



Healthy Landscapes Goal Team Meeting

May 11th, 2026

10:00 - 3:00pm

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

Purpose: This is the first meeting of the newly established Healthy Landscapes Goal Team. This meeting will provide an overview of the goal and outcomes and discuss the development of new Management Strategies in support of the revised 2025 Chesapeake Bay Agreement.

Minutes

I. Introduction to the Healthy Landscapes Goal

Lead: Claire Jantz, PA DCNR and Ken Hyer, USGS

Decisions: n/a

Actions: n/a

Discussion Notes:

- **Kevin Du Bois:** The Management Board sunsets June 30. The updated GMF says: "Priorities can also reflect topics elevated by the GTs, and will be determined with consideration of, but not limited to, available and committed resources, identification of where and how the CBP can add value to existing jurisdictional and federal programs, and the direct connection to the achievement of the Agreement's Goals and Outcomes."
 - **Claire Jantz:** Yea, that is that last bit of the GMF that there is a very strong focus on the agreement goals and outcomes.
- **Anne Hairston-Strang:** Will workgroups and goal teams have the opportunity to include members from the Advisory Committees?
 - **Claire Jantz:** workgroups have leeway to bring in representation from the advisory committee at the goal team and work group level
 - **Laura Cattell Noll:** The Advisory Committees *may* have non-voting seats on the Goal Teams. LGAC (Local Government Advisory Committee) is still waiting for a clear sense of the time commitment for each goal team, but hopes to designate one LGAC member per goal team.
- **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** There is still an executive council, right? I am wondering how that has been built into the structure because previously, in the climate resiliency workgroup, there were always executive orders around our actions with climate work. Is there still that same flow of information?
 - **Ken Hyer:** There can be. The role of the executive council hasn't actually changed. The executive council are all the state governors plus the bay

commission chair, and they will all still meet annually. The big shift is that, once the management board is taken out, part of those old responsibilities float up to the PSC and part float down to the goal team. The PSC will be much more focused on policy, and watching the progress of the goal teams; if there is no progress, that is where Claire and I come to the mat.

II. Overview of Outcomes under the Healthy Landscapes

Lead: Julie Reichert-Nguyen (NOAA/ACEC Coordinator), Katie Brownson (USFS/FWG Coordinator), Jackie Pickford (USGS), Sophie Waterman (USGS/PLWG Coordinator)

Decisions: n/a

Actions: n/a

Discussion notes:

- For Forestry:
 - **Kevin Du Bois:** Did the STAC Report address biodiversity? There is overlap with the Adapting to Changing Environmental conditions team, with promoting trees that can sustain themselves over time.
 - **Katie Brownson:** Yes, absolutely. A healthy forest is a resilient forest, and the key to resilience is biodiversity. Strategies like having a variety of species and having genetic diversity will all be in the report, and when we present our full recommendations in June.
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** Does the STAC report cover coastal forests at all?
 - **Katie Brownson:** It doesn't get into that level of detail for specific recommendations for specific regions, but a more holistic focus, taken from perspectives of people working across different regions, including coastal. If we manage for the things we can control it will better position places like coastal forests to adapt to changing conditions.
 - **Alison Santoro:** I would like to have further discussions with you, especially as you create your management plans, to figure out how we can have more of these joint meetings or how we can enhance each other's products.
 - **Katie Brownson:** Yea, let's do it.
 - **Peter Claggett:** Something I noticed was that foresters think in 100-year horizons, which is just the nature of the work. The work of Healthy Landscapes is often future-focused work, and that is one commonality among all of our groups.
- For ACEC:
 - **Unknown participant:** For the outreach to Jurisdictions, is that how you envision deciding on the sub-watersheds you will focus on?
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** There is going to be a component to that, the Jurisdictions emphasized they want to play a role in selecting those areas. We haven't quite figured out the method yet, so that will be part of our actions we need to do.
 - **Ben McFarlane:** Focusing on things that are relevant for local communities is going to be very important to make sure they engage, because without community engagement this outcome cannot go very far. Identifying areas that are representative, and where we can transfer

