



Non-Tidal Wetlands Workgroup December Meeting

December 16, 2025
2:00 - 4:00 PM

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

New Action Items:

1. Action: Forward the Habitat Tracker Data Request to EPA.
2. Action for Workgroup Members: If there are other groups not being captured in the data call (ex. Entities not directly reporting to their state) let us know so we can engage with them. Please provide a contact, we would rather be thorough than miss someone.

Minutes:

I. Welcome, Roll Call & Introductions

Decisions:

1. N/a

Actions:

1. N/a

II. Updates and Announcements

Decisions:

1. N/a

Actions:

1. Forward the Data Request to EPA.
2. If there are other groups not being captured in the data call (ex. Entities not directly reporting to their state) let us know so we can engage with them. Please provide a contact, we would rather be thorough than miss someone.

Discussion Notes:

- New Outcome Language:

Restore, create, enhance and protect wetlands to support people and living resources, including waterbirds and fish, and provide water quality, flood and erosion protection, recreation and other valuable benefits to people.

- **Restore or create at least 3,000 acres and enhance 15,000 acres of tidal wetlands by 2040, focusing on habitats that support populations of waterbirds and represent healthy wetlands across the watershed.**
- **Restore or create at least 3,000 acres and enhance 15,000 acres of nontidal wetlands by 2040, focusing on habitats that support populations of waterbirds and represent healthy wetlands across the watershed.**
- **Notes:**
 - **An overview was provided of the updated Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement approved in December 2025. Structural and thematic changes relevant to non-tidal wetlands were summarized, including:**
 - **Consolidation of goal teams into four overarching areas**
 - **Placement of non-tidal wetlands under the Habitats, Fisheries, and Wildlife goal team**
- **Wetlands Whitepaper**
 - **Notes:**
 - **Furlough delayed last edits before sending out final draft in the new year**
 - **The Wetlands White Paper is intended to synthesize the current state of science, monitoring, and policy relevance for wetlands under the Chesapeake Bay Program and to inform outcome tracking beyond 2025.**
 - **The white paper is being developed as a foundational reference document rather than a policy directive. Its intended audiences include Chesapeake Bay Program leadership, workgroups, regulatory partners, and external stakeholders.**
- **Habitat Tracker data call**
 - **Projects due Friday, February 13th**
 - **Notes:**
 - **Federal partners (DoD) expressed that they did not get a data call.**
 - **Emily Young (Habitat GIT data manager) specified only jurisdictional reps got the data call.**
 - **Chris Guy (USFWS): Federal Partners, at least USFWS, report out habitat projects to the states where their land resides.**
 - **Kevin Du Bois (DoD): DoD does report to the states on their projects.**
 - **Action Item: Forward the request to EPA.**
 - **Action Item: If there are smaller groups not being captured in the datacall let us know so we can engage with them. Please provide a contact. We would rather be thorough than miss someone.**

III. Future Structure and Governance of the Bay Program and Next Steps

- Updates on outcome and December 2025 EC meeting.

Decisions:

1. N/A

Actions:

1. N/A

Discussion Notes:

○ **Notes:**

- See Slides: [Click Here](#)
- Waterbird's target was wrapped into the tidal and non-tidal targets of the wetlands outcome.
- Management Board will be dissolving after July 1
- 4 Goals
 - We are now under the “Thriving Habitats, Fisheries and Wildlife” Goal
- Structure and Governance conversations are ongoing by a dedicated team.
- Management Board will discuss priorities and guidelines for Management Strategies before it is dissolved in July
 - January Management Board Meeting will discuss what form Management Strategies will take
 - The workgroup will hold off on Management Strategy development until we have more guidance

IV. WOTUS Discussion

Decisions:

1. N/A

Actions:

1. N/A

Discussion Notes:

○ **Notes:**

- Participants noted that recent and ongoing changes in federal WOTUS definitions and interpretations have created uncertainty regarding which wetlands are subject to Clean Water Act jurisdiction. This uncertainty has implications for:
 - Regulatory protection of certain non-tidal wetlands
 - Consistency of wetland delineation and classification across states
 - Interpretation of wetland extent and loss data used in Baywide reporting

- A key point of discussion was the importance of clearly distinguishing:
 - Regulatory wetlands subject to WOTUS jurisdiction, and
 - Wetlands tracked for Chesapeake Bay Program outcomes, which may include wetlands outside federal jurisdiction
- Participants emphasized that Bay Program wetland outcomes should not be interpreted as being limited to WOTUS waters, and that outcome tracking serves a different purpose than regulatory enforcement.
- Implications for Data and Indicators
 - The group discussed how shifting WOTUS definitions can complicate:
 - Comparisons of wetland extent over time
 - Communication with stakeholders who may assume regulatory equivalency
- Implications on new communities
 - Concerns were expressed with the reduction of protected wetlands (because of the surface water connection time frames partially defining what is considered protected wetlands) developers may attempt to build housing in areas that are susceptible to flooding, risking the safety of people living there.

V. Wrap-Up and Adjourn

Attendance

1. **Gabriel Duran** (Chesapeake Research Consortium)
2. **Joe Berg** (Biohabitats)
3. **Tess Danielson** (DOEE & WWG Vice chair- tidal team)
4. **Kevin Du Bois** (DoD CBP)
5. **Nancy Schumm** (Wetland Work group Vice Chair, non-tidal wetlands)
6. **Pamela Mason** (Wetlands Workgroup Chair)
7. **Caitlin Bishop** (DWR)
8. **Megan Diehl** (Chesapeake Bay Trust)
9. **Matthew Robinson** (EPA CBPO)
10. **Adrienne Kotula** (Chesapeake Bay Commission)
11. **Chris Guy** (USFWS, Habitat GIT Coordinator)
12. **Chris Spaur** (USACE)
13. **Erin M. Reilly** (Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, VA)
14. **Maggie Woodward** (Chesapeake Bay Commission)
15. **Emily Young** (ICPRB)
16. **Catherine Krikstan** (CBPO)
17. **Melissa Yearick** (Upper Susquehanna Coalition)

18. **Katie Stahl** (MD DNR)
19. **Denise Clearwater** (MDE)
20. **Megan W Lang** (USFWS)
21. **Sarah Roberts** (Biohabitats)
22. **Su Fanok** (The Nature Conservancy)
23. **Ben Sagara** (DWR)
24. **Sadie Drescher** (Chesapeake Bay Trust)
25. **Gregory Noe** (USGS)
26. **Kayleigh Katzenberger** (Chesapeake Bay Trust)
27. **Sarah Hilderbrand** (MD DNR)
28. **Sarah Koser** (MD DNR)
29. **Alison B. Rogerson** (DE DNREC)
30. Dan (unknown)
31. **Elise Frazier** (Virginia Coastal Zone Management, VA DEQ)
32. **Amanda Poskaitis** (USFWS)
33. **Holly Walker** (DE DNREC)
34. **Gina Hunt** (MD DNR, Habitat GIT Chair)
35. **Cassandra M Davis** (NY DEC)