Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Data Time Series Review Office Hours

March 3rd, 2026
1:00pm - 3:00 pm
Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.

Minutes

I. Land Use Workgroup Updates
Lead: Jackie Pickford (USGS)
Decisions: N/A
Actions: N/A

Discussion Notes:
- Jackie Pickford will be taking over the role of Coordinator, previously Sarah McDonald.
- Arianna Johns will be transitioning out of the Chair role.
- Ken Hyer and Claire Jantz are the new Healthy Landscapes Goal Team Chairs.
- The Land Use Workgroup has released a Call For Nominations for Chair/Vice Chair, as well as membership, with CV/resume to be submitted by COB **April 15th**.
- Reach out to Jackie if you are interested in participating in the development of the management strategy for the new Land Use Outcome.
- The meeting schedule could potentially change to become bi-monthly, depending on upcoming work on management strategies. Updates are to come.
- The Healthy Landscapes Goal Team meeting is TBD for late spring or early summer.

II. Time Series Data Review and Q&A
Lead: Sarah McDonald (USGS)
Decisions: N/A

Actions:
- Let Sarah know by **March 27th** if you need more time to review the data. If there is feedback that requires updates to the data that will cause release past April 1st, we will cross that bridge when we get there.
- Message Sarah McDonald with feedback: identify if your feedback is 1) a **question**, 2) an **issue** (you want feedback documented but are okay if it cannot be addressed in the data), or 3) an **error** (you request the feedback to be addressed, even if it affects the timeline). Identify if this is a systematic error or something you have seen only once.
- An email will be sent out when counties are available. We will also send a reminder towards the end of the month, let us know if you need more time and how much more you are asking for. Reach out to Sarah with any questions or requests for additional context.
- Macro class rules will be posted for reference.

Discussion Notes:

- **KC Filippino**: Will all the counties be available eventually, or are you just reviewing what you can and any major systematic errors will be adjusted if needed?
    - **Sarah McDonald**: That is generally the approach, in the next couple of days hopefully we will have 80 counties, and then there are a couple of other errors that I am debugging. I hope to have the rest of the counties by the end of the week, but I need to fix those before I ask for a review. As each batch is released, we will send an email with the list of counties available.
    - **KC Filippino**: Would you say the 80 counties are well represented across the watershed or are they concentrated in one jurisdiction or two?
    - **Sarah McDonald**: I ran them in batches based on what we had gone through in different groups to select test counties, but some of the test counties failed so not all the ones we picked are in this first batch unfortunately. It is a priority to fix the ones that failed so there is something from each jurisdiction. Hopefully by the end of the week it is realistic to have these counties available.
- **KC Filippino**: When we looked at this before, it doesn't help with absolute trends, and that is the head scratcher for me. You show the change over a year, and that is not information I know how to ground truth. I am trying to see how development changes over time from Phase 6 to Phase 7 which is not easy to grab from these graphics. In terms of ground truthing, I am confused in terms of how I am going to use this to assess anything.
    - **Sarah McDonald**: So you would rather see these two line charts have total acres per class per year?
    - **KC Filippino**: That is just my personal opinion, it is hard to tell what is going on as far as the development increase from phase six to phase seven.
    - **Sarah McDonald:** I do provide basically these charts in the report, so we can swap that so the report has this information, and the web app itself is just looking at total trends.
    - **Dave Montali**: I agree, I want to look at land uses within agricultural classes, in other words how are we representing crop versus pasture? It would be more intuitive to see just the trend in acres. And then as well, I noticed that the annual change is more drastic when you get over to the years 2013/14, and I wonder if that is to match up with your high res data; is that change to make them match 2013 or is that something real?
    - **Sarah McDonald**: Good question, I hope it is not an artifact, I spent a lot of time trying to avoid and address those. It sounds like people are supportive of changing this to be looking at total trends, so that is something we can do.
- **Dave Montali**: Did I hear you say you would do crop, hay, and pasture?
    - **Sarah McDonald**: Sorry that is a typo, pasture and hay are merged to one class.
    - **Dave Montali:** Okay so, if in Phase 6 I saw some weirdness where pasture was going up while hay was going down this would not address that right, is it a combination of the two?
    - **Sarah McDonald**: Correct.
- **Deborah Sward**: I just had a quick question about the slide that talked about neighborhoods and things like that. Is it an update to what was shared with the original reports for the couple of test counties? There was a discussion about methods for handling smaller parcels and impervious and things like that, and I am just curious if this is the same process or if this is an update to that.
    - **Sarah McDonald**: I don’t think I have changed this since I met with the states. This is an update to the original methods based on the back cast methods that came up through the workgroup, but this is not an update based on what data you guys saw a few weeks ago.
    - **Deborah Sward:** And this is intended to capture more impervious associated with these developed neighborhoods and subdivisions where it’s more tricky to detect, I assume?

