



Nontidal Network (NTN) Workgroup June 2026 Meeting

Wednesday, June 24th, 2026
1:00PM – 2:00PM

[Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.](#)

This meeting was recorded for internal use only to assure the accuracy of meeting notes.

Minutes

I. Welcome, Introductions & Announcements (1:00 – 1:10)

Lead: **Peter Tango** (USGS), Chair.

- Welcome Carly Maas to NTN! Carly will be taking over management of the Virginia NTN and collaborating with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on the collection of data, as well as providing oversight of some of the analysis.

II. CWGT Structure (1:10 – 1:30)

Lead: Peter Tango (USGS)

Materials: Meeting webpage [here](#).

Under the new governance structure, several workgroups (WG) previously housed under the Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting Team (STAR) are transitioning into the Clean Water Goal Team (CWGT). This shift includes the sunseting and consolidation of the Hypoxia Collaborative, Non-Tidal Network (NTN), and Data Integrity WG, which will all be integrated into a single Monitoring WG. While their core functions remain unchanged on paper, these groups will now sit under the Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring (WQSAM) outcome in the CWGT. Leadership roles for the restructured framework are currently being finalized; Peter Tango is expected to remain the monitoring coordinator, while Kaylyn, Jimmy, and Breck are slated to continue leading the Data Analysis and Reporting (DAR) Team, formerly known as Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT).

Although the exact operational structure of this new "home" remains uncertain the importance of NTN operations is heavily reinforced. In fact, the new agreement places a more explicit emphasis on these functions and products than the 2014 version, specifically outlining expectations to maintain, support, and strategically grow both non-tidal and tidal trend networks. Furthermore, the evolution of data indicators will continue to provide critical decision support, helping to shape management's understanding of watershed progress and improve strategic targeting.

To finalize this organizational transition, the CWGT is actively soliciting leadership nominations for the future Monitoring WG chair or co-chair positions through **July 15th**. Nominations from state, federal, and county partners across the board are highly encouraged and are being collected

by CWGT staffers Petra and Caroline. The current CWGT leadership team guiding this process includes Lee McDonnell, Greg Sandi, and coordinator Jeremy Hanson.

Discussion:

Comment: *Kaylyn Gootman:* The restructuring aims to streamline governance, but all existing agreements and foundational relationships supporting data collection, submittal, and analysis remain fully intact. This transition represents a major opportunity to enhance coordination and collaboration by bringing tidal, non-tidal, Hypoxia Collaborative, and Data Integrity groups under one large Monitoring Workgroup. While these monitoring programs have historically operated independently, their inherent crossovers will allow the new group to establish a cohesive meeting cadence and work hand-in-hand with the Data Analysis and Reporting (DAR) team to integrate non-tidal data into broader regional trends.

To manage this expanded scope, the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) will provide dedicated staff support, but there is an immediate need for partners to step into leadership roles as WG chairs or co-coordinators. Governance conversations are also underway to define official group membership. While formal membership structure is traditionally tied to voting on major decision items, the priority for this new group is establishing a highly inclusive network. It is critical that the final structure maintains robust representation from the state, local, and federal partners who are actively collecting data and managing non-tidal network sites in the field.

Ultimately, the greater Monitoring WG will likely rely on a dedicated internal substructure. Tidal, non-tidal, hypoxic collaborative, and data integrity activities will continue pushing forward in the background as they always have. Further discussions will take place in the near future to determine exactly how these specialized subgroups will be formally organized and how their specific field updates and technical needs will feed into the larger Monitoring WG.

- **Comment:** *Peter Tango:* Historically, the monitoring and analysis teams have operated responsively, adapting technical outputs and expanding station infrastructure like growing the network from 88 to 122 stations, and to meet the evolving requests of watershed partners and policymakers. The core strength of this WG lies in its unmatched technical expertise and practical execution, handling complex methodological evolutions like Weighted Regressions on Time, Discharge and Seasons (WRTDS) modeling and directly managing localized field operations. Because higher-level administrative bodies lack this granular understanding, the WG retains the exclusive insight required to determine site placement, project operational budgets, and allocate staff time effectively. Given this traditional focus on technical service rather than governance, transitioning toward a highly formalized, policy-relevant membership structure is an unfamiliar direction for the team. However, while the exact operational shape of the restructured framework is still being built, the program's foundational functions remain secure. Moving forward, the team will rely heavily on the insights of its members to navigate these changes and strongly encourages qualified partners to step forward into leadership roles to help guide the new Monitoring WG.
- **Comment:** *James Webber:* I hope many will strategically engage with DAR. Although, DAR is mostly tidal focused, I am hoping there will be some good cross pollination between the two groups so that we can be more collaborative and engage with the analysis of both the non-tidal and tidal portions of the Bay.

III. Management Strategies and Workplans

(1:30 – 1:40)

Lead: NTN WG.

Kaylyn Gootman, Peter Tango, and Breck Sullivan are officially tasked with leading the development of the MS for the WQSAM Outcome. The leadership team will actively consult with

network members as the subject matter experts to ensure the NTN is accurately and robustly represented. Members are encouraged to engage with this process as much or as little as they prefer, as there will be ample opportunity to provide critical input and feedback on these high-level work plans.

The timeline for this strategy development is tightly structured around the broader governance transition, starting with leadership nominations in July and official acceptance of those roles in August. Draft MS must be completed by September to undergo review by the CWGT for final approval in October. Despite the ongoing transition and administrative shifts, the group must maintain its momentum, and Peter Tango will continue coordinating overall network activities alongside Kaylyn and Breck to support their core monitoring goals.

