



Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team Meeting

April 2026

April 20, 2026

1:00pm - 4:00pm

Meeting Link: [Join the meeting via Webex](#)

Meeting number: 2870 166 0910

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Please read the following information carefully, as our meeting policies have changed:

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Purpose: This meeting will convene the Fisheries GIT workgroups (*Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee, MD & VA Oyster Restoration Interagency Teams, Forage Action Team, & Fish Habitat Action Team*) and interested parties to recognize accomplishments and initiate our transition into the [Thriving Habitat, Fisheries, and Wildlife Goal](#) under the revised [2025 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#).

Meeting Minutes

Feel free to add your comments to this Canva Whiteboard: <https://canva.link/4qam6c6072lqkjg>

I. Introduction

1:00pm – 1:10pm

Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

II. Accomplishments under 2014 Watershed Agreement

1:10pm – 1:50pm

Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Brief overview of the accomplishments made by workgroups under the 2014 Watershed Agreement.

Decisions:

1. N/A

Actions:

1. N/A

Discussion Notes:

- Each outcome lead presented a quick overview of accomplishments made by action teams and workgroups under the 2014 Watershed Agreement
 - MD & VA Oyster Restoration Interagency Team (Stephanie Westby, NOAA)
 - Find slides on [Oyster outcome accomplishments here](#)
 - Significant achievements include restoration of oyster populations in ten Chesapeake Bay tributaries.
 - Collaborative efforts among various stakeholders led to successful oyster reef restoration at an unprecedented scale.
 - Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (Ingrid Braun-Ricks, PRFC)
 - Find slides on [CBSAC accomplishments here](#)
 - Major accomplishments include stock assessment update in 2017 and new stock assessment in 2026
 - Contributed recommendations based on best available science to prevent fishery from being overfished
 - Joint management between MDNR, VMRC, & PRFC
 - Fish Habitat Action Team (Chris Moore, CBF)
 - Find slides on [Fish Habitat accomplishments here](#)
 - Understanding fish habitats and their importance are essential for conservation and restoration efforts.
 - Emphasis placed on collaborative work among NGOs, state agencies, and federal partners for effective habitat management.
 - Living shorelines highlighted as crucial for restoring habitats while addressing climate change impacts.
 - Forage Action Team (Ryan Woodland, UMCES CBL)
 - Find slides on [Forage accomplishments here](#)
 - Ongoing research highlights the importance of forage species, including both fish and invertebrates, in Chesapeake Bay ecosystems.

- Data synthesis improves understanding of forage variability and its impact on predator species within the bay (e.g. striped bass and blue crabs)
 - Future plans for development of stop light approach as a management tool
- Invasive Catfish Workgroup (Bruce Vogt, NOAA)
 - Find slides on [ICW accomplishments here](#)
 - Ongoing research targets invasive catfish impacts and strategies to manage their populations effectively.
 - Focused work on abundance estimates and ecological impacts by the science & management team
 - Marketing and processing team has focused efforts on identifying harvest gaps, increasing processing capacity, and identifying value add products
 - Policy team has tracked legislative changes related to invasive catfish

III. Transition to 2025 Watershed Agreement

1:50 pm – 2:35 pm

Lead: Kevin Schabow (NOAA), Christina Garvey (CRC), Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Presentation on updated Chesapeake Bay Program governance & structure from Kevin Schabow (NOAA) and updates on management strategy development as we transition into the Thriving Habitat, Fisheries, & Wildlife Goal by Christina Garvey (CRC).

Decisions:

1. N/A

Actions:

1. N/A

Discussion Notes:

- Find slides on [updated CBP governance & structure & management strategy here](#)

Governance & Structure updates

- The updated Chesapeake Bay program agreement focuses on four consolidated goals and 21 outcomes through 2040.
- The Sustainable Fisheries GIT & Habitat GIT is transitioning into the Thriving Habitat, Fisheries, & Wildlife Goal
 - The restructured goal increases focus on habitats and wildlife with 8 outcomes
- New goal team leadership includes co-chairs Kevin Schabow (NOAA) and Becky Gwynn (VADWR), maintaining existing coordinators and staffers
- Management Board will be dissolved by June 2026
 - Decisions led by GIT leadership team and Principle Staff Committee
- Redefining of Goal Team membership structure
 - Up to 15 voting members
 - Additional advisory membership (non-voting)
- With elimination of MB will the GITs be making recommendations directly to the PSC?

- Yes, in some cases. Goal Team is the liaison between workgroups and the PSC.
 - Kevin and Becky will be non-voting members on the PSC
- Workgroups
 - Membership will not have the same rigid structure as goal team membership
 - How will decisions be made at the workgroup level?
 - Still TBD
 - Discussion at MB on consensus vs. consent
 - Voting if consensus cannot be reached
 - ICW is not currently under an outcome but expect workgroup to continue

Management Strategy & Workplan updates

- Overarching strategic plan with management strategy chapters for each goal
- Review of management strategy and workgroup outlines
- How will workplans be incorporated into management strategies?
 - Work groups will draft work plans separate from management strategies
 - Work plans will not be part of appendices
 - Management strategies & workplans are under the different timelines
 - Management strategies will go through public comment period
- How will decision be made at workgroup level
 - Still TBD - MB still trying to figure out between consensus vs voting (2/3 majority voting)
- Where can jurisdictions declare interest in participation?
 - Participating partner section within management strategy and work plans

Next Steps

- April - July 2026 : Identify & finalize workgroup chairs & membership
 - Bruce & Kevin schedule/attend upcoming workgroup meetings
- May - October 2026: Draft management strategies (begin draft of workplans)
- September 2026 - June 2027: Develop outcome workplans
- Future meetings will be on the [Bay Program calendar webpage](#) and will be open to the public

IV. Open Q&A

2:35pm - 3:45 pm

Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Opportunity to hear thoughts from the group regarding Thriving Habitat, Fisheries, & Wildlife outcomes under the revised 2025 Watershed Agreement

Decisions:

1. N/A

Actions:

1. N/A

Discussion Notes:

- Role of ASMFC within the Goal Team moving forward?

- Importance of ASMFC within the Bay Program - helped us understand what the real management needs are and setting science priorities
- Unsure what level that role will be moving forward whether it is at Goal Team or Work Group level (maybe both?)
- Discussions around where within the new structure is there space for fishery managers - how to create space for discussion around fishery issues?
 - Excomm is not currently under the organization chart presented today - but heard that keeping this group was important
- Will most likely still have a subset of fishery managers that we will bring together - will not longer be decisional on behalf of the Goal Team
- Discussion around oyster outcome and other fishery related outcomes - how to incorporate more commercial fishery voices within workgroups moving forward?
 - Agreement in the need for increased engagement with industry
 - Engagement would happen at workgroup level
 - Will be convening larger oyster workgroup next month and will be working with MD and VA to identify what voices to engage
- In the coming months we will begin meeting with workgroups and developing management strategies and workplans
- Please leave any questions or comments regarding these changes to the FishGIT, workgroups, management strategies, and workplans on this [Canva Whiteboard](#)

V. Wrap-Up & Adjourn
Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

3:45pm - 4:00pm

Next Meeting: TBD