



## Watershed Technical Workgroup Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2026  
10:00 AM-12:00 PM

[Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.](#)

**Purpose:** To provide the WTWG with important announcements related to 2025 Progress and the Phase 7 Model.

### Summary of Actions & Decisions

**Decision:** The WTWG approved the [January 2026 meeting minutes](#).

**Action:** The WTWG will continue to pause the process for confirming nominations for Chair and Vice Chair positions until otherwise given direction from the Clean Water Goal Team or Management Board.

**Action:** Auston Smith, EPA, will reach out with any remaining follow-ups on QAPPs.

**Action:** If you have concerns about the April 1 deadline for 2025 Progress data submissions and BMP history for the Phase 7 calibration, please reach out to Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)).

**Action:** Auston Smith, EPA, will follow up with Kevin Du Bois, DoW, offline about Progress communication needs.

**Action:** Prior to September 2026, there will be a transition from NEIEN to CAST for BMP submissions and reporting. The WTWG will continue to be informed of the timeline for this transition.

**Action:** Prior to the deletion of historic Progress data, the IT Team will provide jurisdictions with backup copies of historic XML files, likely in the Summer of 2026.

**Decision:** The WTWG approved the addition of a duplicates worksheet to the Progress validation report.

**Decision:** The WTWG approved the final [matrix mapping BMPs to load source groups](#) for Phase 7, including the recommendations from the Agriculture and Urban Stormwater Workgroups.

**Action:** Please email Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)), Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)), and Caroline Kleis ([Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov](mailto:Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov)) with any feedback or concerns on the proposed additions/updates to the Phase 6 NEIEN Appendix. The group will approve these updates at the March meeting.

**Action:** Please email Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)), Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)), and Caroline Kleis ([Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov](mailto:Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov)) with any feedback on the Phase 7 Appendix. Members with insight as to why Wetland Restoration is mapped to both “restore” and “create”, are asked to reach out with this context. The WTWG will seek approval of this Appendix at the March meeting.

**Action:** The WTWG will vote via email on the proposed process for proportioning nutrient management acres to pasture and hay land uses in Phase 7 by February 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Action:** Tom Butler, EPA, will follow-up with Bill Keeling, VA DEQ, with an additional example of this proportioning process.

**Action:** The WTWG will vote on the approval of a proposed update to the NEIEN Appendix to include a conversion factor for Animal Waste Management Systems at their March meeting.

**Post Meeting Note:** Following this meeting and subsequent communications offline, the requesting partner has decided to no longer pursue this update for 2025 Progress and the Phase 7 calibration. As such, this will not be included on the WTWG March agenda as a decisional item.

**Action:** The WTWG will continue to be engaged throughout the development of the E3 and No Action Scenarios. Please feel free to provide any feedback or historical insight to Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)) as these conversations continue around the partnership.

## Minutes

### I. Introductions & Announcements

Lead: Auston Smith, EPA

- Approval of [January Meeting Minutes](#)
  - The WTWG approved the January 2026 meeting minutes.
- Update on Nomination Process
  - The WTWG has received nominations for Chair (Sushanth Gupta, MWCOG) and Vice Chair (Christina Lyerly, MDE). At this time, we are still pausing the process to confirm these nominees until we receive additional insight from the Management Board/ Clean Water Goal Team leadership. The WTWG will approve these nominations at the next possible opportunity.
- Verification Emails from Auston
  - Verification calls are complete, and Auston will be emailing back and forth with jurisdictions on remaining points that have been flagged. Auston will reach out with any additional follow-ups that still may be needed.
- April 1 Deadline for Phase 7 Calibration BMP History and 2025 Progress Data Submissions
  - Despite delays on the federal level, we are still on schedule to complete closing of the 2025 Progress Scenario by April 1. With this roughly two month delay, the hope is to finalize QAPPs in early May, before a finalized Progress Scenario is released in July. Between May-July, CBPO will be working with jurisdictions as needed on tailored communications, given this is a target year. In the verification notes, Auston sent a note flagging that by April 1, we hope to have needed updates to BMP history in CAST (as it relates to modified BMPs such as Urban Nutrient Management, ag/stormwater practices on solar). We appreciate folks working to submit these datasets by April 1. Many have already submitted a full BMP history, but for those who want to review based on recent changes, April 1 is due date for those adjustments.
- Status of the Transition from NEIEN to CAST for BMP Reporting
  - Auston noted that confirmation has been received by jurisdictions that they are ok with a formal switch to CAST for BMP reporting. As such, we will formally shut down the node and move away from NEIEN after this Progress year and the release of the

Progress scenario, before we get into 2026 Progress in September. This update will also be reflected in the upcoming guidance and documentation on CAST. So, there is no exact date, but we anticipate late summer/prior to 2026 Progress will be when this takes place. Thanks to the IT Team!

