CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM
HEALTHY WATERSHED GIT & LAND USE WORKGROUP "BIG QUESTIONS" OUTCOME ASSESSMENT JOINT MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

January 13th, 2025
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

MEETING MATERIALS

Meeting Purpose Statement: To convene the HWGIT and LUWG to discuss the responses to the Management Board's "Big Question" outcome assessment for their respective outcomes.

11:00   Welcome HWGIT & LUWG – *Jeff Lerner, USEPA (HWGIT Chair) and Arianna Johns, VADEQ (LUWG Chair)* (10 min)

Arianna Johns and Jeff Lerner gave opening remarks to the two groups.

To lay the foundation for the meeting, Peter Claggett gave a presentation on the Executive Council's Beyond 2025 Charge directing the Principals' Staff Committee to revise the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and provided an overview of the Management Board's "Big Question" outcome assessment assignment to assist with the outcome review process. The assignment centers around the main question: "What advice do you have for the Management Board on how to consolidate, reduce, update, remove, replace or add new outcomes within your GIT?" A summary of the assignment's guidelines/questions are provided below:

- Consider:
    - Whether the outcome is SMART (Specific, Measurement, and Timebound).
    - The challenges to and opportunities for achieving the outcome.
    - The timescale for completing the outcome (5, 10, 15, years).
    - The resources needed and availability (high, medium, low).
    - The risk or unintended consequences of removing the outcome.
- Question:
    - Is the outcome an output or indicator?
    - What is the value added by having the Chesapeake Bay Program work on the outcome?
    - Consider how the Outcome, as written, benefits the public. Does the outcome reflect public input already received and have the potential to galvanize public support/engagement?

Jeff Lerner concluded the presentation by clarifying that, from a structural perspective, we have been tasked with preparing two-page assessments for each outcome to answer the questions, all within a fairly tight timeline.

11:10 **Land Use Methods and Metrics Development Outcome** – *Sarah McDonald, USGS (LUWG Coordinator) and Peter Claggett, USGS (HWGIT Coordinator)* (15 min)

This time was used to discuss the LUWG/HWGIT's recommendations for consolidating, reducing, updating, removing, or replacing the current LUMM outcome:

- **Land Use Methods and Metrics Development (LUMM) Outcome**: Continually improve the knowledge of land conversion and the associated impacts throughout the watershed. By 2021, develop a Chesapeake Bay watershed-wide methodology and local level metrics for characterizing the rate of farmland, forest and wetland conversion, measuring the extent and rate of change in impervious surface coverage and quantifying the potential impacts of land conversion to water quality, healthy watersheds and communities. Launch a public awareness campaign to share this information with citizens, local governments, elected officials and stakeholders.

To facilitate the discussion, participants were encouraged to submit their feedback via Mentimeter, and the responses were screenshared throughout the conversation. Link to the Mentimeter Results (LUMM results on pages 4-5)

Discussion:

Peter Claggett: The LUMM outcome has been one of our most successful outcomes because really it was about information development. The latter part is still in the works, but we do now have 1M resolution LULC data for 2013/14 2017/18 and also developed similar land use data for 2021 and 2022. This provides us with an 8-year span of high-resolution data, offering detailed insights into how land use is changing. These data can be used to inform the TMDL and are now contributing to the Healthy Watershed Assessment, which helps us predict stream conditions. Additionally, these data can be used to support communities. One of the most visible projects being the Forest Service's county-level tree canopy factsheets.

A total of $12 million has been invested in this initiative, which is why we consider it so successful. However, the question remains: is this an outcome or an output? Possibly, we remove this outcome because it's more of an output. This doesn't mean we would stop the work; we would continue to monitor land use changes, but it would become part of the overall management strategy. Challenges to this outcome include changes in technology, the needs of the partnership, and emerging phenomena like data centers and solar fields.

Based on these considerations, the suggestion is to remove the outcome and support the new land use strategy approved by the LUWG, which focuses on the continued monitoring of land use changes and their associated impacts.

