Scientific Technical Assessment

and Reporting (STAR) Team Meeting

Theme: Indicators and Science Needs

Thursday, July 24th, 2025

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Materials: Link

This meeting was recorded for internal use only to assure the accuracy of the meeting notes.

ACTION ITEMS

- ✓ STAR and GITs will continue to coordinate to host STAR meetings focused on assisting the following outcomes with development of their indicators: Fish Habitat (non-tidal outcome), Oysters (forage outcome), and Adapting to Changing Environmental Conditions (once workgroup is structured).
- ✓ If the STAC Workshop doesn't get selected, coordinate with the Habitat GIT to bring their Waterbirds Target (Wetlands Outcome) to a future STAR meeting.
- ✓ Continue to brainstorm ways to make the Science Needs Database more efficient and consider prioritizing or filtering the current science needs.

MINUTES

10:00 – 10:05 AM Welcome, Introductions & Announcements – ***Ken Hyer*** *(US Geological Survey, USGS), STAR chair,* ***Breck Sullivan*** *(USGS) STAR Coordinator,* ***Peter Tango*** *(USGS) CBP Monitoring Coordinator*

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, Workshops and Webinars

- 2025 Capital Area Natural Resource Management Symposium – August 22, 2025, Washington, D.C.
- Chesapeake Watershed Forum – November 7-9, 2025, Shepherdstown, West Virginia.
- Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF) Conference – November 9-13, 2025, Richmond, Virginia.

Announcements:

- UM-SEAS Master's Project Proposals due September 29, 2025.

Peter shared the above announcements. He noted that STAR has used UM-SEAS Masters students in the past and is planning to put together another proposal. He recommended this to others. Peter also noted that Breck Sullivan, the STAR coordinator, was out of the office for this meeting, so he facilitated the discussions. Then, he opened the floor to other updates.

Announcement: *Bruce Vogt:* I know a lot of people have been tracking what is going on with blue crabs and have seen the blue crab advisory report for the year. Through the Bay Agreement revision process, we know we will have a blue crab outcome and a big piece of that will be the blue crab benchmark stock assessment, that's been conducted for blue crab since 2011. One of the key components for that is having an independent peer review conducted. We've been working with the NOAA Fisheries Center for Independent Experts to get funding for that peer review process. Christina and I submitted a proposal that's working its way through the review process now. The plan is to have that stock assessment review in January and it will be open to the public. It will likely be a hybrid or virtual meeting. It's a big deal to have the peer review so that the information coming out of that assessment can be evaluated to ensure it is the most adequate science available to inform management. I know the managers are eager to have a peer review of that assessment. It looks like we're on track for that and in getting enough funding. I wanted to share that.

- ***Q:*** *Peter Tango:* How does a stock assessment vary from the annual surveys? Because it seems like the stock assessments are a lot less frequent than the winter dredge survey.
- ***A:*** *Bruce Vogt:* The winter dredge survey is robust. It's over 1500 sites and might be the best fishery survey out there. It's assessing the population with respect to reference points that were determined by the previous stock assessments. As part of that advisory report, there is a list of science needs. The winter dredge isn't addressing all of the science gaps and exploring everything that can be done, which the stock assessment does. Modeling approaches and computing capacity have changed since 2011. Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) and management have identified things they'd like to do and see. The stock assessment will address a number of those other science questions. It will be a more robust science product than the advisory report is. They will also be bringing in additional survey data, not just winter dredge, but other surveys in the Bay on blue crabs. We are looking at how environmental conditions may be impacting populations and how we can integrate that into a stock assessment. The idea is that it would result in a new set of reference points so the targets we use for female abundance target and the exploitation rate of harvest used to assess populations may change as a result of the additional information from a stock assessment. If you want to see the terms

of reference for the stock assessment, that gets into more detail as to what the model is working on. Those terms of reference are the analyses that they will conduct and then compile to create a new stock assessment.

- ***Q:*** *Peter Tango:* Would there be a chance to join hybrid sometime in January when this is public facing?
- ***A:*** *Bruce Vogt:* January 12th and 15th are the days we are looking at. I hope that will stay. It will be open to the public. Most likely virtually. There is a requirement that it be open to the public. It will be very technical.