- Update on the Deletion of Historical Progress Submissions- Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting
  - At the previous meeting, Jess informed the group of new policies for the deletion of old Progress files. At the last meeting, some members had asked for a backup of the XML files prior to their deletion. Jess spoke with the IT Team who are willing to work on the generation of these XML files, though this is not a first priority and will likely be done in the summer. No historical data will be deleted until these files have been made available.
- Reminder to Submit Pasture High and Hay High Acres for Phase 7
  - All but one jurisdiction has submitted acres for pasture/hay high in Phase 7. All jurisdictions were encouraged to submit this data as soon as possible, as there is no default currently for pasture/hay high.
- Federal Facilities Reporting Template Update for UNM
  - With the updates to the Phase 6 NEIEN Appendix (discussed later in this meeting) and the related updates to Urban Nutrient Management, Auston will be working with David Wood to communicate the information required on the federal reporting template to track Urban Nutrient Management for progress reporting. This will be a topic of discussion at the Federal Facilities Workgroup at their next meeting.

**Actions:**

1. The WTWG will continue to pause the process for confirming nominations for Chair and Vice Chair positions until otherwise given direction from the Clean Water Goal Team or Management Board.
2. Auston Smith, EPA, will reach out with any remaining follow-ups on QAPPs.
3. If you have concerns about the April 1 deadline for 2025 Progress data submissions and BMP history for the Phase 7 calibration, please reach out to Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)).
4. Auston Smith, EPA, will follow up with Kevin Du Bois, DoW, offline about Progress communication needs.
5. Prior to September 2026, there will be a transition from NEIEN to CAST for BMP submissions and reporting. The WTWG will continue to be informed of the timeline for this transition.
6. Prior to the deletion of historic Progress data, the IT Team will provide jurisdictions with backup copies of historic XML files, likely in the Summer of 2026.
7. If you have not yet submitted acres of pasture/hay high for your jurisdiction, please submit them to Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)), as soon as possible.

**Decisions:**

1. The WTWG approved the [January 2026 meeting minutes](#).

**Discussion Notes:**

**Kevin Du Bois:** Auston, sorry if I missed it. You were talking about Progress, and you said something about communications with jurisdictions and messaging. Could you repeat that for me, please?

**Auston Smith:** We hope to have all inputs for the final Progress scenario by April 1<sup>st</sup>. But, then it will likely be July when the Chesapeake Bay Program office can release a publicly available 2025 Progress Scenario. In that between time, we will be finalizing QAPPs, getting those signed, and working with jurisdictions and federal agencies on the tailored communications that we will be putting out and any information as it helps you to put out your own communications as well. I know some of those conversation about overarching communications around 2025 Progress are being held at the WQGIT. So, there will be a longer runway to the release of this Progress scenario as compared to the last few years. So, July is the likely date when a Progress scenario would be released to the public.

**Kevin Du Bois:** I can appreciate that. One thing we are sort of grappling with is about the communication piece. So. I am particularly interested in how that unfolds.

**Auston Smith:** Is there anything in particular you had in mind that I could raise to the WQGIT level?

**Kevin Du Bois:** We have not completed our internal analysis of the data that was submitted to us, but based on projections that we had last year and what installations said they were going to do, I think we were on track to meet some federal planning goals. So, we are wondering how we will celebrate that if that does pan out in the data, while also knowing what's coming with the future Phase 7 updates to the Model and the potential additional allocations due to BMP effectiveness impacted by changing environmental conditions. We don't necessarily want installations to take their feet off the gas. So, my fear is that if some of them do meet their milestones, they'll say, ok, we're done, and it's a lot harder to crank up the machine after being off for a year or two rather than to continue to make progress knowing that there's likely to be more load allocations coming in the future. So, it's a particularly tricky balance. We'd love to hear how you plan to tackle something similar. I don't know if any of the jurisdictions are on track to meet any of their particular TN/TP/TS goals, but I would love to talk about that some more.

**Auston Smith:** Ok. Let's have that conversation offline, Kevin. Certainly kind of a different vein from the federal side versus the jurisdictional side. So, I'd be happy to help usher that side of the conversation through to the Water Quality GIT and our management here at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office as we work with our regional leadership on the overarching communications that will be surrounding the release.