Katie Brownson (in chat): County-level tree cover status & change fact sheets available here: https://chesapeaketrees.net/understand-your-canopy/

Kristin Saunders (in chat): Food for thought - rather than a full stop after the recommendation to remove, have you thought about recommending how to build it into several management strategies for multiple outcomes (and which ones those would be?) People may be tempted to stop at remove and not do the next part.

Ken Hyer (in chat): Totally agree, Kristin - seems we need to avoid any chance that a reader thinks we are done…

Jeff Lerner: Echoing Kristin's comment in the chat, it's worth mentioning the potential concern about removing the outcome, questioning whether doing so might lead to a diminished focus on the issue. Emphasized the importance of considering how to continue working on this aspect, even if it is recharacterized as an output, and ensuring it remains integrated into the future efforts of the Bay Partnership.

Peter Claggett: Agreed, this is a real concern and we need more guidance on that.

Ken Hyer: I'm comfortable with what's being proposed and where you're heading. However, removing it might communicate that we're done with it and no longer need to focus on it. Maybe consider removing the comma or rewording it to suggest it's being consolidated into other outcomes, rather than being sunsetted. We don't want to imply that it's completed, but rather that it's being incorporated into the broader strategy.

KC Filippino: If I remember correctly early on, we had conversations about the same thing. We still need to elevate the importance of data so it continues to be funded and show relevance to where it plays out in all other outcomes. Building out a strategy for that would be part of the recommendation. Personally, I am happy to see it actually being removed. I know people don't like things to be removed, but sometimes when it's truly not having the effect intended, there's another way to make that happen. Doesn't necessarily need to be an outcome.

Peter Claggett: That's where I've struggled with this outcome a lot because it underlies so many other things and cannot be demonstrated in isolation. We've been asked to focus on individual outcomes, but I feel all three of ours are interconnected. If land use methods were incorporated into the management strategies of other outcomes, I'd feel better about removing this one, but even then it would lose visibility. There's a need to continue tracking important indicators like impervious cover change, even if the outcome itself is removed. The siloed nature of the Bay Program makes this challenging.

Anne Hairston-Strang: Is there a monitoring outcome that could reference the need for this?

Peter Claggett: There are some that have to do with monitoring, but they are usually specific. Perhaps we could broaden.

Anne Hairston-Strang: We need sustained commitment to core indicators if we are going to be doing adaptive management.

Jeff Lerner: One of the questions is to consider resource needs. Probably need to highlight that in the writeup that we are committing resources and need to continue that moving forward.

Dave Montali: It's foundational. Phase 7 is dependent on having the most recent land use and the info that goes into that and out of CAST is important. We are doing this, we have to do it and will keep doing it. Doesn't think there's a lot of point in having an outcome that is a component of other outcomes and has to be done anyways.

Kristin Saunders (in chat): A stretch outcome could be to see this data utilized to drive land use decisions and management strategies for several of our other outcomes and goals. Ultimately we want people to use what we have to make better decisions. Not exactly sure how we state it, but this is the gist of what we are trying to see happen.

Peter Claggett: Don't want to cut off discussion if someone has an idea they want to express.

Sarah McDonald: Maybe we can end it with Kristin's comment in the chat.

Jeff Lerner: Good segue to the next outcome.

11:25   Land Use Options Evaluation Outcome – *Sarah McDonald, USGS (LUWG Coordinator) and Peter Claggett, USGS (HWGIT Coordinator)* (45 min.)

This time was used to discuss the LUWG/HWGIT's recommendations for consolidating, reducing, updating, removing, or replacing the current LUOE outcome:

- **Land Use Options Evaluation (LUOE) Outcome**: By the end of 2017, with the direct involvement of local governments or their representatives, evaluate policy options, incentives and planning tools that could assist them in continually improving their capacity to reduce the rate of conversion of agricultural lands, forests and wetlands as well as the rate of changing landscapes from more natural lands that soak up pollutants to those that are paved over, hardscaped or otherwise impervious. Strategies should be developed for supporting local governments' and others' efforts in reducing these rates by 2025 and beyond.

