



Agriculture Workgroup

September 17, 2026
10:00AM- 11:45AM

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

Purpose: To share updates on recent AgWG decisions, learn about an effort to gather BMP implementation data from producers, and discuss management strategy and workplan development for the Clean Water Goal.

Summary of Actions & Decisions

Decision: The Agriculture Workgroup approved the August 2026 meeting minutes.

Action: Agriculture Workgroup staff will send out a poll to signatory members requesting that they rank their choices for at-large nominations in each defined membership category. Votes will be collected through October 1st, and nominees will be informed of the outcome of this vote once ranked choice voting procedures have been completed. The full list of nominees for AgWG at-large positions, as well as nominee CVs/Bios/Resumes are accessible on the [calendar page](#).

Post Meeting Note: At the Clean Water Goal Team September Hybrid meeting, the Goal Team approved assumptions for select Forestry/Agricultural land use change BMPs that represented a compromise between initial proposals submitted by the Forestry and Agriculture Workgroups. The full package of assumptions from source sector workgroups for the E3 scenario, as well as the Goal Team's proposed compromise, were approved on Day 2 (9/29) of this meeting. You can view the approved E3 recommendations [here](#).

Action: Agriculture Workgroup members with any additional feedback, comments, or questions on the Virginia Farm Voluntary Agricultural BMP Survey are encouraged to reach out to Mark Dubin (mdubin06@vt.edu).

Action: The Agriculture Workgroup will continue to discuss the Workgroup Workplan assignment from the Clean Water Goal Team at subsequent AgWG meetings. Given a request from signatory members to convene an in-person meeting on this topic, AgWG staff will follow-up with updated meeting dates for the remaining meetings in 2026.

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome, Roll Call, Review Meeting Minutes

Lead: Caitlin Grady, AgWG Chair

Caitlin opened the meeting and requested participants share their name and affiliation using the meeting "Chat" function. Given quorum was not present at the start of the meeting, the approval of the minutes was moved to later in the meeting, once quorum was reached.

Decisions:

1. The AgWG approved the August 2026 meeting minutes.

Note: Approval of meeting minutes took place later in the meeting, once a quorum of voting members was present.

II. AgWG Membership Update

Lead: Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator

At the August AgWG meeting, the group approved a process for conforming to the partnership's new 15-voting member structure. At this meeting, the complete, updated list of nominees for at-large member positions (due COB 9/10) was shared, and time was made for new nominees to introduce themselves to the group. We also used this time to provide direction for how signatory members will execute their vote to ultimately decide the 6 at-large members and their alternates. Note that there was no vote held before the September meeting (as originally proposed) – this change was made to ensure signatories have adequate time to review new nominees. Instead, Signatory members will rank their choices via an email poll, ahead of the October AgWG meeting. The group was informed of the structure of this ranked choice poll.

Actions:

1. Agriculture Workgroup staff will send out a poll to signatory members requesting that they rank their choices for at-large nominations in each defined membership category. Votes will be collected through October 1st, and nominees will be informed of the outcome of this vote once ranked choice voting procedures have been completed. The full list of nominees for AgWG at-large positions, as well as nominee CVs/Bios/Resumes are accessible on the [calendar page](#).

III. E3 Scenario Update

Lead: Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator

The Clean Water Goal Team reviewed Phase 7 E3 Scenario assumptions proposed by each source sector workgroup at their August meeting. At their September meeting, the Goal Team would address remaining questions and decide whether or not to approve those assumptions. Eric provided a brief overview of the anticipated presentation and discussion flow for this topic at the upcoming September Goal Team meeting, including discussion surrounding the differing AgWG and Forestry Workgroup proposals for select land use change BMPs.

Post Meeting Note:

1. At the Clean Water Goal Team September Hybrid meeting, the Goal Team approved assumptions for select Forestry/Agricultural land use change BMPs that represented a compromise between initial proposals submitted by the Forestry and Agriculture Workgroups. The full package of assumptions from source sector workgroups for the E3 scenario, as well as the Goal Team's proposed compromise, were approved on Day 2 (9/29) of this meeting. You can view the approved E3 recommendations [here](#).

