

March 4, 2025 - Local Leadership Workgroup Quarterly Meeting Notes

Action Items

- Share jurisdiction report outs and meeting notes
- Allow time at future llwg meeting for state updates as needed
- Compile SMART metrics/outputs and share options w/ LLWG
 - **LLWG Members: Send your comments and feedback to Rick (mittler@allianceforthebay.org) ASAP.**
- Compile feedback on LGAC/LLWG formalizing framework and share w/ LLWG
 - Additional feedback collected from LGAC and LLWG Leadership Meeting on Friday 3.7.25
- Post additional information and resources on the [March 4 Meeting Webpage](#)
- Update May 13 LLWG QM Meeting Invitation

Upcoming Meetings

- LGAC Meeting is March 20-21, 2025 | [Meeting Webpage](#)
- Next LLWG is May 13 - In-person in Annapolis | [Meeting Webpage](#)

Local Leadership Outcome Assessment - [Presentation](#)

Finalizing Recommendations to the Management Board for the Local Leadership Outcome.

February 13 MB Meeting (Local Leadership Outcome Recommendation Presented):

- [Link](#) to full list of MB comments and feedback from February 13 meeting.
- Current Outcome Language: Continually increase the knowledge and capacity of local officials on issues related to water resources and in the implementation of economic and policy incentives that will support local conservation actions.
- Local Leadership Recommendation: Update

SMARTifying the LL Outcome Feedback:

- Comment from Chat: Kathy Stecker - was there an issue for the MB with the use of the word “continuously” in the outcome language
 - Response from Rick Mittler, Coordinator of LLWG: I do not believe so. Other outcomes w/ "continually" were still rated SMART by the ERG report. But they were followed by a #/% in a # of years piece.
- Comment in chat: Laura Cattell Noll - suggestion to SMARTifying - There are other outcomes that have two statements. For example.. 'continually increase X. Annually, achieve Y'
- Interest in utilizing existing Local Leadership Survey to create SMART metrics/outputs
 - Examples: Current Indicators from Chesapeake Progress of “Understanding of Water Resource Federal Rules and Regulations” and “Actions taken”.

- Concerns over routine turnover of local officials impacting progress/achieving goals and connecting specific actions taken by local governments to the work of the LLWG
- Concern over adequately surveying the entire population of local officials across the watershed and how this could be done effectively.
- Ensuring metrics/outputs do not create additional work for local governments
- Interest in finding the middle ground between the existing thought of having a metric to focus on # of officials engaged, visits, bus tours, etc and the ultimate goal of increasing knowledge and capacity of all local officials. The first step or metric could be to think holistically and look across the partnership and find nexuses between other CBP outcomes/groups and the LL outcome. The implementation would be getting information sharing to these groups.
- Interest in using land use preservation as a metric/output (per the point above)
 - Concerns over population growth and community specific needs that will impact land use
- Comment in the chat: Laura Cattell Noll - response to interest and concern over using land use as a metric - I think another core question is related to what is the role of state/federal partners in land use? LGAC would say that we need to respect local land use authority, while offering technical/capacity support and resources for implementing best practices.
- Interest in using a circuit rider system or maybe calling out existing networks to fulfill the nexus between the LLWG and the other CBP groups. Interest in including this in the outcome language.
- Comment in chat: Kristin Saunders - response to Don's recommendation on circuit riders- Thank you Don, the circuit rider idea showed up in several of the recommendations for Beyond 2025. The thing I neglected to mention was that tying the other outcomes with a local leadership need to the local leadership work on a body data/decision tools could be provided by circuit riders. This group would actually be really well-positioned to develop some models of circuit rider programs that could build on what exists and improve it with the broader spectrum of outcomes in the agreement. Maybe the creation of a model local liaison model for delivery of this stuff is an outcome to aim for.
- Core deliverable of the LLWG is outreach

LLWG and LGAC Framework

- [Link](#) to CBP Organizational Chart, to view where both the LLWG and LGAC fit within our existing structure.
- Interest in staying separate from LGAC with a clearer framework/outline for how the LLWG and LGAC currently work together
- Comment in the chat: Adrienne Kotula - I think "formalizing" the coordination a bit more will really help.
 - Interest from membership for LLWG to have more of a voice at LGAC meetings

- Comment in the chat: Michelle Edwards - I suggest leaving the structure as is and explaining our role to the management board. We already regularly coordinate with LGAC. I would like to better understand where this sudden conflict is coming from.
 - Response from Laura Cattell Noll, Coordinator for LGAC: there is a broader effort to streamline the partnerships governance and structure. One idea is to ask that group to take up the question of LLWG/LGAC connections.
 - Response from Kristen Saunders: Michelle, I am not certain but suspect that the conflict is coming from the perspective some partners have that we need to shave down and simplify the organizational structure. And a lack of understanding leads to lumping suggestions. My two cents.
 - Comment in the chat: Laura Catell Noll - FYI - LGAC and LLWG Chairs and Vice Chairs are meeting on Friday to discuss how to further collaborate and/or formalize our collaboration.
-

Federal Level Updates - [Presentation Link](#)

What is the current state of federal efforts and funding that can support local governments in taking action in their communities?