- lessons learned and knowledge to other parts of the watershed will also be places we want to focus on.
- **Alison Sontoro:** How do you envision the role of the Adaptation Workgroup will change now that you have specific goals and a specific work group, rather than being more of a technical advisory role?
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** I don't envision us losing that advisory role, but we will also need increased collaboration and joint meetings so we can shift our operations more to working with community partnerships instead of working across the Bay Program.
 - **Anne Hairston-Strang:** One thing we are finding that resonates throughout the watershed are invasive species. Invasive species management is a good target for all of us to strive for I think.
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** Peter and I have been trying to talk about where our focus should be, this is an interesting lens to look at things through too.
 - For Land Use
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** You mentioned working with the local government group. It seems like you already have a good relationship with local government. I wonder if that is something Adaptation can use as leverage because we don't want individual workgroups reaching out to the same people if we can be working together.
 - **Jackie Pickford:** The networking framework we developed was during a technical assistance session with the local government leadership workgroup, and local government is sort of in the same mindset that they know they have to coordinate with workgroups and don't want to be redundant.
 - For protected lands
 - **Anne Hairson-Strang:** Do we know where we are on incorporation of tribes in the bay agreement?
 - **Sophie Waterman:** There is the official tribal recognition with leadership, and then this tribal homelands target, that is more focused on tribal access on public lands, ownership, and measuring those kinds of components.
 - **Ken Hyer:** The PSC and EC are working through if a representative for the tribes will be added as a signatory.
 - **Claire Jantz:** The workgroup has a draft of a recommendation for us to add them as a signatory member, but people need to review it and there are still a few sticking points.

III. Role of the Healthy Landscapes Goal Team - multiple perspectives

Lead: Julie Reichert-Nguyen (NOAA/ACEC Coordinator), Katie Brownson (USFS/FWG Coordinator), Jackie Pickford (USGS), Sophie Waterman (USGS/PLWG Coordinator)

Decisions: n/a

Actions: n/a

Discussion notes:

- **Ken Hyer:** To speak to the last two bullets of your slide Katie, I will say the goal team co-chairs are meeting every two weeks to discuss the topics you presented, how we can serve as a connector with other groups and strategic communication approaches. Hopefully as we clear some administrative hurdles it should become more collaborative that more people could participate in.
- **Unknown participant:** Could you talk a little bit about the engagement framework of the ACEC slide?
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** It sounds like it might be developing based on what Jackie shared earlier about their technical assistance, so maybe that is a framework we can use. So maybe we even have a meeting to understand how we can use that.
 - **Peter Claggett:** Part of the strategy Jackie and I are working on with the local government workgroup is the roles needed. Someone needs to understand the data, someone needs to translate the data, somebody needs to deliver it, and then someone needs to make a decision. It isn't so important that these are all separate people so much as the steps are actually taking place. We are trying to make it generic enough that anyone in the bay program can pick it up and use it. And I think the local leadership workgroup could be really helpful in gathering the needs of localities and what everyone cares about.
- **Kevin Du Bois:** At the Chesapeake Bay Commission meeting last week, there was a discussion about tiered implementation and the development of the Habitat Suitability model. I know I reached out to EPA to make sure we can integrate the sites that provide the biggest contributions to the achievement of the WA goals into our Sentinel Landscape acquisition priorities.
 - **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** To Kevin's comment, I know the sentinel landscapes is another partnership network I would like to learn more about.
- **Ken Hyer:** As a goal team, this idea of sharing the conceptual model of who we are as a goal team and the cross cutting nature, and our ability to tell stories, are what will allow us to capture the attention of the PSC.
 - **Sophie Waterman:** It goes back to the idea of a two way street, we need a better way of getting information to us. How are these things important to local communities? I think people are waking up to the idea that people should have a say over what happens in their backyard and utilizing the shared understanding is something we should be doing.
 - **Katie Brownson:** I wonder if there is a way for the goal team to be a forum to get input on how we can improve the way our data and messaging is delivered, maybe input from local government advisory committee or local government leadership people. It seems like sometimes data comes out and we push it out, and there are things we can't look at without further analysis, and having conversations on the front end with decision makers to get a better understanding of how they can use our data would help us make things more actionable.
- **Anne Hairston-Strang:** How is this goal team going to relate to the TMDL and clean water goal team? Forestry has worked closely with them in the past and I don't want to lose that connection.
 - **Ken Hyer:** Certainly we can't lose that connection, and I work with that team a lot through STAR. While it made sense for forestry to realign to healthy landscapes, we are thinking about how we can maintain that connection. The prevention of silos is a goal of the whole team, so we will figure it out as we go
 - **Claire Jantz:** I know that there has been some pushback against being so narrowly focused on water quality, so that means that there is a lot of work that,

if it is not directly connected to a TMDL, it does not mean it won't be relevant or supported.

