



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Agriculture Workgroup

July 2026

Agenda

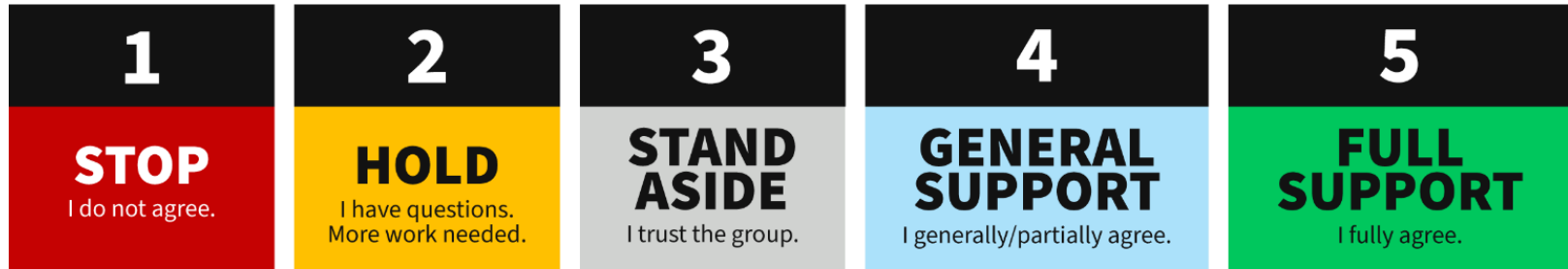
- 1 Review of New Chesapeake Bay
Program Decision-Making Process**
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Year**
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Review of New Chesapeake Bay Program Decision-Making Process

Key Changes

The partnership previously utilized a **consensus**-based decision-making approach. Under new Governance and Management Framework, the partnership makes **consent**-based decisions.

- **Consensus:** Each participant in a decision-making process registers a “5 - Full Support” on a proposed decision.
- **Consent:** Each participant in a decision-making process registers a “3”, “4”, or “5”. A decision is considered accepted if consent is achieved.



**CONSENT
RANGE**

The consent range includes Stand Aside, General Support, and Full Support. When all group members fall within this range, consent is reached and implementation may proceed.

Key Changes (continued)

- A quorum is needed to make decisions
 - For workgroups, two thirds of voting* members must be present
- A member-by-member vote is triggered if consent cannot be reached unanimously after several iterations
- Two thirds of the workgroup voting members must support a decision for it to be approved

*Note: on 7/10, Clean Water Goal Team Leadership confirmed that CWGT Workgroups will not have non-voting members

Consent-based Decision-Making Process

1. Group leadership and members identify a decision topic; decision topic is formally identified on the meeting agenda and posted with supporting materials with required advance notice
 - a. *“An agenda and any decisional documents are circulated at least five business days before the meeting. Members may not be expected to make decisions on topics where materials were not provided within the five-business day timeframe.”*
2. Ensure appropriate quorum exists before beginning decision-making process
 - a. *“A quorum of a workgroup is established when two thirds of voting members are present.”*
3. All members of the group discuss the topic
 - a. *“...opportunity for members of the public to participate in discussions with and provide feedback to program members is provided at the discretion of the chair(s)”* – engaging all stakeholders, not just WG members, is and will continue to be a core principle of the AgWG
4. Informed by discussion, a decision proposal is developed/presented to the group

Consent-based Decision-Making Process

5. Call for consent – Chair will request any members who would not support the proposed decision (or stand aside to enable it to pass) to articulate their concerns.
 - a. If no members raise concerns, the decision will be approved by consent.
 - b. If members *do* raise concerns, additional steps must be taken.
6. Concerns are identified and addressed
 - a. *“Dissenting members are expected to propose alternatives, suggest maintaining the status quo, or outline a process for developing an alternative so that concerns can be constructively addressed.”*
 - b. *“If needed, the decision may be deferred to a subsequent meeting of the... workgroup to allow time for resolution.”*
7. Decision proposal is modified
 - a. *“The proposal may be revised to address identified concerns. The process then returns to the call for decision.”*
8. Repeat call for consent
 - a. If no members raise concerns, the decision will be approved by consent.
 - b. If members raise concerns with the revised proposal, the group may 1) conduct another proposal modification and consensus attempt, or 2) proceed to a vote.

