and provides feedback to guide STAC's future decisions.

Larry Sanford (UMCES, STAC Chair) and Denice Wardrop (CRC, PSU, STAC Executive Secretary) will lead a discussion of STAC's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. STAC will begin drafting a brief justification of the committee.

3:00 pm **Break**

3:30 pm **Check-In on STAC Analysis**
STAC members and participants are encouraged to share any additional strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for STAC that emerged in conversations during the break.

- 3:45 pm** **STAC Lightning Talks**
- *Kathy Boomer (FFAR)*
 - *Chris Brosch (DE Dept. of Ag.)*
 - *Weixing Zhu (Binghamton University)*
 - *Larry Sanford (UMCES)*
 - *Bill Dennison (UMCES)*
 - *Kenny Rose (UMCES)*
- 4:20 pm** **Lightning Talk Discussion**
Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.
- 4:40 pm** **Living Resources Feasibility Charette Debrief– *Kaylyn Gootman (EPA)***
Key individuals met May 6-7, 2025, to discuss and develop a workplan on increasing conservation efforts towards linking water quality management decisions with living resources responses. This was one of the recommendations from the CESR report. Kaylyn Gootman (EPA) will give a debrief on the Charette discussions, outcomes, and next steps.
- 4:55 pm** **CESR Debrief and Updates– *Denice Wardrop (CRC), Mark Monaco (NOAA), Kenny Rose (UMCES), Kurt Stephenson (VT)***
Denice Wardrop (CRC) will provide a refresher on the impacts of the [CESR report](#). Updates on efforts following the report's implications and recommendations will be given by Mark Monaco (NOAA), Kenny Rose (UMCES), and Kurt Stephenson (VT) for CESR-related publications, CESR-related legislation and programs, a Tiered Implementation of the TMDL, and NPS accountability issues. STAC will discuss the implications of CESR as a STAC product.
- 5:40 pm** **Potential Future STAC Products**
The committee will share thoughts on the process utilized to produce the CESR report, suggest changes for potential future STAC products, and consider if another product is necessary and feasible.
- 6:00 pm** **Dinner** (food served until 7:30 pm)
- Evening** **Bingo** (starts at 7:00 pm)
Play and maybe win a small prize in the Social Lounge or at the Headwaters Patio (weather dependent). This activity is open to all NCTC guests and lasts about one hour.
- Hangout at the Headwaters Patio** (starts at 7:00pm)
Relax and chat around the propane fire tables at the Headwaters Patio.

Tuesday, June 17th – “Power of the Partnership”

6:30 am **Breakfast** (hot food served until 8:30 am)

8:30 am **Engagement Activity**

Test your knowledge on the Bay Program and STAC with a quick game of Kahoot! (trivia)

8:45 am **The Bay Program: Present and Future – Kaylyn Gootman (EPA), Breck Sullivan (USGS), Rachel Felver (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)**

STAC Liaisons Kaylyn Gootman (EPA), Breck Sullivan (USGS), and Rachel Felver (Alliance) will provide an update on changes within the Bay Program and apprise STAC of upcoming activities that may require the committee’s attention at the request of the Bay Program.

9:30 am **Collaboration with Advisory Committees in Bay Program Decision Making – Laura Cattell Noll (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay), Jess Blackburn (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay), Hans Schmidt (MD Dept. of Ag.)**

Laura Cattell Noll (Alliance), Coordinator for the [Local Government Advisory Committee](#) (LGAC), and Jess Blackburn (Alliance), Coordinator for the [Stakeholders’ Advisory Committee](#), will share how their Advisory Committees (ACs) structure small groups. Hans Schmidt (MD Dept. of Ag.) will provide an update on the [Agricultural Advisory Committee](#). STAC and the AC Coordinators will discuss the roles of the ACs as the Bay Program’s structure and strategy evolve.

10:00 am **Break**

10:25 am **Collaboration with STAR in Bay Program Decision Making – Breck Sullivan (USGS), Ken Hyer (USGS)**

Ken Hyer (USGS), STAR Chair, and Breck Sullivan (USGS), STAR Coordinator, will talk about the [Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting](#) (STAR) Team’s anticipated needs and discuss with STAC ways to collaborate with STAR as the Bay Program’s structure and strategy evolve.

10:50 am **Understanding STAC’s Perspectives on Environmental Decision Support Tools – Alex Gunnerson (USGS), Sophie Waterman (USGS)**

As the Chesapeake Bay Partnership evaluates future directions for conservation and restoration in the watershed, the Chesapeake Bay Program Geospatial Science and Applications Team (GSAT) is conducting user research to understand the environmental decision support needs of key audiences, including scientists who both utilize and contribute to the development of geospatial resources. During the presentation, participants will learn about existing decision support tools and be invited to share their insights on how geospatial resources can be enhanced and evolved to better support their research and application efforts in the environmental decision-making process.