    - **Sarah McDonald**: Exactly, especially where we have smaller parcels; a neighborhood of for example quarter acre lots, at 30 meter pixels is 900 square meters, which is basically ¼ acre or very close to it, so it is intended to capture smaller places and group them in a way that hopefully makes sense to clean up some potential noise as well as homogenize areas.
- **Deborah Sward**: Could you go over what you did with the jurisdictions that don't have Census of Ag like Baltimore City?
    - **Sarah McDonald:** Yea, so the Census of Ag has certain jurisdictions, specifically cities, that there's not enough agriculture for them to report without it being a privacy issue. So they basically aggregate it and combine it with an adjacent county. So Baltimore County in Maryland is the only case of that, where the Baltimore City census is grouped with Baltimore County. Aside from Baltimore City, I think this only affects some of the Virginia cities.
    - **Jackie Pickford**: Yes, it occurs mostly in Virginia. A lot of cities don't have much agriculture to report anyway, but I can send a list of those cities and which counties they are aggregated in, if people are interested in that information let me know.
    - **Deborah Sward**: Okay, that is helpful for the validation charge. I am curious for the back cast itself, independent of the validation?
        - **Sarah McDonald:** Independent of the validation, I treated the cities as their own unit. So it is independent from that grouping that is only aggregated to those counties for this comparison in particular.
- **KC Filippino:** Is this going to be shared to a larger audience? I feel like this is kind of a big deal, it is certainly a heavy lift and a lot of data and methods to get to where you got to. So I just hope that there are more eyes on this and more understanding so that there are no late breaking questions as to why the land use is different than what it has been.
    - **Sarah McDonald:** We have briefed the Land Use Workgroup. I think David reached out to Urban Storm Water to review as well. I have been working with the Timber Harvest Task Force on some aspects of the model. I think we have some Ag people, and I think that is the extent of the review. I think the Land Use Workgroup is the only one reviewing it holistically, but some of the sector groups will be looking at their appropriate sector, I hope. I sent it to the WQGIT newsletter as well.
    - **Normand Goulet:** I agree, this probably needs to have a presentation at the Water Quality GIT. I would give this presentation to the GIT.
    - **KC Filippino**: Maybe not so heavy on the methods, but yes. This is something I have been thinking about for years. I know that Land Use Workgroup is trying to get moved into a different goal team, but these are the kinds of things the Clean Water Goal Team should care about.
- **Peter Claggett:** I think it would be good to get feedback to Sarah from this group before she presents to the Water Quality goal team so she can get a sense, if any, of what people's concerns are.
- **Normand Goulet**: Well the timing might be moot, if we are saying April one for this review, Water Quality GIT will meet shortly before that. But I agree with KC, this is a big deal and there may be some things in here that may drive results in the new model.
- **Peter Claggett**: The information that Sarah has brought is so much better across the board, and though there is a lot of complexity to it, it is a lot more simpler than what we were trying to do incorporating the Ag Census last time. So I feel like it would help the partnership to decide as a first level of acceptance, is it at least as good as Phase 6? Is it more intuitive and straightforward and transparent?
- **KC Filippino**: I would hate for some fatal review to trace it back to some method that somebody found out about later, but I don't know that is going to happen, and if it doesn't, then we have to say there was not enough time to vet every single method, and there was a review period. So I

> think at the very least this review has to be shared with the Water Quality GIT and just say any major issues you have to bring them up, but there will not be a presentation to the GIT in March unless Jeremy wants to do that. I think noting that methods are available, some high level methodology, would work.

Post-meeting note: Sarah did brief the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) on the backcast methods in August 2025 at the WQGIT Phase 7 Office Hours. The materials and presentation can be viewed on the calendar page, as well as a recording of the session.

III. [Item 3]

Lead: [Name(s) of facilitator(s) or presenter(s)]

[A short description of the agenda topic, context, and any expected input from participants.]

Decisions [required]:

1. [List specific decisions made as a result of the meeting.]

Actions [required]:

1. [List specific follow-up actions, who is responsible for each, and deadlines if applicable.]

Discussion Notes [optional]:

- [Summarize the key points discussed, including major takeaways and concerns.]

IV. Wrap-Up

Lead: [Name(s) of facilitator(s) or presenter(s)]

V. Adjourn

Next Meeting: [Month Day, Year, time]

Attendees:

- [List name and organizational affiliation of all attendees.]