Voting Process

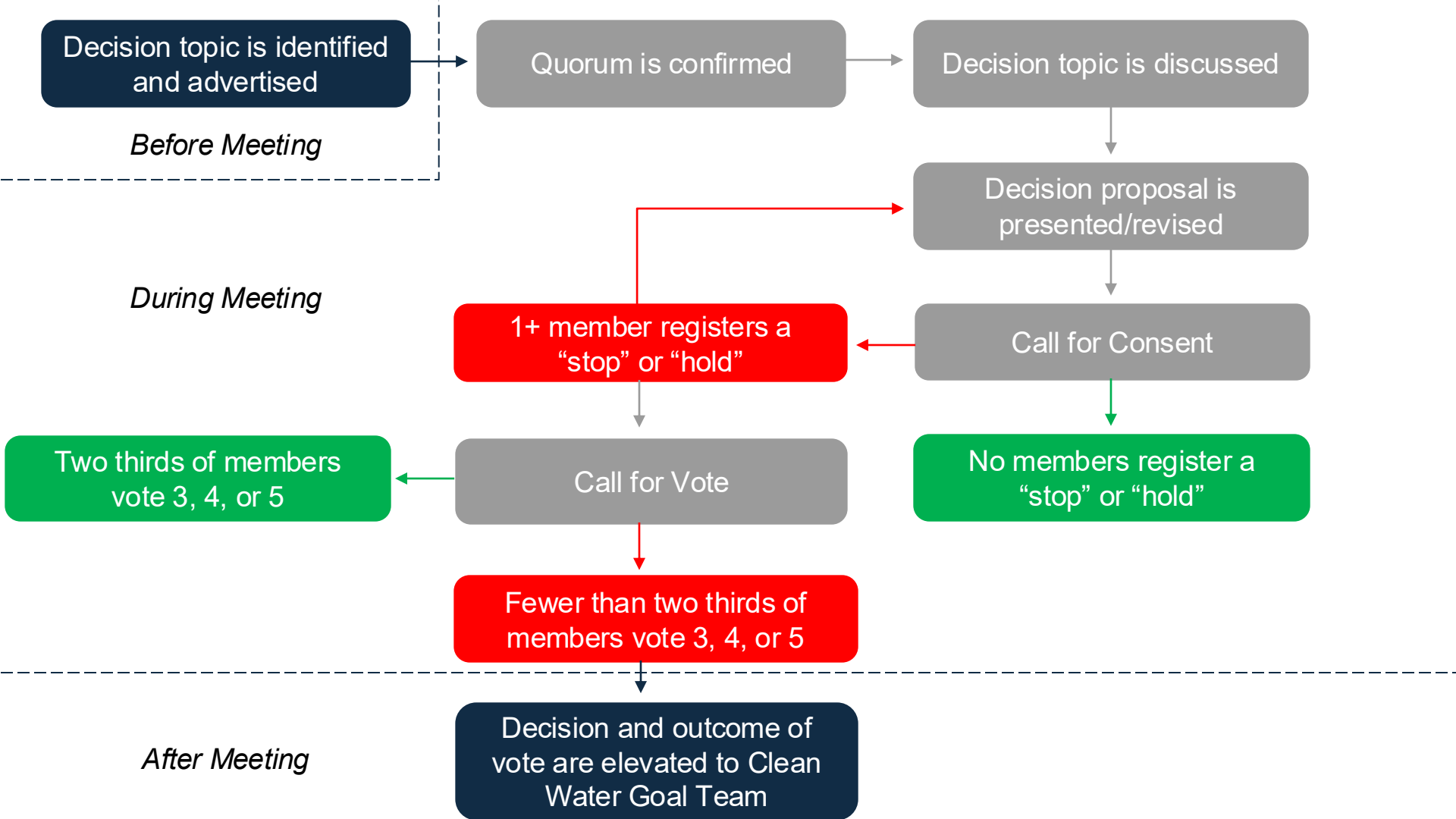
“If consent cannot be reached unanimously after several iterations, voting members will vote using the appropriate threshold for their group.”

- “Threshold” for workgroups is two thirds of voting members

1. After several attempts to achieve consent fail, the Chair calls for a vote
2. Each member individually states their position on the decision-making continuum (1-5) to be recorded by the workgroup staffer
3. Concerns associated with any stop (1) or hold (2) votes are articulated and recorded with the vote results

Vote Outcome:

- If two thirds of the workgroup’s voting members register a 3, 4, or 5, the decision passes.
- If fewer than two thirds of the workgroup’s voting members register a 3, 4, or 5, the decision does not pass and is elevated, along with the results of the failed vote, to the Clean Water Goal Team



Elevating Decisions

In an effort to prevent siloing, the AgWG will communicate the outcome of all of its votes to the Clean Water Goal Team. The table below captures the decision results that *are* and *are not* required to be elevated to the Goal Team:

Workgroup Decisions Requiring Goal Team Review and Approval	Workgroup Decisions <u>Not</u> Requiring Goal Team Review and Approval
Decisions not approved by consent or vote.	Implementation or execution of current management strategies and workplans, resource allocations and programmatic policy.
Approval of nominees for leadership positions.	
Decisions related to topics delegated to the workgroup by a higher-level organizational group.	
Decisions proposing changes to or otherwise impacting management strategies, workplans, resource allocations or programmatic policy.	Tabling an issue indefinitely until the group feels reconsideration is warranted.
Decisions that may impact/inform the work of multiple workgroups.	

