



Stream Health Workgroup Meeting Notes - October 2026

Friday, October 16, 2026
10:00am - 12:00pm EST

Purpose: To hear presentations from partners in the watershed working on stream health-related topics, receive updates regarding the Management Strategy, and discuss the Stream Health Workgroup's upcoming Workplan development.

Meeting Materials: Available on the [Meeting Webpage](#).

Agenda

I. Introduction and Announcements (10:00 – 10:10)

The Stream Health meeting will begin with announcements and updates. Time will be given for each member to introduce themselves. Please put your name and affiliation in the meeting chat.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Brock Reggi (VA DEQ)

Materials: N/A

- The Protected Lands Workgroup has sent a request for Stream Health Workgroup members to join their Healthy Streams action team.
 - Nominations are due by the end of this month (October 31st)
 - See more details in the email from Keith
- The Workgroup is currently finalizing membership lists. Thank you to all who nominated for At-Large and Non-Voting membership.

Discussion:

- Difference between Healthy Streams Action Team and Stream Health Workgroup
 - Protected and conserved land outcome belongs to Protected Lands, not within stream health
 - Meetings are separate from Stream Health
 - Watershed function focus within Protected Lands
 - Reach out to Sofie Waterman with any further questions or comments
- Agreement language for the protected lands: [Protected Lands](#)
 - “By 2040, permanently protect at least an additional 2 million acres of land above the 2025 baseline of 9.3 million acres. **The 2 million acres will include specific targets for: riparian forests; wetlands (including migration corridors); natural areas supporting healthy streams; agricultural lands; tribal homelands; and urban and community greenspace.**”

II. Presentation: Effectiveness of agricultural stream restoration practices: (10:15 – 10:50)
Turtle Creek, Union County, Pennsylvania

Despite widespread implementation of stream restoration there is limited research of its effectiveness in impaired agricultural settings. To quantify the effects of stream restoration on sediment load, we investigated erosion and deposition along 9 stream reach sites (4 restored, 4 unrestored, and 1 downstream) in Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania, United States - a representative agricultural subbasin of the Chesapeake Bay. Results indicate that stream restoration in agricultural watersheds using less-engineered designs can reduce sediment loading and improve stream habitat and health goals.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Greg Noe, USGS

Materials: [Turtle Creek Presentation](#), Published Paper: [Sediment response to stream restoration in an agricultural watershed - ScienceDirect](#), Summary of the Study: [Evaluating the Effects of Stream-Restoration Practices in an Impaired Agricultural System](#), Data Release: <https://doi.org/10.5066/P13QH3XC>

Discussion:

- What is a mudsill?
 - Logs to armour the side of the bank and mud is filled in behind the logs to the bank with the logs for stabilization and bank gradient
- "Relatively" low cost of stream restoration compared with?
 - Compared to urban streams, specifically looking at Fairfax County
- How was there both increased deposition and also increased cobble substrate?
 - Log veins directed flow to the center of the channel. When flows came, it eroded fine sediment off the stream bed and deposited it on the stream banks. If it was a broader flow field on the stream bed, flow may have been distributed instead of centered. The fine sediment was deposited on both the stream bank and floodplain.
- How to choose the best locations for these stream restoration sites (being a part of the consideration of whether to invest)? Funding can often be opportunistic rather than looking at the whole watershed context.
 - Lots of nuance because it depends on the goals of the restoration. If the goal is solely to maximize the amount of load reduction downstream, the location may be determinant on willing partners/landowners in a highly erosive section (target areas that are the biggest problem). Other goals are also relevant, for example in Turtle Creek there was a local TMDL so the project was specifically focused within the watershed. Building trust in landowners snowballed with more people coming to the table after demonstrating effectiveness and trust.
 - It is a complex process with decision making factors such as funding, willing landowners, availability of practitioners, policies, regulations, etc.
- In Chat: Did you see any change in stream bottom elevation (either downcutting or aggradation)?
 - We didn't see downcutting. It's not directly in the paper, but the surveying over time and the measurement of total streambank height indicated there wasn't vertical incision.
- In Chat: Was the headwater originally a natural depositional reach or a transport reach?
 - We don't know for sure if the streams were erosional, depositional, or transport over the long term history. We did show during our monitoring that the most headwater sites had similar streambank erosion rates as the more downstream

sites, and that floodplain deposition increases exponentially with drainage area. Our focus on the valley bottom suggests that all of the measurement reaches were likely transport to depositional geomorphic settings with increasing drainage area.

- In Chat: Do you think these depositional rates will persist into the future? Or are these early gains that may diminish over time?
- In Chat: How many years "storage" would streambank and floodplain provide in restored reaches until full? Would have bearing on P storage capacity as well.
 - We did a back of the envelope calculation that these sediment deposition rates wouldn't change the 'restored' back to the 'unrestored' geomorphology for about a 100 years. But that calculation didn't include feedbacks where deposition rates would decrease as the banks and floodplain gain elevation.
- In Chat: What did the credits go to? TMDL, MS4, other?
 - Not certain about the credits, will find out from PA DEP.
- In Chat: Is the stream health workgroup going to be involved in the current Bay Program effort (led by Tetra Tech) to re-evaluate the CAST BMP cost estimates for the stream restoration BMP?
 - SHWG isn't currently involved with the Clean Water Goal Team/Urban Stormwater Workgroup, which develops the CAST models and BMP memos.
- In Chat: What was the stream's gradient?

