

Stakeholders' Members Present: John Dawes, Andrew Der, Donna Harris-Aikens (Vice-Chair), Matt Ehrhart, Bill Fink, Verna Harrison, Chuck Herrick (Chair), Ann Jurczyk, Hamid Karimi, Julie Patton Lawson, Joe Maroon, Bill Noftsinger, Vaughn Perry (remote) Abel Olivo, Kate Patton, Daphne Pee, Sara Ramotnik, Tim Rupli, BeKura Shabazz, Charlie Stek, Dana Wiggins (remote), and Staff Jess Blackburn & Alex LoCurto

Speakers/Guests Present: Kate Fritz, Amy Handen, Lucinda Power, Adam Ortiz, Josh Kurtz, Carin Bisland, Martha Shimkin, Rachel Felter, Anna Killius, Laura Cattell Noll, Khesha Reed, Cassandra Davis, Greg Barranco, Kristin Saunders, KC Filippino, Jason Dubow, Doug Austin, Keith Bolt, Marisa Baldine, Suzanne Trevena.

Meeting presentations and materials are located at:

[Stakeholders' Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting \(May 2024\) | Chesapeake Bay Program](#)

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

The Stakeholders' Advisory Committee Chair, Chuck Herrick, called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM. The meeting objectives are to (1) Engage with Chesapeake Bay Program leadership around Stakeholders' Committee priority topics; (2) Delve into the Stakeholders' Conservation & Land Use Subcommittee priority: Understand the history of the Chesapeake Bay Program's role in land use planning and decisions as a foundation for effective approaches in conserving land, forests and wetlands beyond 2025; and (3) Learn and discuss updates on the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee in preparation for Stakeholders' Committee feedback.

Business Meeting

- The Committee voted to approve the February 2024 Quarterly Meeting minutes as submitted.
- Chuck shared updates on the Committee's activities: members who volunteered to participate completed their reviews for the 2024 NFWF small watershed grant proposal cycle; the Committee has been participating in the ongoing B25 process as demonstrated by the feedback provided on the ERG report
- There will be opportunities to join and participate in a Summer Virtual Learning Series
- Next PSC Meeting is June 25th

Discussion on Creation of New Agriculture Advisory Committee

Matt shared updates on the proposed Agricultural Advisory Committee. The jurisdictions' action team emphasized that the new committee should consist of agricultural producers, not lobbyists. The current language in the draft Ag Advisory Committee bylaws states a preference for members whose income was primarily derived from agricultural production. Matt acknowledged the challenges of maintaining farmer participation. Some members had questions about the new committee's unique contributions, whether DC could offer appointments of full-time farmers, the political nature of potential assignments, and whether the income preference would exclude small farmer participation. Lucinda Power stressed that Agricultural Committee members, whether voting or non-voting, should not include state or federal staff to avoid conflicts of interest. These staff could be invited as guests to share their expertise. Despite these and other concerns, the Committee overall supported forming the new Ag Advisory Committee.

Conversation with the Principals' Staff Committee Chair

Secretary Josh Kurtz, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Secretary Kurtz shared his vision for incorporating the CESR report into their work on the 31 outcomes focusing on rebuilding local water systems and increasing public involvement. MD DNR aims to use a long-term

vision for short-term decisions, improve access to water, promote outdoor recreation, and adopt climate-adaptive management.

Sec. Kurtz highlighted challenges with siloed agencies and the need for better coordination. Governor Moore reconstituted the Bay Cabinet into the Watershed Council to create a cohesive strategy on septic tanks, wastewater treatment, habitat restoration, and more. For example, the 5 Million Trees Program now has a dedicated team coordinating efforts across local governments and agencies.

Sec. Kurtz emphasized following science and focusing on shallow water habitats and local water quality. He praised new tools that integrate models and monitoring for quicker management decisions and more effective funding. He acknowledged MD's challenge of having abundant data but struggling to drive action, particularly in BMPs, and stressed the importance of strategic project placement and landowner collaboration. He also noted the success of citizen science, like volunteer water quality monitoring, and the need to improve communication and public involvement in restoration efforts, pointing out examples like Virginia's oyster restoration project. He emphasized the EPA's role in optimizing and maximizing restoration efforts for long-term success.

