



Forestry Workgroup Meeting - July 2026

July 1st, 2026
9:00 - 11:00 am

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

Purpose: Review data and get input to inform development of the new Healthy Forests and Trees management strategy including:

- Baseline data for the new Forest Conservation target
- Signatory programs and authorities
- High-level challenges for meeting the outcome and Management Approaches for addressing the challenges

Action Items:

- **Membership update:**
 - **Signatory members-** States should review their current FWG representatives on the Forestry Workgroup webpage (expand the “Our Members” tab on the right panel to see the list) and let Katie (Katherine.brownson@usda.gov) and Julia (fuccij@chesapeake.org) know by 7/24 if you need to make any updates.
 - **At-large members-** We are accepting nominations for new/returning at-large members. If you are interested in serving as an at-large member, please email Katie and Julia with a brief bio/statement of interest by 7/24.
- **E3 Scenario development:** If you are interested in participating in a small group discussion on the E3 scenario for agricultural forestry BMPs to inform the proposal that will be made to the Clean Water Goal Team in August, please let Katie know by 7/8. For more details on E3, review the [E3 Proposal](#) presented at the June FWG meeting.
- **Healthy Forests and Trees Management Strategy**
 - **Forest Conservation Target Baseline Data:** Please review [the data presented at the meeting](#) and let Katie know if you have any input on the data to include in the Management Strategy by 7/8.
 - **Signatory Programs and Authorities:** For any states that did not submit your list of key signatory programs and statutory authorities in advance of the meeting, please do so by 7/8 (see examples in [presentation](#) from today). There was a question raised about whether the funding amounts for programs should include federal or just state funding. CBPO is advising that both could be included so if your program is funded through a combination of federal and state dollars, please just indicate the approximate breakdown of funding sources (i.e. 1:1 state: federal funding). If you previously submitted funding information, we would greatly appreciate it if you could clarify the breakdown of funding sources in the amounts submitted previously (again by 7/8). Thank you!

- **Challenges and Management Approaches:** Please review the [draft list of challenges and management approaches](#) and fill out the Mentimeter (Menti.com, Access code 7319 8832) or let Katie know if you have any input on what to include in the first iteration of the Management Strategy
- **Optional Office Hours:** If you would like to participate in an open “office hours” to discuss the draft Management Strategy (that will hopefully be distributed by 7/22), please fill out this [scheduling poll](#) by COB 7/8. There will not be a formal agenda but this will be an opportunity to ask questions or provide any initial input on the draft.

Minutes

I. Announcements

- Update on E3 Scenario development
- Upcoming [CRC roundtable](#) webinar on Healthy Forests workshop- July 15, 12-1
- August 5th meeting will be cancelled
- Call for three at-large member nominations (or re-nominations!)

Lead: Katie Brownson, USFS

Decisions [required]:

N/A

Actions [required]:

- If you want to be part of the Ag E3 scenario review, reach out to Katie.
- States, review your voting members and change if needed. Applications to be an at large member are open, or to renew your term. Email Katie and Julie with a brief bio and statement of interest. A follow-up email was sent with more information, reach out with any questions.

Discussion Notes [optional]:

- **Katie Brownson:** The E3 scenario means everything, everyone, everywhere scenario that is used as a high level mark of what is physically possible on a landscape that informs planning target development. We are trying to coordinate the E3 proposal with the Urban Stormwater group and the Ag workgroup. The Urban Stormwater group approved the E3 scenario with the numbers we included. One thing that might get tweaked is in the original scenario, we were only looking at putting trees and forests on turf grass, but we have a new pervious developed land use that the tree canopy BMP should be able to be applied to as well. We just received the Ag proposal, so I have no insight to share there, but I will say that we are not very aligned with them in how we are approaching the Ag Forestry BMP's. I will have to take a closer look, and if anyone is interested in doing a deeper dive with me let me know- if not, the plan is just to put something in an email for everyone to review.
- **Katie Brownson:** We are officially refreshing our call for at-large members and for the jurisdictions to review their official members, we will have to provide an updated list to EPA by the end of July. We have up to four at large member positions that we could fill. The current at large members with terms expiring are Lydia Brinkley, Craig Highfield, and Alexis Dickerson. We would love for you all to stay on. Anyone else new interested please reach out.

