



Protected Lands Data Standardization Network Kickoff Meeting

January 15, 2026
1:00-2:00pm

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Meeting ID: 243 945 025 783 96
Passcode: Le9Jq2UM

Meeting Materials: (Also found on the [meeting webpage](#))

- [Presentation Slides](#)
- [2024 Protected Lands Data Best Practices](#)

Meeting Minutes

I. Context Setting (1:15-1:30pm) - Sophie Waterman, USGS, Protected Lands Coordinator

Sophie provided an overview and background of the Protected Lands Indicator, known issues, and introduced the work on updating and aggregating the PLI schema.

Key points:

- We are missing a few important attributes within the data, especially Date of Establishment.
- Inconsistent schema usage between jurisdictions
- The end goal is to create a standard protected lands indicator schema. Need to decide how much of a specific field needs to be attributed, what data is missing, and how we treat that.

Questions to Consider:

- Should we proceed with implementing a revised PADUS schema?
- Which attribute fields should be included in the data submitted for the Protected Lands Indicator?
- What percentage of the dataset must be fully attributed for inclusion in the Protected

Lands Indicator

- What efforts have jurisdictions undertaken to enhance data quality?
- What level of effort would be required for jurisdictions to fully populate the existing schema?
- Is it realistic to have a new standard by 2027?
- How often should we be meeting?

Discussion Notes

Cassie Davis: What is GAP Status?

- **John Wolf:** It has to do with the management intent. Either biodiversity, conservation or whether it is managed for nature, primarily natural, multiple uses, or 'there is no known mandate to prevent conversion to development' are all GAP status codes.
- **Steve Storck:** GAP is an international protected lands standard for management purpose. - <https://www.usgs.gov/programs/gap-analysis-project/gap-status-code-frequently-asked-questions-faq#:~:text=GAP%20Status%20Codes%20are%20a%20classification%20system,many%20receive%20uses%20that%20degrade%20natural%20communities>

Cynthia Wanschura: This could be a capacity issue, federal folks are very understaffed at the moment.

Coral Howe: One of our goals is to address that issue, and make things consistent. If things are consistent, then it could make it easier for everybody. From the technical perspective, there were efforts to create a streamlined process for the indicator, but the 2024 data put the effort out the window because we got data in different formats from each jurisdiction. We need consistency across jurisdictions to streamline the processes.

Jeff Lerner: In terms of why we are doing this, I wanted to point out that if we have a more complete picture of all the different protection work going on throughout the watershed, we have a better ability to tell the story of the benefits related to different aspects of the revised aspects of the chesapeake bay agreement. With water quality, we can talk about preventing things like non source point pollution.

Desiree Shelley: I am not sure how ICC will be integrated into the program until June and how we want to be integrated. Would be helpful to know where tribes have cultural access or easements with another NGO partner. I'm here to learn what it would take to start integrating more data on how tribes are accessing land.

Irina Beal: I recommend changing the date of establishment to year of establishment, I think you would find your data completion to go up. For easements, it's one thing to find the year, but much harder to find the date. Ask for date of establishment, but mandate year of acquisition or easement recording date. Also for PADUS, how heavily are you depending on PADUS for other

non federal lands?

- **Coral Howe:** for 2024, we didn't use PADUS for anything other than Federal lands conservation easement database because that is no longer in existence.

II. Jurisdictional Perspective (1:30- 1:45pm)

Jurisdictional data managers were asked to share about their programs and data sets. The following questions were discussed:

- Do we have the right people at the table? Who else from your jurisdiction needs to be present for these meetings?
- What challenges do you foresee when it comes to improving your jurisdiction's data?
- What standardization and quality control have you done to your jurisdiction's data in the recent past?
- What can your involvement with this community of practice realistically look like?
- How can the Bay Program make your involvement worthwhile?

Discussion Notes:

DC

Young Tsuei: Most of the lands in DC are NPS properties that are protected. For DC properties, get people from Dept of Parks, DPR, and Public Works involved. DPR controls all public recreational lands. DOEE is in charge of some other grounds as well.

