



Public Access Workgroup Meeting

May 19, 2026
2:00 - 4:00pm

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Draft Agenda

Purpose: This meeting will cover the Data Call for public access sites added in 2025, provide updates on the drafting process for Management Strategies and Workplans, review the final definition for greenspace, propose metrics for tracking access, and continue discussions on the remaining targets and indicators to be developed by the workgroup.

I. Welcome and Introductions (2:00 - 2:10pm)

- Norah Carlos, the new CBC Virginia Director, gave an introduction to the workgroup
- Lorenzo Cinalli gave a call for Co-Chair if there is interest.

II. 2025 Data Call (2:10 - 2:25pm)

- Daniel Koval provided an update on the 2025 Data Call that was recently sent out to the jurisdictions in order to track the public access sites added in 2025.

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

Materials: [Presentation Slides](#)

Context: Every spring, the workgroup collects the number of added public access sites on the water for each jurisdiction from the following year; this data call will collect the number of sites added in 2025, and will be the last data call under the previous Watershed Agreement's outcome of adding 300 public access sites on the water by 2025. The Workgroup completed this outcome in 2024, but will collect data on 2025 for tracking and reporting.

Kevin DuBois, in chat: We won't complete our datacall for SY25 until October 15.

Sophie Waterman: Maybe we should have a conversation about date of establishment issues in the protected lands data and the lack of public access information with future data calls.

III. Bay Program Updates: Governance and Structure, Management Strategies, and Workplans (2:25 - 2:45pm)

- Participants learned about the ongoing conversations about governance and structure happening at the Management Board level, which will detail membership within the Goal Teams and workgroups once finalized. Julia Wakeling gave a description of the management strategies as it relates to the Engaged Communities Goal Team, which the Public Access outcome falls underneath. .

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

Materials:

- [Presentation Slides](#)
- Writing Templates:
 - [Workplan Example Backyard Birds 2026 04 02 FINAL](#)
 - [Workplan Template 2026 04 16 FINAL](#)
 - [Management Strategy Example Backyard Birds 2026 04 16 FINAL](#)
 - [Management Strategy Template 2026 04 16 FINAL](#)
 - [MS Timeline 2026 04 16 FINAL](#)

Key Points on Management Strategies:

- The management strategies are the roadmap to achieving the Watershed Agreement. Each Goal has its own management strategy.
- There will be one management strategy for the Engaged Communities Goal; the Outcomes within this Goal will have sub-chapters. There will be a high-level overview for the Goal, and the sub-chapters will go into depth on the background and ongoing programs associated with the work being done towards each outcome.
- At the end, there will be an appendix of implementation and then statutory authorities.
- We will have an initial, full draft ready in September 2026. Each workgroup can choose a process that works best for their team to get the draft ready by then.

Workplans:

- Workplan drafting timeline is up to the workgroups. Some will choose to write their entire management strategy first, then focus on their workplan after the public feedback period of the management strategy (occurs in January 2027). Others might choose to do both simultaneously.

Lorenzo Cinalli provided context on the ask of the workgroup, and what the timeline for drafting the public access portion of the management strategy will look like.

- Looking for 6 volunteers to help draft the public access sub-chapter.
- Responsibilities Include
 - Sharing expertise
 - Writing sections of the management strategy
 - Participating in small group meeting throughout the summer
- Timeline can be found on [slide 6 in the presentation slides](#).

IV. Final Greenspace Definition

(2:45 - 3:05pm)

- Participants will see the approved definition for urban and community greenspace. A discussion will follow on how jurisdictions and organizations use the terms active and passive recreation.

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

Materials: [Presentation Slides](#)

Discussion:

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

Jurisdictional definitions of Active and Passive recreation

- **Lorenzo Cinalli, DC** perspective:
 - Passive: walking, birdwatching, things without equipment, more accessible
 - Active: sports, things that do require equipment,
- **Mark Hohengasser, NY**: Similar to DC. lots of grey area sometimes, but that is generally New York’s stance on it as well.
- **Jillian Seagraves, MD DNR**: passive are visitors enjoying the space, and active are equipment and gear
- **Julia Wakeling**: Accounting for the grey areas, not sure if we need to get too into detail. We could note how we make a plan doing so in management approaches, and situational analysis.
- **Kristal McKelvey, VA DCR**: We don't particularly define active/passive. However, we do kind of define developed parks vs natural parks.

