

The background features a marbled paper pattern with swirling veins of orange, teal, and grey. A large, semi-transparent white circle is centered on the page, containing the main title and author information. The text is rendered in a clean, sans-serif font.

# **2024 Forestry Workgroup planning**

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# On the Horizon



2025!  
AND BEYOND!



PHASE 7 OF THE WATERSHED  
MODEL



NEW 2021/2022 LAND USE  
AND LAND USE CHANGE DATA




**We need your input!**

To the Jamboards

# Focus areas for 2024

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- Beyond 2025: Inform recommendations on forestry-related issues
- Phase 7 of Watershed Model: Identify any needed forestry-related improvements
- Timber Harvest Task Force
- State of Chesapeake Forests 2.0 Storymap- Phase 2
- Communications



**Focus areas  
for 2024-  
Riparian  
Forest Buffers**

- Updating and expanding the official forest buffer indicator
- Strategy Review System: Management Board “check-in” opportunity in June
- Start developing new Management Strategy (2025-2035)- *tentative pending recommendations from Beyond 2025 steering committee*

# Follow-up on implementing State Forest Buffer Action Plans

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ACTIONS – 2023-24			
Action #	Description	Performance Target(s)	Responsible Party (or Parties)
<b>Management Approach 1: Renew and maintain leadership</b>			
1.1	Track progress and maintain accountability for implementing state Riparian Forest Buffer Action Strategies	a) All states report out on progress towards implementing Action Strategies at annual MB meetings, including any challenges or successes that could provide “lessons learned” for other states b) States report on key indicators in their RFB Action Strategies in their two-year programmatic milestones	State MB reps with support from FWG reps
1.2	Regularly engage state, federal and CBP leaders to identify opportunities to support implementation of state Riparian Forest Buffer Action Strategies (based on updates provided for Action 1.1)	a) Successful efforts identified that can be replicated/ expanded with additional Leadership support b) At least 1 PSC meeting annually includes time devoted to a “deep dive” into a specific challenge or opportunity for increasing RFB implementation (i.e. 2023 Farm Bill, developing a Baywide permanent buffer easement program, etc.)	FWG to engage PSC, MB, CBP Leadership, USDA

- Should we continue annual “report outs” at the MB on Action Strategy implementation?
- Are states including indicators from their Action Strategies in their new milestones?
- Are there topics we should propose for a “deep dive” with the PSC sometime this year?

# Advancing forest buffer conservation

Sample supporting recommendations from the Rising Water Temperatures report:

- Chesapeake Bay Program partners need to accelerate conservation to protect the coldwater streams now supporting health aquatic life
- CBP partners should build on and intensify their existing strategies for conservation and restoration of RFBs and find new public-private funding

**Should we prioritize these as focal actions for 2024?**

## Management Approach 6: Conserve existing buffers

6.1	Strengthen policies to minimize loss of existing forest buffers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Research conservation policies used in other states to reduce RFB loss and develop conservation policies that reduce RFB loss in Bay states</li> <li>b) Identify opportunities to strengthen state/local stream restoration policies to lessen impact on existing buffers</li> </ul>	FWG, State and local governments
6.2	Develop and expand forest buffer easement programs to incentivize permanent conservation of RFBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify model forest buffer easement programs that could be replicated (i.e. MD's CREP Easement Program)</li> <li>b) Explore potential to establish a Baywide Buffer Easement Program</li> </ul>	FWG, States, CBP, USDA

5.5	Improve reporting and verification of forest buffers to ensure new buffers are getting full credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Work with LUWG to determine efficient strategies to verify buffers using high-resolution imagery</li> <li>b) Work with USDA/EPA Task Force to improve verification of federally-funded RFBs</li> <li style="border: 2px solid red;">c) Evaluate potential to further extend credit duration for RFBs under permanent easements</li> </ul>	LUWG, USGS, USFS, USDA
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# FY24 GIT funding

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- New process- Need to have priority ideas submitted to the WQ GIT by late January
- Historically projects were \$25K-\$100K for 1-2 year projects that were bid out to contractors
- Projects should support advancement of specific Outcomes
- WQ GIT requesting brief project justification/description, project duration, estimated cost and cross-outcome connections
- WQ GIT chairs will be discussing ideas with EPA leadership



# FY24 GIT funding- potential RFB topic

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## Options:

### 1.) Advancing conservation of riparian forest buffers

- *Research conservation policies used in other states/localities to reduce RFB loss and develop model policies that could be implemented in the watershed*
- *Identify model forest buffer easement programs that could be replicated and evaluate potential to develop a baywide buffer easement program*
- *Work with LGAC/Local Leadership Workgroup to deliver materials in a format that will be useful for local planners and their contractors*

### 2.) Watershed-wide prioritization map for RFB restoration

- *Evaluate what % of riparian area should be forested to establish a better restoration target “ceiling”*

# FY24 GIT funding- potential TC topic

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## Options:

- 1) Share models and best practices for effective incentive-based and regulatory approaches to protect urban tree canopy
  - Recommendation from Chesapeake Tree Canopy Funding & Policy Roundtable
- 2) Develop a Trees & Climate Resilience Strategy Guide for local governments
  - Prior workplan item not yet completed; weave together latest NIACS tools and other resources/real world examples
  - Supports Roundtable recommendation: *Integrate trees for climate resilience into comprehensive plans (and other local plans) with specific goals, and include climate resilience strategies in urban forest plans and projects*