



**Chesapeake Bay Program
Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)
Meeting Minutes**
Thursday, May 6, 2021
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Calendar Page: [Link](#)

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Action: WTWG should review the minutes posted to the calendar page. Approval will be asked at May meeting.

Action: Hilary Swartwood will provide Vanessa Van Note's (new WTWG Coordinator) contact information to the WTWG membership.

Action: At the next WTWG meeting on June 3rd WTWG will discuss cut- off and back- out.

Action: Vanessa Van Note and Hilary Swartwood will reach out to current members to confirm them and their alternates.

Action: Vanessa Van Note and Hilary Swartwood will review CBP and WQGIT governance protocols to ensure consistency across the groups.

Action: WTWG members should submit any additional questions regarding back- out to Cassandra Davis (cassandra.davis@dec.ny.gov) and Vanessa Van Note (vannote.vanessa@epa.gov) by May 18, 2021.

Action: The revised back- out method (see below) will be sent out to the WTWG for their review. WTWG members will have until **COB Friday, May 21st** to submit any comments / concerns. Any concerns will be addressed prior to the WTWG meeting on June 3rd where a decision will be requested.

- Revised Proposed Back- out Method: *Back out of forest and tree planting land use change practices will be based on the date of the land cover imagery used in the model's base conditions minus 15 years as recommended by the Forestry Workgroup.*

Agenda

10:00 AM – **Introductions and Announcements** – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC

- Introduction of New WTWG Coordinator, Vanessa Van Note (Thank you, Jeff!!) – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC
- Welcome Jeff Sweeney as EPA representative for WTWG – Vanessa Van Note, EPA
- Approval of April Meeting Minutes – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC
 - **Action:** WTWG should review the minutes posted to the calendar page. Approval will be asked at May meeting.
- BMP Verification Ad Hoc Action Team – Vanessa Van Note, EPA

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- *No consensus was reached on first two practices. Next meeting will focus on what the next steps will be. They will also introduce partial credit and DE will present on their verification challenges.*
- Updates to CAST – Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting
 - *The wastewater data is now available on CAST. Previous webinars are posted online on the CAST page “learning / free training videos.”*
- Cut- off Updates and Next Steps for June 3rd Meeting – Vanessa Van Note, EPA
 - *Today we will be attempting consensus on back- out which should hopefully open up time for cut- off on the next agenda for June.*
 - **Action:** Hilary Swartwood will send out Vanessa’s email to the group to make sure people are able to contact her.
 - At the next WTWG meeting on June 3rd we will discuss cut- off, if consensus is made today on back- out.
- Other announcements

10:20 AM –**Review of WTWG Voting Procedures and Membership** – Vanessa Van Note, EPA

Vanessa Van Note will review the WTWG voting procedures and membership list.

Discussion:

Loretta Collins: there is a governance and voting process that occurs at the WG level and then we have to get approval from the WQGIT after this process is complete.

Vanessa Van Note: thanks Kevin, I would love to have you as a an at- large member here but we will go through the voting process in a couple of slides.

James Martin: I just wonder if this group, being primarily states reporting data, should be solely signatory members.

Vanessa Van Note: Thanks James, if things stay the same as they are now that’s fine too.

Greg Sandi: I think maybe a definition of the purpose of the group would be beneficial so that any additional voting members would support the role and purpose of this group moving forwards.

Olivia Devereux: I just wanted to introduce Leon Tillman because he would likely be an important role in this group.

Leon Tillman: I am the new NRCS Chesapeake Bay Coordinator and still figuring out my role and how I can support these efforts moving forwards.

Vanessa Van Note: Thanks Olivia, the scope and purpose of this group is posted to the webpage. We can send this out to the group so they are aware.

Kevin Du Bois: Looking at the website scope and focus, and the tracking and reporting is one of six functions of this workgroup. To that issue about tracking and reporting, the DoD does provide credit reports to all the jurisdictions to show how DoD BMPs are credited in the model. I think we do a good job of pointing out where the DoD could be approving. These credit reports also identify any potential issues with reporting in NEIEN. I think we a valuable partner to the jurisdictions and we appreciate the support of the workgroup.

Action: Vanessa Van Note and Hilary Swartwood will reach out to current members to confirm them and their alternates.

Action: Vanessa Van Note and Hilary Swartwood will review CBP and WQGIT governance protocols to ensure consistency across groups.

10:35 AM – Back- out Time Period Related to Trees – Sally Claggett, USFS and Iris Allen, MDNR

Sally Claggett and Iris Allen will present the recommendations from the FWG on the back- out time period related to trees.

Discussion:

Olivia Devereux: did you only have 8 samples for greater than 15 years for that data?

Iris Allen: Yes, it was a pretty small sample. I forgot to mention that some of the points are double counted.

Sally Claggett: although there was less data for trees over 15 years, we did have a larger sample size for trees over ten years old.

James Martin: what qualifies as the land use being updated? Is that the date of the imagery used in the base conditions or is it the reforecasted every 2 years?

Cassie Davis: from my understanding it's the first, it's the date of the high-resolution imagery.

Dave Montali: is it the date of the imagery or the date of the imagery when it goes into CAST.

Vanessa Van Note: we have the date of the imagery set here, which is 2017. But back- out can be recalculated with the milestones.