**Kevin Du Bois:** Thank you.

**Bill Keeling (in chat):** April 1 is the last date to submit any changes to the current progress data already reported?

**Jess Rigelman (in chat):** Bill, yes.

**Auston Smith:** I saw a question from Bill. I gave that a thumbs up, and I know Jess confirmed that as well. April 1 is the deadline. So, you will hear that a few more times during this agenda.

## **II. Progress Validation Report Updates**

Lead: Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting LLC

At the January WTWG meeting, Jess Rigelman noted that a request was made to add a tab indicating potential duplicates to the validation report for Progress. At the February WTWG meeting, Jess asked the WTWG for final approval of the addition of the duplicates worksheet to validation reports. Jess will also share an update on new errors that will be included as a part of the validation report.

### **Decisions:**

1. The WTWG approved the addition of a duplicates worksheet to the Progress validation report.

### **Discussion Notes:**

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Jess. Voting members of the workgroup, please either raise your hand if you've got any questions or feel free to put your vote in the chat. A 3, 4, or 5 will move this forward. With a 1 or a 2, we really do request that you provide a reason behind that and maybe an alternate solution. So, I will give folks a minute to type out their thoughts or vote.

**Cassie Davis (in chat):** NY-5, approve

**Joseph Schell (in chat):** Delaware is a 5

**Christina Lyerly (in chat):** MD-5

**Samuel Canfield (in chat):** WV-5

**Alicia Ritzenthaler (in chat):** DC-5

**Kevin Du Bois (in chat):** 4

**Scott Heidel (in chat):** PA DEP 4

**Matt Kofroth (in chat):** 4

**Bill Keeling (in chat):** VA 4

**Norm Goulet (in chat):** 5

**Jess Rigelman:** While people are putting their votes in, I wanted to let you guys know that we are planning a deployment in late February. That's tentative right now, and that's when this would be released along with those extra errors and some other minor things. But, this would not be available until the end of this month. Since we are still voting here, Bill, I wanted to let you know the issue that we had with the shoreline BMPs not going back to Virginia, that has been addressed, and that will be a part of that deployment. So, you will get credit for those. I don't know if it was oyster or shoreline management BMPs that were being wrongly attributed to Maryland LRSEGs, but they will now be attributed to Virginia. But, again, we will have to make that fix after we do this deployment in February. So, you won't see it until then.

**Bill Keeling (in chat):** 3 oyster records

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Bill.

**Kevin Du Bois (in chat):** Please correct my vote to 4.

**Caroline Kleis:** Thank you, Kevin, for pointing out the error there. Looks like we are missing one vote.

**Joshua Glace (in chat):** 4

**Auston Smith:** Sounds good. This is approved. Thank you, everyone!

### III. Approval of Mapping of BMPs to Load Source Groups

Lead: Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting LLC

In November 2025, Jess Rigelman provided an overview of an initial proposal for how Phase 7 load sources will be mapped to BMPs. Jess returned to the WTWG in January 2026 with an update on initial feedback from the Urban Stormwater Workgroup and Agriculture Workgroups. At the February meeting, Jess presented the final matrix for WTWG approval, incorporating recommendations from the Urban Stormwater Workgroup and Agriculture Workgroup. The WTWG was asked to approve the mapping of BMPs to load source groups for Phase 7.

#### Decisions:

1. The WTWG approved the final [matrix mapping BMPs to load source groups](#) for Phase 7, including the recommendations from the Agriculture and Urban Stormwater Workgroups.

#### Discussion Notes:

**Kevin Du Bois (in chat):** For Mapping BMPs to load source groups, I vote 3 - have to leave the meeting in a few minutes.

**Jess Rigelman:** Does anyone have any last minute questions on this? Hearing none, what you are voting on is the approval of the proposed mapping matrix of BMPs to load source groups, including the suggested revisions from the Urban Stormwater Workgroup and the Ag Workgroup. Back to you, Auston.

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Jess. Please just input your votes in the chat. Raise any hands if you have any follow-up questions here.