Speaker: Carolyn Berndt | Berndt@nlc.org

Jurisdiction Report Outs

Watershed state's key projects, goals, and focus for 2025

Delaware - Jim Sullivan, DNREC

- Key Priorities:
 - Reduction of Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Sediment
 - Increasing the amount of tree and grass buffers along waterways
 - Increasing funding for long term best-management practices/reduction practices
- Resources, TA, Funding:
 - Chesapeake Bay Implementation (requires match)
 - EPA 319 Program - Expanding to Non-point source pollution (requires match)
 - State Revolving Loan Fund - Using Loan Interest to support:
 - Surface Water Planning Grant for water quality projects
 - Community Water Quality Improvement Projects (requires non profit to work with municipality)
- Connections to LLWG 2025 Key Themes:
 - Creating Climate Action Plans for 2025 - based off 2021 plan and will include public engagement
 - PFAs: state agencies working collaboratively to address PFAs in drinking water
 - Land Use & Development – Experiencing the most issues with Sussex County due to zoning; minimum of two units per acre, causing a significant amount of sprawl. Within

Sussex, the sprawl is mainly impacting inland Bays, but there is concerns over it moving towards Bay watershed/headwaters

Maryland - Kathy Stecker, MDE

- [Presentation](#)
- Key Priorities:
 - Meet 2025 [WIP](#) goals for nutrients and sediments:
 - 100 percent sediment reduction goal reached
 - 100 percent phosphorus reduction goal reached
 - 83 percent nitrogen reduction goal reached
 - Maintain Funding to meet 2025 WIP goals
 - Continue to implement [Wastewater Strategies](#)
 - Early detection process in place to analyze data from wastewater treatment plants
 - Working with PA and Susquehanna River Basin Commission to fund pay for success projects to implement [Conowingo WIP](#)
- TA
 - [Bay restoration Fund](#)
 - Clean Water Commerce Act
 - [CWA Section 319 Funding](#) (no match non point source projects)
 - [Winter Maintenance Training](#) (private applicators)
- Connections to LLWG 2025 Key Themes:
 - [A-StoRM](#)
 - [PFAS](#)
- Additional Resources
 - [MD Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#)

Maryland - Carrie Decker, MD DNR

- [Greenspace Equity Program](#)
 - From the Land Acquisition Program
 - Established in 2023
 - Reviewing applicants at this time
 - Intended for overburdened and underserved small communities to help them acquire land or to complete projects on land used that could be used as a public space
 - [Grant Gateway](#)
- [Whole Watershed Act and Fund](#)
 - New MD initiative to build capacity and obtain resources
 - Focus on water quality improvements, monitoring, small restoration segments
 - 5 year pilot program
- [Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund](#)
 - Over 10 years

- Awards coming out soon
- Part of larger restoration grant program
- [Watershed Assistance Collaborative](#)
 - [Planning & Design Grants](#) | [Technical Assistance](#) | [Stormwater Financing & Outreach](#) | [Training Opportunities](#)
 - Partners with Chesapeake Bay Trust
- Community Partnerships for Restoration Program - Contact Carrie: carrie.decker@maryland.gov (410) 260-8768.
- [Watershed Restoration Specialists](#)
- [MD Department of Planning](#)
 - Dedicated ‘circuit riders’ that locate smaller communities that require assistance with comprehensive planning and water resource elements