Announcement: *Bruce Vogt:* This is something I need to catch up with Chris Guy about, but we are potentially putting on a sturgeon workshop. State of science for sturgeon recovery in the Bay. This is something that our partners down at the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) are very interested in. We also talked with our NOAA scientists that have been doing sturgeon work in the Bay, yesterday. We're interested in convening a sturgeon workshop under the offices of the Fish Goal Implementation Team (GIT) to look at what we've learned, what we still don't know, and opportunities for more collaboration among scientists.

- ***Response:*** *Chris Guy:* I am happy to help with that. We need to start coordinating on that and will set something up in the next few weeks.
- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* You may know that since 2012, there is a biological opinion that the EPA and Bay Program submit to NOAA for sturgeon protection, in terms of criteria and water quality standards. We produce an annual update for NOAA regarding whether the habitat is as described in the biological opinion supportive of protecting sturgeon. We haven't violated that biological opinion set of criteria. When you are planning your workshop and looking for a summary, give us a call.
- ***Response in chat:*** *Kristin Saunders:* Look at you guys collaborating on your own!
- ***Response:*** *Bruce Vogt:* That's great, thanks Peter. We will make sure to include you in this.
- ***Comment in chat:*** *Bruce Vogt:* And for Ken, we will also be reaching our to Tom O'Connell RE sturgeon bc Leetown what has been involved in genetic work.

Announcement: *Rachel Felver:* I am about to hit send on the Oysters Update Press Release for the Oyster Restoration Goal for the 2014 Watershed Agreement. By the end of this month, it will have been achieved! I wanted to give everyone a big congratulations!

Announcement: *Peter Tango:* I will mention that Rachel is doing amazing work on the public feedback coordination.

Announcement: *Rachel Felver:* We have our second to last webinar today at noon. We'll focus on the Healthy Landscapes Goal and the outcomes underneath. Next

Wednesday, we will be doing the final one on the Engaged Communities Goal. Heads up on those!

Announcement from chat: *Kristin Saunders:* If folks are interested, MD has scheduled an open house to solicit feedback. The announcement and information can be found here: https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2025/07/23/public-input-invited-for-next-chapter-of-chesapeake-bay-restoration-work/

- ***Response:*** *Rachel Felver:* Those events have been posted on the Beyond 2025 page as well as Chesapeake Bay Foundation open houses.
- ***Response:*** *Kristin Saunders:* Feel free to invite any stakeholders that would like to participate. It will be August 5 from 5:30 to 7:30 at the Department of Natural Resources. Parking is free across the street. It's in what used to be the cafeteria.
- ***Response:*** *Bruce Vogt:* I touched base with Bailey on that Kristin. He will cover blue crab for us.

10:05 AM – 11:00 AM – ***Revisiting Discussion and Exploration of Priority Indicators*** – *STAR Leaders.*

Description: Each outcome will be encouraged to fill out a shared spreadsheet with their indicators, including type of indicator. Using this data, participants can discuss similarities and nuances within the indicators for the revised outcomes.

Discussion Questions:

- *If an outcome is not ready to state what their indicators will be, what discussions or information would help you identify your indicators?*
- *Outcomes with targets still under development, do you have any updates? Do you need any support from STAR to finalize your measurable target?*
- *Would groups find it beneficial to bring back their indicators to STAR for workshopping and possibly bringing in outside expertise?*
- *Do STAR members think the revised outcomes and targets should all have the same timebound?*
    - *i.e. Wetlands and Brook Trout state to accomplish by 2035. WQSAM states to achieve a percentage annually. Protected Lands state to accomplish by 2040.*

Summary: Peter introduced this agenda item and the corresponding spreadsheet. Gabriel presented on the previous indicator conversation from the June 2025 STAR Meeting. This presentation refreshed participants on the ongoing conversation to prepare for today's discussion. Some of the main takeaways from this presentation were aligning indicators with our communications with public priorities and distinguishing between indicators and targets.

Q: *Ken Hyer:* Your last slide, under certain circumstances, targets and indicators can be the same thing but what we're trying to nuance is that when having things that are more understandable to the public, that indicators and target would be two different things. But it's still completely ok to have an indicator and target that were identical, correct?

- ***A:*** *Gabriel Duran:* Yes, thank you for the clarification.
- ***Response:*** *Ken Hyer:* In an ideal world, they would align in a really good way, but I also understand that many of our targets will be more technical, the indicators will be different to offer clarity.
- ***Comment:*** *Peter Tango:* On that note, I think of a target as the end point, we are trying to reach but the indicator is the way we measure our steps in getting there. It's a little hard for me to figure that both are the same. It feels like they have different intentions. We're putting targets into the agreement, but they need tracking devices, which are the indicators.
- ***Response:*** *Ken Hyer:* That certainly helps, Peter. I am trying to nuance how I think about the interplay between the two. Originally, I was hoping they could be the same in some cases, but there's a good example because of that time series component. The indicator may also be our guidepost for where we are in our progress and the target is our endgame.

