



Forestry Workgroup October Meeting

October 7th, 2026
9:00 - 11:00 am

Meeting Link: [Join the meeting via Microsoft Teams](#)

Meeting ID: 275 015 323 949 007 **Passcode:** 4PF7sj9j

Call: +1 202-991-0477,,384896581# **Conference ID:** 384 896 581#

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

This meeting may be recorded for internal use only to assure the accuracy of meeting notes. To turn on closed captioning, click on the three ellipses (More actions), then click on “Turn on live captions” (preview). To request accommodations, please contact Caroline Kleis at Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov

Please read the following information carefully, as our meeting policies have changed:

- All meeting attendees' cameras and microphones will be muted at the start of the meeting.
- To request access to the microphone and camera, all meeting participants will be required to use the raised hand feature on Teams. Once access has been granted by the meeting organizer, you will then be allowed to unmute your mic and turn on your camera. Unless instructed otherwise, once a participant has microphone or camera access, they will have this permission for the remainder of the meeting.
- Access to chat will be provided as well. Should it be necessary, the Q&A feature on Teams will be utilized to field participant questions.

Compromised Meeting Plan: If the meeting's privacy is compromised, the meeting staffer and coordinator will send an email to all Members, alternates, staffers, coordinators, and interested parties. Within the email, you will find a new meeting link, instructions on sharing this information with external partners, and any necessary adjustments to the meeting schedule. Please do NOT share this information publicly or post it to the Chesapeakebay.net webpage.

Purpose:

- Provide updates on the draft Healthy Forests and Trees Management Strategy
- Learn about a new brook trout decision support tool that could help inform riparian restoration and conservation efforts
- Discuss the new riparian forest protected lands target
- Share lessons learned from recent partner projects focused on improving forest conservation on ag lands and leveraging volunteers to maintain riparian forest plantings

Agenda

I. Welcome and Introductions (9:00-9:05)

Requested Action: Non-decisional
Lead: Nancy Sonti, USFS
Materials: N/A

II. Announcements (9:05-9:15)

- New [Chesapeake Bay Shared Stewardship Agreement signed!](#)
- E3 Update- Scenario approved at [9/29 CWGT meeting](#)
- Tree Canopy and Forest Buffer Indicator Updates
- Staffer update- Applications for the new [Healthy Landscapes staffer](#) are open now! Please share with your networks!
- New at-large member nomination- Michelle Katoski, USGS

Requested Action: Non-decisional
Lead: Katie Brownson, USFS
Materials: N/A

III. Round Robin (9:15-9:30)

Please come with 2-3 updates to share from your jurisdiction or organization!

Requested Action: Non-decisional
Materials: N/A

IV. Healthy Forests and Trees Management Strategy (9:30-9:40)

Katie will provide an update on the current status of the Healthy Forests and Trees Management Strategy, including input received from the Healthy Landscapes Goal Team and the Bay Program's Strategic Engagement Team.

Requested Action: Non-decisional
Lead: Katie Brownson, USFS
Materials: Will be posted on calendar page when available

V. Brook Trout Decision Support Tool (9:40 – 10:00)

The Chesapeake Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center is building a decision support tool to help stakeholders identify the most impactful opportunities for brook trout habitat restoration. For a given amount of restoration effort provided by a user (meters of riparian buffer planting, acres conserved, etc.), the tool quantifies the change in brook trout habitat suitability at every NHD stream reach throughout their native range in the Northeast United States. We are using the Brook Trout species distribution model developed by the USGS Aquatic Gap Analysis Program to translate user-defined restoration scenarios into estimated change in brook trout occurrence probability. The result is a ranked list of stream reaches and their estimated impact for a given restoration effort. This project is funded by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and intended to support state fisheries management agencies and the Chesapeake Bay program implement brook trout habitat restoration goals by identifying opportunities that will provide maximum return on investment.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Mike Evans, Alicia Sabatino, Charlotte Weinstein, Chesapeake Conservancy

Materials: Will be posted on calendar page when available

VI. Riparian Forest Protected Lands Target (10:00-10:15)

The 2025 Watershed Agreement includes a placeholder for a new riparian forest protected lands target. Sophie will provide a brief overview of the protected lands dataset and the current amount of protected riparian forest. We will then start a discussion on potential numeric targets for 2040.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Sophie Waterman, USGS

Materials: Will be posted on calendar page when available

VII. Meeting the Healthy Forests and Trees Outcome Goals and Maximizing the Conservation and Community Benefits of Agriculture Preservation (10:15-10:35)

Rob will share updates and lessons learned from multiple recent efforts in MD including:

- The “Maryland Climate-Smart Agriculture Road to Resilience” report, January 2026, by the Harry Hughes Center of Agroecology
- A GIS analysis of Agriculture Preservation Programs and Forest Cover by Program using Frederick County as an example
- Frederick Climate Response and Resilience Report and Forests
- Maryland Agriculture Land Preservation Foundation Program, existing ranking criteria and suggested modifications
- Creating a consistent and comprehensive riparian forest buffer program in Maryland.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Rob Schnabel, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Materials: Will be posted on calendar page when available

VIII. Riparian Rangers: A Collective Community Approach to Successful Afforestation (10:35-10:55)

Ryan will share accomplishments and lessons learned from their Riparian Rangers program in PA, which trained volunteers to help maintain and monitor afforestation sites after planting. After the presentation there will be time for questions and discussion.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Ryan Davis, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Materials: Will be posted on calendar page when available

IX. Wrap-Up (10:55-11:00)

X. Adjourn (11:00)

Next Meeting: November 4th, 9-11 am