Delaware

Carly Costello: DE is in the process of auditing open space acquisition data. Our conservation easement data is pretty solid, but introducing a new schema could be a tough undertaking. That would slow us down.

Maryland

Kevin Coyne: Dept of Planning should be on, but couldn't make it. Working on the year of establishment, and the year is much easier to get than the exact date. Land acquired before 2000 is tougher to get the date of establishment.

West Virginia:

Jessica Perkins: Kurt Donaldson from WV GIS Technical Center. State lands are taken care of by WV DNR. Lavon Payton and Mark Schiavone from WV Ag Land Protection Authority work in easement data, so they could be beneficial. State level data is in pretty good shape for PADUS schema; we did end up adding date of establishment and GAP status code for most of our properties. I'd be interested in knowing what we are missing from your point of view.

Forest Service, WV: Mark Schug, GIS Coordinator, Monongahela National Forest, mark.schug@usda.gov"

Pennsylvania

Ashley Rebert: only folks missing are the Dept of Agriculture.

Irina Beal: I recommend reaching out to Roger Johnson (rjohnson@usgs.gov) USGS SAS, regarding data aggregation and cross-walking attribute fields. Stephanie Zimmerman would be a good contact as well. I have a good connection with all the land trusts and their easements.

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Virginia:

David Boyd: I have maintained an inventory of VA protected lands since 2000, and we are looking pretty good for the date of establishment. More challenging is that some properties protected before 2000 are hard to know the acquisition date.

New York:

Cassie Davis: Our contact with the Natural Heritage program who maintains our protected lands database has retired, so I will find someone from there to take over that work and loop them in.

Federal Agencies:

Cynthia Wanschura, NPS: The NE Region for the Park Service should be here, I can find some names for you. The Land Resources Division could be good people to keep in the loop (regional level and national level). They could have an idea of what boundary information that we are being asked for, as their boundary datasets don't reflect jurisdiction or ownership but rather Legislation.

The Map Land Act and Map Waters Act are calling for data standardization among federal agencies for lands/waters offering recreation. It is an unfunded mandate, and their offices have been cut, but the work has gone to us. The data standards work with map land has been ongoing for at least a year, but the map waters data standards are less further along.

: "[Text - H.R.3113 - 117th Congress \(2021-2022\): Modernizing Access to Our Public Land Act | Congress....](#)

[SO 3447 - Expanding Hunting and Fishing Access, Removing Unnecessary](#)

[Barriers, and Ensuring Consist...](#)

[Text - H.R.187 - 119th Congress \(2025-2026\): MAPWaters Act of 2025 | Congress.gov | Library of Cong...](#)

Leonard Gore, BLM: Here on behalf of Anthony Bobo Jr for Eastern States BLM Natural Resources. Could also include people from Lower Potomac Field Station.

III. General Discussion and Next Steps (1:45 - 2:00pm)

This topic was not discussed due to time, but moving forward, the group will discuss timelines for this group and the capacity for implementing schema changes for the 2026 PLI.

IV. Adjourn (2:00pm)

Attendees:

Sophie Waterman, USGS
Coral Howe, USGS
John Wolf , USGS
Peter Claggett, USGS
Daniel Koval, CRC / CBP
Irina Beal, WeConservePA
Ashley Rebert, PA DCNR
David Boyd, VA DCR
Kevin Coyne, MD DNR
Cassie Davis, NY DEC
Eric Reid, DE Dept of Ag
Lori Brown, DNREC
Carly Costello, DNREC
Jessica Perkins, WV DNR
Meryl Friedrich, WV DNR

Matt Monroe, WV Dept of Ag
Tsuei Young, DC DOEE
Cecilia Lane, DC DOEE
Lee Cain, DC DOEE
Desiree Shelley, ICC
Leonard Gore, BLM
Cynthia Wanschura, NPS National Capitol Region
Jeff Lerner, EPA
Emily Heller, EPA / CBP
Maggie Woodward, CBC
Steve Storck, Storck Mapping Consulting
Chase Douglas, CCP
Aaron Knishkowy, CCCC / CCP
Nick Staten, CRC / CBP