Prepared Subcommittee Questions:

- ❖ What do you see as the role of the CBP in land conservation and land-use planning and what more can the CBP, federal agencies, and states do to meet the tremendous needs necessary for restoring the Bay Watershed?
 - Maryland uses Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) funds for rapid money movement in acquisition and innovation, partnering with land trust communities to leverage underutilized tools. Embracing carbon and habitat credits involves risks compared to state acquisition of easements, requiring careful consideration. Maximizing easement restoration should be a priority to enhance bay water quality and conservation efforts.
- ❖ What is your view on the partnership's preference for consensus and the tension with the need to move forward?
 - In this partnership, we strive to keep members focused on a common goal despite strong political differences. While there's no perfect method for decision-making in partnerships, the goal is to drive collective action, push boundaries, and maintain inclusivity. The partnership's strength lies in progressing together while keeping everyone at the table.
- ❖ As the partnership focuses on Beyond 2025 with an intention to amend the *2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, thinking through the lens of what you would like to accomplish in your tenure as PSC chair, how do you see your role in encouraging the signatories to be engaged at the highest executive levels and bring their creative and ambitious energy to the effort?
 - To improve efficiency, we need to identify where the partnership falls short due to bureaucracy or resource constraints. We aim to maximize the restoration effort's benefits for all watershed residents by sharing successful initiatives among states. Sec. Kurtz noted that competition among states can benefit the partnership but requires active participation from the principals. Gov. Moore may personally send requests for EC attendance. Kurtz suggested creating agendas with decisions and consequences for non-attendance to boost participation. He emphasized the need to share success stories and reignite excitement about water quality efforts and climate action.

Member Discussion:

- ❖ *Balancing Conservation and Agriculture:* Bill Fink asked about balancing land conservation with agriculture, emphasizing the importance of ensuring farmers remain profitable and can participate in conservation efforts.
 - One of MD's top programs for land protection is the Agricultural Land Preservation Program which lends technical assistance to landowners. MD DNR administers the Legacy Program, successfully designating rural legacy areas and conducting acquisitions within them. Supporting farmers is critical amid new development pressures, such as solar projects.
- ❖ *Environmental Justice Mapping:* Julie asked if existing land conservation maps overlay with EJ Screen, Justice 40, or other socio-economic indicators to strategize conservation efforts for communities in need. She also inquired about community engagement levels to ensure alignment with community needs and preferences.

- DNR prioritizes funding based on a scoring criteria, with people accounting for 40% of the score. This tool helps focus on communities already burdened and facing additional challenges. Currently, DNR engages more with institutions than individual landowners, providing long-term stability but requiring new approaches to work directly with landowners without devaluing their property.
- Abel asked for clarification on what areas the “40% of people” included in their scoring.
- Sec. Kurtz responded that it includes access to protected property, imbalances in infrastructure accessibility, and benefits for the surrounding community; but lacks public health or other EJ factors.
- ❖ *Obstacles to Success:* Charlie asked Sec. Kurtz what tools he and the Bay program lack to achieve their restoration goals, particularly in shallow waters.
 - Sec. Kurtz replied that the main issue is the lack of data processing. They collect large amounts of data but lack the capacity to analyze it fully, which hinders fine-scale knowledge and management decisions.

Conversation with EPA Regional 3 Administrator

Administrator Adam Ortiz, U.S. EPA Office of the Administrator

Administrator Ortiz aims for EPA to be actively engaged both in asserting its authorities and responsibilities and in listening and learning from stakeholders. He emphasized proactive engagement through the Advisory Committees as well as community involvement to foster a robust partnership for the future.

