Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Forestry Workgroup Meeting

February 4th, 2026
9:00am - 11:00am

Example Meeting Link: [Join the meeting via Microsoft Teams](#)
Meeting ID: 246 388 262 055 07 Passcode:GG2Ec7oM
Call: +1 469-208-1525,,596978741#   Conference ID: 596 978 741#
[Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.](#)

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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:
- Share information between the Bay Program and Forestry Workgroup partners
- Discuss an effort to explore leveraging remote sensing for the verification of Riparian Forest Buffer BMPs
- Learn about the scenarios needed to develop water quality planning targets and the Forestry Workgroup's role in updating these scenarios for Phase 7
- Receive timely federal policy and budget updates
- Discuss priorities for our meetings in 2026
- Begin exploring priorities for the new Forest Conservation target in the revised 2025 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

Agenda

I. **[Welcome and Introductions** **(9:00-9:05)**
Requested Action: Non-decisional
Lead: Nancy Sonti (USFS, FWG Co-Chair)

II. **Announcements** **(9:05-9:15)**
- Upcoming STAC workshop: [Healthy Forests: Proactive Strategies for Managing Threats and Promoting Conservation](#) (Feb 24-25 in Frederick, MD)
- Updates from the Bay Program on Management Strategies and Goal Team leadership
- Multiple NFWF funding opportunities available
  - [Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants](#)- Pre-proposals due Feb 12th
  - [Small Watersheds Grants](#)- Proposals due April 2nd
  - [Chesapeake WILD Grants](#)- Proposals due April 9th
- CSS Harvested Forest for Phase 7 - To implement the [Timber Harvest Task Force Recommendations](#) (approved by the FWG and the WQ GIT), Phase 7 will include a new "CSS Harvested Forest" land use.
  - This land use would only apply if: (1) harvested forest is mapped within the CSS footprint or (2) in the rare circumstances where a given modeling segment does not have sufficient non-CSS harvestable forest (forest patches >10 acres) to apply the amount of harvested forest allocated to that modeling segment. In the case of option 2, CSS Harvested Forest would be pulled from CSS Forest. If these acres were not needed to meet that modeling segment's proportional allocation, they would remain as CSS Forest. The same BMPs can be applied to both (non-CSS) Harvested Forest and CSS Harvested Forest.

Requested Action: Non-decisional
Lead: Katie Brownson (USFS, FWG Coordinator)

III. **Round Robin** **(9:15-9:30)**
Please come with 2-3 updates to share from your jurisdiction or organization!
Requested Action:Non-decisional

IV. **Potential Roles for Remote Sensing to Inform Riparian Forest Buffer BMP** **(9:30-10:00)**
Verification
The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) is exploring how to better leverage remote sensing to reduce the BMP verification burden on jurisdictions. To better understand the interests of the Forestry Workgroup on this topic, Alex Gunnerson from the CBP Geospatial Science and Applications Team (GSAT) will initiate a conversation to solicit input on 1) pain points and resource intensive aspects of the current verification process for riparian forest buffer BMPs, 2) how remote sensing is or has been used in this process, 3) BMP dataset availability to help train remote sensing methods, and 4) potential opportunities for remote sensing to assist with verification.
Lead: Alex Gunnerson (Koniag Government Services) and Eric Hughes (EPA)
Requested Action: Non-decisional

V. **Preparing Scenarios to Inform Planning Target Development** **(10:00-10:15)**
Auston will give an overview of the scenarios needed for setting new water quality planning targets. He will discuss the No Action and Everything, by Everyone, Everywhere (aka "E3") Scenarios in preparation for further workgroup discussions and later recommendations.
Lead: Auston Smith (EPA)

Requested Action: Non-decisional

VI. **Federal legislative and budget update** **(10:15-10:30)**
Anna will provide a brief overview of pertinent legislative and budget developments at the federal level.
Lead: Anna Killius (Chesapeake Bay Commission)
Requested Action: Non-decisional

VII. **Review Input Received on 2026 Forestry Workgroup meetings** **(10:30-10:40)**
Katie will provide an overview of the input received via the questionnaire on our workgroup meeting schedule and topics to address in 2026.
Lead: Katie Brownson (USFS)
Requested Action: Non-decisional

VIII. **Discussion of New Forest Conservation Target** **(10:40-11:00)**
Katie will lead a discussion to initiative conversation on directions, priorities and data needs to support implementing the new forest conservation target in the 2025 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. Questions to address may include:
- What are partner priorities for this new forest conservation target? Where can CBP/the FWG add value to existing efforts?
- Are there new partners we need to engage to advance this work?
- What existing datasets are available to support implementation of the new Forest Conservation target or for a new Forest Conservation indicator
- What analyses are needed to develop strategies that will maximize benefits for multiple outcomes?

Lead: Katie Brownson (USFS)
Requested Action: Non-decisional

Next Meeting: March 4th, 2026, 9:00 am- 11:00 am