To facilitate the discussion, participants were encouraged to submit their feedback via Mentimeter, and the responses were screenshared throughout the conversation. Link to the Mentimeter Results (LUOE results on pages 8-7)

Discussion:
Peter Claggett: The LUOE outcome took data developed from LUMM and applied it to make it actionable. LUMM monitors the rate of conversion, while LUOE helps local governments and others minimize that rate. This outcome has been around since the 2000 agreement and was an opportunity to

move away from the hard, measurable 30% target and focus more on building local capacity. It's a softer outcome, with a timebound goal of 2017, but it's not very measurable or specific. The recommendation was to keep it because of its profound impact on the health of the Bay and streams, but the challenge is how to address it in the context of land use change and climate change. The idea is that when conversion does occur, the impact should be minimized—classic smart growth.

One could argue we've already met this with the conservation land use policy toolkit, and others have said it's been useful. However, it could be more specific and measurable. Without that, there's no real accountability. The major challenge is that socioeconomic and development factors, which influence land conversion, are beyond our control since decisions are made at the local level. Therefore, we can only indirectly affect the rate of land conversion. The suggestion is to revise the outcome and instead support the CBP land use strategy and the recommendations from the HW B25 small group, while also incorporating monitoring into this framework.

Olivia Devereux (in chat): How much of this is addressed by the Land Policy scenarios/BMP in CAST? Will those continue into the next iteration? BTW, our CAST webinar on Thursday is on quantifying land preservation.

Peter Claggett: I don't know the answer to that, but for those who aren't familiar, for the Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plans in CAST, states were given the option to make assumptions about land use change and land conservation that could help reduce any increases in future loads. Several states, including Maryland, have land policy scenarios in CAST, but these scenarios don't have a significant impact on loads—maybe like 2-3% for sediment. Whether these scenarios stay in the model is up to the jurisdictions, but I don't think they've been very effective because they don't reduce nutrients much. As a result, they haven't really gotten much attention.

Carol Cain (in chat): Perhaps add carbon sequestration as a benefit for supporting conservation.

Peter Claggett: Do people feel like we need to have this outcome in the agreement or something like it?

Anne Hairston-Strang: I think it's core to what we need to do in the Bay Agreement, but it's hard.

KC Filippino: Is there going to be a land conservation outcome or is there a land conservation outcome?

Peter Claggett: There is a protected lands outcome, not necessarily a conservation outcome.

KC Filippino: To me it's what comes of this. Since land use is so local, it's unlikely that anything from the Bay program will significantly shift that, but it might help influence statewide policies. Tying to something that's already happening with other GITs or a conservation outcome could be valuable.

Jeff Lerner: Local land use planning is an important tool for protecting healthy watersheds, along with other strategies like land acquisition and easements. I see it as a key part of a broader approach to watershed protection, and it could be linked to land conservation or watershed health outcomes.

Anne Hairston-Strang: We have a lot of valuable data, but we need to take it to the next level by framing it in a way that's useful for planning and zoning, whether for staff or local watershed organizations. The goal is to help them understand what a restored Bay landscape looks like.

Peter Claggett: This idea of green infrastructure planning has come up within the HW group. I'm aware that it means different things to different people—some see it as green roofs and rain gardens, which I consider small-G green infrastructure. However, Big-G green infrastructure is about creating a spatial network of protected public green spaces like open areas, forests, wetlands, and working lands. This network, planned in alignment with comprehensive plans, provides multiple benefits. Instead of evolving piecemeal, having a coordinated plan for open space and protected lands can yield much greater benefits. For example, planning along rails-to-trails and having parks along the way. It's not that the Bay Program hasn't done this before, but we haven't really positioned it as our niche. In a revised agreement, we might want to lean into this and provide the data and tools needed for local planning.

Anne Hairston-Strang: We should build off the data available from the Healthy Watersheds Assessment.

Jeff Lerner: Brings up the question, "What's the value of this being included in the Bay Program?" Even though decisions are local, we can roll that up and say how we are doing on this topic.