- **Ken Hyer:** One other thought: the PSC is talking about a prioritization scheme, looking at highest priorities within the 4 goal teams. I think lots of them will be cross-outcome, and as a goal team, we will need to discuss what those are so the list of PSC priorities don't become just water quality priorities.
- **Kevin Du Bois:** We can relate this work to the TMDL through nature based features that provide water quality benefit; do a CAST scenario with those metrics and you can report pounds of nitrogen and etc. removed, and add that to annual metrics you record. Just food for thought to communicate value.
 - **Marel King:** 100% agree with calculation of ecosystem benefits, but for communication to public and elected leaders, we will need the next step to translate those benefits to \$\$\$. For example, impact on property values, reduction in electricity bills due to lower A/C use in summer, decreased property losses/and or insurance costs due to decreased flood risk, etc.
 - **Michael LaSala:** "Ecological Economics Workgroup" (or similar name/focus)? We've relied on cost-benefit analyses considering these benefits (usually direct, indirect, and theoretical benefits are calculated in \$\$) amongst many others too at a local level (usually project level, but can be scaled up to regional). However, a number of values relied on or referenced are outdated or should be tailored more to CBP needs (e.g. we still rely on an ACOE calculation from 1985 for conservatively-valued CBAs with respect to the dollar value of flood mitigation projects for local property owners).

IV. Management Strategies Overview and Discussion

Lead: Ken Hyer and Peter Claggett, USGS

Decisions: n/a

Actions: n/a

Discussion notes:

- **Kevin Du Bois:** Should the work group chapters include non-EPA federal programs that support the management strategy
 - **Ken Hyer:** Absolutely, we want to reflect the partnership not just EPA programs
- **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** We don't yet know which signatories will sign on to which outcomes, which makes this drafting process a little harder. It also makes it harder to say where the resources would be coming from. We also want to take into account the added value of different ongoing programs; I am trying to figure out how to balance the signatory work, but also writing the workplans showing we are a workgroup with collaboration and added value beyond regurgitating what the jurisdictions are already doing.
 - **Ken Hyer:** Conceptually, the situational analysis would say these are the challenges, and the management strategy should be where value adds are outlined and situational pieces are outlined.
 - **Ken Hyer:** The idea of signing on has been deferred by the partnership, so the idea is to write the management strategy so as to not exclude any partner from joining. It will end up being a two step process, where we identify who helped write it and who plans to participate, but ultimately signatory partners can join at

any time. We do not know when people will sign on at this point, it might not be until we write the management strategy and see what is going on.

- **Francesca Moser:** The goal team doing MS could look at the subchapter outcomes and figure out collective action by each sub team so that you have an overarching strategy, and the four subgroups could arrange their work plans to be keyed into the more overarching approach. Does this create too many barriers? How can we actually make sure a greater strategy is integrated into our plans.
 - **Ken Hyer:** We are not there yet, it is a great idea, but we need to figure out the sequence so that we know what we put together at the goal team level is being what is put together at the outcome level. What you are saying is an approach from the goal team, and I would love to see us get there but we aren't quite there yet.
- **Francesca Moser:** As the goal team, you could have the ability to figure out collective action by each workgroup so you have an overarching theme. Then the four workgroups arrange their outcomes and workplans so that at least a couple of them were all keyed to a more overarching approach. Could you do that, or does that create too many barriers?
- **Julie Reichert-Nguyen:** Our workgroup doesn't have members yet, is there expectation that the consent diagram with voting approval is used when we draft the strategy, or is it just a small group we can put together and have healthy landscapes vote on? If we have a disagreement we don't have the voting membership, so what should we do?
 - **Ken Hyer:** Yes, just working within the team you do have is the expectation. If there is a disagreement you will just have to work through it, but we are happy to help talk through it.