**Scott Heidel (in chat):** PA DEP 4

**Christina Lyerly (in chat):** MD -5

**Joshua Glace (in chat):** 4

**Matt Kofroth (in chat):** 4

**Joseph Schell (in chat):** DNREC, 4

**Bill Keeling (in chat):** VA 4

**Norm Goulet (in chat):** 4

**Alicia Ritzenthaler (in chat):** DC -5

**Samuel Canfield (in chat):** WV-4

**Cassie Davis (in chat):** NY- 5

**Auston Smith:** Alright, this is approved. Moving on to the next agenda item.

### IV. 2025 Progress Phase 6 NEIEN Appendix Proposed Additions

Lead: Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting LLC

Jess Rigelman provided an overview of proposed additions to the approved 2025 Progress NEIEN Appendix. This will allow CBPO to appropriately receive both Phase 6 2025 Progress BMPs and BMPs for the Phase 7 calibration by April 1st.

#### Actions:

1. Please email Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)), Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)), and Caroline Kleis ([Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov](mailto:Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov)) with any feedback or concerns on the proposed additions/updates to the Phase 6 NEIEN Appendix. The group will approve these updates at the March meeting.

**Discussion Notes:**

**Bill Keeling:** I wanted to give a little background on the whole reason we locked down the Appendix. In the early days of NEIEN, EPA would change the Appendix without letting anyone know. We would be in the process of trying to report and we were three appendices behind because we didn't know there had been changes. So, we asked for a lockdown so that at least while we were reporting, there were no changes to what we are currently trying to report. So, that was the genesis of the lockdown. I believe this is a special circumstance and, if I understand correctly, Jess is saying that for Phase 6 reporting nothing changes. We keep using the current Phase 6 Appendix as is on through time, but it allows Jess the opportunity to translate the Phase 6 speak for Urban Nutrient Management to Phase 7 speak for calibration purposes. Therefore, VA would not have to resubmit an entire new history of Urban Nutrient Management for Phase 7. It could be translated from what we already reported, at least for the initial calibration. Is that right?

**Jess Rigelman:** Correct.

**Bill Keeling:** Ok, and then you're going to talk about the ag NM on hay and pasture a little bit later.

**Jess Rigelman:** Yes.

**Bill Keeling:** Just to be clear, I don't have a problem with this change in the Appendix. If I am reporting and trying to make a change for 2025 Progress in Phase 6, there's no real change. Nothing impacts me in terms of what we would submit, unlike the genesis of the lockdown where that was changing. So, you are only proposing some stuff for the Phase 7 translation. So, I am ok with this.

**Jess Rigelman:** Thanks, Bill. I do understand the genesis of the lockdown, and I totally understand that. But, yes, you are correct. This will not change anything, it just makes stuff available to you if you wanted to take advantage of it, and that is it.

**Bill Keeling:** Thank you.

**Auston Smith:** Are there any lingering questions or concerns that might make it useful to have an office hours? We could certainly schedule that in the next couple of weeks, prior to the next Watershed Technical Workgroup meeting. It is not on the agenda now, so we wouldn't do that if there's no interest. I don't see any immediate interest in the chat or raised hands. So, if you have questions as we approach the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting where we will be approving this, please reach out as quickly as you can.

**Jess Rigelman:** Yes, please. I encourage you to do so. This decision is a little bit last minute, so if there's going to be any hiccups, please let us know so that we can hopefully address them sooner rather than later.

**Tyler Trostle (in chat):** What's the possibility of getting Floodplain Restoration being release status as we use this in PA alot? *\*Note: This was not answered on the call. Follow-up on this question took place offline.*

## V. Phase 7 NEIEN Appendix Update

Lead: Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting LLC

Jess Rigelman provided the group with an update on feedback received regarding the NEIEN Appendix and asked the group specifically about wetland restoration BMPs.

### Actions:

1. Please email Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)), Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)), and Caroline Kleis ([Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov](mailto:Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov)) with any feedback on the Phase 7 Appendix. Members with insight as to why Wetland Restoration is mapped to both “restore” and “create”, are asked to reach out with this context. The WTWG will seek approval of this Appendix at the March meeting.

### Discussion Notes:

**Jess Rigelman:** There are two wetland restoration BMPs where the measurement name decides whether or not it goes to restoration or whether or not it goes to create. This is how it is mapped in the Appendix. I don't know the genesis of this. Bill Keeling had brought it to our attention. Why would the same BMP be mapped to two different CAST BMP short names? Again, I don't know how this came about. I am not going to make a change unless you guys are wanting a change, but there's a wetland restoration that maps to wetland restore and a wetland restoration that maps to wetland create. Its only difference is the measurement name. So, I just wanted to bring that to your attention. Anyone who has heartburn with that and wants to make a change to it, please speak up and let the group know. Otherwise, I am just going to leave it as is.

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Jess. If there are any folks that may have a recollection of if that was intended, that would be helpful. Otherwise, as Jess said, we are keeping it as it is.

