



Fish Habitat & Forage Action Teams Meeting

May 2026

May 21, 2026

11:00am - 12:00pm

Purpose: This meeting will convene the Fish Habitat & Forage Action Teams to discuss the transition of the workgroups under the revised 2025 Watershed Agreement's Thriving Habitat, Fisheries, & Wildlife Goal Team. Discussion will include changes to governance & structure, workgroup membership, and management strategy development.

Meeting Minutes

- I. Introduction** **11:00am – 11:05am**
Requested Action: Non-decisional
Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

- II. 2025 Watershed Agreement Structure & Membership Update** **11:05am – 11:20am**
Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)
Discussion on changes to workgroup structure and membership under the updated 2025 Watershed Agreement

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

Discussion:

- Materials:
 - [2025 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#)
 - [Fish Habitat & Forage Action Team Meeting Slides - May 2026](#)
- Related to the nontidal fish habitat target, the USGS is currently updating its 2022 Assessment which could be a starting point
 - [Link to USGS updates to Assessment](#)
- For forage fish, is that a place where invasive species may fall under? Like ICW?
 - Plans to continue ICW and have it connected to the new goal team structure. Complimentary work between this forage target and ICW - Tom O'Connell (USGS) is playing large role on science side of ICW
 - NCBO and CBP involved in coordination of both groups and can help create connections
 - There is no Bay Program outcome for invasive catfish - but does not mean that the work goes away - we will continue working on this

- Spotlight approach on forage species with advice to management - at what level? How would you provide management?
 - Bay jurisdiction level - have not had detailed conversation yet
 - Starting point = create something that helps state jurisdictions (MD, VA, PRFC)
 - Connection points between Habitat Assessment work and integrating information on forage
 - MD has developed a traffic light index for MD Bay Striped Bass forage - it is in the most current annual report on page 258
 - [Link to the MDNR Annual Report](#)
- How will At-Large members be selected?
 - Right now there is a draft governance and structure document that is almost complete and will be finalized next month
 - Most likely will send out an email to all current members for nominations for At-Large members. Co-Chairs and Signatory members of the Goal Team will review nominations and make decision on At-Large membership
- Targets under Fish Habitat (AMD and fresh water mussel) where does that fall under?
 - [Reference goal team structure diagram on slide 13](#)
 - Work under the Fish Habitat Outcome is quite different
 - Proposing to have a fresh water mussel group that is its own workgroup
 - Proposing to have AMD as an action team under multiple workgroups (e.g. fish passage, brook trout, stream health)
 - For AMD, the Brook Trout group has been working on that issue so a great cross-working group topic
- Oyster fishery action team - how will issues around aquaculture be included?
 - Will change name to fishery and aquaculture team
- Why are there only 3 action teams when the rest of the issues should also have some “action” associated with them? What makes an action team and why do not all workgroups have them? Concern around rolling this out and don’t have anyone to answer those questions (seems like these are the only action teams that will exist) Maybe do not include them in the structure?
 - Every outcome will have a workplan with associated actions needed to complete it
 - Action teams are short lived teams with a sunset date
 - These groups have action teams because they are new elements to the bay program - recognition that we need new expertise to address how we are going to incorporate those into our workplans
- It seems odd to have an oyster fishery/aquaculture action team and not one for other fisheries
 - We propose to have an oyster fishery/aquaculture action team because it is a new target - did not have fishery specific targets come up in blue crab. Industry asked for credit for fishery and aquaculture contributions.

III. Workgroup Chair Call for Nominations

11:20am – 11:30am

Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Description of workgroup chair roles and responsibilities and call for nominations

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

Discussion:

- Materials: [Fish Habitat & Forage Action Team Meeting Slides - May 2026](#)
- Review of the criteria and role and responsibilities of Workgroup Chairs
- Call for nominations of Workgroup Chairs
 - Self nominations accepted
 - An email will be sent out with official call for nominations - reply to the email with your nomination and CV of the nominee
 - **Nominations are due by June 4th**
- How will the Goal Team approve nominations for workgroup chairs?
 - Right now it will be just goal team chairs since we won't have a finalized goal team in place until late June

IV. Management Strategy Development

11:30am – 11:40am

Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Overview of management strategy template and development timeline

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

Discussion:

- Materials: [Fish Habitat & Forage Action Team Meeting Slides - May 2026](#)
- No further questions or discussions regarding management strategy

V. Open Q&A

11:40am - 11:55am

Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA), Kevin Schabow (NOAA)

Opportunity to hear questions, comments, and discussion from the workgroup

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

Notes:

- No further questions

VI. Wrap-Up & Adjourn

11:55am - 12:00pm

Lead: Bruce Vogt (NOAA)

Attendees:

Bruce Vogt (NOAA), Kevin Schabow (NOAA), Christina Garvey (CRC), Jim Uphoff (MDNR), John Lancaster (PA DEP), Emily Hoyt (MSU), Kelly Maloney (USGS), Ryan Woodland (UMCES), Matt Ogburn (SERC), Matt Robinson (EPA), Clint Morgeson (VDWR), Peter Himchack (OPC), Amanda Malagari (MDNR), Jeffrey Horne (MDNR), Marek Topolski (MDNR), Tom Ihde (MSU PEARL), Alex Kiser (USGS), Mary Fabrizio (VIMS), Chris Moore (CBF), Ed Houde (UMCES), Ward Slacum (ORP), Troy Tuckey (VIMS), Shannon Moorhead (MDNR)