

Public Access Workgroup
Tuesday, August 19th 2025
2:00 - 4:00 pm



Microsoft Teams Meeting
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Meeting ID: 263 000 340 468 0
Passcode: WM9et3Wb

Public Access Outcome: By 2025, add 300 new public access sites, with a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for boating, swimming and fishing, where feasible.

Attendees:

Daniel Koval, CRC Staffer
Sophie Waterman, USGS
Emily Heller, EPA, GIT 5 Coordinator
Julia Wakeling, DC DOEE, GIT 5 Co-Chair
Christine Bruins, NPS, National Capitol
Region
Adrienne Kotula, CBC
Sandi Olek, MD DNR
Jillian Seagraves, MD DNR

Kristal McKelvey, VA DCR
Mike Krumrine, DE State Parks
Mark McLaughlin, PA Fish and Boat
Commission
Vallie Edenbo, PA DCNR
Mark Hohengasser, NYS Parks
Katie Lautar, Baltimore Greenspace
Meredith Lemke, CRC Staffer

Meeting Materials:

- [Presentation Slides](#)
- [Call for Chair](#)
- [Target Timeline document](#)
- [Public Feedback Document](#)

2:00 PM Welcome/ Introductions

Daniel Koval: Please put your names in the chat for attendance purposes. I hope everyone's August is going well! It's been a while since we met, so there's a good amount of things to catch up on.

Thanks everyone for coming! To start, I want to talk about the new meeting security happening across the entire bay program. There have been a few instances with unwanted guests sharing inappropriate video and audio in meetings, so we have decided to have all attendees join meetings with microphones and cameras disabled. When we come to the discussion part of the

meeting, you can use the raise hand function and I will individually give you the ability to turn on and off your microphone and camera.

Quick agenda will be going over some leadership updates with the Stewardship Goal Team, the call for chair, the press release celebrating the workgroup's achievement, some updates on the management board requests, and the public feedback review.

2:15 PM Housekeeping

- Leadership Updates
- [Call for Workgroup Chair](#)
- CBP [Press Release](#)

First, I want to give a quick update on the broader Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT 5). This diagram on the slide shows the context of where our workgroup sits underneath GIT 5. Emily Heller is the new GIT Coordinator, and Julia Wakeling and Julie Lawson are the new co-chairs for the GIT.

Emily Heller: Hi everyone! I am Emily Heller, and I'm coming from EPA Grants most recently. I lived and worked in DC prior to the Bay Program a couple years ago, and am excited to be working with you guys!

Julia Wakeling: Hi all, I know a lot of you , but some I don't. I am taking over chairing the soon to be Engaged Communities group with Julie Lawson. We work in the Natural Resources Administration inside of the District of Columbia's DOEE . Specifically, I am in the watershed Protection Division. My main day job is the Chesapeake Bay Program Coordinator, so I work on representing DC on a whole bunch of other goal teams, and I work really closely on other Watershed use grants and projects, from trash to public access. Julie Lawson is not here right now, but she works in our education team at the DOEE. We can answer any questions and are always both available, especially as we go through the public comment process in the next couple months.

Daniel Koval: Continuing discussions on leadership, for the workgroup specifically we are still waiting for the CBP to identify a new coordinator for the workgroup. The Park Service took a step back with coordinating roles with the bay program, but will still be participating just not leading. Hopefully this will be filled soon in the future. We also have a vacancy for the Chair position. I [dropped a link in the chat that goes through the roles and responsibilities for the role of chair](#). It is not a huge additional lift, but the chair may sometimes speak at management board meetings on behalf of the workgroup, and there are a few additional meetings maybe once a month with the staffers or coordinators to help with agenda prep or goal setting for the workgroup. This will also include looking at management strategies for the workgroup as a whole moving forward. If you have any questions, reach out to me or Emily or Julia!

Next, I want to take some time to celebrate the achievement of the workgroup! We did meet the 300 new access sites by 2025. The Bay Program's Communications team sent out a Press Release highlighting this achievement, and congrats to all who had a part of that!