**Jess Rigelman:** Ok. I will bring this back to you next month. I am guessing there will be very few changes, but if there are, I will present them to you, and we will hopefully get a vote on this next month. Thank you.

## VI. Pasture and Hay Nutrient Management

Lead: Tom Butler, EPA

Tom Butler led a discussion with the group surrounding a potential concern for reporting nutrient management on pasture and hay lands and an associated solution.

### Actions:

1. The WTWG will vote via email on the proposed process for proportioning nutrient management acres to pasture and hay land uses in Phase 7 by February 19<sup>th</sup>.
2. Tom Butler, EPA, will follow-up with Bill Keeling, VA DEQ, with an additional example of this proportioning process.

### Discussion Notes:

**Dave Montali:** In simple terms, this came to my attention and Bill's attention when we were working up the pasture high and hay high stuff. If we don't have this ability, and since it is so difficult to adjust our BMP history with both things (current Progress and Phase 7) to be done by

April 1st, it's kind of like we are caught between a rock and a hard place. If we don't have this translation as proposed, then the first calibration of Phase 7 isn't going to work right. The impetus for defining our high land uses is really the knowledge that we have nutrient management on some of those acres, and those are the acres that we want to do the nutrient spread high on. So, if we can't have this by then, it's almost like, nevermind, don't bother with these hay high and pasture high land uses because they aren't going to work as intended in Phase 7. I think this is a good fix. If it can be pulled off, that's great.

**Auston Smith:** Thanks, Dave, and yes couldn't have said it better on the importance of ensuring this is all good to go by March to meet April 1. After we discuss these questions, if folks don't have any other questions or concerns that need to be handled offline, I would love to move for a vote unless there is consternation about that.

**Christina Lyerly (in chat):** MD will respond via email

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Christina, for that insight into Maryland. So, we will set a deadline of two weeks and include that in the follow-up on this. Once we are done with this discussion, I would love for folks to kind of mull it over for two weeks and provide a vote via email back to Caroline, Tom, and me on this subject, and we can send out the finalized votes on this topic so people are aware.

**Bill Keeling:** When I understood this, we were going to get high hay first in the batting order. I didn't see it as proportioned out with other hay. In other words, the example of 40 acres (10 going to high, 30 to other, and 20 to legumes), that's where I am having problems. If the batting order was what we report is applied to high hay first and then it spills over to other forms of hay, that's one thing. But, I don't know why we are proportionally setting the acres in the base conditions.

**Tom Butler:** So your question is in the breakdown of pasture hay and leguminous hay?

**Bill Keeling:** Our current reporting has been on the land use code we call HayAl.. Really the reporting we get does not differentiate. So, we're just reporting it on hay, which would include leguminous. So, I would argue that in terms of a batting order, the one that should get applied last would be your hay low. I don't understand the proportioning out part because Virginia has provided a base condition acreage that we intend to report against. If the batting order is applied this way based on some proportionality, I am going to have to submit XML using the new land use code so that it's crystal clear what we are doing. That's a little different than having Jess just translate things.

**Tom Butler:** I appreciate that. I wanted Dave to kind of weigh in there because I know that there are obviously different levels of reporting on this and maybe he has some insight into that.

**Dave Montali:** I look at this example as a jurisdiction that reports pasture/hay. That's the reporting mode. I think what I heard Bill say is our history of N and P for hay is hay and alfalfa, and I think that's what Bill said Virginia's is, too. Right now, in Phase 6, if you go look at submitted and credited, you see that hay and alfalfa submissions go mostly to other hay and, proportionally, to a small amount of leguminous hay. So, the way I understand this is going to work is exactly the same in Phase 7. If we continue to make our submissions on hay and alfalfa, that leguminous hay will come off the top and get nutrient management applied to it. For the other hay that's left, the process will preferentially put it on hay high and if there is any remainder, then it will go on hay low. I think, Bill, that's what you were saying. I need assurance that hay low will be the last step in the order. The way I look at it is, our folks can't say none of this goes on leguminous hay or alfalfa, so there is some nutrient management on leguminous hay. Just like in Phase 6, if 90 goes to the other hay and 10 goes to leguminous hay, that'll still happen. But, of that 90 that's left, if

there's 90 high hay acres, it will all go there. If there's only 80, then 10 will go to hay low. I just want to confirm that my understanding of that is correct. If it is, I think we are good to go.