II. Round Robin

Lead: Anne Hairston-Strang, MD DNR

Decisions [required]:

N/A

Actions [required]:

N/A

Discussion Notes [optional]:

- **VA: Megan Mulroy Goldman;** We have a new state budget of \$1 Million in state funds for tree planting projects over the next two years.
- **MD: Anne Hairston-Strang;** EPIC has a new project on innovative financing for riparian forest buffers and MD will be participating on the launch committee.
- **MD: Craig Highfield;** Forests for the Bay is returning at least for the next year, and we hope to work with you all. The Healthy Forest Healthy Waters program in MD has been funded again for next year, we have about 369 acres of reforestation planned.
- **MD: Nancy Sonti;** I am participating in the Urban Forestry Careers Camp next week, which is a week-long camp for high school students at University of Maryland, and they visit different sites in DC and Maryland while meeting with professionals. It seems like a unique model and it would be interesting to know if other states do something similar.
- **DC: Robbery Corletta;** We are watering trees and preparing for the storms that continue to blow through. We have started our urban tree canopy analysis, which should yield us some results in the fall.
- **DE: Holly Walker;** The Trees for every Delawarean (TEDI) program has reached its halfway point.
- **DE: Chris Miller;** We are continuing to expand our grow out station, we have planted over 2000 seedlings this year to implement into our urban program. Delaware has a new wetlands bill coming into effect, where all non-tidal wetlands in the state are protected through DINREC, with silvicultural cutouts.
- **PA: Matthew Keefer;** We celebrated the completion of the K10 program with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, which planted 10 million trees in PA. As far as the grant program, we are in the process of scoring and ranking; the total demand for projects is over \$5 million. I don't think we will have enough funding to meet that entire demand, but the awards will be announced in the fall. Our state forest land totals 2.2 million acres, likely to pass 2.3 million acres with acquisitions in the works and when we reach that milestone we will be planning an outreach event that could be an opportunity to include some messaging around the new Bay targets.
- **NY: Ava Glasser;** We are starting to work on our landscape-wide afforestation program that will run the next two and a half years. We are looking at about 142 acres of planting coming up this fall that will be a mix of riparian, wetland, upland, and some silvopasture as part of an agroforestry pilot with SUNY. Our stewardship program is currently running, with about 22 interns working in the watershed.

III. Forest Conservation Baseline data

Cotton and Katie will share data from the USFS Forest Stewardship Program and NRCS that could be used as baseline data for forest stewardship and management in the new Management Strategy. Input will be requested on the data to include in the Management Strategy.

Lead: Cotton Randall (USFS) and Katie Brownson (USFS)

Decisions [required]:

N/A

Actions [required]:

N/A

Discussion Notes [optional]:

- **Anne Hairston-Strang:** To share a little context for Maryland, we report all our forest stewardship plans in the federal reporting system. Not every state does that, and few states have that level of forestry staff investment into planned production.
 - Cotton Randall: That's a great point, and if you look at states like PA, some don't capture all the plan data. So there may be additional data at the state level that isn't reported up through our system that could be added to this.
- **Rick Turcotte:** To get back to the forest health connection- we are almost at the point where we can see vegetation change at 30 meters. Contacting landowners to see things that have changed, or having them report back, could also be discussed. For Maryland Ag, knowing the landowner, and having someone who is actively in management that has a plan, is a great service. Putting data on the ground that is site specific and connecting it to the forest health program is an incredible tool. I throw that out there because the technology is getting to a point where we don't even have to leave the office to see if something has changed, but with that being said each landowner is also an early detector for something new.
- **Matthew Keefer:** A couple of comments for PA, we did a purge of our stewardship data the last few years which reduced our numbers and made it more accurate. We have the partnership with the Alliance on the P-WREN program, which has been wildly popular, so we can demonstrate the demand. So thinking ahead to management strategies, and translating this into Bay speak, I think having data like this that shows perhaps low participation that may be masked by other factors might give us a jumpstart in PA to flag that there is demand and interest, even if our numbers are low. So I appreciate this data and am excited to talk this through.
- **Matthew Keefer:** I definitely think this is useful information to include in the management strategy, but I think we have to make a few connections with the data. For example connecting it to forest health, invasives, things that matter to people from a threat perspective because those impact the value and can translate to conversions to other land uses, which then impact the bay model. If we can connect it to things like permanent conservation, legacy planning, etc. further down the line things that would be reportable, that would help the data connect.
- **Craig Highfield:** For forest health, I was wondering how we would communicate management on public lands?
 - Anne Hairston-Strang: Yea, we should be clear that the data that was represented was just private lands, that is a good point.
- **Anne-Hairston Strang:** Bay restoration is not just about nutrient reduction- it is a big deal, and trees are great at it, but it is really about restoring the whole system. That is why we are excited about this conservation element, because our streams need trees, so I hope we can find ways to channel that message even as we hold up their nutrient reduction benefits.
- **Katie Brownson:** If there is any data we showed today you think we should not include, let me know, otherwise we will just try to workshop some from the stewardship program and some from the NRCS data to tell the story of management.