Decision Making by Email

“If after discussion, formation and modification of a proposal, members need additional time to obtain their organization’s position, decision positions may be collected via email to finalize the decision.”

1. Decision topic is identified and posted
2. Decision proposal is formed, discussed, and modified during the meeting
3. For time-sensitive decisions and when members can obtain their organization’s vote before the following workgroup meeting, the Chair will note that the decision will be finalized via email
4. Workgroup staff will send an email with the decision proposal and a clear and reasonable deadline for submitting votes
5. The outcome of the decision finalized through email will be shared at the following workgroup meeting and publicly documented in the workgroup’s Actions and Decisions log

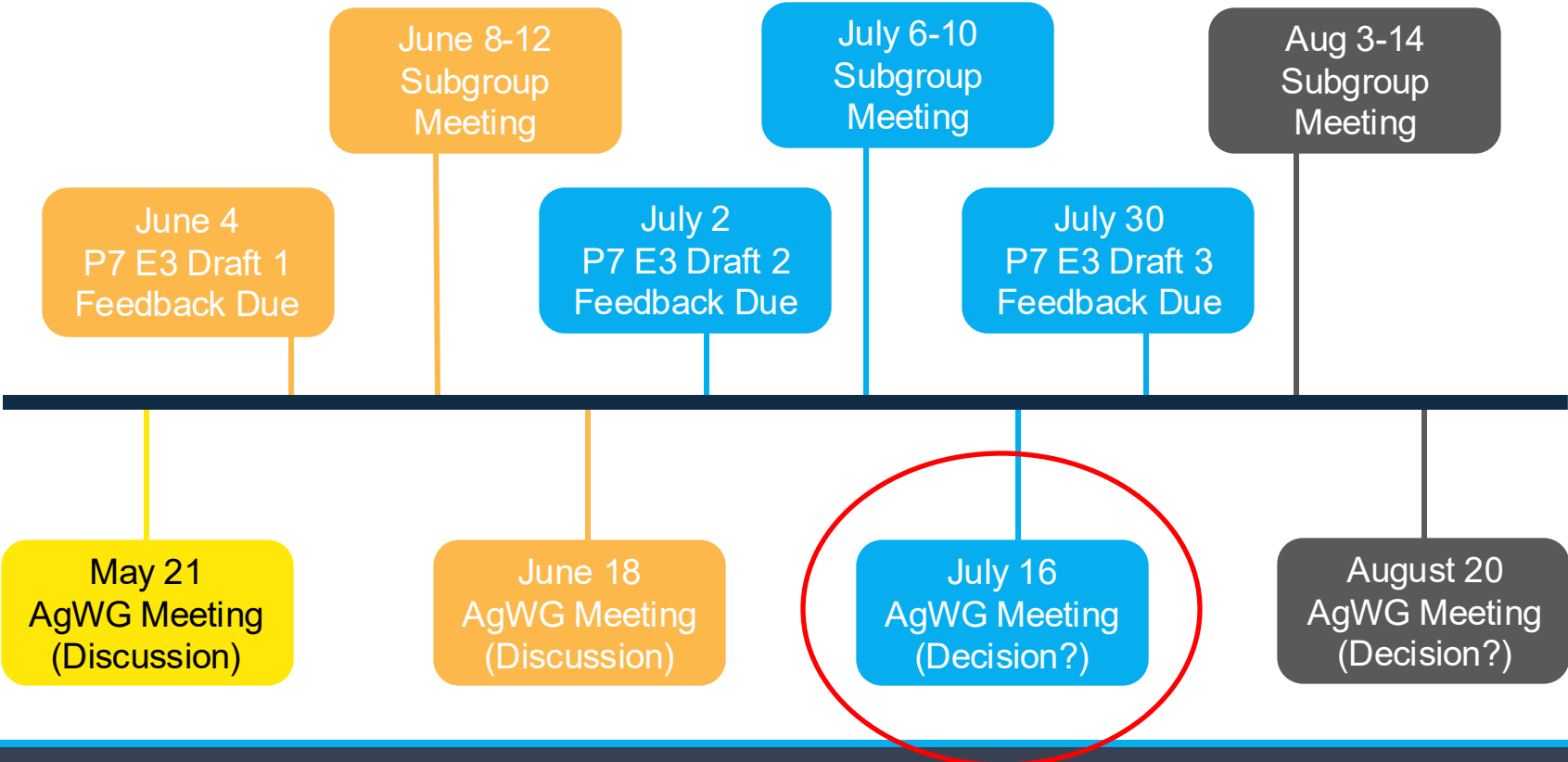


Questions?



Phase 7 Ag E3 Scenario Update and Scenario Base Year

Proposed AgWG E3 Timeline



Latest Developments

- Last Ag E3 Small Group work session – 7/1

BMP	Change to Assumption since June AgWG Meeting
Prescribed Grazing	Assumption returned to 100%
Wetland Restoration and Tree Planting	Determined these BMPs would not be applied to Ag Open Space load source for purposes of E3
<i>Land Use Change Composite</i>	Not a BMP, but added to show intended cap on ag land use conversion in E3 (15%)
Non-urban Stream Restoration	P7 assumption set to match P6 assumption
Shoreline Management	P7 assumption set to more conservative level than P6 assumption
Ag Stormwater Management	Assumption set to 100% of all feed space acres (will discuss today)
Manure Transport	P7 assumption set to functionally match P6 assumption and reaffirm connection to MTT
Poultry Litter Amendments	Assumption set to match “true” P6 E3 assumption (will discuss today)

Today

- Review points still in need of discussion
 - Confirmation of Supplemental NM justification
 - Non-Urban Stream Restoration assumption
 - Ag Stormwater Management assumption
 - Poultry Litter Amendments assumption
 - Any other assumptions in need of further consideration as determined by the partnership
- Attempt at approval of the E3 scenario by consent
 - If approval of the scenario, as amended, cannot be achieved, the vote will be tabled until August
- Discussion of scenario base year (not an AgWG decision)



Spreadsheet Walkthrough





Call for Consent-based Decision

Approval of the P7 Ag E3 Scenario Assumptions (as amended)





Scenario Base Year



AgWG Membership Under New Partnership Structure

Guidance from Clean Water Goal Team – Voting Members

- On 7/10, CWGT members and workgroup leadership received the following guidance:
