Chesapeake Bay Program
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Public Access Workgroup Meeting

February 17, 2026
2:00 - 4:00pm

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Meeting Minutes

Purpose: This meeting will review what was discussed at the Defining Greenspace Workshop in January and continue conversations about how the workgroup will track greenspace and other targets.

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Administrative Updates: Management Board and Governance/Structure

Daniel provided an update on recent management board decisions regarding management strategies, governance and structure, and membership. Goal Team chairs will be assigned as the lead in the authorship of management strategies, with collaboration between workgroup members and goal team coordination. The Approved Engaged Communities Chairs are Julie Lawson, DC DOEE and Julia Wakeling, DC DOEE. There is interest from Lorenzo Cinalli to serve as Co-chair of the workgroup, and he gave a brief introduction.

Decisions: N/A
Actions: N/A

Lorenzo Cinalli: I used to work with the Forestry Workgroup, and now work with the DC Dept of Parks and Rec as a Community Planner. My current role, along with the changing priorities of the workgroup, and my previous involvement with the CBP aligns well with serving as chair or

co-chair. I'd love to co-chair with someone who has prior involvement with the workgroup as well.

Julia Wakeling: In the case that Lorenzo takes up the offer of leadership for this workgroup, I do think it would be really beneficial to have another federal agency, NGO, or jurisdiction to co-chair with him. In the next couple weeks, Daniel and I will be making sure we have more regular representation across jurisdictions as well.

III. Recap of Defining Greenspace Workshop
- Daniel shared an overview of what was discussed at the greenspace workshop held with the Protected Lands Workgroup on January 29th, as well as the refined definition following the feedback requested throughout early February.
- Sophie Waterman shared information on how Census Places and Urban Areas will be used as geographic boundaries for tracking urban and community greenspace. See the powerpoint slides for more information.

  Requested Action: Non-decisional (discussion and presentation only).
  Materials: Presentation Slides

IV. Group Discussion
- The workgroup was given a revised definition to share thoughts on.

  Requested Action: Non-decisional (discussion and presentation only).
  Materials: Presentation Slides

<div align="center">Discussion</div>

Re-worked Definition: Community and Urban Greenspaces are publicly accessible outdoor lands in census designated places and urban areas that provide opportunities for both passive and active recreation while offering exposure to nature. These spaces deliver public health, community, and environmental benefits and include, but are not limited to, parks, trails, gardens, sports fields, waterfronts, community gathering areas, and natural landscapes like community forests or grasslands.

Kelly Rossiter: Is there a reason why we would refer to these as community and urban greenspaces, instead of just greenspaces? It seems shorter, and all encompassing, besides rural lands. Do we need those disclaimers at the beginning?
- **Daniel Koval:** the intent came from the desire to more purposefully include urban spaces with the language and tracking of lands.
- **Sophie Waterman:** the community and urban was fought for by a lot of partners who wanted to see language specifically calling out that.

Julia Wakeling: Can we switch the order to be urban and community, to be in line with other programming?

- **Daniel Koval:** Yes, and the outcome language also says urban and community so that can be done.

Julia Wakeling: Also, it looks like the term outdoor places was changed to outdoor lands. Is this consistent with 'census designated places and urban areas'? Should we switch to saying outdoor areas instead of lands?

      Sophie Waterman: Lands was made as a suggestion in the feedback form.

V. **Additional Ways to Track Access Discussion**
- Daniel gave an overview of different methods of tracking access that have been discussed previously: Proximity in acreage (metric: increase the percentage of greenspace within a census place / urban area) and 10 Minute Walk (metric: increasing the percent of people who live within a 10 minute walk of those greenspaces).

Daniel Koval: My understanding is that the protected lands workgroup will be tracking those urban and community greenspaces that are protected within their dataset, and the public access workgroup will be working in collaboration with protected lands workgroup with that tracking, but with more of a focus of how the access component is happening (percentage of greenspace within a certain census designated place / urban area, and also the distribution of those lands and making sure access is available to as many people as possible which brings in the 10 minute walk component.)

Sandi Olek: I know this is a tricky thing to measure. We did an analysis that was based on TPL's 10 minute walk, but the way that reads it looks like we are trying to increase the amount of people,. If we do go with that, we should phrase it a little differently, as we are not looking at things like affordable housing, etc, but just greenspace and distance of where people live to that.

- **Kelly Rossiter, in chat:** Agreed. I think it needs to be word smithed a little, but the idea is good!

VI. **Looking Forward: Outcome Targets Discussion**
- Daniel shared details on the remaining targets in the new Public Access Outcome, and what work needs to be done to lay the groundwork for tracking.
  - Access to natural lands and waters
    - National Park Service Chesapeake Gateways is working with DOT Volpe Center on a project creating a baseline of natural lands access sites in the Watershed. They did a similar project of water access sites back for the 2014 agreement, so their experience will guide this project.
  - Site Upgrades/Maintenance
  - ADA/ABA Accessibility Features

Requested Action: Non-decisional (discussion and presentation only).
Materials: Presentation Slides

Discussion

<mark>**Action Item:** Begin to think about how your jurisdiction tracks things like accessibility features and site maintenance, and how we can incorporate that data into our current tracking system.</mark>

Sandi Olek: For MD: for accessibility features, it would probably happen for the SCORP process, but I'm not sure if there is a requirement there. There may be goals associated with it, but I will have to go back and look.

Mark Hohengasser: NY Parks; For identifying maintenance, I don't think we track that. I can look into it and get back to you. For ADA, the dept of conservation does a good job at identifying what they have and keeping it up to code. For state parks, we are trying to keep up with them, and have strategies to implement for consistency between the departments. When we do get something, I will let you know.

Julia Wakeling: I am not sure how we track this, but I think it would be tracked through at least two different teams. For us, it would be helpful - we can internally define maintenance, but if there's specific items that we are looking for that might be a helpful starting point.

Lorenzo Cinalli: DC DPR- I think we do have this information, but need to see who the holder of it is.

VII.   **Wrap-Up**
   ● This time was given for members to share items of interest to the group.

Mark Hohengasser: I have a project in the watershed, southern NY, and I'm hoping that we can tour the site soon and have enhanced access to the water. We just acquired about 400 more acres within the watershed, as well.

VIII.   **Adjourn**
   ● **Next Meeting: May 19th, 2026**

Attendance:

Daniel Koval, CRC
Sophie Waterman, USGS
Emily Heller, CBP / EPA
Mark Hohengasser, NY Parks
Lorenzo Cinalli, DC Parks and Rec
Julia Wakeling, DC DOEE
Brent Peterson, DC DOEE
Kelly Rossiter, PA DCNR
Jenna Talbot, DNREC
Sandra Olek, MDNR
Isabel Layton, MDNR