Continuation of presentation: Gabriel continued through the slide on framing indicators, highlighting, in response to Ken's comment, that we should consider having internal indicators, that are not public-facing, for those contextual factors affecting success.

Comment: *Peter Tango:* In looking back at the minutes, I saw that Kristen noted that we have these ecosystem indicators to track the influence we are having on moving the needle. Looking at and tracking our investment in time, space, and practices. I think the total maximum daily load (TMDL) indicator is one of those places where it took years to mesh expectations and actions. It'll be interesting to see how these evolve by seeing our influence.

Continuation of presentation: Gabriel finished off the presentation and showed the shared spreadsheet to the group. This spreadsheet included all of the updated outcomes and allowed outcome leads to fill in their indicators. Peter let the group know that if they are not comfortable naming their indicators yet, they can use STAR to workshop these indicators in future meetings.

Discussion:

Comment: *Chris Guy:* I am struggling with "ready to state indicators." I think we are still developing a lot of those. I am struggling with the way that question is worded. We're committed to our targets moving to indicators, but I'm not ready to state what they are. Fish habitat and waterbirds are the two that are in their infancy. We have a concept of a plan of where we want to go, and they are being developed. For other ones, like habitat, we know where we want to go, we just need to get the data and do the math. Those ones are pretty good. With the waterbirds and wetlands target, we think there will be a series of indicators, and we haven't even built the team yet to lead that. We are starting that process as early as today. What I am putting forward is a STAC Workshop, which might not get funded. In absence of a STAC Workshop, we could come back to STAR and work through something like a workshop. I think for fish habitat non-tidal we'd also want some support from STAR.

Action Item: If the STAC Workshop doesn't get selected, consider working with the Habitat GIT on their Waterbirds and Wetlands Targets in a future STAR meeting.

- ***Response:*** *Gina Hunt:* I agree with your original point about being ready to state what our indicators are. Outcomes that already exist and were edited have an easier time naming their indicators. They are an existing group and have already discussed how to get there. For non-tidal fish habitat, there is already a target being discussed, but for the other two, there is not. We are so far back. To me, this conversation is for after the Executive Council (EC) has signed. For acid mine drainage, we're still developing a target. The target language was kind of a placeholder for public feedback. No, we are not ready, and I can't see how we would be ready until after we have the agreement ready. At a previous acid mine drainage meeting, we had someone mention that whatever our target is needs to be able to have data collected and tracked and there was silence. Please don't dream up language where data on indicators would be unavailable. That was a moment of "we need to get there from here." The ones that are already outcomes are in a better place to answer these kinds of questions. These other ones, absolutely not and not for a while.
- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* Thank you for that insight, Gina. Until we get through the feedback period, adjustments, and Management Board (MB) and Executive Council (EC) approval, it's tenuous. In the meantime, I am glad you are setting up teams and working towards that development.

Comment: *Bruce Vogt:* I think I am in a similar place to Gina, but I will share where we are. The oyster outcome has three targets and the indicators for each of those will be different. One is restoration focused and will include progress towards 1800 acres and maybe something similar to the success metrics we've used previously, but those may change.

For oyster abundance in the fishery, I have no idea. We need to have that discussion. Maryland has a new stock assessment for oysters and Virginia has some new monitoring, but we haven't convened conversation around what we will do and how we will measure progress.

For the one around maintaining existing reefs, the assumption is we would use the same monitoring and metrics we do with the existing outcome. We haven't dug into that too much yet.

Blue crab is the most straightforward. We talked about stock assessment earlier. I anticipate we will have some new reference points built around abundance and exploitation/harvest and that's what we would report on in the advisory report each year.

For fish habitat, we have two fish habitat assessments. Bruce and Gina just alluded to the nontidal one. The tidal one scores the 92 segments for fish habitat conditions. The living resource data compilation and modeling will be kicking off soon with the goal of having the draft model by the end of the year. The idea is to use that assessment for implementation of tiered TMDL. There is an opportunity to look at that assessment across the program for informing targeting. Is there a common currency to use for assessment so we can have the same information to identify how closely we can work together?