Discussion Notes:

Caroline Kleis (in chat): Slides outlining the differing AgWG/Forestry recommendations, along with an associated memo are posted to the calendar page:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/documents/Forestry-Ag_E3-Comparison-Slides.pdf

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/documents/Forestry-Ag-E3-Comparison-Memo_09.28.26.pdf

Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat): It feels important to note that the list on the comparison memo are ALL of FWG control technologies (BMPs) and only a portion of ours. Beyond those buffers, AgWG also has additional BMPs applied, in-field management methods stacked - such as precision NM, CC, etc.

Eric Hughes: It's a good point, Elizabeth, and I appreciate you chiming in on the Office Hours. I think, if folks feel strongly about this, it's important for people to hear that, and it's not necessarily something that I can always say on your behalf. So, if you're a representative of a jurisdiction that feels this way, I certainly welcome you to come to the meeting and share that.

Efeturi Oghenekaro: I joined the office hours for a little bit for this particular discussion, and someone had a comment about how the Bay TMDL was developed and that it used the Forestry Workgroup's proposal in the development and if that had to be changed or if the AgWG's proposal was adopted, that might lead to a UAA. I was not clear about what that comment meant. Is that something you can shed light on since there will be voting taking place.

Eric Hughes: I might turn to Auston if he is online. One of the participants in the office hours raised concerns about the implications of an E3 Scenario that doesn't ultimately achieve water quality standards. So, what would happen if that were to be the case?

Auston Smith: Generally, if the effort that the partnership has to go through to reach water quality standards does not fall within the controllable load set between No Action and E3, we're going to have to come back and revisit this. That will be determined early in 2027 is my best guess. It will change a lot of schedules if we have to come back and revisit that in short. I am happy to go into further detail, but there is a bar that we have to meet with this scenario.

Eric Hughes: I think their perspective is just that because the Forestry Workgroup proposal includes more than that's the better bet and puts us in a better position to avoid going down that path. Does that answer your question?

Efeturi Oghenekaro: Yes, it does. Thank you.

Caroline Kleis (in chat): September CWGT Agenda and Materials: [Clean Water Goal Team Meeting - September 2026](#)

Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat): I would hesitate in saying their proposal provides "more". In those categories of BMPs, maybe, but we still are addressing controllable load by the many other BMPs in our E3 scenario beyond that list. How our E3 assigns control technologies to address the load may be different, because we have more BMPs to apply to our landscape, and the snapshot in the memo is not the full proposal. Just feels like an important note to not skip over in that discussion at CWGT.

IV. Virginia Farm voluntary Agricultural BMP Survey and Producer Survey Verification Framework Proposal

Lead: Mark Dubin, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Mark Dubin, Voluntary Agriculture BMP Consultant with the Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech, provided the workgroup with a brief introduction of the Virginia Farm Voluntary Agricultural BMP Survey which was initiated in June of 2025 to identify and report voluntary as well as crediting-lifespan expired cost-shared agricultural BMPs across Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Actions:

1. Agriculture Workgroup members with any additional feedback, comments, or questions on the Virginia Farm Voluntary Agricultural BMP Survey are encouraged to reach out to Mark Dubin (mdubin06@vt.edu).

Discussion Notes:

Eric Hughes: This was done about five or six years ago. I am just thinking about participation levels from then to now. Is there generally more buy-in this time around? Is there less buy-in than last time? What's your take on the response level from then compared to now? Is there a trend one way or another?

Mark Dubin: I'd be happy to address that. I know with working with other partners such as Pennsylvania over the years, we have seen some survey burnout or more limited participation over time with multiple surveys. With this one here, we are still working through the information, so I can't say what the final numbers will be yet. We did get more total responses to the survey than we did back in 2021. Part of what we have to work through is that we did have some producers who responded where the operation wasn't in the watershed. We also had some producers who filed multiple survey responses/had multiple surveys in the system. So, we are sort of working through those to see if that is representative of multiple farm operations or did they decide to back out and re-enter the online survey system? So, we are working through those right now and when we come out with the final report, we will have the verified numbers on that.