V. Identifying Opportunities for Collaboration

Lead: Julie Reichert-Nguyen (NOAA/ACEC Coordinator), Katie Brownson (USFS/FWG Coordinator)

Decisions: n/a

Actions: n/a

Discussion notes:

- **Katie Brownson:** Something I have seen come up a few times is data centers, and what we are going to do about them. From a land use planning and resiliency standpoint, this could be looking at where big open spaces are that data centers could be built in.
- **Sophie Waterman:** I think some of the landowner engagement comments are getting at the need to expand our network and reach local.
- **Peter Claggett:** I put up a comment about consistent messaging, because in talking to people on the ground, we are advocating from different positions for different solutions to the same problem. For example where to put solar fields; we want a solar field, instead of just saying what not to do, having some agreement on where they can go and talking with others about things like that.
- **Katie Brownson:** I wanted to pick up on the communication piece a little bit more. Working with people trained in communication is a good first step.
 - **Sophie Waterman:** There are a lot of Chesapeake Bay relevant people online I could see us collaborating with to get in touch with an audience.

VI. Adjourn

Next Meeting: TBD

Attendees:

Fucci, Julia, CRC	Turcotte, Richard, FS, WV	Howe, Coral, USGS	Hayes, Christopher, FS, WV
Nylander, Patricia, DOF	Johns, Arianna, DEQ	LaSala, Michael, Land Studies	Chehab, Nadya, MDA
Santoro, Alison, DNR	Ganju, Neil, USGS	Heidel, Scott, PA DEP	Malagari, Amanda, MDNR
Sager, Charly	Jackson, Ryan, BLM	Carlozo, Nicole, MD	Rebert, Ashley, PA
Barnhart, Katheryn	Kayle Krieg, UMD Sea Grant	Trostle, Tyler, PA	Hullinger, Ashley, PA
Jantz, Claire, PA DCNR	Claggett, Peter, USGS	Reichert-Nguyen, Julie, NOAA	Brown, Lori, DNREC
Maloney, Kelly, USGS	Peters, Christopher, FPAC-NRCS, PA	Davis, Cassandra, NY DEC	Hyer, Kenneth, USGS
Klingaman, Cass, DEC	McDonald, Sarah, USGS	Carr, Joel, USGS	Waterman, Sophie, USGS
Ferreira, Celso, GMU	Konfirst, Matthew, EPA	Hirsch IV, Robert, DEPR Baltimore County	Du Bois, Kevin, DoW CBP
Corbitt, Emma, HRPDC	Symborski, Mark, MCDP	Tsuei, Young, DOEE	Naylor, Bruce, PA DEP
Dr. Yi Liu, Morgan State University	Brownson, Katherine - FS, MD	Nathan Stephens, MD	Bollt, Keith, EPA
Brzezinski, Sarah, EPA	Wolf, John, USGS	Lancaster, John	Power, Lucinda, EPA
Heller, Emily, EPA	Pickford, Jacqueline, USGS	Talbot, Jenna - DNREC	Woodall, Kristy - DEQ
Cattell Noll, Laura, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Filippino, KC, HRPDC	Lerner, Jeffrey, EPA	Koval, Daniel, CRC

Sonnenburg, Erin, CRC	King, Marel, CBC	Walsh, Wendy, NY	Campbell, Elliott, DNR
Ciminelli, Jennifer - DCR	Keefer, Matthew, PA	Maddox, Michael, UMD	Cinalli, Lorenzo - DPR
Bonnaffon, Heidi, MWCOG	Sullivan, Breck, USGS	Olszewski, Marisa, Maryland LCV	Mawhorter, Julie - FS, PA
Owrutsky, Rachel - DNREC	Gilbert, Anne, DNR	Hughes, Eric, EPA	Soriano, Cathryn, DNREC
Hanson, Jeremy, CRC	Durkin, Brendan, DOEE	Kleis, Caroline, CRC	Onyullo, George, DOEE
Carlozo, Nicole, MD	Mittler, Rick, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Hance, Rosa, CCWC	Christian, Maura - DEQ
Highfield, Craig, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Sonti, Nancy, USFS	Crowley, Alanna, MDNR	Douglas, Chase, CCP
Gupta, Sushanth, MWCOG	Alisha Mulkey, MDA	Schabow Kevin, NOAA	Hoffman, Elizabeth, MDA
Woodward, Maggie, CBC	Katoski, Michelle	Moser, Fredrika, Maryland Sea Grant	Wise, Cheryl, MDNR
Dosmann, Lisa, US Navy	McFarlane, Ben, HRPDC	Coleman, Sara, MDNR	Sward, Deborah, MDP
Koser, Sarah, Roots for Resilience			