- V. **Trust for Public Land: 10 Minute Walk Metric** (3:05 - 3:25pm)
- Participants will hear from the Trust for Public Land on how the Public Access Workgroup could use the 10 Minute Walk analysis as a metric for tracking access to sites.

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

Materials: [TPL Presentation Slides](#), starting on page 6.

Will Klein, TPL, presented on how the 10 minute walk analysis can be used for tracking access.

Key Points:

- Will presented some hypothetical numbers for different types of goals. Do we want to increase the amount of acres of urban and community green space, or do we want to increase the percentage of people who are within a 10 minute walk?
- If your goal is to target community greenspaces where the most people live, there are some places in the watershed that have high numbers. Rock Creek Park in DC, for example, has a huge number of people within a 10 minute walk.
- For an acreage target, half of all urban area parks in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed are between 2 and 43 acres (A quarter are within 2 and 9 acres).

3 examples of 3 scenarios, depending on what the goal is:

1. Goal is to protect the most amount of urban acreage
 - a. Ex: go from 300,000 acres to 350,000 acres
 - b. Tracking would require acreage numbers
2. Goal is to protect land near the most people
 - a. Ex: 2 million people within walking distance of a greenspace that is protected.
 - b. To meet this goal, 500 sites would need about 4,000 people per site within walking distance
 - c. Tracking would require:
 - i. The sum of people around the space
 - ii. A 10 Minute Walk Network Analysis (such as TPL's Parkserve tool)
3. Goal is to protect lands in park access gaps (places where people have no urban and community greenspace within a 10 minute walk)
 - a. Increase 10 Minute Walk gap from 60% to 68% (1 million more people)
 - b. Note: Sites in these geographic gaps would be the ones to move the needle on that goal. Added urban and community greenspaces in areas with already existing greenspaces would not change the progress to the goal that much. TPL does not track in this way.
 - c. Tracking would require:
 - i. The sum of people around the space
 - ii. A 10 Minute Walk Network Analysis
 - iii. Completed inventory of existing urban and community greenspaces

TPL does not try to move the needle for a 10 minute walk for their sites; largely because they do stuff outside of urban areas, which can be trickier to measure.

- Instead, they measure acreage and walking distance
- Some sites might move the needle on one of the options, but not the other
 - A site that is near other greenspaces won't affect 10 minute walk amount; but it will affect the number of people within walking distance

Kevin Du Bois: I'm having a hard time understanding why the middle case is not the same as the first case. There are other parks nearby, and it's the same people within a 10 minute walk, so aren't you just adding acres, not providing greenspace to any new people?

- **Will Klein:** The distinction is in the second use case, it is kind of a compromise; you are not tracking if people already have access, just tracking 'are you creating stuff where people live?'. If you are just tracking acreage, this project would just be a rounding exercise in that metric because it is so small; What the second method does is count the number of people who live near the sites, which is measured by looking at how many people live within a 10 minute walk of that, without necessarily counting for park access gaps. It depends on the goal of the metric:
 - Are you trying to align it with smaller community greenspaces that get washed out in acreage metrics but are important because they're close to people?
 - Or are you trying to prioritize neighborhoods that have zero greenspaces?

The reason to do the first one could be a focus on places that already do have a high amount of people within a 10 minute walk, but that could still benefit from added greenspaces. Projects in cities like DC or Richmond would not move the needle much on a 10 minute walk metric that focuses on gaps in 10MW, but that does not mean that new greenspaces in those cities are not beneficial.

- **Kevin Du Bois:** As I understand, the overarching goal is to get more people to be believers in the value of the Chesapeake Bay watershed and the agreement's goals and outcomes. So to put a park where there are 5 other parks, to me, is not a good expenditure of limited resources. We would get more people engaged if we spread them out and focus those resources on places where those resources don't exist. I'm not saying we should only do that, but think we should be weighted towards that.
- And maybe we should do all three, but I think we should weigh our approaches based on how we see the need to achieve the overall goal.

Sophie Waterman: The first and second options would work best given the limited attribution of public access within the PLI (Protected Lands Indicator).