Ken Staver: Mark, we had that long discussion about high management pasture. I couldn't help but notice your last slide with what looked like high management pasture in pretty fertile Sudan grass or Sudex. So, as part of this survey are you getting any information on the N rates or anything like that in those systems we are talking about?

Mark Dubin: The survey was set up to look at crediting BMPs versus baseline research data. So, it's really geared toward looking at what the acreages are of pasture versus hay and how they are being managed (if there's a grazing management plan that's in place, if there are records for that, etc.). So, the survey is more geared toward that side of the house versus some of the work I did before in Virginia which has been more on the research level. There's really sort of this flux between a field being hay versus pasture, so it's really hard to divide the two between one function or the other. That's probably based off of how many head of cattle there are, how much rainfall we've had, how flux the pastures are, and what time of year it is. So, it really varies across the board, and it's pretty difficult to say it's one thing or the other.

Ken Staver: While I am still unmuted, I will say that there has been a lot of press about Virginia really ramping up on their financial commitment to BMPs. What are the needs with all this new funding?

Mark Dubin: Yes, Virginia really has stepped up on the funding that is available. This project in itself was a request of the legislature from the agricultural sector of Virginia asking for funds to implement the survey. So, it originated from them. It didn't originate from the state agencies. So, there's definitely a forward movement on this. Sometimes it's hard to find a home for additional funds because it takes time to work those things up, make plans, and outreach to producers. So, I think we will definitely have our work cut out for us moving forward to make sure we find the correct places to put those new additional funds that have arrived and to make sure we've got the field staff to implement them. So, it's putting the onus on us to do it.

Ken Staver: That's a good problem to have to deal with! Thanks a lot.

Hunter Landis (in chat): There some producers in VA who are not interested in government support, but are implementing BMPs.

Elizabeth Hoffman: Mark answered it by saying the whole report is coming, but I will ask my question anyway. With the breakdown of the types of practices, are those annual practices like nutrient management, more so structural, or both? My second question is what I think you will put in your report. What are your findings for those that are meeting standards versus have retired? In Maryland when we did this effort, we were surprised to find that beyond the contract,

nearly 80% of practices were still functioning to meet water quality standards. So, that was really interesting and important to us. Also at the practice level, we then had data on which types of practices were lower in terms of being maintained. My last question is what is the process if a farmer had a practice that had been under contract, it is now past the due date, and it needed to be brought up to standards? How did that get routed back to technical service providers? So, those are my three questions.

Mark Dubin: For the first one, yes. We are looking at annual and multi-year structural processes across the board. So, we are looking at cover crops, nutrient management, manure storage systems or stream buffers, grazing plans. There are really a diverse set of agricultural practices we are looking at in the survey and developing into the report for the project. We're digging into the details, you might say. So, when I'm sitting out with producers, we're looking up the nutrient management plan, when the plan they had was developed and by whom. We're tracking down fencing that was put in by producers versus fencing that was put in through cost share, when that was, and the like. So, it takes me a few hours to sit down with a producer to go through this and to look at the practices physically on the landscape as well. As you probably have experienced in the past, figuring out what the dates are of some of these is sometimes challenging. Usually as we go through it, we figure out it's probably further back than what we initially thought. Because it is voluntary and we're working for producers, it's a very open and free discussion and friendly. We even get some producers who say, "hey, stop back in any time you want!" So, it's very enjoyable doing this with them. As far as the other part of the survey there was a section of the survey that they could fill out which allowed for them to ask questions and seek additional technical assistance. We do have responses back from producers saying, "I'd be interested in this" or "I'm interested in more information about that", and someone can contact me for assistance. We do have that other section of the survey that we manage separately from the reporting aspect you're doing. There's a lot there. Sometimes the more interesting part of the survey section is to see the personal responses from producers versus a yes or a no and acres or feet.