11:20 am **Nature-Based Solutions and Capital Accounting – Vamsi Sridharan (Tetra Tech), Julia Fucci (CRC)**

Vamsi Sridharan (Tetra Tech) and Julia Fucci (CRC) will present on the objectives of the STAC Synthesis project, “Evaluating the performance of nature-based coastal protection solutions for natural capital accounting in Chesapeake Bay” and information on Natural Capital Accounting (NAC).

12:00 pm **Lunch**

1:00 pm Lightning Talks

- *Christine Kirchhoff (PSU)*
- *Ellen Kohl (UMBC)*
- *Mike Runge (USGS)*
- *Erin Letavic (HRG, Inc.)*
- *Kathy Bunting-Howarth (NY Sea Grant)*

1:30 pm Lightning Talk Discussion

Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.

1:50 pm Setting the Science Agenda for 2026: Navigating Uncertainties

Larry Sanford (UMCES) will give a brief introduction on uncertainties, the "gold standard for science," and the proposed Foundational Strategies. STAC will split into breakout groups and discuss ways to build resilience in a changing landscape and continue to progress in the next year+.

3:00 pm Break**3:20 pm Perception of Knowledge – Christine Kirchhoff (PSU), Ellen Kohl (UMBC), Theo Lim (UBC SCARP), Daphne Pee (Stakeholders' AC, GWU)**

[Social Science Workgroup](#) (SSWG) members Christine Kirchhoff (PSU), Ellen Kohl (UMBC), Theo Lim (UBC SCARP), and Daphnee Pee (Stakeholders' AC, GWU) will facilitate activities and discussions to prompt STAC to think about interdisciplinary and alternative ways of knowing and to reflect on how the exclusion of ways of knowing can hinder the production and quality of knowledge in decision making. These discussions will inform STAC on the various ways of knowledge production and the importance of codesigning efforts with people who hold these alternative knowledge.

5:20 pm Break**5:30 pm Indigenous Data Sovereignty and ICC Tribal Feedback**

'Braiding Knowledge Streams' ([draft proposal](#)) was proposed as a Foundational Strategy to be incorporated in the revised Watershed Agreement and applied across all Outcomes. This strategy posits collaborating with the [Indigenous Conservation Council](#) (ICC) of the Chesapeake Bay, which is composed of the seven federally-recognized tribes of Virginia and supports tribal nations in rematriating and caring for their lands in a manner that reinforces sovereignty and self-determination. Desiree Shelley (ICC Indigenous Knowledge and GIS Specialist) will share concepts of ethical space, data sovereignty, and understanding different definitions of knowledge and Melissa Ann Ehrenreicht (ICC Executive Director) will share feedback on respectfully engaging tribal voices and incorporating indigenous knowledge into decision-making.

6:00 pm Dinner (food served until 7:30 pm)**Evening Trivia (begins 7:30 pm)**

Group up and test your collective knowledge on a variety of topic areas in the Social Lounge or at the Headwaters Patio (weather dependent). This activity is open to all NCTC guests and lasts about one-and-a-half hours.

Wednesday, June 18th – “Pushing for Progress”**6:30 am** **Breakfast** (hot food served until 8:30 am)**7:30 am** **Bird Walk**

NCTC ornithologist Jim Siegel will lead a walk through the woods and help identify birds by sound and sight. Wear walking shoes and appropriate clothing for the weather; binoculars will be provided. Meet at the Bridge at the Commons at 7:20am.

8:40 am **STAC Lightning Talks**

- *John Bovay (The Commons)*
- *Yusuke Kuwayama (UMBC)*
- *Scott Knoche (Morgan State, PEARL)*
- *Leah Palm-Forster (UD)*

9:10 am **Lightning Talk Discussion**

Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.

9:30 am **Science Topics of Interest**

STAC will identify potential science topics to discuss in future meetings.

10:00 am **Break****10:20 am** **STAC Lightning Talks**

- *Shirley Clark (PSU)*
- *KC Filippino (HRPDC)*
- *Jeni Keisman (USGS)*
- *Carl Friedrichs (VIMS)*

10:50 am **Lightning Talk Discussion**

Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.

11:10 am **Formation of ad-hoc workgroups**

Success of the Social Science Workgroup (SSWG)

STAC Staff will inform on the process of ad-hoc workgroups.

STAC will discuss and create ad-hoc workgroups, assign selves into workgroups.

11:50 pm **Working Lunch — ad-hoc workgroups breakouts****1:00 pm** **Meeting Summary (Open to Public)**

The meeting summary is open for the public to attend virtually ([link to join on STAC site](#)).

- June Meeting Review – Larry Sanford
- Ad-hoc workgroups report-out
- Topics for STAC thematic meetings
 - Approve November 2025 topical meeting date
- Expertise gaps in STAC Membership
- Outcome: Outline of one-pager which justifies STAC

3:00 pm **Meeting Adjourn**