Prepared Subcommittee Questions

- ❖ Can you help members understand how the Bay TMDL accountability framework and EPA backstops will or will not be in effect beyond 2025?
 - Administrator Ortiz views the Bay TMDL Accountability Framework and backstops as a partnership decision, but his intention strongly advocates for keeping them in place, as they are in PA. Accountability should apply uniformly across all states, not just upstream neighbors. Progress is going to demand more than just backstops.
- ❖ What do you see as the role of the CBP in land conservation and land-use planning and what more can the CBP, federal agencies, and states do to meet the tremendous needs necessary for restoring the Bay Watershed?
 - With a background in local government and experience in zoning decisions in the Metropolitan DC area, Admin. Ortiz understands the issues well. He has attended many Council of Governments meetings in DC, discussing land use planning and transportation. EPA’s primary role lies in providing data and GIS mapping trends. It is politically sensitive for the Federal Government to get involved in local land use decisions unless it’s something significant like the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Admin. Ortiz advocates for others to step up in their roles across different government sectors to push for sustainable planning. It’s not appropriate for the EPA regional administrator or staff to attend local zoning meetings, but the agency can still play an essential role. There is a patchwork of conservation laws in the region that see both smart growth principles and their absence in various areas. Land conservation is something we continue to monitor, and I’m open to suggestions on how we can collaborate more effectively.
- ❖ Is the Bay Program partnership really serious about DEI? Some members who represent the community still continue to feel excluded and there seems to be reluctance to include, recognize and compensate marginalized individuals for their invaluable contributions to the Bay’s priorities and objectives?
 - The President’s Administration is committed to Justice 40, which allocates 40% of grant dollars to underserved communities. EPA Region 3 exceeds these targets across air, land, brownfields, and water programs, including for the Chesapeake Bay. A key funding vehicle is the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which supports small watersheds orgs with the aim to distribute funds promptly and direct them to where they’ll have the greatest impact. Any feedback on improving this effort is welcome. We are also in the process of filling a position for the partnership’s

coordinator for the Diversity work group. Additionally, the Management Board is revisiting the DEIJ implementation strategy.

- ❖ What is your policy and position on EPA funding for need-based Stakeholders' Committee member honorariums?
 - Admin. Ortiz personally supports the Committee's proposal for a needs-based honorarium. Though EPA faces legal complexities that make implementing the honorarium challenging, but not impossible. In August the Management Board (MB) will discuss financial assistance to support diverse participation in the advisory committees. Administrator Ortiz pledged to personally oversee the proposal's progress as the MB reviews it.

Admin. Ortiz emphasized the importance of engaging more with farmers in the partnership who play a crucial role as frontline environmentalists and make a daily impact on the soil. It's essential that their contributions are recognized and ensure they have the support they need to continue their environmental stewardship effectively.

Addressing the Beyond 2025 process, he stressed the need to commit to accelerating efforts in terms of scale and speed. The funds from BIF and IRA are making a significant impact in VA, MD, and PA with historic levels of financial support. These funds strategically enhance participation in restoration efforts, such. Sustained funding and program expansion are crucial moving forward to amplify our impact.

Admin. Ortiz concluded his thoughts by saying that Advisory Committees often send letters and receive responses months later. While that's acceptable, he encourages more direct interactions. He is open to attending quarterly meetings and suggested additional opportunities to convene, such as smaller gatherings and conversations between chairs, vice-chairs, and himself, where conversation could enhance alignment and partnership. Other State secretaries support this idea as well.

Member Discussion:

- ❖ *EPA Support of Small Organizations:* Abel asked how can EPA help small organizations grow beyond coupling with larger organizations to manage grant funds?
 - The launch of the Thriving Community Technical Assistance Centers (TCTAC) focuses on providing technical assistance and guidance to smaller communities helping them build capacity to compete.
- ❖ *Incorporation of New Voices in EPA Strategy:* Daphne Pee asked how EPA is including the experiences of engaging with communities and allowing new voices to enter into strategic thinking?
 - We value having people at our table, but it's also vital to visit theirs, as it's often difficult for them to come to us. Listening is key; through 300 field meetings, we learn more ways to be more supportive. Understanding ground-level impacts at EPA makes us more effective.
- ❖ *Closed Door Meetings vs. Transparency:* Julie referenced Sec. Kurtz's challenges as PSC Chair in building consensus amid partnership distrust and noted how closed meetings can erode public trust. She asked how Admin. Ortiz balances consensus-building with transparency?
 - Building relationships of trust involves showing up in safe spaces, listening, and sharing concerns. This applies to individuals and organizations. It's important to meet and have conversations where people can safely air their concerns.
- ❖ *Agricultural Task Force vs. New Advisory Committee:* Joe Maroon asked if there's a possibility to structure the new Ag advisory committee as a task force focused on accelerating conservation within the agricultural community and addressing related issues rather than as a fourth advisory committee.
 - The PSC has signaled a preference for a standing committee so the initiative is progressing in that way.