**Bill Keeling:** I guess it's just difficult not having an example with hayAI versus just pasture, versus pasture/hay. There are multiple ways things have been reported. I've never reported pasture/hay. I need a more straight line with what we are reporting to be more comfortable.

**Tom Butler:** Bill, that's on me for this example. It would be essentially like what Dave suggested- what you've been doing for Phase 6. As you said, there could be a number of ways to put this example.

**Bill Keeling:** I guess I need to see that sort of documented if I am expected to vote "yay". If there's a table or something somewhere that could be emailed to me, that would be helpful.

**Tom Butler:** Ok, we can work offline.

**Auston Smith:** Thanks, Bill. We will get you a different look at those materials and move towards a vote to weeks from now if you are comfortable. I see a hand from Olivia.

**Olivia Martin (in chat):** Tom, how will crediting work when BMPs can be submitted at multiple scales? Is the rollover of the BMP to the other land use happening at the modeling segment scale regardless of the scale that the BMP is reported?

**Olivia Martin:** It's really helpful to see this example, and I appreciate Bill's questions on the land use part of it. But, I was kind of asking about the geographic scale. What if the county reports some portion of this BMP at the HUC scale and maybe even land river segment scale? How will that be managed? Is it the same as every other BMP? Is the geography done first and then it goes to land use? What is the sequence of steps for calculating the reduction with this rollover from one land use to another? Does the proportioning among land uses happen first and then it goes to the geographic areas, everything is downscaled, and then calculated? I can see several ways to do it, so I just wanted some clarity on what the plan is for that.

**Tom Butler:** That's a great question. My default is going to be that I wouldn't expect a difference for how it is done currently in Phase 6 for these land uses, particularly the hay. But, I will ask Jess to kind of help me with the scale question if there's more that needs to be elaborated on there.

**Jess Rigelman:** It would be proportioned down to the land river segment first. So, your pasture/hay at whatever scale, your hayAI, all of that would be proportioned to pasture hay and legume hay load source groups (knowing that pasture and hay are now a smaller load source group) at the land river segment scale. Once we are down to the land river segment scale, the pasture nutrient management would be prioritized to high. Hay nutrient management would be prioritized to high, and obviously legume is legume.

**Olivia Martin:** Thank you so much.

**Tom Butler:** I did want to make a shameless plug here because we've talked at least once before about pasture high and hay high. I did want to make everyone aware that there are discussions at the AMT about some of the efficiencies for the supplemental BMPs for nutrient management. So, we hope to have that for you guys coming up here pretty shortly. Obviously, those discussions will happen there. So, I would strongly encourage you guys as we work through this example to keep in mind coordinating with your AMT reps about this and other topics relevant to it.

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Tom. The efficiencies for the supplemental practices for nutrient management will come to the WTWG in March. So, got to keep it moving. Thank you for that informational plug, Tom, and for holding the two AMT meetings this month.

**Caroline Kleis (in chat):** The AMT meets on Friday, Feb 13th 8-11. The agenda (with virtual meeting info) will be posted here when it is available.

<https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/agricultural-modeling-team-meeting-february-2026>

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Caroline, as well for highlighting that first AMT meeting, and I believe the second one would be February 27<sup>th</sup>. Any other questions? We heard in the chat that folks are more comfortable maybe thinking on this. Caroline and I will follow-up with all of you to get a vote on this for approval two weeks from now, so February 19<sup>th</sup>. If that causes consternation- the two week email voting period- I'd love to hear that now. Otherwise, it's what we will be pushing forward to do in the essence of time and the deadlines for Phase 7. Thank you all for your immense amount of understanding.

**Dave Montali:** This two week timeline is a tough thing to pull off. I've been intimate with this, so think I understand it, and I am good to go. But, I wonder if you should take other steps to hear what questions other jurisdictions might have. I am just worried a little bit about pulling it off.

**Auston Smith:** Moving towards February 19<sup>th</sup>, would it be beneficial for us to have an office hours a week from now to talk through any lingering questions or concerns from folks? Put a yes in the chat or feel free to speak up anytime on that if it would be helpful here to ensure there is understanding around what people are agreeing to hypothetically via email by the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Scott Heidel (in chat):** PA DEP would like to get our vote out as 3 now.

**Jess Rigelman:** I just wanted to encourage you all that if you do have questions or issues on this, please contact us as soon as possible. I will admit that I am part of the reason pushing for a two week vote on this. This is a big change in how this BMP is processed. With this and all the other decisions that have been made March 1<sup>st</sup> and in the calibration that is expected to be started April 1, I personally would like for me and the IT team to have the time to properly do this and all the other changes before that April 1 deadline, knowing that there are many other decisions that are coming from the AMT and other votes coming to this group. So, I understand if it needs to delay, but that is part of the reason that we are encouraging you to turn this vote around in two weeks. I am more than happy to answer any questions you might have, and we will get Bill the documentation the HayAI by the end of the day.