Pennsylvania - Megan Lehamn, PA DEP

- [Countywide Action Plans](#)
 - Bottom up approach due to the large amount of municipalities within the watershed;; sourcing knowledge from boots on the ground
 - Purpose is to assist local planning groups that arose from conservation districts and county planning agencies
 - “People, projects, and process”
- [Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program](#) (AgCAP)
- [Growing Greener Plus Grant](#)
- [Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority - PENNVEST](#)
- Countywide Action Planning (CAP)—Why is this important to counties?
 - [2021 Testimonial](#), [2022 Tetimonial](#), and [2023 Testimonial](#)
 - Noted Priorities:
 - Agriculture
 - Stream stabilization
 - Storm water
- Additional Funding from private foundations in PA (options for matching)
- NFWF Funding options available
- Clean Water Gatherings - [Bay Restoration - Tracking Pennsylvania's Progress](#)
 - Two gatherings thus far: October 2013 | January 2025
 - Convening event with representatives from state, local, non profit, and county leaders. Following the first meeting, leading up to the January 2025 meeting, 30 participants contributed 1000 hours of work across 3 clean water progress teams to address priority action areas that were generated at the first meeting. The three teams were on
 - Technical administrative assistance - alignment of software and process for reporting progress

- Staffing retention
 - Funding in multi grant coordination
- Key Priorities
 - Documenting and reporting progress
 - Outreach, marketing, and public relations funding
- Connections to LLWG 2025 Key Themes:
 - Climate
 - [Priority Climate Action Plan to EPA](#)
 - Submitted last year
 - Currently going through second round of public meetings
 - Land Use
 - primarily controlled at local level within PA
 - DEP is in the process of bringing back some stormwater planning assistance for local zoning authorities
 - PFAS
 - Half of the Pa's public water systems have been sampled in the previous year, the rest will be this year - sampling for PFAS
 - Published PFAS, PFOS, PFOA Maximum Contaminant Level Rule two year ago within drinking water
- [Healthy Waters Healthy Communities Annual Report:](#)
- Newsletter ([subscribe](#)): [Newsletter | Department of Environmental Protection | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)
- CAP Coordinator and Regional contacts: [Countywide Action Plans | Department of Environmental Protection | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)
- Additional Contacts:
 - Kristen Wolf
 - Program Manager
 - Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division
 - PA Department of Environmental Protection
 - 400 Market Street | Harrisburg, PA 17101
 - P: 717-772-1675

New York - Cassie Davis, NYS DEC

- [Presentation](#)
- Key Priorities
 - [WIPs](#)
 - Technical Assistance & Grant Funding
 - Funding Opportunities (state wide)
 - [NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Funding Finder Tool](#)
 - Water Quality Improvement Project Grant

- Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and MS4 Mapping Grant
 - Allows for municipalities to put forth design ideas that the WQ Improvement Project grant funds could eventually be applied to
 - [NYS Agriculture and Markets Funding Opportunities](#)
 - Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Grant
 - Climate Resilient Farming Grant
 - [Environmental Facilities Corporation Green Resiliency Grants](#)
 - [Environmental Facilities Corporation Green Innovation Grant Program](#)
 - Both of these grant opportunities are storm water focused
- TA
 - [Southern Tier 8](#)
 - [Southern Tier Central](#)
 - [Upper Susquehanna Coalition](#)
 - Purpose is to create awareness of ongoing funding opportunities and programs
 - Partnership between Pa and NY soil conservation districts in southern tier
 - Resources for farmers with larger grant programs
 - Receives majority of Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant funding
 - Department of State - [Model Local Laws to Increase Resiliency](#)
- Improving Communication amongst Local Stakeholders
- Connections to LLWG 2025 Key Themes:
 - Climate Change
 - [Climate Smart Communities](#)
 - 20 currently in chesapeake bay watershed
 - Based on ranking can be awarded climate smart community funds
 - Within NY this is managed by Regional Planning Boards and DEC staff
 - [Resilient NY](#)
 - Recently awarded funding through Environmental Bond Act
 - [NY Climate Act](#)
 - Mainly focused on GHG emissions
 - PFAS
 - 2016 creation of the [PFAS](#) Water Quality Rapid Response Team
 - 2020 [maximum contaminant levels](#) established
 - State Firefighting Foam Collection Efforts
 - Statewide PFAS Survey
 - PFAS guidance document on water quality sampling and analysis

- Land Use
 - [NYS 30x30](#) : Conserving 30% of NY's land and waters by 2030 •
 - Statewide currently at 21.88%