Conservation and Land Use Panel

Carin Bisland, Retired EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office

Jason Dubow, Vice Chair, Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT); Director, Research, Review and Policy Division, MD Department of Planning

Laura Cattell Noll, LGAC Coordinator, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Kate Patton, co-chair of the Conservation and Land Use subcommittee offered opening remarks and introduced the panelists to provide historical context and insights establishing a solid baseline for future discussions.

Carin Bisland's opening remarks highlighted her focus on the successful and unsuccessful aspects of the [Chesapeake 2000 Agreement](#) and the [2014 Watershed Agreement](#) which were both pivotal in shaping the program. Land use significantly impacts CBP's mission, influencing water quality, habitat, biodiversity, and climate resilience. Human habitat management is very crucial for watershed health. The 2000 Agreement initially emphasized land use, but this goal was scaled back in the 2014 agreement. The *Chesapeake 2000 Agreement* tested 26 commitments across land conservation, public access, transportation, and development/redevelopment. By 2014, adjustments were made based on successes and challenges with significant achievements in land conservation and public access, which were supported by existing entities. Challenges continue to persist in transportation and development/redevelopment, influenced by local decision-making complexities and state and local government dynamics.

Initiatives like resource lands assessments, tax policy reviews, local government roundtables, and model plans for low impact development showed progress. However, inadequate communication and collaboration with local governments hindered their implementation. The commitment to reduce harmful sprawl by 30% in *Chesapeake 2000* failed for two main reasons: not all states fully embraced it and the initial measurement tool designed for another purpose was discontinued. The complex relationships between states and local governments, alongside the numerous localities involved further complicated efforts to achieve consensus and meaningful action on sprawl reduction.

In the 2014 agreement, the commitment to reduce harmful sprawl by 30% was not included for a couple of reasons. First, the focus was on areas where the program believed federal-state commitments would lead to tangible successes, drawing lessons from the challenges faced in the *Chesapeake 2000 Agreement*. Second, CBP prioritized SMART goals—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound—to maintain flexibility and adaptability in their approach. This allowed states and localities to pursue goals in ways that aligned with their unique relationships and capabilities rather than imposing rigid requirements from the Agreement itself.

Jason Dubow highlighted the importance of raising awareness about environmental impacts from land use changes at both CBP and state levels attributing these impacts not only to population growth but also to economic activities, noting the challenge of measuring the environmental impact of new development.

When the *2014 Watershed Agreement* was introduced, Jason ensured that land use issues were included, despite some states advocating for their removal due to perceived challenges in influencing local decisions and tracking development. He highlighted VA and MD's enforcement of critical area laws near tidal waters as examples of state-level authority in land use management. The detailed one-meter resolution land cover dataset is integrated with the TMDL effort and serves as a reliable method to monitor development trends. This dataset provided detailed insights into land use and impervious cover changes since the 2010s, making it evident that ignoring such data or its integration into the Bay Agreement was no longer justified. Despite this the program has not yet disseminated this information or leveraged it for policy change though it remains a highly defensible dataset.

Jason advocated for the need to raise awareness among state and local governments about watershed land use changes. Forecasting future changes and robust planning are crucial to protect water bodies as urban areas expand. Jason debunked the idea that only local governments influence land use, suggesting strategies like developer incentives and mandates such as critical area laws that could guide development and minimize environmental impact.

Laura Cattell Noll coordinates the CBP's Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC), which advises the Executive Council and other decision-makers on local government impacts. Recent feedback underscores affordable housing, as a pressing concern for LGAC members. Local officials prioritize expanding affordable housing and aligning it with land conservation goals by advocating for dense, transit-oriented housing in targeted areas. A National League of Cities survey found 73% of officials prioritize expanding or diversifying local housing which is crucial for addressing affordability amid market dynamics where supply impacts housing costs significantly.

This approach is underscored in the Land Trust Alliance's report "[Finding Common Ground](#)", which explores collaboration between conservation groups and affordable housing advocates. Local governments assert their role as key decision-makers in land use with minimal state involvement and use tools like comprehensive planning and zoning ordinances.