Anne Hairston-Strang: And to help them understand more what it means for the watershed. Why is it OK to have working lands in the mix with good BMPs. Help them build the understanding that there are places on the landscape and regenerative potential that will give us the best outcomes for Bay.

Jeff Lerner: The tree canopy factsheets are a good example of that, but there's other information that could be assembled and delivered into the hands of local governments that can help, potentially with their land use decision making.

Anne Hairston-Strang: Many local governments don't have experts in land use assessment and modeling. Without tools or guidance, they will struggle with concepts like Tier 2 watersheds and how to address them. Having a standard that is meaningful and tied to functions crucial for Bay restoration—like the Healthy Watershed Assessment—could help provide clarity and direction.

Jeff Lerner: What you're getting at too is metrics. The nice thing is we don't necessarily need to have the metrics all figured out now in order to move forward with recommending a revised outcome, but we should start thinking about them and how it relates to whether it's SMART.

Peter Claggett: I'm hearing a mixture of feedback—do we revise this and still have some outcome presence, or just consolidate it into Protected Lands or Healthy Watersheds and have it be more of a strategy for achieving the outcome, rather than being an outcome itself?

Alisha Mulkey (in chat): Yes. A strategy for land conservation outcome

Katie Brownson (in chat): Agree- but this would require a more holistic land conservation outcome than our current protected lands outcome

Alisha Mulkey (in chat): @katie, agreed

KC Fillipino (in chat): Good conversations, sorry I have to run. A strategy makes sense.

Anne Hairston-Strang: It's more of a strategy, but the outcome that the strategy is after, where is that, other than land conservation?

Peter Claggett: Well that could be what we talk about next, it could be protected lands outcome or it could be the healthy watersheds outcome.

Anne Hairston-Strang: Local governments are pretty different across the watershed.

Olivia Devereux (in chat): Confusing about terms--land conservation, land preservation. Which is more accurate and understandable?

Peter Claggett: The Bay program has embraced term conservation because they are specifically calling that as a pillar versus preservation. Conservation is a better term.

Olivia Devereux (in chat): Land protection is another term used.

Katie Brownson (in chat): Protected lands currently focuses on permanent land protection through easements, etc. Conservation can be broader and encompass the stewardship, management and planning needed to help maintain the health and resilience of intact ecosystems

Jeff Lerner: I want to highlight a question in the Mentimeter asking if LUMM and LUOE have ever been considered for consolidation. I recall we discussed this at a previous Management Board meeting, and there was agreement that combining made sense. We may already be ahead of the game in thinking about moving away from these separate outcomes and potentially combining them into a single land use outcome—or even incorporating it into another existing outcome.

Peter Claggett: We did consolidate the management strategies for both of those into one management strategy in the previous SRS, so we have made progress towards this already. I still struggle with whether

this should remain as its own outcome. I can see how a revised conservation or protected lands outcome could include strategies for land protection in specific areas and also incorporate green infrastructure planning. Ultimately, I think the real challenge is balancing the visibility and attention these efforts get with their importance. Should we move onto the next outcome?

Anne Hairston-Strang: I think moving on to the healthy watershed would not hurt the conversation.

12:10 **Healthy Watersheds Outcome** – *Jeff Lerner, USGS (HWGIT Chair), Debbie Herr Cornwell, MDP (HWGIT Vice-Chair), Peter Claggett, USGS (HWGIT Coordinator)* (45 min.)

This time was used to discuss the LUWG/HWGIT's recommendations for consolidating, reducing, updating, removing, or replacing the current HW outcome:

- [**Healthy Watersheds Outcome**](): 100 percent of state-identified currently healthy waters and watersheds remain healthy.