**Bill Keeling (in chat):** If I get clear documentation for HayAI and PAST NM reporting I should be good in 2 weeks.

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Jess. I will gently push back and say it's not always you pushing for a tighter timeline. There are leaderships above us that are pushing for it. So, please advance questions as quickly as you can get them to us. We would love to help iron out any inconsistencies or miscommunications beforehand. I don't hear necessarily any interest in office hours. So, we're not going to try and set that up. But, Caroline and I will be following up with folks in the coming days to push towards a vote by email by February 19<sup>th</sup>.

## **VII. Animal Waste Management Systems NEIEN Proposed Appendix Update**

Lead: Auston Smith, EPA

Using USDA Manure Management System information and in-pasture estimates from jurisdictional partners, a conversion factor estimate for each animal type was provided to calculate animal units from the volume of an animal waste management system. This methodology was reviewed with the WTWG and time was made for the workgroup to ask any remaining questions.

### **Actions:**

1. The WTWG will vote on the approval of a proposed update to the NEIEN Appendix to include a conversion factor for Animal Waste Management Systems at their March meeting.  
*\*Post Meeting Note: Following this meeting and subsequent communications offline, the requesting partner has decided to no longer pursue this update for 2025 Progress and the Phase 7 calibration. As such, this will not be included on the WTWG March agenda as a decisional item.*

### **Discussion Notes:**

**Dave Montali:** I am trying to think back to the documentation. We work in terms of how much litter a bird produces on a dry weight basis. Are there any concerns about moisture making this translation? I don't know if it is in there, out there, or will be applied at the end or something.

**Auston Smith:** If I am missing anything, Jess and Tom, please feel free to speak up. Within that NRCS handbook, there is a moisture content that they flag for each animal or animal group, and that is kind of baked into the volume there. So, I would encourage folks to look at this resource that we have linked here and get back to us with any questions on that. But, the moisture content is flagged there for each of them. I think it would be accounted for. I appreciate the question there, Dave. Certainly a consideration.

**Auston Smith (in chat):**

<https://directives.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files2/1712930943/17165.pdf>

**Cassie Davis (in chat):** Were the days in storage state supplied animal times different for states or did they use the same data?

**Auston Smith:** I believe it was averaged across the watershed. Tom, is that correct?

**Tom Butler (in chat):** It was an average for the watershed.

**Cassie Davis:** I've never seen the New York State supplied ones when we supplied them. I know we supplied them a long time ago, so I was just wondering if they were default values for certain states or how that worked.

**Auston Smith:** I am not positive as to the history behind the supplied data. But, Dave, I see a hand. Maybe it's on this subject.

**Dave Montali:** I don't know about defaults. If this is a question about how much time the animal is in confinement, then I think each state has provided this on a monthly basis. Is that the question? I don't understand "in storage".

**Auston Smith:** Sorry. Not in pasture-within a facility where that manure could be put into the animal waste volume.

**Dave Montali:** So, in confinement? All your poultry is 100% in confinement everywhere, I think.

**Auston Smith:** So, every one of these animal figures that say 365, you can assume that for pullets, turkeys, pigs, broilers, down the list, if it says 365, it is always in confinement. Thank you for correcting my phrasing there.

**Dave Montali:** Right, but the cattle part would be different by latitude. I don't know what New York has submitted. I do know that West Virginia and Virginia's numbers are pretty similar about time in pasture and riparian zone. I assume confinement. But, I don't know about New York.

Tom Butler (in chat): <https://cast-reports.chesapeakebay.net/public/Detailed-SourceData-Animal.xlsx>

Tom Butler: In the document I just put in the chat, you will have a time in pasture tab that gives you percentage of time animal is in pasture/confinement, or whatever you want to call it.

Auston Smith: Amazing. Yes, that's on the source data section for CAST. So, we are not pushing for a vote right now or even in two weeks. We'd love for folks to review these resources and the math that we've outlined here and the various assumptions. Happy to provide insight on the steps we took or suggestions for revision. But, yes, at this time, this would be associated with a NEIEN Appendix change that we will also be presenting in March. So, this falls under the same March decision timeline to lead to the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. So, we generally don't have many months for conversation on this if we were to fit it in for Phase 7. Any other questions? We heard a couple on days in storage and moisture considerations. Cassie, Dave, others, please just reach out to us as your timeline allows, and we can help handle any extra questions. Thank you, everyone, for listening to that presentation.