Member Discussion:

- ❖ *Utilizing Existing Regulations:* Hamid inquired about leveraging existing regulations to restrict urban sprawl and facilitate redevelopment efforts.
 - Jason answered that despite MD's strict stormwater management regulations for new developments, urban stormwater loads have continued to increase over time as revealed in their Phase III WIP analysis. This trend significantly hampers progress in retrofitting older developments without adequate stormwater management measures. A key challenge lies in assessing the feasibility of further tightening requirements.
- ❖ *TMDL & Clean Water Act's Impact on Development:* Joe asked whether the Clean Water Act or the Bay's TMDL can help regulate development. Are states required to address growth in their WIPs and offset new growth within the TMDL allocation limits?
 - Carin responded that the answer lies in hidden factors. Despite implementing best management practices, entities often do not receive credit due to unaccounted-for land use changes affecting load adjustments. The focus remains on BMPs rather than articulating the impact of land use changes on goal attainment. However, land use and offsets are integral to the TMDL framework.
 - Jason added that he is unaware of regulatory controls over new or expanding non-point sources of pollution in water bodies under the TMDL except for point sources.
- ❖ *Influence of CBP on Land Use Decisions:* Jess Blackburn asked about the role of the Bay Program in influencing land use decisions amidst economic drivers and varying state-local government dynamics. What actions can a multi-jurisdictional voluntary program take to influence land use decisions especially in achieving critical environmental outcomes like forest and wetland preservation beyond 2025?
 - Carin suggested that the current partnership structure might not be suited to address all the major challenges hindering Chesapeake Bay restoration. She emphasized the importance of clarifying federal, state, and local roles to ensure commitments are made at the appropriate government level.
 - Laura highlighted the potential of the Bay Program to act as a capacity builder supporting networks engaged with local governments. She proposed resourcing these networks with tools and technical assistance to empower communities in making impactful decisions.
 - Jason raised concerns about reaching critical development thresholds in the Bay watershed that could hinder achieving restoration goals. He suggested conducting analyses to forecast these thresholds and potentially imposing limits to avoid irreversible damage.
 - Kristin Saunders, the CBP cross-goal team coordinator, added that decisions made at the local level have broader impacts. The partnership provides comprehensive data, monitoring information, and strategies to address these issues. Kristen highlighted using social science tools and incentives to improve decision-making and underscored the interconnectedness of the watershed system. She emphasized the partnership's role in fostering positive change by addressing collective impacts across localities.

Thursday, May 23, 2024

The meeting was reconvened at 8:30AM.

Member Reflections from Previous Day

Hamid appreciated that the advanced questions for speakers fostered respectful dialogue and viewed it as a smart practice to continue. Donna expressed her desire for ongoing engagement with the Secretary and Administrator to maintain dialogue and discuss bold ideas thoroughly. Verna proposed revisiting the consensus requirement for EC decision-making. Building on Donna's suggestion to engage directly with the Secretary and Administrator, Verna and Andrew volunteered to contact the MD Watershed Council to arrange a meeting.

Kate Patton referred to Secretary Kurtz's suggestion of a new easement/restoration program, noting MD's robust existing programs make new initiatives unnecessary. She stressed the importance of avoiding duplication and fostering collaboration among conservation and agriculture sectors. Kate also urged the committee to renew a sense of urgency and inspiration for driving impactful action forward.

Beyond 2025 Steering Committee Updates

Anna Killius, Executive Director, Chesapeake Bay Commission; Co-Chair, Beyond 2025 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) aims to provide the Executive Council with a high-level report aligned with the Bay Program's mission and organized into three main sections: science, restoration, and conservation, and partnership. The SC is likely to recommend amending the *2014 Watershed Agreement* to build on current progress and avoid disruption of creating a new one. By focusing on amendments, the aim is to optimize resources and maintain momentum in ongoing initiatives. Recommendations from the ERG and small groups highlight specific changes to bridge gaps and align with partnership goals. The Agreement's adaptable framework allows for adjustments and the SC intends to leverage this flexibility fully. The proposed phased approach aims to streamline edits to core program pillars: clean water, living resources, habitat, landscapes, and people, while integrating conservation where suitable to underscore its importance.

From 2025 to 2026, the SC proposes a review of all 31 outcomes updating dates and metrics as needed and incorporating new language to address emerging challenges and ensure clarity on current goals. Achievable time-bound targets will be established for all outcomes, addressing feedback from the 'Charting a Course to 2025' report and small group discussions. As of 2023, 18 outcomes are on track, while 11 are off track.

The timeline for the rest of the year includes a public feedback period from July 1 to August 31. During this period, anyone can submit comments. All comments received will be posted online at chesapeakebay.net. Subject matter experts will collect and review the comments and a red-lined version of the document will be posted online. Based on the public feedback revisions will be made in September. In October, the MB and the PSC will review the final report. In December, the EC will be presented with the findings of the report and will have the opportunity to take action in response to its recommendations.

