



Integrated Trends Analysis Team (ITAT)

Workgroup Meeting

Wednesday, June 24th, 2025
10:00 – 11:00 AM

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

This meeting was recorded for internal use only to assure the accuracy of meeting notes.

Purpose: This meeting is to update ITAT members and interested parties of the restructuring of the Workgroup to the newly formed *Data, Analysis and Reporting Workgroup* (DAR) under the Clean Water Goal Team. Membership for this Workgroup will be discussed.

Minutes

I. Welcome, Introductions & Announcements (10:00 - 10:05 AM)

Lead: **Breck Sullivan** (U.S. Geological Survey, USGS) ITAT Co-coordinator, and **Kaylyn Gootman** (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA) ITAT Co-coordinator.

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, Workshops and Webinars

- [Restore America's Estuaries' 2026 Coastal & Estuarine Summit](#) – September 22-25, 2026. San Francisco, California.

II. Restructuring and Integrated Trends Analysis Team Transition (10:05 – 11:00 AM)

Lead: **ITAT Leaders.**

Material: Meeting webpage [here](#).

Breck Sullivan: Under the new structure, the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) will have four goal teams (GT). Much of the clean water work involves moving pieces from Scientific Technical Assessment and Reporting (STAR), where ITAT was housed, into the Clean Water Goal Team (CWGT). While our core activities around monitoring, data analysis, and communications remain the same, they are being packaged differently so we can work better together.

ITAT is shifting to the CWGT to better integrate monitoring into the modeling and implementation realm. Along with this shift, a name change has been suggested: the Data Analysis and Reporting Workgroup (DAR WG). We are open to other acronym suggestions. This group will continue to support Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring (WQSAM) Outcome by providing tidal bay trends, status updates, and communication products (like Tributary Summaries and Story Maps), while supporting the research and partnership work you all do within your own agencies.

Kaylyn Gootman: There is a real opportunity here for DAR to bring in non-tidal pieces. We have always tried to connect the "why" of loads and trends in the non-tidal watershed to the tidal part, and since the non-tidal piece sits within USGS's shop, this new structure provides a great chance to cross-pollinate.

This will also be the right place to coordinate and connect watershed and tidal bay communications, which are critical to our jurisdictional partners. Leadership structure will eventually include a chair, co-chair, one or two coordinators, staff support, and membership for each WG. We will need to determine the higher-level coordination cadence, whether meetings are monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly.

Regarding decisional items, while modeling and criteria assessment teams have clear paths for decisions that impact the partnership, I see DAR and monitoring as being primarily focused on coordination, connection, and leveraging expertise rather than heavy policy decisions. Lastly, this group offers a great opportunity to connect with academic researchers to share results, hear how they utilize our data, and explore new ways to analyze trends. While things are still a bit unclear, we expect more guidance soon.

Discussion:

Comment from chat: *Elgin Perry:* Breck used the term "DAR team". I suggest making team part of the name so that the acronym becomes **DART**, which sounds like a much more focused group compared to DAR.

Comment: *James Webber:* I know this group has traditionally focused on tidal elements, but those of us focused on non-tidal analysis will be active contributors now to ensure balance. We are charged with representing both tidal and non-tidal conditions and trends. This creates cool opportunities to intersect non-tidal loads with what is happening in the estuary. It is very early days; the vision shared so far was just a brief paragraph. Once leadership and members are identified, our first tasks will be to flesh out the management strategy (MS) and develop a tight, 1-2 page work plan. I also see DAR and the monitoring WG working hand-in-glove, as monitoring generates the data that DAR uses.

- **Comment:** *Amanda Shaver:* The biggest crosswalk I see is data storage and formatting. We need to ensure we have a good, consistent dataset to perform our analyses and report on, which will be a key link between the monitoring and data analysis teams.
- **Response:** *Kaylyn Gootman:* Bringing the groups that manage data under one tent will be highly helpful. For the non-tidal program, data flows from our water quality data manager to the USGS for database management, Quality Assurance/Quality Control, and publication, alongside what our program office does to host and serve it.

Breck Sullivan: Another aspect the partnership wants us to include in this new group is utilizing monitoring data to directly inform decision-making, rather than just explaining the factors behind trends. This is a great addition, but it means we will need to bring in new topics and different people to grow the WG.