2:30 PM **Update on Management Board Requests:** [Proposed Timeline](#) on creating the final target metric

Next, I will get into the Management Board Requests. A few months ago, the management board wanted all of the workgroups with placeholders for targets to create some sort of timeline that gives anticipated completion dates for each step they need to take. This slide shows a screenshot from that document of the tasks needed to be completed for the access to urban greenspace metric. In September, the Protected Lands Workgroup's data set should become available and we can take a look at where we are right now with what protected lands are publicly accessible. Sophie Waterman is in this meeting right now, and she has been taking the lead with the protected lands data work, so if you have any questions on that, you can always ask her.

Regarding tracking green space, one concern from different jurisdictions was that some representatives don't work with green space, they only work with water. We want to make sure that if that is the case for you, and if you only work with water sites, we want to make sure we tell the management board so they know they need to identify other members who can join the workgroup and track land sites. If you are a state representative who does not work with land tracking, please let me know.

Sophie Waterman: Quick question, is there a lot of overlap between folks working on the water access side and land/public park side? Or is there a divide? What work should the bay program be doing to find those representatives?

Jillian Seagraves: I know the state of MD has a split; normally the water access is handled by a Boating Access Group, and the parks are within the Dept. of Natural Resources that have their own Outdoor Recreation group.

Julia Wakeling: DC works similarly, we have an office of District Waterways Management that does water access, and any of the other land access would come in the dept of Parks and Recreation.

Michael Krumrine, from chat: In Delaware, the same people work on both land and water

Vallie Edenbo: Speaking from PA, we are a hybrid. The Fish and Boat Commission exists for water access, but within the DNR where I am, some folks work on water, but others work on land access. Maybe I'm late in the transition here, and may have missed catching up on the new

element on the goal, but I'd like to understand better about how the protected lands and public access groups are both handling this avenue.

Daniel Koval: It's my understanding that the PLWG is focused on tracking specifically acreage or geographic distribution, whereas the public access workgroup is specifically tracking access. There hasn't been a specific definition of access yet, but something in terms of quality, transportation, walkability/bikeability, etc. So this group will focus on that rather than just acreage or just the number of sites.

Vallie Edenbo: So we might end up with a metric like the number of trails, or some other metric like walkability?

Daniel Koval: Yes.

Jillian Seagraves: To follow up on that, it was described to me that not all lands protected are supposed to be publicly accessible, and that's how I think about it.

Daniel Koval: Yes, that's a great point to bring up. And that adds to why they are being divided into both groups, because if you put all of the focus on one workgroup, you might be missing the access side or the ability for protected lands to begin tracking urban or community lands. Thanks for that!

Are there any other comments or questions? It seems like lots of states do it differently, so I might reach out to states individually to see if they might need extra capacity or if it's all consolidated into one.

Katie Lautar: I think you may have covered this, but with the idea of preserved lands not open to access, but there are also accessible lands that are not necessarily protected. There are lots of accessible greenspaces that may or may not be protected. On school property, etc, but in Baltimore there is a lot of accessible greenspace that does not have formal protection status, but that is accessible by community.

Daniel Koval: Thanks for bringing that up! That adds to the conversation of why it is so important for both of the workgroups to focus on this. If there are no other questions, we can dive into public feedback.

2:45 PM **Review of Public Feedback:** [Gathered feedback](#)

Daniel Koval: We received the first round of feedback at the end of last week, and the period goes until September 1 so there will likely be more to come. The management board wants a redlined version of the agreement by September 23, which does not give much time to review them. There is an assigned Review Team that has been going over the comments and

consolidating them based on outcome and target. In this document, all of the things highlighted in Pink are recommendations by the Review Team on how to address the comments. I have separated each comment by the target to go through each one.

The Review team asked that once we go through these comments as a workgroup, to go back to them and explain how we want to use the comments. From there, we can create proposed revisions on how to incorporate them, which would have to be approved by the Management Board.