To facilitate the discussion, participants were encouraged to submit their feedback via Mentimeter, and the responses were screenshared throughout the conversation. [Link to the Mentimeter Results](#) (HW results on pages 10-11)

Discussion:

Jeff Lerner: As I mentioned earlier, we've considered land use as one of the strategies to achieve healthy watersheds. These strategies build on each other, and that brings up the question of what we do with the current healthy watershed outcome. Where does it fit within the partnership structure moving forward? Right now, the goal is for 100% of state-identified healthy waters and watersheds to remain healthy. However, we've struggled with how to measure this outcome. We do know that land protection is a key factor, and nearly 2 million acres have been protected over the last decade, some of which are in areas identified as healthy watersheds. So, there's progress, but as we've discussed before, we need to better track protected lands, including when they were protected, so we can better assess how we're doing with this outcome.

Peter Claggett: The caveat regarding state-identified healthy watersheds is that each state has its own definition, which has been problematic. This raises the question: if every state is doing their own thing, what value does the Bay Program add? The strawman proposal suggests updating, rather than eliminating, the current outcome. This is necessary because maintaining forests and wetlands in high-quality stream areas is crucial for protecting water quality, especially amidst development.

Additionally, there's confusion between watershed and stream health due to different measurement scales, making alignment between workgroups difficult. While land protection is under the Protected Lands Workgroup and land use under the Land Use Workgroup, the role of the Healthy Watershed Outcome or its goal team is unclear.

The current outcome is specific but difficult to measure since streams aren't monitored frequently enough. It's also not time-bound and unrealistic in expecting current conditions to remain unchanged indefinitely. There is also uncertainty about the resources needed to achieve this outcome.

Recommendations for revision include making the outcome more specific to watershed processes that contribute to healthy streams, working with the Stream Health Workgroup to incorporate watershed conditions into the stream health outcome, and creating more synergy between watershed and stream health. Additionally, the Protected Lands Outcome could become more spatially strategic, with a focus on protecting lands within healthy watersheds.

Aurelia Gracia (in chat): Some of the feedback we have received for the Protected Lands 2pager has been to keep/update a larger conservation goal but add specific incremental metrics that highlight forest lands, wetlands, land uses, etc.

Dave Montali: My gut is that this should be removed. I think for West Virginia, we identified healthy waters as tier 3 anti-degradation waters on public lands. And if that's how it's defined, there's not much expected negative change unless something drastic happens. So it kind of becomes a "do nothing" thing in that regard. If it shifts to something like bringing in the stream health component with waters that have very good biological scores, we do have a bunch of those, but there's nothing much the state can do to limit those waters right now, practically speaking. If it changes to something where we're told, "Well, you don't really have control over that," we probably wouldn't play, and I just doubt that the partnership would add much value in this case. But that's just my personal opinion.

Kristin Saunders (in chat): Dave, how do you think the WV partners who work in the realm of land conservation would weigh in on this?

Jeff Lerner: For land conservation we're not necessarily talking about regulation, we're usually talking about voluntary and proactive efforts. There are groups working on land conservation, and they could be protecting and putting healthy watersheds into conservation easements or making them public land. This could be done in any state.

Cassie Davis: In NY we've struggled with developing this outcome because we don't identify healthy watersheds. It was kind of like the inverse – if it wasn't identified as being impaired and had no known impact, it was therefore considered a healthy watershed. I really like what you had on your sheet (referring to the draft 2-pager), tying it to stream health and having some of the watershed metrics as part of the stream health. I think that would be a really useful product. If you have a V score, you could zoom in and see what the watershed looks like, whether or not it's healthy based on some of the metrics we identify.

Peter Claggett: There's a disconnect between landscape conditions, like those identified by the Chesapeake Healthy Watershed Assessment, and the biological scores (BIB scores) expected in forested or wetland-dominated areas. While these areas are typically assumed to have high BIB scores, they don't always, creating confusion for both the public and scientists about how to interpret these results.

Alisha Mulkey (in chat): States already have drivers for impaired waters (or healthy as inverse), so I don't see the value add of this outcome.

Peter Claggett: Agreed, noting that while regulatory programs address impaired waters, there isn't a complementary program for healthy waters. Emphasized that waters that are not impaired today could become impaired in the future due to the cumulative effects of multiple actions over time, which is often not addressed by existing regulatory programs. These programs focus on individual actions, not the broader, cumulative impacts, highlighting the potential value of additional efforts to protect non-impaired waters.