Jeff Sweeney: the imagery itself covers several seasons. If it's a three-year tracking of the imagery it's centered on a particular year, right now it's 2017.

Olivia Devereux: when we get a new land use product, it encompasses not just imagery but a number of other things. Another thing that goes into CAST is the historical BMPs. That is why the back out date has been set to 2017. It is true that the imagery that the land data team are working on was taken in or around 2017.

James Martin: this is just getting more and more convoluted; I think if we are clear that the back out year is set prior to the date of the imagery with CAST based conditions. Right now, in CAST 2019 that date is 2013. That's not to say that the back- out year is set to that. Here we are tying it to the date of the imagery. Unless that update included new imagery.

Matt English: I think I understand this, but I have some follow up questions. I think within this back- out there are questions that come in about verification and credit life because credit life is currently ten years which is tied to when the imagery is supposed to have picked things up. We are certainly not going out and verifying tree plantings because of that. There is also a chance for double counting. While a BMP is not 100% recognized, at ten years maybe 60% is recognized, but you would be getting 100% of credit for that BMP and then 60% based on the imagery.

James Martin: In addition to tree canopy being visible in the imagery*, the classification process has to classify it properly. Even when we identify tree canopy, if we call that something like tree canopy over turf, then you are not getting the full credit. There is that nuance that helps to offset the potential for over crediting risk.

Matt English: I like what is being presented here more than the present method, but there is potential for some double crediting.

Ted Tesler: I guess I am worried that we won't be able to verify all of these.

Bill Keeling: if you don't verify it, then it doesn't get counted at all,

James Martin: for buffers you would continue to get the upland credit if it was verified even after it was backed out.

Ted Tesler: for NEIEN, is there a list of these because right now it's pretty broad.

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Sally Claggett: we equate narrow forest buffers with tree planting and not with buffers, which is confusing.

Bill Keeling: but in terms of back out its irrelevant.

James Martin: I would add all the practices that this would affect and clarify that it's the date of the imagery used in those base conditions.

Loretta Collins: Can I suggest that we revise the language and send it out via email for final approval.

Matt English: is there a better date, to avoid double counting?

Decision Requested: WTWG consensus to set the backout year of tree planting, forest planting and riparian forest buffers to 15 years prior to the date of the imagery. *For example, if the date of the imagery is 2017, backout will be calculated using tree practices implemented in 2002.*

- **Revised:** Back out of forest and tree planting land use change practices will be based on the date of the land cover imagery used in the model's base conditions minus 15 years as recommended by the Forestry WG.

Action: The revised back- out method (see below) will be sent out to the WTWG for their review. WTWG members will have until **COB Friday, May 21st** to submit any comments / concerns. Any concerns will be addressed prior to the WTWG meeting on June 3rd where a decision will be requested.

- Revised Proposed Back- out Method: *Back out of forest and tree planting land use change practices will be based on the date of the land cover imagery used in the model's base conditions minus 15 years as recommended by the Forestry Workgroup.*

11:10 AM – Continued Discussion on Additional Back- Out Procedures – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC, Vanessa Van Note

Cassandra Davis and Vanessa Van Note will lead a discussion on additional back- out procedures and next steps.

Discussion:

James Martin: This is the part I am confused about: CAST 2019 is using a back out date of 2017 even though the imagery that was basis for the base conditions was dated 2013. This is really at the crux of the confusion previously. The proposal should be clear that we are focusing on the date of the imagery and not the updates from the land use data team.

Dave Montali: The existing situation that for our original phase 6 model that was based on 2013 imagery. Practices that were inputted prior to 2013 were backed out.

Jess Rigelman: We actually used 2012 but yes, it is backed out.

Dave Montali: the part that gets me is that there is new imagery that is not being incorporated but because it was taken in 2017 the back out has shifted.

Jess Rigelman: the land use imagery wasn't exactly used but some of the data that influenced that. I don't think we need to debate that because that's not what is being decided here. It incorporated new data, whether that should or should not be done is what we are discussing for CAST 2021. I think we need to understand that the imagery will be used to determine the back out date for some of these. The back out year that we use for 2021 can be different for different BMPs. We are talking about tree BMPs and that suggestion is 15 years, but it may be different for other BMPs. I think based on the discussion that we are having; it's likely going to be a different discussion about what goes into developing the back out year for our land use BMPs.

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Cassandra Davis: Yes, right now we are just discussing tree canopies and in future meetings we can discuss back out for other BMPs.

11: 40 AM - **CAST 2021** – Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting, and Jess Rigelman, J7

Olivia and Jess will present the CAST 2021 schedule and what is being included in CAST 2021.

Discussion:

Greg Sandi: May I have a copy of the new data?

Ruth Cassilly: Yes, I will send it to you.

12:00 PM – **Meeting Adjourn**

Next Meeting: June 3, 2021 from 10:00 to 12:00 PM

Call Participants

Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC

Vanessa Van Note, EPA

Hilary Swartwood, CRC

Jeff Sweeney, EPA

James Martin, VA DEQ

Bill Keeling, VA DEQ

Greg Sandi, MDE

Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting

Jess Rigelman, J7

Loretta Collins, UMD (AgWG)

Sally Claggett, USFS (FWG)

Iris Allen, MDNR

Katie Brownson, USFS

Dave Montali, Tetra Tech (WV)

Matt English, DOEE

Ted Tesler, PA DEP