Suzanne Shea (in chat): When an onsite verification visit occurs, are you verifying only that the BMP exists and is being maintained according to its definition, or are you also collecting measurements that indicate whether the practice is producing the intended functional or water-quality outcome?

Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat): Well when the report is ready, we'd love to compare notes! Might be an interesting incentive to reply if it bumps them to the front of the line for TA, if needed. Thanks for sharing.

Eric Hughes: Suzanne, I'd invite you to come on and speak to your question if you are ok with that.

Mark Dubin: I do see the comment. I can answer it. When we are doing the onsite visits, we basically review every question in the survey that the producer had addressed, and a few more. Sometimes they may miss practices that they didn't think was a BMP that might be. So, I am looking at it from the standpoint of does it meet standards on that for water quality based on the Bay Program BMPs, what is its function, and how is it being maintained? We're also looking at measurements. So, we're especially looking at it from the standpoint of stream buffer fencing. I've got to confirm that, typically using aerial maps to develop estimates of what those measurements are, rather than going out there and running it with the wheel. So, I am looking at that, seeing how close that is to what the producer thought, and we do discuss that as a part of the interview process. So, hopefully that answers the question. If not, I am happy to address it.

Suzanne Shea (in chat): Thank you. I couldn't find my mic and am volunteering in a children's classroom. Thanks for the answer.

Eric Hughes: It doesn't seem like we have anything else in the chat or any other hands. So, with that, Mark, thank you. I really appreciate you coming back and talking about the great work you're doing.

Mark Dubin: Sure, it's a collective partnership effort. So, thanks to our Virginia partners. They're the ones that make it happen, along with our producers, because it's voluntary. So, when they allow for me to come out and meet with them, take their time and visit with them on their operations, it's an honor for me to be able to do that. Thank you.

Eric Hughes: Fantastic. I think one of the gaps that you're highlighting is can we put guardrails on some of these things where there isn't a clear definition for what is, can be, or should be done for verification with some of these methods. So, all that to say, I think it tees us up nicely for this final topic where we're going to be thinking about things like that. Maybe that's something that we want to pursue in the coming months and years.

V. Management Strategy and Workplan Development for the Clean Water Goal

Lead: Eric Hughes, AgWG Coordinator

At the most recent meetings of the Clean Water Goal Team, updates have been provided on the draft Management Strategy for the Clean Water Goal. Approval of the Management Strategy will be sought at the Goal Team's September meeting. With a Management Strategy in place, the Goal Team will assign the responsibility of developing workplans to the workgroups under the Clean Water umbrella.

While we do not yet have all of the details for this assignment, we allocated time to discuss the draft Management Strategy and any preliminary information on workplan development that has been communicated to the AgWG leadership and staffing team. Important to this conversation will be the AgWG's prioritization document, which will be referenced repeatedly in the drafting of our workgroup's workplan.

Actions:

1. The Agriculture Workgroup will continue to discuss the Workgroup Workplan assignment from the Clean Water Goal Team at subsequent AgWG meetings. Given a request from signatory members to convene an in-person meeting on this topic, AgWG staff will follow-up with updated meeting dates for the remaining meetings in 2026.

Discussion Notes:

Alex Echols (in chat): Implementation of structural practices is WAY down. These are typically the most effective and have the highest e-ROI over the long term. Focusing more on implementation of structural practices would be a good initiative. Thanks. Alex

Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat): Not disagreeing but flagging that annual management practices (cover crops, nutrient management, conservation tillage management, etc) may have a smaller reduction efficiency/unit (acre) - but they are impactful given the magnitude of acres they can be applied to and important when we begin considering stacked benefits such as soil health.

Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat): "reach through communication" should be coordinated between both groups (AgWG <> AAC). Jurisdictions charged with communications connected to their developed and revised plans, and programs (funds, staff) to reach those targets, need to be considered in that messaging.

Amanda Barber (in chat): While AAC will support communication, I think cross-sector communication between all workgroups should be a high priority as evidenced by the forestry E3 scenario and conversation.