Member Discussion:

- ❖ *Engaging Communities:* Daphne asked what engaging people and communities looks like in the B25 process?
 - Anna answered that it is more appropriate for the jurisdictions and the partners to do the outreach. The Bay Program builds the capacity of those doing the direct community outreach.
- ❖ *Comment Review Process Clarification:* Sara Ramotnik asked two questions: Who is responsible for redlining during the two-month public comment period? She also proposed boosting enthusiasm with a December event focused on rallying around a recommitment to the 2014 Agreement and sought ideas to support this initiative.
 - Anna explained that subject matter experts will primarily be reviewers with input from external experts as needed. She emphasized the importance of signatories feeling the urgency and reaffirming their commitment to the partnership but highlighted the challenge of ensuring full attendance at the December EC meeting.
- ❖ *Approving Amendments to the Agreement:* Ann Jurczyk asked which type of amendments the PSC can adopt to close existing gaps and which need EC approval.
 - Changes impacting goals and wording need EC approval. The Agreement has been updated twice with significant changes approved by the EC to clarify terms like "public" versus "citizen" and "youth" versus "young citizen." Adapting goals and outcomes to future conditions (e.g., climate change), consolidating goals, refining outcomes for better measurability, and refreshing deadlines on TMDL outcomes would require EC approval.

Subcommittee Reports

- *Stewardship and Engagement Subcommittee:* Daphne reported on the subcommittee's progress in embedding action learning into the EPA's process for dispersing funds to community-based organizations and met with Dr. Nakamura, who educated the subcommittee on this approach. Chuck and Daphne are exploring options from the EPA and the Bay Funders Network for funding this initiative. Additionally, the subcommittee is planning to consult with experts on how to ensure a culture of mutual respect and trust on the full committee. They are also addressing the flexibility of funders in loosening CFR requirements for community grants. Finally, Daphne volunteered to represent the subcommittee in the B25 review process.
- *Water Quality Subcommittee:* Matt reported that the entire subcommittee would like to participate in the review of the draft B25 recommendations. They would like to dive deeper into the differences and implications of the

Agreement and the TMDL beyond 2025 focusing on policy implications. The subcommittee plans to set up a Zoom meeting panel with experts like Evan Isaacson, John Mueller, and Roy Hoagland for an in-depth discussion on the TMDL's origin, intent, and its implications for future permit limits. They aim to ensure the EC addresses the TMDL and the broader Agreement as a legal issue. The subcommittee will potentially connect with members of STAC who are examining the tiered TMDL concept from CESR and exploring its policy implications.

- *Conservation and Land Use:* Kate reported that the subcommittee's main priority is preparing for a September panel discussion and formulating a recommendation to the EC around the development of a comprehensive mapping tool to identify threats to water quality and habitat. A focus on housing and redevelopment threats may be a future topic for the subcommittee that they have not greatly explored. The subcommittee plans to ask Peter Claggett and the Chesapeake Bay Conservancy for a presentation on available mapping tools, threats, and land protection gaps, but are still refining their questions. In an effort to accelerate land conservation to detect vulnerable areas, the subcommittee discussed recommending to the EC that MD's use of the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) be reviewed due to indemnity clause issues and whether VA and PA face similar limitations. Additionally, the subcommittee seeks to propose that the Bay Program encourages states and federal agencies to collaborate with conservation groups and land trusts to share information about land protection and conservation programs fostering better understanding and collaboration.

Action Items:

- Jess will email the committee a link to all B25 small work group one-pagers including recommendations and 12 considerations from the ERG report.
- Jess will send an email requesting volunteers for a smaller internal working group to review and synthesize feedback from the B25 public comment period.
- Draft a letter to Governor Moore commending Secretary Kurtz for his dedication, enthusiasm, and innovative efforts in restoration.
- Julie will share equity and inclusion training resources.
- Jess will circulate Dr. Nakamura's action learning presentation to the committee.
- Andrew and Verna will coordinate a meeting between the MD Watershed Council and the MD delegation.
- Members will consider an agenda topic for the September meeting to discuss raising the level of urgency and hearing from speakers to inspire around this topic before presenting recommendations to the EC this December.