If Julia or Emily have anything you want to add about the comment period, feel free! If not, we can dive into the first one.

Julia Wakeling: I want to add one thing that as we are going through this, if we feel like there are certain ways in which we want these comments understood, and if we want to make sure they are interpreted in a particular way by the Review Team, I think we have the ability to flag that with the group. We can provide context to make sure it is digested in the right way.

Daniel Koval: On top of the document, I put in the submitted outcome language, and separated each comment by each target. There are only 6 comments from the review period, and an additional 3 from the engaged communities webinar a few weeks ago.

For the first target of New Access Sites, if anyone wants to share any thoughts feel free to raise your hand and we can start.

Adrienne Kotula: This comment gets to one of the concerns that I've had, with the existing public access plan that is in place. I think NPS was working on or close to having a draft plan available for the location of all of the public access sites in the watershed. If that's available now, that is something we can contemplate addressing but not sure if it is available. I think it was being done in conjunction with DOT.

Daniel Koval: Yes, the last I heard about it was they were finalizing the report. I can reach out to the leads on that and see if it was finished or if they are still in the review process. That would be good to look at.

Adrienne Kotula: We can consider that if the data is ready.

Daniel Koval: Also to note, some of the feedback are maybe not things that the workgroup has to incorporate into the language of the target, but could be put into the management strategies and action plan.

For the second one, for example, this is not a change that may need to happen to the language, but just recommends adding incremental steps for tracking that could be planned out in the management strategies.

Sandi Olek: Is there a specific definition for Recreation? For ‘new public access sites with a strong emphasis on recreation’.

Daniel Koval: That is something that could be better defined by the workgroup. Previously it was talked about technical vs non technical recreation but that is something that should be defined, if anyone has thoughts on that?

Sophie Waterman: Does each jurisdiction have a different definition for recreation? Do we know?

Adrienne Kotula, from chat: Guessing it would be closely tied to the Land and Water Conservation Fund definition which is really broad.

Christine Buins, from chat: NPS Stats Office defines how we count recreational vs non recreational visits with definitions [NPS Visitor Use Statistics Definitions - Social Science \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)

Sandi Olek: I don’t know. I’m going to be in DC with other directors of outdoor recreation and I can ask around. PA will be there, and about 20 other states will be.

- **Kristal McKelvey, from chat:** Curious about the meeting this evening /tomorrow. Just wondered who/if VA was invited because I may have to update contacts EIR such events
- **Sandi Olek, form chat:** All State Offices of Outdoor Recreations were invited. It's a NGA Recreation and Health Forum. I don't think VA has an active Office.
- **Kristal McKelvey:** Thank you. Correct. I’ve tried to fill in some blanks but can’t act in that full complexity.

Sophie Waterman: Yeah, that would be a very interesting report out for this group. We had this issue with healthy watersheds as well, with trying to find a definition that a partnership can get behind. I’ve been looking up and trying to better understand green space as it's related to Protected lands target, and there are a bunch of different definitions about that too. That could be something we put into one list for what are all the definitions from jurisdictions within the watershed.

Sandi Olek: The US Dept of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis tracks outdoor recreation - it’s a satellite account, and they break it down into core outdoor recreation and then supporting or non core where one might be your hunting/fishing/camping/biking/etc. and the other is more field sports, outdoor festivals, etc. I can provide that definition to you guys. The data is tracked for every state. But I did recently hear that they may stop tracking that data.

Daniel Koval: That would be great if you could send any data you find or after conversing tomorrow at your conference. Is it okay if each state has their own definition in terms of the partnership, or should we try to nail down one definition to use? What are people’s thoughts?

Sandi Olek: I think so as long as we are tracking the same thing, but it would be nice to have a common definition.

Julia Wakeling: We don't need to have the same definition if we have a good understanding of what each jurisdiction's definition is.

Daniel Koval: Good to know.