Suzanne Shea (in chat): Under the priority of evaluating credits for BMPs not currently incorporated into the Chesapeake Bay Program's modeling tools, what is the pathway for bringing forward an agricultural practice or measurement approach that has substantial field use

but is not currently recognized in the model? Specifically, what evidence would the Ag Workgroup need in order to begin evaluating it?

Eric Hughes: I see some things coming through the chat, so before I go on to the next slide, I want to just look back at what was shared in the chat. First, thank you, Alex, I think it's a great idea and certainly welcome that feedback and what you'd like to bring to this group for that discussion. [In response to Suzanne], that's a fantastic question. Right now, Suzanne, we have what we call the BMP protocol. Historically, we've gone through an expert panel process. There are intermediate groups. There is an Expert Panel Establishment Group that can be created, and that's what we did for the most recent Ag BMPs that have been added to the suite of modeling tools (alley cropping and silvopasture). The expert panel establishment group essentially evaluates the merits of an uncredited practice and reviews the best available science to determine what crediting could look like for those practices. The findings of the group are brought forward to the full Agriculture Workgroup and any other sector work groups that may be involved for consideration and approval, and ultimately determination of whether or not a full expert panel is needed. An expert panel is a group of experts who come together and use best available science and best professional judgment to assess the nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment load reductions that can be associated with one of these in-field practices. There is a protocol process for how we go about doing that. The reason why I am a little bit hesitant is because I know that, as we speak, the Clean Water Goal Team made an ask of the Watershed Technical Workgroup to reevaluate the process by which we go about bringing a practice forward for crediting or reevaluating that practice. The intent of that change, as I understand it, is to actually make it more straightforward and streamline the process, not make it less scientifically rigorous. Scientific rigor is extremely important in everything that we do here. But, the goal is to make it so that it does not take three years, soup to nuts, to get a practice in the model. That's a complaint that we've heard from the community and others saying that there has to be a balance found. So, we'll be able to more comprehensively answer that question in the coming months as that new process is finalized. It's a great question and an important one for the group to be thinking about. I think that's a fantastic idea and just another example of a good opportunity for us to coordinate closely with the advisory committee. Elizabeth flagged in response to Alex's comment that management practice have a smaller reduction. They are impactful given the magnitude of acres that can be applied to an important when we consider stacked benefits such as soil health. Amanda Barber says, while AAC will support communication, I think cross-sector communication between all work groups should be a high priority, as evidenced by the Forestry E3 scenario and conversation. Amanda-Agreed.

Suzanne Shea (in chat): Who is the signatory member I should work through to bring that request forward?

Eric Hughes: Suzanne, I'm assuming you're referring to a BMP. So, whichever jurisdiction you're in, you would route it through your member there. So, you said you're in Gettysburg. Kate Bresaw and Brady Seeley would be your signatory members to the Ag Workgroup. Then the request coming from a signatory would trigger that review. As an example, for the agroforestry practices, that effort came largely from Elizabeth and MDA. So, that is what we would expect. Hopefully that answers your question. The other point that I wanted to mention on this is we're thinking about how we go about developing work plans. It could be an intensive effort. So, Caitlin, Jenn, Caroline, and I are going to do our very best to take the work that has already been done in the prioritization document. Once we have our workplan template, we're going to do our best to start to map that out for the group. We don't want to give you a pre-baked document that you have no input on it and ask you to approve it. It should be a collaborative effort to build how we go about doing that. I think there may be some different ideas floating around out there. We actually got an e-mail from one of our signatories with other signatories copied about holding an in-person meeting to build some of this. Now, Caitlin, I don't know if you want to speak to thoughts on in-person development at all, but I know that from some conversations we've had, if

there isn't support or buy-in for convening in a centralized location, we don't want to just set something up if it's not something that people are going to be interested in. But that e-mail that we got this morning does seem to indicate that there would be some interest. So, Caitlin, I don't know if you want to add to that.