Alison Santoro (in chat): FYI, the Stream Health Workgroup will be discussing this question next Friday, Jan 24 at 10 am
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/stream-health-special-session-outcome-assessment

Anne Hairston-Strang: while it's essential to consider watershed conditions for effective stream restoration, it's also important not to place the responsibility for the entire condition of the watershed on stream restoration practitioners. It's a balancing act, where the broader watershed context matters, but the responsibility for it can't fall solely on those working on stream-specific projects.

Henry Campbell (in chat): The outcome is of value if used to determine the condition and trends, cumulatively, in each watershed. A 'healthy watershed' would include criteria based on the conditions of terrestrial and aquatic resources and the cumulative response within that watershed. This could include, for instance, metrics and thresholds on impervious surfaces, tree canopy, impairment/nonimpairment status, etc.

Kristin Saunders (in chat): My sense is that the initiation of this outcome to begin with was to try to hold the line on degradation as preventive action. And invest in ways that would help keep healthy areas healthy while also targeting restoration actions or regulatory actions where degradation has occurred. It has always been described to me as preventive combined with investments to restore. And there are partners beyond state or local agencies who deeply invest in this type of activity on behalf of their staff, through voluntary conservation practices on privately owned lands.

Alisha Mulkey (in chat): I think the Protected Lands Outcome should be revised to expand beyond easement/permanent protection. The revised language would speak to preservation of tree canopy, farms and wetlands --> mitigate for degradation

Kristin Saunders (in chat): I think these conversations are happening at the protected lands workgroup and within the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership. We have been trying to connect those efforts to the Healthy Watersheds team to consider good nexus...all in play but good suggestion.

Steve Epting: Highlighted the challenge of advancing healthy watershed protection without a clear regulatory driver. In the Clean Water Act, anti-degradation provisions are the primary regulatory tool. Some jurisdictions, like Maryland, have utilized these provisions for watershed protection. Suggested that if this outcome could help align joint priorities within state programs, particularly those that invest in both restoration and protection, it could add value. Emphasized that maintaining watershed health requires leaning on multiple programs and cross-program collaboration. Proposed focusing on a few

priority watersheds, working with local partners, and aiming to maintain their health, which could be a helpful approach for the Bay Program.

Angel Valdez (in chat): We do have the MD Healthy watershed assessment to build upon for an updated outcome. It's been a struggle to use it to access the outcome because based on what we have data wise, 100% of our healthy (currently Tier II) waters are not healthy. *some are still healthy, but we cannot meet the 100% remain healthy

Ken Hyer: What about the possibility of shifting from a "healthy watersheds" outcome to a "watershed health" outcome. During Phase 1 of the Beyond 2025 process, a group explored the idea of looking at the full spectrum of watershed quality, rather than just focusing on the highest quality or impaired watersheds. This would allow for a couple of things: 1) it would tie directly to the Healthy Watershed (HW) tool that was developed, and 2) it would create a nexus to stream health, as watershed health and stream health are closely connected. He asked if there had been any discussions about broadening the focus to watershed health, which would facilitate this connection to stream health.

Peter Claggett: The HWGIT and SHWG leadership had a meeting last Friday, during which Claire from ICPRB suggested that the Stream Health Workgroup could focus on identifying biological stressors. The idea is to look at stream conditions from a multi-metric perspective and then figure out what's driving issues like temperature and conductivity, especially if they're tied to land use or watershed conditions. This could help create a more integrated view of both watershed and stream health.

Jeff Lerner: We've definitely been thinking about this, and one of the great things about the Healthy Watershed Assessment is that it not only helps identify the most intact parts of watersheds, but also signals the integrity of all catchments within them. This idea came up in Beyond 2025 discussions and could be part of future Healthy Watershed work, whether as a standalone outcome or integrated with others.

Ken Hyer: At the goal level, since those are being reviewed by the PSC, there would need to be some coordination there.

Jeff Lerner: Good point. Exercise is about outcomes. Not asked to address the goals. PSC will be looking at goals

Carol Cain (in chat): There is at least one Tier II stream that was completed fouled by sediment from private logging. How often are the healthy streams & watershed reevaluated?