 - The Goal Team and Workgroups may have up to 15 voting members.
 - Workgroups may deviate from the 9 signatory : 6 at-large Goal Team ratio if a signatory member declines filling their reserved membership spot.
 - Action: All workgroups are requested to share their recommendation for their workgroup's membership to conform to the 15 voting member structure. If possible, please send your recommendation to CWGT leadership by July 31st.

Guidance from Clean Water Goal Team – Non-voting Members

- On 7/10, CWGT members and workgroup leadership received the following guidance:
 - The GMF allows for the discretion of Goal Team Chairs to determine whether workgroups should have designated non-voting members. CWGT Chairs have determined to have **non-voting members at the Goal Team only and not at workgroups**. All workgroups will continue to have interested parties whose participation at meetings is welcome and who will continue to be included in email updates.

Implications for the AgWG

- The AgWG has historically maintained 21 voting members (9 signatory, 12 at-large)
 - Shift will require at-large membership to be reduced from 12 to 6
 - Despite changes to voting membership, the ability for interested parties to participate in AgWG meetings will remain the same
- We have been charged to conform to this new partnership structure
 - Concerns with this change will be elevated; however, we must demonstrate how we will conform to the 15-voting member requirement
 - The workgroup can determine *how* we reach that number

Potential Next Steps

- We would conform to the 15 voting member structure by taking the following steps (as outlined at the May AgWG meeting):
 - Signatories will be asked to confirm their primary/alternate members
 - Candidates for 6 at-large positions would be current at-large members and those nominated during the most recent call for nominations
 - Prior to the August AgWG meeting, signatory members would be polled to fill the 6 at-large positions from the full pool of nominees (ranked choice vote)
 - Results of the poll (those who received enough support to serve as at-large members) will be shared with signatory members and signatories will be asked to approve the new at-large members at the August AgWG meeting
- Question: How prescriptive should we be in identifying “sectors” to be represented as AgWG at-large members?

Anything else?

- Send to Caroline Kleis (Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov) for inclusion in “Recap” email

Thank you!

Any questions?

You can contact me at Hughes.Eric@epa.gov



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