Vallie Edenbo: On the first comment about geographic distribution, I want to say that there are so many sides to look at and it could get complicated quickly. I am in favor of having the 100 sites goal be that simple. When you start looking at geographic distribution, you ask who you are serving and where and why, and those are good questions to ask but we might not have the capacity to drill that down as well as we would like. If we add a site right next to an existing site, it could be because of population demographics. In PA, if there is no site in one spot geographically, it could be because it doesn't serve many people or there is a fishery or something else there. You could look at it with road networks and accessibility, but I'm perplexed by that question and how we would dig into it in that capacity.

Katie Lautar: Regarding geographic analysis, when we are thinking about that analysis for only 100 more sites, are they across every jurisdiction?

Daniel Koval: Yes.

Katie Lautar: Could you say a little more about what the concern is with looking at the distribution?

Vallie Edenbo: I have no concern looking at it. I just wouldn't want to set a goal that says it is more important to put sites in one jurisdiction than it is in another jurisdiction. Unless we have the data to back that up.

Katie Lautar: Is someone proposing that we decide jurisdictions that the 100 go to? Or just to analyze it?

Vallie Edenbo: No I don't think so. I'm just not understanding the questions as they are written. It says when discussing access metrics, consider the geographic distribution of sites. Maybe I'm digging in too deeply on that question

Daniel Koval: Yeah, the bullet points are something that I wrote beneath the comments as something to consider as we move forward with management strategies after the targets are finalized. So that's not something that was written by a comment.

Katie Lautar: I often raise the question of distribution of green spaces or access, usually related to 30x30 goals. If there is a concentration of access only in certain places, without localized goals, whole communities could be neglected by the distribution of access to these places. If

we make a goal of 100 more places for access, if there is not also a recommendation about distribution, one whole state could carry the torch of 100. So maybe PA doesn't have to do anything bc MD does. I'm just making that up, but just something to think about.

Vallie Edenbo: I hear what you are saying. I'm all for localized goals as well. I know our localized goals around fishing/boating are based on TPL analysis with drive network time and we have a heat map that says how far sites are in PA. I think it would be great for everyone to have local priorities. I just would not want one state to carry the partnership. I didn't want someone to look at a scatterplot and see a gap, because usually there is a reason for why the gap is there. Or if they look at a cluster and think there is enough access in a city, but that is usually not true. I appreciate the discussion, I just think simple geographic discussions are not enough.

Daniel Koval: Thank you for that, it definitely will have to come with conversation about social and demographic context in terms of where sites are.

For the next target, ADA/ABA Accessibility, there is one comment. They may have misinterpreted the numbers on this target, so maybe we need to be clearer in the language. They said 3% is low, in terms of 100 sites, but the original language is about the existing 312 sites, so about 10 sites. Some could argue that is still low, but they wanted to emphasize looking at infrastructure and finding sites that would have easy developments. The Review team recommended rewording it to 'at least 3%', and maybe re ordering the targets to put this one third, below the improvements target. Does anyone have any thoughts on this? Do you agree with what the review team said?

Adrienne Kotula: I'm not sure where the 3% came from, and I'm not in the business of constructing sites, so I don't feel educated enough to answer the question.

Daniel Koval: Yeah, the 3% was a number discussed in prior meetings for target metrics to determine a number that is realistic for states in terms of maintenance of existing sites. It was done in the context of adding the 100 new sites, and maintaining existing sites.

Do folks at least agree with what the review team recommended?

Vallie Edenbo: It does say existing public access sites, so maybe it is a mis interpretation. Maybe we could put a round, approximate number in that so it shows that the effort is greater than how it has been interpreted.

Katie Lautar: I'm proud of you guys for putting that in there, but I have no thoughts on how to fix it.

Daniel Koval: I will move on to the next target: Access Upgrades, Maintenance, and Expansion. This comment focuses on public transportation and transit access in terms of defining access and looking at upgrades to sites. Is that something we want to specify in the language, or put it

as action items in the management strategy? The review team recommended a specific sentence highlighting ADA Accessibility into this one, and also recommended for specific transportation access to be included in the management strategies rather than in the target language.