- The 1st option of purely acreage will be covered in protected lands indicator data. That is something we already track, and will be captured. We don't have anything official, but we will pull out protected lands in Census Designated Places and Urban Areas
- The 2nd option may be the best in terms of the current state of the data. The public access attribute is missing in a lot of the data for the protected lands indicator. Not saying it is off the table, but getting to the access question will just take more time while we work on filling out the public access attribute in our data. Hopefully this will be able to

be done in the future, but for now it is limited. There are sites that may be publicly accessible, we just don't know if it isn't attributed in the data.

- About 30% of the protected lands data has attributed public access data.

Lorenzo Cinalli: The sites you do have it attributed for, is it just a yes or no?

- **Sophie Waterman:** Yes, and there are specific codes through the Protected Areas Database of the US (PAD-US)

Lorenzo Cinalli: I'm curious if a site is not publicly accessible, but it's protected as a natural space, does that count as being within a 10 minute walk and serving people?

- **Will Klein:** TPL's answer is no. The main thing we do is classify if it is open to the public or not, and only publicly accessible sites are being counted.
- **Sophie Waterman:** And if we move forward with the access component of the target, this will be further funding justification to get the data back into shape. We are working with the Land Trust Alliance right now to complete our date of establishment attribute for the protected lands data, and the next big one on the list is public access.

Kevin Du Bois: Sophie, couldn't you do a gap analysis for the third case. Add some open spaces where none exist?

- **Sophie Waterman:** Yes, we could show that right now with protected lands, but we couldn't get at the access question with the data right now.

Kevin Du Bois: Could we say we will put our resources towards all three options?

- **Will Klein:** Option 3 does require having confidence in the watershed's full inventory of urban and community greenspace that is publicly accessible, which right now does not exist. Once that is in place, options 2 and 3 would have no difference with the analytic requirements, but they would incentivize different locations of projects.
- **Sophie Waterman:** I think we can slice it in different ways, and perhaps we could revisit this and add option 3 once we have that inventory. And the first option is already done, and is already incorporated into our work.
- **Daniel Koval:** We can potentially revisit this as the NPS Chesapeake Gateways project of creating a baseline for greenspaces in the watershed continues, and for now focus on options 1 and 2 with the intent to look at access gaps in the future once that baseline is created.
 - **Julia Wakeling:** We also might be able to write in caveats to the future Data Collections, if it makes sense to write in some flexibility for ourselves.
 - **Sophie Waterman:** I could also see this as part of your management strategies, getting data into a place where we could look at 10 minute walk gaps.
- **Sophie Waterman:** We will be talking about greenspace at our protected lands meeting on Tuesday, June 9th as well if anyone wants to join in on that conversation!
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VI. Outcome Targets Discussion: Site Upgrades / Maintenance (3:25 - 3:40pm)

- Participants discussed the remaining targets in the new Public Access Outcome, and what

work needs to be done to lay the groundwork for tracking. Guiding questions included:

- What counts as maintenance / upgrades?
- How can this be tracked?

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

Materials: [Presentation Slides](#)

Target Language: By 2040, improve at least 100 of the 1,451 existing public water access sites by upgrading or maintaining site grounds and structures and expanding the range of active and passive recreation opportunities such as paddling, boating, trails, courts, piers, wildlife viewing and picnic areas.

Discussion:

Lorenzo Cinalli: In DC, there is a spreadsheet with all projects and funding organized through the capital projects team, and there are historical records going back. Maintenance is one big pool, and the maintenance team chooses where money from one overall budget goes.

- **Julia Wakeling:** Some of DC's greenspace maintenance goes through DOEE, and some go through DPR.

Mark Hohengasser: In NY, we do not have any maintenance tracking. Hopefully, conversations like this will inspire a tracking system of some kind. We do track capital improvements, but that is not always maintenance.

Isabel Layton: MD DNR is similar to NY; the Engineering and Construction unit is doing some re-structuring and gathering info on all sites; after that, there will hopefully be a better way to track maintenance. We've also opened a fair amount of parks, and want to bring up how we are defining upgrades and maintenance. A new water bottle station would be different from something like a new amenity or holistic upgrade.

Lorenzo Cinalli: What about site upgrades? Is it easy to see the history of capitol projects?