For forage, I think it would be good to bring what we are thinking back to STAR. We have some draft indicators already. We want to put the indicators into a management context while also telling a better story to the public. Our proposal is to put our indicators into a stoplight chart approach. This would be where we'd be assessing whether forage abundance is in a good, bad, or uncertain place to be clearer about when conversation needs to take place.

- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* That gives us a lot to think about. There are a lot of moving parts in the fisheries world that are under consideration. There seem to be a few places we could work together for this. Thank you for the overview.

Comment: *Chris Guy:* I was talking to Sarah Brzezinski about the "where are you" summary that those still developing our targets had to submit to the MB. That is being summarized for the MB in discussion on what to do with those targets. There was a concern raised around the fact that these targets won't be finalized before the EC meeting. The MB will be discussing what to do with targets that won't be final for the EC meeting. I am somewhat concerned about what we should do with those. Does that mean if we can't get them done, they are no longer relevant? I don't know if others were aware of that.

- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* That is a good point. We've been given a small window relative to the development of the 2014 agreement. We are being given weeks to complete tasks that took years. That should be an interesting discussion and will be something to look out for.
- ***Response:*** *Ken Hyer:* There will be many outcomes that are in this same situation. They won't have everything done in time for the EC meeting. The example that came to my mind was that the Governance and Accountability Team highlighted that we would bring forward a series of one pagers on topics that we can give to the EC. It's not until next year that we would actually have a red line version of the governance document updated. We're not going to have some of the outcomes ready and we're not going to have the governance document. I think we are all adopting this idea of getting as much completed as we can with an acknowledgement that some pieces will not get done until 2026. This doesn't mean it's not relevant to the partnership, they are just delayed. I wouldn't beat yourself up if it will take until 2026.
- ***Response:*** *Chris Guy:* The question that concerns me isn't "can we carry it past?" it's more so "do we want to?" Is that an opportunity or is it lost?
- ***Response:*** *Ken Hyer:* It better not be lost. Peter framed it well. We're trying to do something in months that used to happen over a number of years. That's a really tight window. I can't see that as approaching justification for removing or eliminating. That will be my approach, and I will be pushing that for the MB.
- ***Response:*** *Chris Guy:* For waterbirds, we have already mentioned that we will not be starting to work on it until the beginning of 2026. That's in the language we submitted to the MB.

Comment: *Julie Reichert-Nguyen:* I was going to report on where we are at with the Adaptation Outcome. As Ken mentioned, the structure is being worked out. We didn't have an adaptation indicator to begin with so it'll be challenging to figure out what that looks like. With the updated Adaptation Outcome language, we should have an easier time creating the indicators. We have a few other things to figure out before we decide what that looks like. We'll be moving from STAR to a Healthy Landscapes Goal, if the MB updates pan out. We're expanding the adaptation work to include tidal and nontidal. In the past, we have focused on tidal and coastal impacts. Now, we have to integrate non-tidal into the indicators. We have a few other things the workgroup needs to sort out that would help inform indicator development. Partnering organizations have been looking at ways to create indicators around increasing capacity to do the adaptation work and increase resiliency. We can tap into some things like the

Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT). Within the sub-watersheds, we could create a way to identify with an indicator how successful we are at implementing the increased capacity. These conversations probably won't happen until after March 2026 because we have to talk about other things and need to restructure our group to expand our work.

- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* I am hearing that we have an expectation of additional work between now and 2026 to nail these targets and indicators down. That's insightful and helpful. We are happy to set up meetings or carve out time in our STAR meetings to talk about the targets and indicators for these outcomes.
- ***Response:*** *Julie Reichert-Nguyen:* Once our workgroup is structured, it would be helpful to have this opportunity to come to STAR for assistance, since our outcome is so cross-cutting. It would be great to use the variety of expertise here.

Comment: *Peter Tango:* In recognizing that in our draft agreement, the timelines are diverse. We may want to discuss having a specific expectation for these timelines. Should we ask each outcome to frame their target to a 10–15-year timeline so we have a consistent endpoint we're working towards? We also understand that in some cases this wouldn't be the end of the goal. There are longer time frames for our improvements too. Do we or don't we use a consistent end point? Is there an important reason to have them scattered?