Jillian Seagraves: I think another way to define or track the access to the site could be the developments that are around the site itself, to complement public transit. Because in some locations, there is no public transit but it might be easy to walk to the park or boat ramp or whatever site there is.

Daniel Koval: Yes, going off of that point, this could focus on the access to greenspace as well and could fall into conversations of how access is defined. I think often public transit is more important in more urban areas for getting to access sites, so this conversation could fall into both as well.

Julia Wakeling: I could also see how this kind of language could be more important for some jurisdictions than for others. Wondering if maybe we will get feedback that this is not expanding the scope, but a slightly broader scope? For DC, because our greenspace and water access are urban, this is really important so we would argue that it does not expand the scope. Just wanted to add that.

Daniel Koval: Any other thoughts on this one or what the review team recommended? Especially with whether or not the transit language should be in the target language or the management strategies?

Sophie Waterman: I think the management strategy might be the most appropriate for this concern. I think this is a little out of scope of the Bay Program for dealing with the transportation access aspect of it, though it is relevant and I think putting it in the management strategy could be a good way to get us thinking about the interconnectedness of it all.

Katie Lautar: This is also crucial to Baltimore, like DC. If transportation access is really important, I'm wondering if that doesn't mean it should go under the urban lands part. Is this exclusive to urban areas? I'm fine if you put it in management strategies if that makes sense, but it does seem relevant to urban.

Sophie Waterman: Yes, totally relevant. I get a little frustrated with the Green Equity mappers with walkability because sometimes transportation should be a part of it when it is not. Putting it in the management strategy would allow us to call that out a little more while not specifically putting it in the goal language itself. This would make it an identified need part of the whole picture, but allows for breathing room in case the management board says it is too out of scope for the goal language itself.

- Julia Wakeling, from chat: I agree with Sophie- we may want to anticipate that the MB will say its out of scope in revisions

Daniel Koval: Sounds good, thank you for all that Julia, Katie, and Sophie. I'll be reaching back out to the review team about what the workgroup discussed about the comments and their recommendations. They want to know how we will incorporate what they recommended and I will let them know those thoughts.

This next comment was from the Engaged Communities Webinar put on by the communications Team. It was a pretty broad recommendation to change the word 'kayaks' to paddlers, as it is a more all-inclusive recreation term rather than just specifically highlighting kayaks. This would be a pretty easy fix with broadening the word.

Sophie Waterman, from chat: I like 'paddlers'!

- **Katie Latuar, from chat:** me too

Daniel Koval: I am seeing some thumbs up. Cool. Anybody have any last questions or comments related to that target?

The last section is access to urban lands, and both of the comments are from the Webinar, not the public feedback period. Some of them are general discussion questions, and they tie into the discussion that the workgroup needs to have about how we will define and track access to greenspace. The first question is 'how are you defining access to urban lands?' they recommend looking into active and passive recreation opportunities and how we specifically outline them.

Katie Lautar: At Baltimore Greenspace, we define passive and active differently, but it is like 'active' recreation are places designed more for sports, etc. Vs pocket parks. We don't really categorize it in those ways, and that could get really tricky. Especially because site use changes sometimes based on how people use it.

Daniel Koval: Yes, and that could also get into the possibility of one site having a sight-seeing pier but adds a different active amenity, and how that would track differently. Another comment from the webinar talks about exploring walkability access and this is related to the public transit comment talked about earlier. Does anyone have thoughts they want to share now about this? This relates with tracking green space that was going to be the original discussion of today's meeting. I have a few prompt questions we can get into as well.

Katie Lautar: The team at Trust for Public Lands (TPL) and a few other people have been looking at the difference between walkability / bikeability and public transportation access and the different ways to look at that. I will send you some information from our conversation about what systems work for that. I don't want this team to reinvent the wheel, but want to make sure that some of those systems are more reliable than others. Their team has looked at this in depth so it might be worthwhile to talk with them. Will Klein is who has been thinking this through with me.