Caitlin Grady: Like Eric said, we don't want to pre-bake anything. We just want to acknowledge the work that has already gone into this Workgroup with the conversations around the past prioritization document. But I want to make it really, really clear that this does not have to be our list. We can certainly add more topics, and we can change topics. The prioritization document doesn't speak to specific actions that we want to undertake. So, I think that's going to require a lot of discussion of what types of actions we want to accomplish. We're trying to enable this to expedite and alleviate some of the efforts and not make people think that we're duplicating something that's already been done. Rather, we are inviting a more robust discussion on where we left off last year with the prioritization document and how things have changed, new additions to that, new actions. Potentially if there's enough interest in an in-person meeting, I'd be happy to discuss that, if that is what folks feel would be enabling for this process that we're trying to undertake here.

Eric Hughes: Thank you, Caitlin. Maybe that's how we will close out this item is by opening up to thoughts from folks, recognizing that the ask here is going to be not just tell us what you are interested in, but needing to come together to identify the things that we are collectively agreeing to do over the next three years. That conversation may require being face to face and working through some things together. So, are there any thoughts on the how? Does anyone want to weigh in on that?

Matt Kowalski: I'd begin by saying that it depends on what our mandate is/what the larger intention is from the Clean Water Goal Team. To a certain extent, we've got to wait and see what they say are some of the things they want us to focus on. Granted, this group has already identified a series of priorities and initiatives that we would like to take on, but I think we may have to shift some of those around depending on what the Clean Water Goal Team asks of us. That said, I think that being in person and having the opportunity to work through some of those ideas, whiteboard some of it, and be able to sit in a room with each other and have eye contact is a lot more productive for discussions like that.

Eric Hughes: Matt, thank you for sharing, and agreed. I always think back to when someone said something to the effect of do we want to put the cart before the horse? Are we getting ahead of ourselves here with going down this path if we know that is coming? Matt, to your point, I want to be very respectful of that, knowing that we are going to hear more. We don't want to get ahead of ourselves by saying we are going to do all this stuff and then all of a sudden, they're going to come back and tell us that we have to do something completely different.

Suzanne Shea (in chat): I agree.

Caitlin Grady: I'll also ask if anyone has questions about what Eric outlined in terms of the status of where things are and what we know. We are happy to answer those too.

Tom Butler (in chat): I think Ken has a good point. When it comes to this task are we maybe thinking of shorter term objectives that we can achieve over say 6 months 12 months etc?

Ken Staver: Not to be repetitive, but we've been doing this a long time. We had a plan. We worked on it in some places. Some states made it and some states didn't. I don't think we are going to have any major new BMPs. Unless we've been blind for 20 years, we don't have massive BMPs coming out that are going to jump out and make this all happen. There's no silver bullet out there. There has been incremental progress. Mark was talking about Virginia; they have the money part solved, but they've got to get the infrastructure there to get practices out on the ground. Then the practices take time to change nutrient loads. So, this is a long-term game here. The logical thing is just to work off of where we are rather than trying to start anything from scratch, or it would take a really long time and open up all kinds of new discussions that are pretty much going to be a lot of rehashing and wasted time. Certainly, if there is stuff in the plans

that will never be funded or never get done, then make adjustments and say take this out of the plan, you've got to find these reductions somewhere else. I think working off of what we have is the easiest, most efficient way.

Eric Hughes: Ken, when you say "what we have", you are referring to WIPs?

Ken Staver: Yes.

Eric Hughes: I appreciate you bringing that up again, Ken. I'm trying to think back to where I had seen this but, very early on, I read somewhere in the documentation that under the previous 2025 WIP outcome, the workplans were essentially WIPs. I think that was, in a sense, the intent. I think we need to be careful with framing. Our jurisdictional partners weighing in on this is going to be critical because we want to be mindful of setting up a separate review process. We want to be very clear about what it is we are executing and where we can actually provide value. That's not something that I would be able to address. I think that's going to come from our jurisdictional partners saying, hey, this is really where we feel we could benefit from partnership involvement. I truly hope there are ways we can take a look at this and look at what's working, what's not working, and what we need to do. How are we going to get there? I would certainly open that up to consideration from our state partners.