Katie Brownson (in chat): Seems like the watershed health concept may also help engage with communities about the value of the Chesapeake restoration effort for local waters

Kristin Saunders (in chat): Ken, in working with the PSC chair, we are trying to make sure we elevate those opportunities where corresponding changes need to happen in the goal based on the outcome reviews. More of that discussion will happen at MB/PSC joint meeting later this week.

Alison Santoro: One thing I want to note is that, while it's been mentioned here and in the chat that the Stream Health Workgroup is focused on the stream corridor, I think the Healthy Watersheds goal is much broader than just streams. It includes tidal and non-tidal areas, wetlands, and other aquatic resources. So while there is some overlap, the Healthy Watersheds outcome plays a much larger role beyond just stream health.

Dave Montali: I still question whether we can truly affect change. "Healthy" is unclear right now. In terms of impaired conditions, states already have processes like stressor identification, the 303(d) list, and TMDLs. So what's the added value? The definition of "healthy" is key, and in our state, it's based on stream health. But the outcome seems redundant—"100% of healthy waters remain healthy." The real issue is what the state can do. If they feel they have no control, they might just opt out, which is a real possibility for my state. The necessary first step is defining healthy.

Jeff Lerner: EPA issued guidance last year to states for their nonpoint source programs, highlighting watershed protection as a national priority. This reflects the idea that to address nonpoint source pollution, it's not just about restoring parts of the watershed landscape, but protecting it as well. As part of this, the Healthy Watersheds Consortium grant program helped fund state agencies like Virginia's Department of Forestry and Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for watershed protection efforts.

States are interested in creative solutions for protecting more watershed lands, and I think the work of the goal team should continue in that direction. However, I agree there may need to be some modifications to this outcome or how it's positioned, which is why we're suggesting a revision and update.

Peter Claggett: I agree with Allison that watershed health includes more than just streams, as other valuable water bodies also play a role. The challenge, though, is defining what "healthy" means. For example, we have areas where a watershed is considered healthy, but the stream is impaired, and other areas where the stream is in great shape but the watershed is not, often based on a single metric. We need a clearer, more comprehensive definition of "healthy."One suggestion is to refine the outcome to focus on watershed processes, not just streams but also broader factors affecting aquatic resources. This would provide a more holistic approach.

Also, regarding the land use outcomes, healthy watersheds are closely tied to land conservation, which could be part of a conservation or protected lands outcome. However, we also need to address land use planning, policies, and regulations, which are crucial for watershed health, especially as population growth continues. These aspects need to be integrated into the conversation.

Jeff Lerner: One thing I'd like to add for consideration is the interest in source water protection. While it hasn't traditionally been a focus of the Bay Partnership, it could be valuable to consider as we engage with communities about watershed health. Source water protection ties closely to clean and drinking water concerns, and there could be significant overlap between the needs for source water protection and the overall health of the Bay ecosystem.

Carol Cain (in chat): Yes to source water protection.

Peter Claggett: Hearing no more comments, I think we can recap next steps. The HWGIT has a meeting on February 3rd to further discuss the HWGIT outcome, and LUWG members are welcome to join. During this meeting, we plan to finalize the two-pagers for all the outcomes. Before February 3rd, we will send out revised two-pagers reflecting today's feedback, with the goal of finalizing the documents for MB consideration.

Kristin Saunders (in chat): Peter et al, let's make sure to invite folks from CCP and stewardship goal team who do land conservation to get those perspectives into the discussion on Feb 3.

Jeff Lerner: After we submit the two-pagers, there will be an opportunity to present the information at the MB meeting scheduled for February 27th. We can offer some introductory comments, but the write-ups will stand on their own, and the MB will discuss them. We aim to have the documents finalized by February 13th. If anyone would like to have individual conversations before then, we're happy to set up time in the next couple of weeks. Thank you all for the feedback.