- **Mark Hohengasser: in NY,** we have a capital improvement list, but it is not necessarily maintenance specific. We can provide that data, but it doesn't necessarily always correlate to what you are looking for.
- **Kristal McKelvey, VA DCR:** the planning and recreation resources division does design and construction of facilities, and I can work with them on those facilities; my main concern is getting this tracking from local parks. We can do some of it through grants, but it could be limited to LWCF and RTP; beyond that, a question to the group is how to track or record anything that is a local level project.
- **Mark Hohengasser:** I would second that for NY; we have that data, but could have our GIS folks figure out what is in the watershed and how it could help you.

Lorenzo Cinalli: For what counts as a maintenance or upgrade: do people have opinions on

what counts as an upgrade? Should it include simple things like a new bench, or should it be more substantial?

- **Julia Wakeling:** My initial take is mirroring what Kevin is saying earlier; maybe we can weight upgrades differently? A bench should count as an upgrade in my opinion, but larger scale upgrades could be quantified differently. The dollars spent metric would kind of get on that from another perspective; but it would be cool to also track what the actual upgrade is itself.
- **Lorenzo Cinalli:** A dollar analysis could be interesting. And it is only 100 sites, so it could be possible to have a list of sites that had upgrades, and manually determine what counts as an upgrade if we have a list of requirements.
 - **Julia Wakeling:** Right, we'd have to define what we are doing, quantify it probably into tiers, I would think.
- **Kristal McKelvey, VA DCR:** I think it would be worth tracking accessibility for ADA features; this is part of the Virginia Outdoors plan and want to make sure we are providing as many accessible sites.

VII. Outcome Targets Discussion: ADA / ABA Accessibility (3:40 - 3:55pm)

- Participants discussed the remaining targets in the new Public Access Outcome, and what work needs to be done to lay the groundwork for tracking. Guiding questions included:
 - How many sites currently have ADA/ABA amenities?
 - How can this be tracked by this workgroup?

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

Materials: [Presentation Slides](#)

Target Language: By 2040, improve at least 40 of the existing public water access sites by adding Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) accessible features.

Discussion:

Isabel Layton: MD DNR is working on creating an inventory of ADA/accessible resources. This will cover all resources on state lands, and the Engineering and Construction team is open to making an ADA Accessible layer, which we could add to water based access sites.

Lorenzo Cinalli: That would be great and very timely. Do other jurisdictions have layers like this to track what sites are ADA accessible?

- **Kristal McKelvey:** not yet.

Mark Hohengasser: NY is working on that but it won't be ready until maybe next year.

Lorenzo Cinalli: DC does not have that many water access sites, but there is information on if

they are ADA Accessible and would be easy to pull that information.

VIII. Wrap-Up

(3:55 - 4:00pm)

- This time is open for members to share items of interest to the group.

Round Robin / Member Updates:

Mark Hohengasser, NY: We are about to purchase land that could give additional water access in NY in the watershed. Hopefully we will have a boat launch in the planning process, but we're in the early stages of planning.

Julia Wakeling: DC Office of Waterways Management has a meeting discussing public access along the Potomac River, Washington Channel, and the Anacostia River, along with sustainable economic growth.

Isabel Layton: MD DNR is opening new state parks this year! I'm not sure about water access sites, but will look into it.

Lorenzo Cinalli: DC DPR is working on a new park near the Kenilworth Gardens, where they are redeveloping the site along the Anacostia River with water access. It's been in the works for about 30 years and is finally moving closer to opening.

IX. Adjourn (4:00 pm)

- **Next Meeting: Tuesday August 18th, 2-4pm**

Note: As we begin to draft management strategies and continue developing metrics for the remaining targets, there may be additional meetings scheduled throughout the summer/fall as needed.

Attendance:

Daniel Koval, CRC
Lorenzo Cinalli, DC DPR
Julia Wakeling, DC DOEE
Mark Hohengasser, NY PARKS
Cass Klingament, NY DEC
Kristal McKelvey, VA DCR
Isabel Layton, MD DNR
Jillian Seagraves, MD DNR
Kevin Du Bois, DoW
Norah Carlos, CBC
Maggie Woodward, CBC

Katie Ayers, EPA
Sophie Waterman, USGS
Will Klein, TPL