## VIII. Overview of E3 and No-Action Scenarios

Lead: Auston Smith, EPA

Auston Smith, EPA, provided the group with an overview of E3 ("Everything, Everywhere, (by) Everyone") and No-Action scenarios for setting planning targets. This informational overview will lay the groundwork for future discussions and decisions at the sector workgroup level on scenario inputs.

### Actions:

1. The WTWG will continue to be engaged throughout the development of the E3 and No Action Scenarios. Please feel free to provide any feedback or historical insight to Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)) as these conversations continue around the partnership.

### Discussion Notes:

Bill Keeling: As I remember things, the 2010 No Action was used and with the E3, there were the Shenk curves and the hockey sticks used to come up with an equitable distribution of allocations for the TMDL. That was one use. The other was as a planning scenario. For WIP I and WIP II, we used the 2010 No Action as our base scenario for planning. I believe that changed in terms of the base scenarios with planning for WIP III. I believe we had a projected future land use that we thought would exist in 2025, and that's why we needed the Midpoint Review to make sure we are going to be "on target" so to speak. We never really talked about controllable loads. An equitable way to allocate the load was somewhere between No Action, assuming nobody was doing anything in 2010 (the year of the TMDL) and the theoretical maximum level of effort. That depended on what basin you were in as to what allocated load you ended up with. That's how I remember it came into play. This will probably have to remain in order for the target development and the equitable allocation process. In terms of the planning scenario, I don't believe we want to use a 2010 No Action scenario for planning for 2035 or in the future.

Auston Smith: Thank you, Bill. That historical context is always really helpful. I was not around, so I appreciate that and don't disagree with you about the update that you alluded to.

**Dave Montali:** I know you are just trying to get people starting to think about this, but Bill's point about how this was used for the allocation needs to be a part of the presentation. I think when we really get down into it, if we are going down the same allocation approach that we have in 2010 and in the Midpoint Assessment, then the understanding of the different choices for No Action, E3, and how that ultimately effects the hockey stick would be good. It's really very complicated, so I don't know if you can start discussing No Action and E3 without bringing in how it actually gets used in the allocation process. We don't even have to follow the same hockey stick approach. That's the precedent, and it's a precedent with a few other caveats about New York and West Virginia in it. But, it's good that you start talking about this because, in 2028, we are going to have to decide as a partnership how we are going to allocate the new loads.

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Dave. Heard loud and clear. I don't want to sign you up for work, but I would love your thoughts as I refine this for the follow-up meetings to source sector workgroups to ensure the major questions that we need asked are teed up properly. I might reach out to you, but I really appreciate the suggestion.

**Dave Montali:** That's fine. If I can help, yes.

**Auston Smith:** I am happy to take questions or comments offline as well. Please don't be scared to email me saying your presentation would really be better if you did XYZ. I am always very open to that. I am seeing no further questions or comments at this time.

## **IX. Wrap-Up**

Lead: Caroline Kleis, CRC

## **X. Adjourn**

**Next Meeting:** March 5<sup>th</sup> 2026, from 10:00AM-12:00PM

### **Attendees:**

Auston Smith, EPA

Caroline Kleis, CRC

Petra Baldwin, CRC

Kevin Du Bois, DoW

Samuel Canfield, WV DEP

Holly Walker, DNREC

Bailey Robertory, MD DNR

Bill Keeling, VA DEQ

Joseph Schell, DNREC

Dave Montali, Tetra Tech

Arianna Johns, VA DEQ

Tyler Trostle, PA DEP

Eric Hughes, EPA

Christina Lyerly, MDE

Sushanth Gupta, MWCOG

Dylan Burgevin, MDE

Cassie Davis, NYSDEC

Eugenia Hart, Tetra Tech

Olivia Martin, Devereux Consulting

Norm Goulet, NVRC

Joshua Glace, Larson Design Group

Ashley Hullinger, PA DEP

Scott Heidel, PA DEP

Mark Dubin, VA Cooperative Extension

Alicia Ritzenthaler, DOEE

Megan Thyngge, EPA

Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting LLC/CBPO  
Contractor

Matt Kofroth, LCCD

Lori Brown, DNREC

Sabine Miller, MDE

Emily Dekar, USC

Tom Butler, EPA

Clint Gill, DDA