IV. Signatory programs and authorities for Healthy Forests and Trees

Each signatory will have ~3-4 minutes to share the key programs in their jurisdiction that support implementation of each of the targets and major statutory authorities that support engagement in the Healthy Forests and Trees outcome. The signatory programs and authorities will be added to the Healthy Forests and Trees Management Strategy.

Lead: N/A

Decisions [required]:

N/A

Actions [required]:

N/A

Discussion Notes [optional]:

- See [the slides](#) posted to the website for signatory programs

V. Healthy Forests and Trees: Challenges and Management Approaches

To guide Management Strategy development, Katie will share a draft set of high-level Challenges and Management Approaches for workgroup review and input. Please come ready to share your thoughts on the biggest challenges we will face in meeting our outcome targets and high-level management approaches for addressing these challenges.

Lead: Katie Brownson, USF

Decisions [required]:

N/A

Actions [required]:

N/A

Discussion Notes [optional]:

- In response to the first question on [the Menti](#)
 - o **Anne Hairston-Strang:** We talk about barriers to landowner engagement, but what we really need is to figure out how to get more landowners to say yes? This also sort of lumps a bunch of issues together, because part of increasing landowners willingness is making sure the funding is available, and then having a skilled workforce.
 - o **Matthew Keefer:** I put in a comment about fatigue. People are asking about Phase 4, and sustaining the current level of effort is hard though we have support. It will need constant prioritization for us to sustain it, and people are surprised we aren't done. Watershed restoration does not have a definitive start and end, so managing that fatigue and expectation could be something to think about.
 - o **Katie Brownson:** Good point, one of my takeaways from the healthy forests workshop is talking about things in a way that makes people want to be engaged, so thinking about how we address fatigue and keeping people interested and wanting to participate.
- For the rest of the menti responses, see the posted results in the link above
- **Katie Brownson:** I am going to be working on getting a draft management strategy done for everyone to take a look at, if people could provide feedback by 7/8/26. If anyone else is interested in being part of a group that is putting pen to paper, please let me know. Otherwise, the plan is to send the full draft for review, I was thinking of a three week review period. The initial draft would be ready a week in advance of our September meeting

VI. Adjourn

Next Meeting: September 2nd, 2026, 9-11am

Attendees:

- Julia Fucci
- Katherine Brownson, FS, MD
- Anne Hairston-Strang, DNR
- Matthew Keefer, PA Bureau of Forestry
- Maggie Woodward, CBC
- Cass Klingaman, DEC
- Meghan Mulroy-Goldman, DOF
- Jarred Kinlein, WVDOT
- Nancy Sonti, FS, MD
- Christopher Peters, FPAC-NRCS, PA
- Cotton Randall, FS, OH
- Alanna B Crowley, DNR
- Holly Walker, DNREC
- Richard Turcotte, FS, WV
- Robert Corletta, DDOT
- Daniel Coy, DNR
- Chris Miller, DDA
- Craig Highfield, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
- Cathryn Soriano, DNREC
- Jenna Talbot, DNREC
- Kristen Heberlig (External)
- Ava Glasser, USC NY and PA
- Ned Brockmeyer
- Rachel Owrutsky, DNREC
- Brendan Durkin, DOEE
- Alexis Dickerson
- Teddi Stark
- Anne C Gilbert, DNR
- Heidi Bonnaillon
- Lorenzo Cinalli, DPR
- Peter Claggett, USGS
- Bella Konchar
- Sarah Brzezinski, EPA
- Robbie Coville
- Cassandra Davis, DEC