Discussion:

Comment: *Breck Sullivan:* If you are interested in the overarching approach to achieving our outcome for the management strategy, it will be discussed at future CWGT meetings every 4th Monday of the month between 1-4PM. For WQSAM, some of the individual WG meetings are still in flux due to the transition. If you don't have an opportunity within the meetings that we still have left, we are hosting individual meetings just for WQSAM typically on Wednesdays from 9-10AM. If people are interested in helping with the MS, I can share the template. Also, please feel free to email us any parts that you feel like you would have input on and we can compile that information. You can access the [Management Strategy template here](#). Please feel free to email us with any of your thoughts, especially around the challenges you think we are facing and the management approaches to addressing our work.

IV. NTN Scope and Purpose

(1:30 – 2:00)

Lead: Kaylyn Gootman.

Kaylyn Gootman: The NTN leadership team recently met to discuss the upcoming organizational changes under the CWGT and a key takeaway from the discussion was that despite the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the final structure, core NTN monitoring activities will continue without interruption. While the exact operational substructure beneath the broader Monitoring WG has yet to be finalized, the team emphasized the critical, ongoing need for collective coordination across the network.

To guide this transition, the leadership team is proposing that the specific scope, purpose, and objectives of the NTN be integrated directly into the new Monitoring WG's detailed work plan. An initial draft of this proposal was shared alongside the meeting agenda, and though the legacy "workgroup" terminology is slated to change, the primary goal remains to ensure that network operations are hitting the mark and serving the partnership effectively. The leadership team is actively soliciting feedback on where members want to focus future NTN topics on and how to best leverage the larger monitoring group while preserving the unique focus of NTN.

A major operational challenge is ensuring complete representation from all partners, especially during prime field sampling seasons or seasonal disruptions like the current prolonged drought, which directly impacts sampling schedules. Because field personnel frequently cannot attend these administrative sessions, the leadership team stresses the importance of each participating agency designating a representative to bring ideas and technical issues forward. Ultimately, the team aims to establish an optimal check-in frequency, such as a bimonthly schedule, to align with the core demands of data collection, Quality Assurance/Quality Control, and uploading the data used to calculate loads and trends information.

Discussion:

Comment: *Molly Pulket:* I support having some smaller NTN meetings, whether we do them quarterly and whether we have ad hoc meetings if issues arise.

Q: James Webber: I think we've been given broad authority to structure these meetings and these subgroups as it best fits our purposes. It's challenging to put monitoring, tidal, and non-tidal together, try to cover both the field needs and the data curation needs, and then discuss analysis. It's too much for one monthly WG call. If it makes the group feel better, it seems like we have a lot of flexibility on how we could break this up. We could have one quarterly mega-group meeting and then smaller sub-teams that come together just for tidal, non-tidal, or different pieces. Is that something that would resonate with the group?

- **Q: Doug Moyer:** We have gone through something similar before and we started to lose participation from both tidal and non-tidal during those big integrated meetings. When you've got a heavy focus on tidal, the non-tidal folks start to drop off if they don't have a tidal perspective. What started to happen at that time is we would have smaller group discussions, and basically, we went back to having separate non-tidal and tidal groups, which is where we are today. I wouldn't be surprised if we struggle with participation again. If we have these subgroups that are really talking about the most relevant issues to that group, what are we talking about when we come back together?
- **Comment: Peter Tango:** What I have seen previously is a spring meeting focused on getting ready for the field season. Then at the end of the year, the intention was to present the analysis. There was an attempt to have an integrated picture of how all the phytoplankton, zooplankton, flows, and fish may or may not have fit together, and whether we learned something new. It was a two-part approach of getting people organized and then trying to look at findings at the end. That was meant to answer the big-picture question of whether we could see relationships among the connected parts of the ecosystem, and if that would inform long-term or short-term pictures.
- **Comment: Doug Moyer:** I agree that on the data analysis side, those linkages are more apparent because we're providing input to a system and seeing how there may be a response based on what we're finding in the non-tidal environment and how it's impacting tidal. The challenge on the monitoring side is that those two worlds are usually not dependent on each other. We are collecting data using different techniques and different timing, and one is not dependent on the other. It's hard to make one relevant to the other.
- **Comment: James Webber:** the other way to structure meeting is an every-other-month frequency. For example, this is a non-tidal meeting this month, and it's a tidal meeting next month. To Doug's point, maybe there is no need for the groups to ever cross-pollinate unless someone wants to join every one of those meetings. The upside is you don't populate everyone's calendars with a bunch of sub-meetings and all this stuff going on. The downside is now you're talking about only having face-to-face time six times a year on these topics. Maybe people can think about what would happen if we only touched base on that every-other-month schedule, or what would drop. Is there a way to have the group meet in person one month, and maybe the other month the state leads just provide a written update to the co-chairs? We can provide a status update to the co-chairs just to say, "everything's good on non-tidal monitoring in Maryland; no challenges this month."

V. Adjourn

(2:00)

Next Meeting: TBD.

Attendees:

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|------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Peter Tango (USGS) | • James Webber (USGS) |
| • Douglas Moyer (USGS) | • Lucretia Brown (DOEE) |
| • Allison Welch (CRC) | • Cynthia Johnson (VADEQ) |
| • Gabriel Duran (CRC) | • Carly Maas (USGS) |
| • Kaylyn Gootman (EPA) | • Brandon Fleming (USGS) |

- Chris Mason (USGS)
- Breck Sullivan (USGS)
- Bhanu Paudel (DNREC)
- Tyler Trostle (PADEP)
- Durga Ghosh (USGS)
- Molly Pulket (PADEP)
- James Colgin (USGS)
- Matthew Kearns (USGS)
- Nick Murray (WVDEP)
- Dustin Shull (PADEP)
- Tyler Shenk (SRBC)
- Andrew Keppel (MDDNR)
- Kristen Heyer (MDDNR)
- Sarah Brzezinski (EPA)