Peter Claggett: Thank you all for your time and feedback. We'll revise the drafts based on today's input and get them back to you for feedback between now and February 3rd.

1:00   Adjourn
  NEXT HWGIT MEETING: Monday, February 3rd (11:00 AM - 1:00 PM)
  NEXT LUWG MEETING: Wednesday, March 19th (1:00 PM - 3:00 PM)

Attendees

Alanna Crowley, MD DNR	Brian Gish, CBF
Alison Santoro, MD DNR	Carol Cain, MD DNR
Alison Welch, CRC	Caroline Kleis, CRC
Allie Wagner, Northern VA Regional Commission	Cassie Davis, NYS DEC
Andrew Gray, Carroll County, MD	Christopher Hayes, USFS
Angel Valdez, MDE	Craig Larcenaire, USFS
Anne Hairston-Strang, MD DNR	Dave Montali, Tetra Tech
Arianna Johns, VA DEQ	Deb Sward, MDP
Aurelia Gracia, NPS	Debbie Herr Cornwell, MDP
Bailey Bosley, USGS	Emily Heller, EPA
Breck Sullivan, USGS	Gabriel Duran, CRC

Greg Noe, USGS

HL Campbell, CBF

Irina Beal, WeConservePA

Jackie Pickford, USGS

Jeff Lerner, EPA

Jeff Sweeney, EPA

Jeremy Hanson, CRC

John Wolf, USGS

Kara Kemmerer, MDE

Katie Brownson, USFS

KC Filippino, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

Kelly Maloney, USGS

Ken Hyer, USGS

Kristin Saunders, UMCES

Kristy Woodhall, VA DEQ

Labeeb Ahmed, USGS

Laura Cattell Noll, Alliance for the Bay

Lorena Kowalewski, DC DOEE

Lorenzo Cinalli, USFS

Marisa Baldine, Alliance for the Bay

Mark Dubin, UME

Mark Hoffman, CBC

Mark Symborski, MNCPPC

Matthew Baker, UMBC

Melissa Harrison, PA DEP

Michelle Katoski, USGS

Nat Gillespie, USFS

Natahnee Miller, PA DEP

Nick Staten, CRC

Norm Goulet, NVRC

Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting

Peter Claggett, USGS

Rick Mittler, Alliance for the Bay

Rick Turcotte, USFS

Ruth Cassilly, UMD

Samuel Canfield, WV DEP

Sandra Davis, FWS

Sandy Davis, USFWS

Sara Weglein, MD DNR

Sarah McDonald, USGS

Scott Heidel, PA DEP

Scott Stranko, MD DNR

Shannon McKenrick, MDE

Steve Epting, US EPA

Supriya Khadke, NOAA

Suzanne Trevena, EPA

Todd Janeski, VA DCR

Tyler Trostle, PA DEP

William Harbold, MD DNR

Young Tsuei, DC DOEE

Acronym List

CBF: Chesapeake Bay Foundation

CBC: Chesapeake Bay Commission

CBP: Chesapeake Bay Program

CBPO: Chesapeake Bay Program Office

CHWA: Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment

COB: Close of Business

CRC: Chesapeake Research Consortium

DC DOEE: DC Department of Energy and the Environment

FWG: Forestry Workgroup

GIT: Goal Implementation Team

HRPDC: Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

LULC: Land Use / Land Cover

LUMM: Land Use Methods and Metrics Outcome

LUOE: Land Use Options Evaluation Outcome

LUWG: Land Use Workgroup

MDE: Maryland Department of the Environment

MDFS: Maryland Forest Service

MD MDR: Maryland Department of Natural Resources

MDP: Maryland Department of Planning

MNCPPC: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

NPS: National Park Service

NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NYS DEC: New York State Department of Environmental Control

PA DEP: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

SOF: State of Forests

UMCES: University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science

UMBC: University of Maryland Baltimore County

UME: University of Maryland Extension

USFWS: Fish and Wildlife Service

USGS: United States Geological Survey

USFS: United States Forest Service

VA DEQ: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

VA DCR: Virginia Department of Conservation and Restoration

WV DEP: West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection