



Adapting to Changing Environmental Conditions (ACEC) Outcome Meeting

March 19th, 2026

1:30pm - 3:30 pm

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

Purpose: This meeting will serve to reconvene the interested parties of the Outcome. We will discuss changes, current projects, and the future direction for the outcome, alongside presentations from Laura Costadone and Keith Bollt.

Minutes

I. Introduction/welcome

Discussion Notes

- CBP Requests:
 - Seeking feedback on ChesapeakeProgress. If you have used ChesapeakeProgress in the past and would like to provide feedback about this site and inform potential product improvements, we encourage you to [complete this feedback form](#). **The form will take ~10 minutes to complete. Send feedback by April 10, 2026.**
- Workshops:
 - The STAC Synthesis NbS Project headed by Laura Costadone is having its first Charrette on April 3rd, from 10 - 12pm (virtual). Attendees will focus on identifying monitoring metrics and performance indicators for the guidebook they are developing for coastal nature-based solutions (NbS). If you are interested in attending, please register [here](#).
- Funding Opportunities:
 - The National Coastal Resilience Fund RFP is now open, proposals are due no later than **March 31st at 11:59**. See more [here](#).
 - Maryland DNR released Roots for Resilience RFP to solicit applications for construction, design/build, and design proposals for living shoreline projects (lower Eastern Shore). It is open until **April 6th**. See more [here](#).
 - NFWF will award funding through Chesapeake WILD for implementation, collaboration, and technical assistance for on the ground conservation projects. Applications are due **Thursday April 9th**. See more [here](#).
- Claire Janz introduced herself to the group. She is a deputy secretary at the Virginia Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and was previously a geography professor.
- Ken Hyer introduced himself to the group. He works for the USGS and coordinates USGS studies within the Bay Partnership

II. Bay Program Updates – Governance, Structure, & Management Strategies

Lead: Keith Bollt, EPA

Discussion Notes:

- **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** Before Keith gets into it, I want to recap who we are as an outcome since we have some new people here today. Essentially, we are now the healthy landscapes goal with four workgroups, ACEC being one of them, working towards reducing future risks from changing conditions with precipitation, temperature, and sea level rise to people and habitats. Our outcome focuses on picking sub-watershed tidal and non-tidal areas to build capacity to use nature-based solutions. We hope to have done this in seven areas by 2040.
- Keith's presentation discussion:
 - **Kevin Du Bois:** It would be great if the structure diagram could also show where the individual federal agencies fit in
 - **Keith Bollt:** I agree. If you look at the document that was agreed to at the executive council meeting, it shows the very high level, which is a simplified way of representing everything. But I agree for certain audiences it might be helpful to explain what agencies are part of the structure.
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** And I am happy to share this with Kevin Schabow, NOAA's federal rep. Hopefully there will be a more comprehensive structure diagram so that people can see where they fit in. Claire shared the link to the [document](#) that was presented at the March Management Board meeting if you want to dive deeper.
 - **Claire Jantz:** And if you are interested in getting a head start on management strategies, there is also a template available from the March Meeting.
 - **Keith Bollt:** I want to also say that at the workgroup member level, regarding management strategies, you will be called upon to provide input. So I would discourage running off in a direction without marching orders, if only so you aren't being duplicative of work that others will be leading. For example if the goal team chairs are doing a specific aspect that is not workgroup specific, you all do not need to work on that same strategy.
 - **Jason Dubow:** I know that there is a particular format being used for work plans, but I would also encourage groups to flesh out work plans as much as possible, including who would be committed to doing what as I feel the more detail we can provide on that the better.

III. Choptank Marsh Adaptation Project Update

Lead: Paul Cirillo, University of Michigan

Decisions:

1. n/a - informational only

Actions:

1. If you are interested in attending the students capstone presentation, please reach out to Julia (fuccij@chesapeake.org)

Discussion Notes:

- Paul gave a brief verbal overview of their project: Collaborating with Envision the Choptank and NOAA, this capstone project evaluates the resilience and management landscape of five critical tidal marshes in the Choptank River. The team integrated historical land cover data with 2050 sea-level rise projections to identify past shifts in vegetation and future migration pathways. Through literature reviews and professional interviews, the researchers also

identified key financial and resource barriers facing conservation practitioners in the region. Their methodology combined GIS spatial analysis with qualitative insights to assess how these ecosystems can adapt to increasing environmental pressures. Ultimately, the project provides comprehensive analyses to inform the improvement of marsh management and adaptation and will be presented at the university's capstone conference this April.

- Discussion notes:
 - **Paul Cirillo:** we can share the presentation link with anyone who is interested
 - **Laura Costadone:** I was wondering if you would be interested in sharing data, because this project fits very well into some work I am doing on natural capital accounting and I don't want to replicate what has already been done. We could team up and look at how these changes can be translated into ecosystem service losses and maybe translate those further into economic terms, which is very much the basis of natural capital accounting.
 - **Paul Cirillo:** Yes definitely, I can also connect you with my teammates who have done the GIS analysis, depending on what you are looking for.
 - **Jason Dubow:** Is the work that this team completed going to be counted towards the 2040 ACEC goal? What steps would be needed to build upon that work if so?
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** Great question. Everything is still in flux; we are still restructuring and waiting on guidance. However, because we are going to be a place-based outcome, my hope is that with current engagement with the Choptank partners, and it is also a habitat focus area of NOAA, that the Choptank River watershed will be one of the seven areas to focus our adaptation work. I would love to have this conversation once we get organized. I would propose the Choptank is sort of a pilot area for ACEC to figure out how we can best contribute as a workgroup and fill any gaps they need.

IV. STAC Synthesis NbS Project Update

Lead: Laura Costadone, Old Dominion University

Decisions:

2. n/a - informational only

Actions:

2. Anyone interested in joining the NBS Charette on April 3rd can register using [this link](#).

Discussion Notes:

- **Erin McNally:** Are you considering thin layer placement as a NBS to assess its effectiveness? You may also want to consider runneling, it hasn't been widely implemented in the Mid-Atlantic but has been done in the North East.
 - **Laura Costadone:** We are going through a big analysis and literature review process and compiling a list of all the NBS that have been considered in the work. So I am not sure if the thin layer placement has been studied, but if it has then we will pick up on it and use it in our list.
- **Kristin Saunders:** Are you including in-water practices in the nature-based solutions (oyster reefs, etc)?
 - **Laura Costadone:** Yes, we do.
- **Cindy Orsorto:** Can you please speak more on whether you are considering state conservation laws? Maryland for example has the Maryland the Beautiful Act.

- o **Laura Costadone:** Not at this point, I don't think we have the capacity to incorporate laws at this point because of the restricted timeline, but that is a very interesting aspect I would like to keep in mind.
- o **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** That is something maybe the workgroup can think of too, because we want to build capacity and understanding of the laws and what could help with these NBS.
- o **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** If people are interested in joining the Charette on April 3rd, the registration link is on the agenda for you (see the actions of this section).

V. Strategic Network Training Updates

Lead: Julia Fucci, CRC

Decisions:

3. n/a - informational only

Actions:

3. n/a

Discussion Notes:

- **Jason Dubow:** I want to make sure that the work you were just talking about can be used to inform ACEC's work plan moving forward, because it is so easy to get projects with completed research lost and forgotten and I don't want that to happen
 - o **Julia Fucci:** That is a really good point. A big part of this collaboration is us taking a look at our non-tidal work, and figuring out not only who our network should be to support that, but taking that and thinking about how it will tie into the structure of the group itself because we don't really know how that is going to look. We hope that out of this collaboration training we can identify the structure and how we will implement work, which hopefully will prevent what we do from getting lost.
 - o **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** One of the reasons I wanted to sign up for this collaboration was that we aren't necessarily trying to rebuild something, but leverage things that work specifically for us, so it has been helping us identify some crossover. The project that Julia mentioned was the Marsh Adaptation work. We did a bunch of interviews, and customized how we could use their data, their needs, to get work done, which has been successful for us. The product of that was Paul's project that he spoke on earlier. We are hoping we can do something similar with this new work after the training helps us identify who we need to be talking to.

VI. Workgroup Plans for ACEC Outcome and Next Steps

Lead: Julie Reichert-Nguyen, NOAA, ACEC Coordinator

Decisions:

4. n/a - informational only

Actions:

4. Schedule meeting between ACEC and DRCN groups to learn more about their partnership and collaborative opportunities.

Discussion Notes:

- **Erin McNally:** The DRCN (Delmarva Restoration and Conservation Network) is doing work in the Delmarva region. We are looking to provide assistance to and support to projects looking for funding or that have existing funding, and make connections with project needs to build efforts. I was thinking the DRCN group and ACEC could meet.
- **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** Yea that's great, you will be hearing more from me because that is the idea we have, and maybe we can bring power across different watersheds, because we have people from Virginia too, so we can meet and figure out how to build capacity across these networks.
- **Kevin Du Bois:** In the upland areas, perhaps another strategy you might consider is the relatively low cost conversion of turf to meadow or tree canopy.
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** Yeah, we definitely need people who are going to help us think through the non-tidal elements like this too. You will be hearing from us soon as we move forward to recruit members.
- **Kristin Saunders:** I am reminded that jurisdictions said they wanted input into the subwatersheds that are selected as target areas for this work
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** Yes, we still plan to do that Kristin, we just have to wait until we get our workgroup all set up. We have already been doing some looking into who we should speak to from each jurisdiction.
- **Frederika Moser:** The hope would be we could target new watersheds that are not currently a priority so as to increase the areas getting attention.
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** That is a thought I have had, but we don't necessarily have funding, it would be tapping into existing funding sources at least initially that would kickstart our work. However, selecting all seven areas we want to work in will be an incremental process, so if we start with existing projects, that isn't to say we can't build out later and we can definitely identify a few new areas.
- **Nicole Carlozo:** Building capacity in new watersheds could help set up MD communities for future Whole Watershed applications.
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** An Envision the Choptank meeting I was at sort of touched on the same thing, maybe that could help us build up justification of why we are selecting these areas.
- **Jason Dubow:** Does CBP have the capacity to create an inventory in 2026 of all the entities (local governments, state and federal facilities, and nonprofits) that are already facilitating the identification, planning, and/or implementation of place-based adaptation measures?
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** As the Climate Resiliency group, for years we try to track what's happening and the adaptation planning projects and so forth. We haven't really had full capacity to do that and I don't know if we will, which is why I think we are really interested in this strategic networking and how to build out networks, because these networks have maps of projects that are going on. We are going to have to reach out and ask jurisdictions about projects to select the areas we want to work in, so could use that as a starting point. These are good things for us to be thinking about- how do we set ourselves up to get the information we need to start making decisions on these subwatershed areas?
- **Frederika Moser:** I just want to reinforce the idea that we should lean into new watersheds, we aren't going to make the kind of progress we could make if we aren't able to expand where we work.
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** : That's a good point, the balance is hard to strike. We have the low hanging fruit, where there are resources coming in, but maybe they don't need much assistance. We want to add value, and as such maybe the low hanging fruit isn't the best place to do that. Maybe we have to think creatively too- how do we bring resources to other areas? This is definitely something I will bring up once we recruit our co-chairs and core workgroup members.

- **Kelly Maloney:** USGS is also leading a watershed-wide assessment of stream conditions focusing on suite of indicators (benthic macroinverts, fish, salinity, physical habitat, stream temp, etc.) working closely with the Stream Health WG. We are working on integrating into a web-based tool. Both observed and modeling approaches with annual model predictions for each stream reach from 1985-2023 presently. Happy to chat/present if of interest.
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** : That is great, I will probably reach out to you because I think this could be really useful.
- **Chris Guy:** I would recommend talking to the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, they have strong networks with a lot of activity going on and should definitely be a part of this discussion. I also want to share a benefit of the tidal and non-tidal structure, because the Wetlands Workgroup has been doing something similar. We were having meetings about non-tidal issues and people from tidal states would lose interest, so the biggest plus was that through the separate structure we are engaging the very specific communities we are trying to reach. The downside is that a lot more staff resources are needed to run both groups.
 - **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** Thanks for sharing that Chris. Once we get things situated, it would be great to meet with you and hear a little bit more as we try to figure everything out.
- **Julie Reichert- Nguyen:** Okay, to wrap things up: we are going to be working over the next couple of months to build out the workgroup structure and work with the Healthy Landscapes chairs so we can start working on our management strategy. If you want to be included in the distribution list and are not, you can reach out to Julia or me.

Next Meeting: TBD

Attendance

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Julie Reichert-Nguyen, NOAA, ACEC Coordinator ● Kevin Du Bois, DoW ● Patrick Thompson ● Fredierka Moser, UMD ● Kristin Saunders, DNR ● Joel Carr, USGS ● Kelly Maloney, USGS ● Jason Dubow, MDP ● Paul Cirillo, UMich ● Breck Sullivan, USGS ● Erin McNally, EA Engineering ● Taryn Sudol, UMD ● Chris Guy, FWS ● Cass Klingaman, NY DEC ● Ryland Taylor, MD DNR ● Taylor Woods, USGS ● Laura Costadone, ODU ● Sara Coleman, DNR ● Marel King, CBC ● Amy Freitag, NOAA NCCOS ● Ellen Egan, Aqua Law ● Cindy Orsoto, MDE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sabine Miller, DC DOEE ● Nicole Carolzo, MD DNR ● Karinna Nunez, VIMS ● Claire Jantz, PA DCNR ● Ken Hyer, USGS ● Matthew Konfirst, EPA ● George Onyullo, DC DOEE ● Michael Maddox, UMD ● Kerry McClaughry, UMD ● Anne Hairston-Strang, DNR ● Deborah Herr Cornwell, MDP ● Katherin Brownson, FS ● Dr. Yi Liu ● Arianna Johns, DEQ ● Coral Howe, USGS ● Celso Ferreira, GMU ● Ben McFarlane, HRP PDC ● Keith Bollt, EPA ● Nancy Sonti, FS ● Molly Mitchell, VIMS ● Lena Easton-Calabria ● Kate Vogel, NWF ● Petra Baldwin, CRC |
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