Table 2
Selected parameters collected during cross-sectional field geomorphic assessment of Turtle Creek, central Pennsylvania.

Parameter (units)	Restored					Unrestored				
	R1	R2	R3	R4	Mean	U1	U2	U3	U4	Mean
Hydraulic Characteristics										
Mean Slope (m/m)	0.003	0.004	0.002	0.010	0.005	0.005	0.003	0.007	0.003	0.005

Fig. 2. Longitudinal profile of stream surfaces in the Turtle Creek watershed, central Pennsylvania (PAMAP Program, 2006; Quantum Spatial Inc., 2018).

III. Presentation: Pooled Monitoring Initiative Science Syntheses for Restoration Decisions

(10:50 – 11:25)

The Pooled Monitoring Initiative has spent more than a decade generating research to address priority questions about stream and stormwater restoration performance. This presentation will briefly revisit how the Initiative connects research with the needs of practitioners, regulators, and decision makers, and highlight key insights emerging from funded studies. The focus will be on new science synthesis products and decision-support tools that translate more than ten years of Pooled Monitoring research into accessible, actionable information.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Sadie Drescher (Chesapeake Bay Trust)

Materials: [Pooled Monitoring Presentation](#), PMI-RRP Website -

<https://cbtrust.org/grants/pooled-monitoring-initiatives-restoration-research-award-program/>

Discussion:

- Comment: Would love to see more research focus on upland practices to improve watershed function, upland water infiltration which would cool water, reduce flooding while providing baseflow to streams during dry periods. Given droughts, then big storm events we need to focus on "functional" rainfall - infiltration and reducing runoff -leading to true stream health and biotic improvements.
- Let Sadie know if you have any additional comments, feedback, and questions.

IV. Discussion: Workplan Development (11:25 – 11:55)

The workgroup will be given updates on the Management Strategy and discussion will be based on building into the new Workplan.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Introduction - Keith Boltt (EPA), Discussion - Alison Santoro (MDNR), Brock Reggi (VA DEQ)

Materials: Draft of Management Strategy and Workplan Template available on meeting page.

- Please see the [Meeting Presentation](#) for timeline and information.
- Workplan was previously known as "Logic and Action Plan"

Link: https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVEcRGp0c=?share_link_id=600353387142

Discussion:

- Comment: I hope this group will address the concerns communities throughout the watershed have on the MS4 and Bay Program's credit system driving in-stream projects over addressing impervious acres and excessive runoff. In the long term, we should focus on watershed function and influencing this issue.
 - Reply: Stopping stream restoration crediting isn't the solution, the solution is changing resource management to push for the much more expensive upland practices, starting with prohibiting development that increases runoff.
 - Water quantity problems can drive quality problems!
 - Reply: Agreed. Addressing source is critical and FIRST step ahead of stream restoration.
- Workgroup Response: The Bay Program crediting system is actually set by the Clean Water Goal Team. We can work on coordinating cross goal teams and work on the issue. It has been discussed within the workgroup before and should continue.
 - Reply: There was a Bay Program initiative about credits for conservation, what is current status of that?
 - Reach out to Peter Claggett (Land Use/Healthy Landscape)
 - Katie Brownson: The effort to look at crediting conservation is not still ongoing- but something folks have expressed interest in revisiting

V. Wrap-Up and Adjourn (11:55 – 12:00)

Recap the decisions and actions captured from the day's discussions and deliberations.

Requested Action: Non-decisional

Lead: Alison Santoro (MDNR), Brock Reggi (VA DEQ)

Action Item: Workgroup leadership will follow up with a synthesis of ideas from the brainstorm activity for further discussion and feedback leading into Workplan development.

Next Meeting:

[Stream Health Workgroup Meeting - December 2026](#) | December 18, 2026 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Meeting Attendees: Alison Santoro (MDNR), Brock Reggi (VA DEQ), Greg Noe (USGS), Sadie Drescher (CBT), Lindsey Boyle (USGS), Katherine Brownson (USFS), Catherine Wazniak (MDNR), Chris Spaur (USACE), Sandra Davis (USFWS), Denise Clearwater (MDE), Derrick McDonald (PA DEP), Sally Entrekin (Virginia Tech), Rosemary Fanelli (USGS), Louise Finger (DWR), Nat Gillespie (USFS, DC), Jennifer Farabaugh (Western PA Conservancy), Joe Berg (Biohabitats), Cass Klingaman (DEC), Kristen Saack Blunk (Headwaters LLC), Kyle Hodgson (MDNR), John Lancaster (PA DEP), Maggie Woodward (CBC), Kelly Maloney (USGS), Marine Metes (USGS), Mimi Abdu (CBT), Mindy Neil (WV DEP), Nita Settina (CER), Dan Pelletier (UVA), Rob Schnabel (CBF), Nancy Roth (TetraTech), Sara Weglein (MDNR), Dustin Shull (PA DEP), Mark Southerland (TetraTech), Brittany Sturgis (DNREC), William Harbold (MDNR), Matthew Cashman (USGS), Angel Hinickle (Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District), Keith Bollt (EPA), Kami Lentzsch (CRC)