Summary: ITAT is shifting to the CWGT (giving us a direct line to management and the Policy Steering Committee, PSC). We are getting a new name (DAR), and we are expanding our focus from just tidal to include non-tidal data and decision-making utility. Goal team chairs are currently looking for WG chairs, coordinators, and staff, and we will update you as soon as we know more. Nominations for WG Chairs are due **July 15th**.

Kaylyn Gootman: Governance documents are aiming for a streamlined, 15-member structure per group with jurisdictional and at-large seats. While all groups are expected to conform, it might not be a clean one-to-one fit for every team. I still see DAR's role as largely informational rather than focusing on heavy voting or decisional items.

- **Comment:** *Jimmy Webber:* My reaction is that I do not want to see restrictions placed on participation. We are tackling massive, complex questions about tidal/non-tidal trends and decision-making; we cannot do that with just 15 people. We need a huge tent of 50+ people to do this work. While formal membership matters for policy voting, our work plan can be developed collaboratively by sending items out to everyone for input.
- **Comment:** *Amanda Shaver:* In talking with Kevin McLean, who helped develop this framework, the intent is not to limit participation or restrict anyone. It is simply an effort to formalize and streamline representation across the watershed, so every voice is heard, and conversations aren't one-sided. Every WG will operate a bit differently.
- **Comment:** *George Onyullo:* I agree with Jimmy. Sometimes proposed structural changes risk restructuring innovation right out of the system. We should let things play out a bit before locking ourselves into a rigid framework, and keeping a big, open tent is the right way to go for now.
- **Comment:** *Rebecca Murphy:* When you mention innovation, it reminds me that a core strength of ITAT has been collaborating with academic researchers. These relationships directly helped us explain complex trends in the past, like degrading Secchi and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) trends. Please remind leadership that this open collaboration is vital for innovation and directing future management actions, even if the discussions aren't always tied to an immediate, tangible action.
- **Response:** *Anthony Timpano:* I agree; we have a strong history of academic presentations, and that will likely continue, especially since we just brought on some academic at-large members. To the extent that we can bring people together and reduce siloing across groups.
- **Comment:** *Renee Karrh:* My reaction to the goal of "bringing monitoring into decision-making" is that monitoring has always been foundational to decision-making and aligned with modeling. Sometimes new leadership repeats old cycles without realizing why things were done a certain way in the past. From a Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) perspective, we plan to stay actively involved across both monitoring and modeling in this new structure.

- **Response:** *Kaylyn Gootman:* You are exactly right; monitoring data is foundational. We are hearing loud demands across the partnership to use more monitoring data rather than just relying on models. Figuring out how to do this in practice will require a lot of overlap and collaborative work between the monitoring and data analysis teams.
- **Response:** *George Onyullo:* In DC, we fought over monitoring data for a long time because much of it was geared toward regulatory permitting rather than planning. "Monitoring at scale" is tough because local planning data needs don't always aggregate easily to meet Bay-wide needs. This group is the right place to robustly address those data silo issues.

Breck Sullivan: There are still unknowns regarding who will lead and coordinate the new DAR team, making it hard to schedule the next meeting. However, the official switch begins July 1st. While we figure out the work group logistics, I highly recommend attending the monthly CWGT meetings to provide your input on the overarching MS. We will aim for a solid first draft of the MS by September for chair review before it goes to the PSC. Right now, we are working on the high-level MS; the specific, 1-2 page work plan detailing DAR's exact tasks will come right after.

III. Adjourn

(11:00 AM)

Next meeting: TBD.

Attendees:

- Breck Sullivan (USGS)
- Allison Welch (CRC)
- Kaylyn Gootman (EPA)
- James Webber (USGS)
- Rebecca Murphy (UMCES)
- Elgin Perry (Consultant)
- Cynthia Johnson (DEQ)
- Jon Harcum (Tetra Tech)
- Renee Karrh (DNR)
- Andrew Keppel (DNR)
- Chris Mason (USGS)
- Carly Maas (USGS)
- Ladonna Smith (MWCOG)
- Anthony Timpano (DEQ)
- Jeremy Hnason (CRC)
- George Onyullo (DOEE)
- Tish Robertson (DEQ)
- Amanda Shaver (DEQ)
- Emily Young (ICPRB)
- Blessing Edje (DOEE)
- Efeturi Oghenekaro (DOEE)
- Peter Tango (USGS)