Daniel Koval: That sounds great! I was planning on trying to set up some sort of workshop meeting that connects Public Access Workgroup, Protected Lands Workgroup, Chesapeake Conservation Partnership, Trust for Public Lands, etc. If people have interest in that, that could be a good opportunity to dive into these discussions and nail down different definitions. If you could send me that information Katie, that would be great. If no one has any other thoughts on those specifically, we can move on to broader discussion.

2:45 PM Discussion on Access to Greenspace Metrics

- What kinds of parameters could be set for what the workgroup tracks?
- How should access be defined?
 - Walkability, Transportation access, Proximity
- Should a broader workshop be planned to discuss and finalize parameters?

Daniel Koval: This is the last slide, it's just prompting questions on some things that have been brought up in past workgroup meetings about what needs to be discussed with tracking green space. I just gathered up different topics discussed earlier and hopefully we can have some sort of conversation today as a starting opportunity and inform a workshop meeting with larger groups to get this moving forward.

The two biggest questions revolve around the different parameters on tracking greenspace and where we put boundaries up. Options have included the presence of recreation amenities; acreage, though that could lead to some various hardships as lots of urban parks are super small and not even an acre which is one thing to note; or type of ownership, among others.

Katie Lautar: Is this just for urban or overall?

Daniel Koval: This would be for urban and community greenspace, so the land access.

Katie Lautar: A substitute for acreage could be lots. Baltimore Greenspace protects over 100 lots, but only 9 acres.

Daniel Koval: That's good to know. In past meetings, it's been noted that the public can easier visualize a number which is why acres are sometimes used, so that could be one avenue that we take.

Katie Lautar: For proximity: proximity to what? One thing we look at is proximity to population size and population types. So what green space is closest to vulnerable populations.

Daniel Koval: That's a good question, I don't have a specific answer. To add to that, I know sometimes proximity could show you are really close to a park, but maybe it is not walkable and has no sidewalks, or maybe it is geographically close but you have to go all the way around to

get there easily. It's just a term that has been talked about in the past and I wanted to mention it here.

Sophie Waterman: I think your idea of having a definition workshop with all the relative groups could be a good use of time and wonder if jurisdictions are able to get folks involved with those they work with. We could present some options of what different paths look like if there is interest from this group. I'll pose this question: what types of metrics or maps would you be interested in when it comes to defining some of this stuff? What can we at the bay program office look into to present to you all to react to?

Adrienne Kotula: Looking into what other programs are doing is valuable, and learning from other models and building upon it. I know there is an urban waters federal partnership, and I'm sure there is something similar for urban areas in the last space that we could learn from. I'd also encourage you all to not limit your invitations to just jurisdictional representatives. Bringing all the partners to the table is important.

Sophie Waterman: If we put this together, could we rely on you all sending it to partners you work with to join this conversation? The more the merrier, this has been a process of learning.

- **Julia Wakeling:** Yeah!
- **Katie Lautar:** yep. I'm part of Urban Waters and chair of the Climate task force
- **Adrienne Kotula:** Certainly
- **Jillian Seagraves:** yes
- **Michael Krumrine:** Sure.

Sophie Waterman: Great!

Daniel Koval: So it looks like there is interest in a workshop like this. For scheduling, I could send out a poll to the workgroup.

Sophie Waterman: Daniel, we can talk about this and figure out a poll for timelines. December is usually a terrible month, but things are brewing and there is lots of overlap happening. We can create a range of dates that may work for you all.

Daniel Koval: Anybody have any last thoughts to think about over the next month or two, or questions you want to see answered or considered in a workshop like this?

If not, we can end early. I will send out minutes by the end of the week with a follow up email detailing what we talked about today. Be on the lookout for that, and information about this workshop idea that we can schedule with the workgroup! Thanks everyone for coming!

3:50 PM Wrap Up and Next Steps

- Protected Lands Data should become available by the end of September to begin reviewing baseline data on currently accessible public lands.