- ***Response in chat:*** *Chris Guy:* I believe there is only an advantage to having different timelines for outcomes and targets. Both for tailoring to the problem, I think it works for political and funding considerations
- ***Response in chat:*** *Julie Reichert-Nguyen:* Adaptation timeline was arbitrary. I am not sure how long it would take to increase the capacity of implementing nature-based solutions in seven sub watersheds. We still need to identify these sub watersheds and then we can assess how long it may take. Also dependent on funding and finding champions.

Q: *Peter Tango:* Chris, did you say that there are political and funding implications to having scattered timelines?

- ***Response:*** *Chris Guy:* Yes, I think it is better to have these tailored problems, instead of fitting problems into a timeline. I think you highlighted well the way that submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) has 40 years of data to draw from. They have a nice well-researched target that can have a timeline fitted to it. They didn't actually create an end goal. They could have finished it out to see where they would be finished. Five-year increments are good for SAV. For Brook Trout, I think they chose ten years because it's a good window and then back into an annual benefit too. The ten-year timeline didn't go away, but it allowed us flexibility to address problems and scale them accordingly. From a political and funding standpoint, these staggered timelines help to keep things in the public eye. With the 2014, we looked out at the 2025 deadline and said, ‘geez we’re not going to make it.’ I don’t think that went over well and drove a lot of the timeline issues that we’re facing in this revised process. We made it seven years in wetlands without doing anything. What was the Bay Program doing all those years?

- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* That’s really helpful.
- ***Response in chat:*** *Ken Hyer:* Chris - I appreciate your perspective on the benefit of staggered timelines. I know I've already seen this comment in the comments for the revised watershed agreement. It seems to me that we could leverage the SRS process and indicators to support short-term and long-term progress checks.

Comment: *Kristin Saunders:* Chris raises good points that align with conversations I have been part of. I don't have an answer to the question, but I have some context you might want to consider. The PSC began to have a time horizon conversation at their last meeting. They noted the different timelines for different outcomes, as they are proposed in the current draft. There weren’t any decisions, but they began to scratch the surface. As you think about this question, it would be important to raise your input to your MB and PSC representatives. So, when and if they have a call to decide, they are informed by the justification from you. If the worry is that the public will be curious about the differing timelines, we will have clear and concise explanations of these decisions. When STAC was weighing in on the timeline for the 2014 Agreement, Kirk Havens and Carl Hersner drilled in that rather than having a cookie cutter timeframe, consider when you would either see implementation or a change in the environment. When we were building the SRS, the MB wanted us to have a timeline, which is where we got every two years for the reporting. The recommendations from the Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR) Report were to be flexible and have staggered timelines. STAC has told us that it makes sense to have staggered time horizons based on implementation and ecological response. I don’t know where we would explain that, but I think it’s important, if we have different time horizons, that it’s clear why those were chosen.

- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* That was really good input to finish with, Kristin. We will see how this goes over the next 6-12 months and continue to have this conversation.
- ***Response in chat:*** *Bruce Vogt:* I do think there is value in a commonly defined timespan for achieving the revised agreement for communication and tracking, however, still allowing flexibility for near term and interim deadlines specific to outcomes and targets. I get setting an ecological timeline for setting expectations as well but that will be decades in many cases.

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM – *An Overview of the Strategic Science and Research Framework and its Connection to the Strategy Review System* – *Gabriel Duran and Allison Welch (Chesapeake Research Consortium, CRC).*

Description: Gabriel and Allison will present an overview of the Strategic Science and Research Framework (SSRF), including its development, purpose, and connection to the Strategy Review System (SRS). The presenters will emphasize STAR's critical role in advancing the Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP) scientific capacity through tools like the SSRF and the Science Needs Database. They will conclude with an open discussion to gather feedback and perspectives on the SSRF and science needs to help inform the Governance and Accountability Team (GAT). They will be looking for feedback on strengths and limitations of the SSRF and explore how it can be more effectively integrated into ongoing Governance and Structure discussions – particularly in preparation for recommendations shared by GAT the September 2025 Management Board (MB) Meeting.

Summary: Allison Welch and Gabriel Duran presented on the SSRF and SRS processes. Allison presented how the SSRF process was formed, the role that STAR plays in SSRF, and how SSRF and SRS interact. Next, Gabriel shared an update on the Science Needs Database and how the capacity is currently being utilized to complete science needs. This presentation introduced the need for supporting science needs moving forward with the current lack of capacity and improvements through agreement revisions.