Ken Staver: The states have to do the heavy lifting, obviously, and they each get to do their own WIP. But, what this whole effort has been with expert panels, the model, and coefficients of effectiveness and bringing new practices in is about the option for developing a WIP that's effective and works for every state. So, I think people have brought in new things that they want to put in because they see that in their state and their ag systems that there are things that they are doing to help. So, in terms of our role specifically as opposed to the states, we're all kind of constrained to the WIPs. I jump back and forth between a scientist and a semi-jurisdictional person, but we're all constrained by what the model gives us credit for. We don't get to claim our own credit for the WIPs. We get to develop our own plan, but we have a central accounting system we have to work off of. Soil health jumps out at me. The idea that we are going to focus on soil health...good luck with that. We'll be chasing our tails on numbers to put with that for whatever time we are allotted, and we still won't have it when we're done. So, I just feel like we need to go forward from where we are.

Elizabeth Hoffman (in chat): Can you remind us of what the question is? Workplan vs WIP?

Eric Hughes: We're talking about our work plan. But, when we're looking at the Clean Water Goal Management Strategy, WIP development is in there. So, trying to figure out what the role of the Workgroup is, taking a look back at what was done historically, what worked well, what didn't work well. Is that something that we as a group should address? It's certainly something that we could, but is it going to be valuable? I think that value should be identified at least in part by the jurisdictional reps. We would turn to you as the leaders in WIP development and the folks who know best where the partnership could help provide that value in the development of the next iteration of WIPs.

Tom Butler (In chat): I think Ken has a good point. When it comes to this task are we maybe thinking of shorter term objectives that we can achieve over say 6 months 12 months etc?

Eric Hughes: I think it's all fair game. We can identify longer term efforts. We can identify shorter term efforts. It's just what are those actions that we are going to take?

Suzanne Shea (in chat): Is the bottleneck the technical review process and model-crediting process? Define who owns it. If everyone owns it, it can easily become something no one is specifically responsible for.

Eric Hughes: Suzanne, could you maybe rephrase your question? The bottleneck to what?

Elizabeth Hoffman: I feel like my understanding is that the workplan is broader than the WIPs, but it lays out how this group can explore topics in conversation and exchange of information to then achieve our WIP. Every jurisdiction does their WIP separately, and I think the soil health topic is a good example of that. It doesn't mean that we are going to have to decide metrics associated with soil health, but we can't ignore that soil health is a conversation in part of

accelerating BMP implementation. So, I think the workplan is broader as the reach of this workgroup is broader. Doing that exercise from those conversations will help us think about putting a WIP in place. The WIP is really just the roadmap. We are assigned a target and a load to achieve or reduce to. We put BMPs in place to get that. Then there's that in between of how do you get a BMP on the ground? The social science and the technical assistance delivery. So, I think the workplan can be bigger. That's my understanding. So, I just want to add that comment in case I am very wrong.

Caitlin Grady: In my listening at the CWGT over the last several meetings, I agree with Elizabeth that this could be broader. I also get the sense they are encouraging new ways of thinking and if there are areas and actions we can take that are broader than the sets of things we've focused on in the past, we can be creative in what we want to prioritize and maybe shake the trees loose on some things we could work on.

Matt Kowalski (in chat): I'd like to think that this group's workplan would be developed from the perspective of "what can this group do that the partners alone can not accomplish".

Tom Butler: A WIP is a very long term goal. We've also heard today that we are really focused a lot about conservation and what's happening on the ground. So, when I am thinking of this workplan, it's kind of the idea of how are we setting meetings? At various times of the year, we have people who submit data for Progress which is going into the Model. So, is it structuring the flow of ideas so that, February through June, we're talking about BMP implementation or things that can go into a quality assurance plan, some of the obstacles we have with the timing for submission data and collections of data, or when things could work in terms of incorporation if we're doing a model update? I am not saying it all has to be specifically tied to the Model, but in terms of creating a workplan, if we are looking for smaller, actionable, incremental items, then that might be a little bit different than what I've heard so far. And it might not be. It's just a matter of perspective. So, I just want to bring that up and see if people have comments on it.