Virginia - Maura Christian, VA DEQ

- Updates:
 - New Acting Secretary of Natural & Historic Resources - Stefanie Taillon
 - Governor's Executive Directive 10 (December 2024)- acknowledging the Commonwealth's critical role in positioning Virginia for continued success in Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts, value and commitment to Bay Partnership and work in amending the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, commitment to continuing work beyond 2025 building upon progress already made.
 - Established Statewide Wetlands Technical Team, Blue Ribbon Oyster Panel
 - Worked with Secretary Taillon about the importance of local government engagement, joined conversations with LGAC.
 - There has been a large investment of time and energy from Virginia Partners in the ongoing Beyond 2025 Phase II planning work.
 - Continuing to engage with regional and state partners on the Beyond 2025 Process, providing updates to regional Planning District Commissions, Bay Interagency Team, watershed roundtable groups, [SWCD](#) regional meetings.
 - Effort to identify all GIT/WG reps in VA and survey their involvement with the Bay Program, to additionally help inform the Structure and Governance discussions
- Connections to LLWG 2025 Key Themes:
 - **PFAS**-there was VA legislation in 2024 which has DEQ coordinating with VDH to address public drinking water systems where VDH has notified DEQ of PFAS levels exceeding drinking water standards. The DEQ PFAS website contains additional information if interested in learning more, and you could provide a contact person at DEQ if anyone has questions and wants to follow-up. Evolving topic with a lot of interest.
 - **The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act** (Bay Act) and accompanying Regulations were amended to address resiliency – Tidewater VA localities requirement to incorporate new Resiliency regulations into local programs, considerations in certain land use decisions that address coastal resilience and adaptation to sea-level rise and climate change. DEQ CBOA liaisons working closely with local governments subject to the Bay Act, to make required updates to Zoning Ordinance and associated decisions regarding resiliency assessments by October 2025.
- Funding opportunities

- DEQ currently has Federal Bay program funding that is sub awarded to PDCs & watershed roundtables for implementation projects and local WIP engagement, additional IJA funds in year 3 now.
- Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Program
 - and [NPS Implementation projects](#) with approved implementation plan areas. Through Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act, Virginia is awarded grant funds to implement nonpoint source programs. Check back in late spring 2025 for more information about the FY26 RFA
- [The Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund](#)- established to provide financial assistance in the form of low-interest loans to local governments for needed improvements at publicly-owned wastewater treatment facilities and/or collection systems. Since then, the scope of the VCWRLF has been expanded by the SWCB
 - Eligible VCWRLF project types now include:
 - Publicly owned wastewater collection and treatment facilities | Publicly owned stormwater best management practices | Remediation of contaminated brownfield properties | Land conservation | Living shorelines | Agricultural best management practices
- [The Stormwater Local Assistance Fund \(SLAF\)](#) provides matching grants to local governments for the planning, design, and implementation of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) that address cost efficiency and commitments related to reducing water quality pollutant loads.
- [VCAP](#)- mostly state funds support, some federal. Cost-share program that provides financial incentives and technical and educational assistance to property owners installing eligible Best Management Practices (BMPs) in Virginia's participating Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). Local governments could be eligible for funding for various projects, primarily homeowners, can also be eligible for schools, libraries, commercial, just Non-ag, non state, non-federal properties.

West Virginia - Josephine Saikali, WV Region 9

- Key Priorities
 - To reduce sediment, pollution, and nitrogen levels that end up in the local waterways, and eventually the Chesapeake Bay River. Many of the municipalities are upstream from other residential and commercial areas.
 - Current talk of combining the MS4 permits in the state, with reissuing of the Phase II MS4 General Permit
 - In the Eastern Panhandle, at least, there are multiple municipalities seeking to implement green infrastructure practices, city-wide, to improve their community as a whole. There is a definite trend towards this practice.
- Resources, TA, Funding:

- Funding sources from foundations like the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) are integral to finding funding for projects that address water health and quality in the Bay.
- Additional Funding Sources: [Watershed Assistance Grant Program](#) (WAGP), [Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Program](#) (G3)
- Other funding sources come from federal and state grant programs, some of which are a bit uncertain for future granting, given the current administration's cutdown of grant funding.
 - [WVDEP](#), [FEMA](#), [US EPA](#)
- Connections to LLWG 2025 Key Themes:
 - The Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic at West Virginia University supports nonprofit and government clients with real estate law, land use law, and planning. The clinic has assisted more than 30 communities with adopting comprehensive plans and supported over 40 communities with local ordinances. Efforts also include flood recovery, water quality, and wastewater management projects.
 - In the counties that fall into the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, there are an estimated 150 of these projects.
 - The 2025 WV legislative session began in the middle of February and will last until the middle of April; there are advocacy groups that work towards getting these issues presented in front of lawmakers to improve the environment in West Virginia.
 - [WV Rivers Priorities to Protect Public Health in the 2025 legislative session](#)
 - Category A Drinking water protections: Opposing removal of category A waters and supporting the long-standing policy of protecting drinking water sources for current and future use
 - Water Quality standards for Public health: Support the inclusion of all EPA Priority Pollutants for Public Health in WQS.
 - Community Science: Oppose new restrictions for community air monitoring data in WV.