Comment from chat: *Bruce Vogt:* We don't have a goal anymore 🙁

- ***Response from chat:*** Kristin Saunders: Bruce, you do! Just fisheries disguised as thriving habitat and wildlife.

Comment from chat: *Bruce Vogt:* Great presentation. I anticipate this database and the outreach for finding capacity will be even more important than in the past as GIT funding goes away and federal budgets change.

Comment: *Ken Hyer:* I can report that this week, in a discussion with Lee, I shared that I thought that GIT funding no longer being supported creates a big gap. I can't report that I changed hearts and minds. I don't think that we should walk away from it and assume that GIT funding is gone. We should continue to drive home that these were resources that allowed our workgroups to meet their science needs and get work done. In my mind, GIT funding is not dead. I hope we will work to redevelop it. Also, I think everyone has heard at the MB meetings that there is an effort to get more input from the MB on the priorities. I think it highlights that as we try to have the MB provide more insight, having these prioritized science needs at our fingertips is going to put us in a better place to push the MB. This would be not only to get feedback but also to say that if they are going to provide direction, then they need to provide resources to support this. Having a well-developed science needs database will be important going forward. Beyond 2025 has taken a lot of oxygen out of the room, so we haven't focused much on this in the last year. This will be a critical topic in moving forward with the new agreement.

- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* I appreciate the note on GIT funding. About 20 years ago, there was a budget steering committee, and I remember having a discussion about competitive versus core funding opportunities. Core items were things like the long-term water quality monitoring program and then competitive work was decided in terms of allocating resources to priority recommendations, like the GIT funding process. I think that form of support could evolve and return.

Q: *Kristin Saunders:* When the Bay Program office leadership is preparing their allocation for the budget, do we know if they're consulting what is in the database? Before this existed, everything lived in Rich Batiuk's brain. One priority was distilling what was living in his brain and putting it somewhere where everyone would have access, specifically for making decisions about future fiscal years. I know GIT funding has traditionally been the place where we went to fund a lot of these needs, but I'm curious whether the leadership is using this database to make decisions about where funding and contracts go.

- ***Response:*** *Ken Hyer:* I haven't heard them acknowledge that. Six months ago, the MB had the exercise on labeling priority tasks, which was a mess. These lived outside of the science database, which is a piece of evidence that a second list was being developed.
- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* Thinking back, I recall Denice Wardrop commenting on STAC's review of the database, saying a strength is that it is a place of reference. One of the challenges is that it was very precise at times but also could be very general. If requests could be concise and precise, that would be more helpful. Some of those requests are what became the 30 or so specific priorities in the PSC monitoring review that then Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding was allocated towards. That's a case with a clear connection between the database and decision support. There are broader opportunities because not all of the science needs had the same level of maturity.
- ***Response in chat:*** *Kristin Saunders:* So, perhaps a suggestion to lift up to the governance and accountability group is to remind them this Strategic Science and Research Framework and the database would make a good starting place for

looking across the program for science needs and include consideration as budget allocations are being made going forward.

Comment: *Peter Tango:* One thought is that, are some of the science needs obsolete or is everything fresh? We may want to go through and do a filtering of the database at another meeting.

- ***Response:*** *Ken Hyer:* We could probably benefit from revisiting that. That could be homework outside of a meeting for groups to go in and ensure that everything is still up to date. It could use a little help with the vision going forward. We didn't see as much broad usage as we had originally envisioned. I'd love to think about how we can make it more accessible so that it becomes part of the culture. That way if someone is thinking of a new project, they can go in, check if anyone else is working on it, and see if there is related work. Yes, it needs a refresh, but it also needs a generation two thought process to make it most effective for the partnership.

Comment: *Chris Guy:* The intent of the science needs database was fantastic. In practice, everyone was throwing every science need they could think of in there. Because of this, most weren't being accomplished with our current resources. There needs to be a prioritization system. Even if we took the top three from each outcome, it's still close to 100 science needs. There needs to be a sideboard to this. The top two go in the management strategy that can be tied back. The exercise we did with GIT funding could be applied to science needs. We shouldn't see things that were science needs but are no longer needed. That doesn't make sense. Things should be coming off because they were fulfilled. Developing those sideboards could make the database more useful.

- ***Response:*** *Peter Tango:* The only thing I've seen relative to that is that some needs may not be specific initially, but additional information overtime helps narrow the scope or improve the direction.