Eric Hughes: Thanks for the perspective, Tom.

Elizabeth Hoffman: I like that, Tom. I like there being an expectation of the seasonality of the work, and then filling in the spaces is just the other information sharing that we do. So, I like that idea. Again, this is where we're waiting to even understand what the assignment is. We're sort of guessing at this point. So, Eric, we're just being philosophical right?

Eric Hughes: We're being philosophical to an extent. But, I think that Tom brings up a really good point, and looking at how, historically, a year has been mapped for this group, I think what the work plan will help us do is plan in advance. If we know these are the things that we are going to need to do, we can map out over the span of however many months to a year and say this is what we are going to do to get there. It can take into consideration, of course, some of those things that Tom is talking about. We can be mindful of some of those deadlines and the needs leading up to those. But, yes, we don't know exactly what the ask is yet, nor what we are going to be told to do.

Suzanne Shea (in chat): Where does the work plan process slow down? Are there steps that could happen at the same time rather than one after another?

Eric Hughes: I see Suzanne reworded the question there. In terms of work plan development process, I think the bottleneck right now is just that we're at the ready. We're waiting to get the ask, I think jumping ahead of items hasn't always worked out for us well in the past. So, we're going to make sure that we're not going out and doing things that we haven't been told to do or we haven't gotten a blessing for. So, that's the bottleneck at this point, I would say. But hopefully that'll be cleared next month. If there's nothing else on that, Caitlin, maybe we can continue soliciting interest in an in-person meeting. I think that the difficult thing with timeline on that is we're not going to know what the ask is until September 28th. And we obviously need a full month to plan. So maybe we can plan for an in-person and extend it out a little bit. If it seems like the ask doesn't warrant a face-to-face gathering, then maybe we pivot. We can talk about that more and we'll put our heads together based on this new e-mail that we got and see how we want to approach it.

VI. Wrap-Up

Lead: Eric Hughes, EPA

VII. Adjourn

Attendees:

Caitlin Grady, GWU
Jenn Fetter, PSU
Eric Hughes, EPA
Caroline Kleis, CRC
Hunter Turner, WVDA
Emily Dekar, USC
Krista Crone, PA DEP
Brady Seeley, PA DEP
Jeff Hill, YCCD
Sam Parker, Mountaire
Eric Rosenbaum, Rosetree Consulting
Arianna Johns, VA DEQ
Tyler Trostle, PA DEP
Greg Albrecht, NY Dept of Ag and Markets
Alex Echols, Campbell Foundation
Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA
Bob Waring, AAC Vice Chair/Brandon Farms
Cassie Davis, NYSDEC
Cass Klingaman, NYS DEC
Vivian Dickson, NRCS
Megan Beever, CBC
Mark Dubin, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Nick Hepfl, HRG
Natalie Howe, USDA NRCS
Seth Mullins, VA DCR
Natasha Rathlev, Sustainable Chesapeake
Jenna Talbot, DNREC
Hunter Landis, VA DCR
Matt Royer, PSU
Kristen Saacke Blunk, Headwaters LLC
Tom Butler, EPA
Ken Staver, UMD
Amanda Barber, NY Cortland County SWCD
Dylan Burgevin, MDE
Jenna Schueler, CBF
Tyler Walston, ACB
Grant Gulibon, PA Farm Bureau
Norah Carlos, CBC
Suzanne Shea, Old Sword Farm
Efeturi Oghenekaro, DOEE
Auston Smith, EPA
Carlington Wallace, ICPRB
Alex Soroka, USGS

Doug Bell, EPA
Kristen Hughes Evans, Sustainable Chesapeake
Joseph Schell, DNREC
Ashley Lenig, USDA NRCS
Emily Heller, EPA
Matt Kowalski, CBF