Comment: *Amy Handen:* In a future iteration, it would be helpful to home in on needs that should be updated or aren't relevant. I wonder if the MB and PSC are interested in being directive and establishing priorities. This is an organized way for them to achieve them. It could be an organized way for leadership to see what is identified and identify their priorities. I think this could be tremendous value for them in identifying priorities for Goal Teams and Workgroups.

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM – *Mentimeter Survey on Science Needs* – *STAR Leaders.*

Description: *Participants will be asked to participate in a Mentimeter Survey and provide their feedback on Science Needs and the Science Needs Database. Please see below for the questions that will be asked:*

1. ***Planning Our Work:*** *What aspects of identifying science needs did you like/not like through SRS? What touch points would you want with STAR? How will science needs continue to be shared across the partnership?*
2. ***Prioritizing Our Work:*** *How can science needs be utilized to prioritize our work? How can it be a part of the decision-making/resource allocation process?*
3. ***Reviewing Our Work:*** *When is reviewing/identifying the science needs best done and to what degree of frequency?*
4. ***Managing Our Work:*** *What do you LIKE about the Science Needs Database? If possible, please Identify certain functions and features in your response. What do you NOT LIKE about the Science Needs Database? If possible, please identify certain functions and features in your response.*

Mentimeter Responses

Question 1: What aspects of identifying science needs did you like/not like through SRS?

- Not like – lack of standardization among the needs. Some are new and note fleshed out, some have a full scope. Perhaps there are requirements or standards that need to be met in order to enter a need.
- Like – one stop shop place that hosts needs from GITs/workgroups
- Like the ability to integrate it into the SRS process, I did not like that there was a requirement to put something during SRS. It made it feel like this was your one shot at science needs
- To address needs with different levels of maturity, perhaps a way to add that as a field.
- Follow-up was spotty in science needs, wasn't clear what workgroups were getting out of the exercise.
- Could there be a schedule for GITs to ensure that things are current and up to date? I am not sure the last time we looked at the needs associated with our GIT.
- I liked that we could put a spreadsheet together and send it to STAR to integrate into the science needs database.
- We did have a challenge completing science needs in the mix of developing the logic and action table – may be better to identify science needs before the heavy lift of the Quarterly Review & workplan

Question 2: What touchpoints would you want with STAR? How will science needs be shared across the partnership?

- I would engage with the MB to determine how this can be most helpful to them in their priority setting, decision making.
- Follow-up on the list, to figure out if the Bay Program is/will/wont address the need

- Have STAR provide space in meetings to identify science needs across outcomes to foster collaboration before cohort's quarterly review prep.

Question 3: How can science needs be utilized to prioritize our work? How can it be a part of the decision-making/resource allocation process?

- Prioritize – look for common needs and collaborative opportunities across the outcomes.
- There needs to be more transparency on how resources of the CBP are being allocated and a process that outcomes can engage in to apply for resources – perhaps STAR can assist with identifying a process

Question 4: What aspects of the database do you like/not like?

- The database is pretty easy to use. Sometimes the categories are not assigned correctly. May be better for the outcome leads to assign the category from the list or to review.

Question 5: When is reviewing/identifying the science needs best done and to what degree of frequency?

- Should happen at least once a year, but before the heavy lift of preparing material for the Quarterly Progress Review and Workplan development.

12:00 PM Adjourn

Attendees:

Allison Welch (CRC), Gabriel Duran (CRC), Peter Tango (CRC), Gina Hunt (MD DNR), Chris Guy (USFWS), Erin Sonnenburg (CRC), Douglas Austin (EPA), Stephanie Nummer (ICPRB), Sophie Waterman (USGS), Ann Foo (UMCES), Ashley Hullinger (PA DEP), Emily Young (ICPRB), Bruce Vogt (NOAA), Katie Ayers (EPA), Kristin Saunders (MD DNR), Rachel Felver (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay), Catherine Krikstan (UMCES), Julia Fucci (CRC), Ken Hyer (USGS), Meg Cole (CRC), Julie Reichert-Nguyen (NOAA), Marisa Baldine (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay), Dede Lawal (CRC), Auston Smith (EPA), Greg O'Connell, Matthew Kierce (IWLA), Christina Garvey (CRC), Katie Brownson (USFS), Jennifer Olszewski (USGS), Doug Bell (EPA), Amy Handen (EPA), Sarah Brzezinski (EPA), Lucinda Power (EPA), and Matthew Robinson (EPA).