



## Watershed Technical Workgroup Meeting Minutes

July 2, 2026  
10:00AM-11:00AM

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

**Purpose:** This is the monthly meeting of the Watershed Technical Workgroup. Agenda topics include relevant announcements, an update on the release of 2025 Annual Progress and associated items, and updates on recent Partnership/CWGT developments.

### Summary of Actions & Decisions

**Decision:** The WTWG approved the June 2026 meeting minutes.

**Action:** The Eutrophication Units Tool will be removed from CAST as a part of the July 15<sup>th</sup> CAST release. WTWG members with questions or concerns on the removal of this tool should contact Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)) and Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)).

**Action:** CBP NEIEN node will be decommissioned on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026. All Progress BMP submissions should be made via CAST thereafter. Those interested in running test submissions for upcoming Progress years or for any other reasons, should register on the CAST test site. Contact Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)) if additional information is needed.

**Action:** Please reach out to Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)) if you have any questions on QAPP finalizations given the delay and/or if you have any comments or concerns related to communications surrounding the release of the 2025 Annual Progress, Milestones Evaluation, and 2025 Assessment. The tentative timeline for release is August 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Progress Scenario/communications and August 10<sup>th</sup> for the Milestone Evaluation and 2025 Assessment/communications. Please note these times are subject to change.

**Action:** The WTWG will proceed with the functions of the Federal Facilities Workgroup integrated into the Watershed Technical Workgroup on an anticipated quarterly basis. The groups will meet for the first combined meeting in August to discuss membership, workgroup processes, the potential need for a planning target action team, nutrient credit trading confirmation, and other topics relevant to both groups. Please begin to consider your preferred membership structure for the Watershed Technical Workgroup, given the combined functions of the Federal Facilities Workgroup.

**Action:** Caroline Kleis, WTWG Staffer, will send an email to the WTWG requesting edits to the [Phase 6 NEIEN Appendix](#) via email, in advance of subsequent discussion and decision at the August Watershed Technical Workgroup meeting. Please send all requested edits and questions to Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)), Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)), and Caroline Kleis ([Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov](mailto:Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov)).

# Meeting Minutes

## I. Introductions & Announcements

Lead: Sushanth Gupta, MWCOG

Sushanth Gupta, WTWG Chair, opened the meeting and Auston Smith, WTWG Coordinator, and Sushanth walked the group through the following announcements:

- Approval of the June WTWG Meeting Minutes
  - The WTWG approved the June 2026 meeting minutes.
- Proposed Removal of Eutrophication Units (EU) Calculator Tool on CAST
  - It was noted that there was a problem with the Eutrophication Units tool previously linked on CAST. As such, it is proposed that this tool will be removed from CAST with the next CAST release on July 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Reminder: The CBP NEIEN node will be decommissioned on August 31, 2026. All Progress BMP submissions will be made via CAST.
  - Jess Rigelman, J7 Consulting LLC/CBPO Contractor, reminded the group that the CBP NEIEN node will be decommissioned on August 31, 2026. In particular, Jess noted that the test node has been decommissioned and, as of now, the production node will be decommissioned on August 31st. If anybody wants to test submissions for the upcoming progress year or for any other reason, they need to register on the CAST test site. If you need any information about that, reach out to Jess.
- Historic XML Data File Emails
  - Auston Smith, WTWG Coordinator, noted that he has received confirmations that historic XML data files have been received.

### Decisions:

1. The WTWG approved the June 2026 meeting minutes.

### Actions:

1. The Eutrophication Units Tool will be removed from CAST as a part of the July 15<sup>th</sup> CAST release. WTWG members with questions or concerns on the removal of this tool should contact Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)) and Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)).
2. CBP NEIEN node will be decommissioned on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026. All Progress BMP submissions should be made via CAST thereafter. Those interested in running test submissions for upcoming Progress years or for any other reasons, should register on the CAST test site. Contact Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)) if additional information is needed.

## II. 2025 Annual Progress Update

Lead: Auston Smith, EPA

Auston Smith, EPA, will provide an update on the release of 2025 Annual Progress. Auston also briefly discussed the Milestones Evaluation and 2025 Assessment release schedule and associated details. In particular, Auston noted:

- Most jurisdictions were in the signature process for QAPPs and that QAPPs will be finalized before Progress release. Jurisdictions were encouraged to reach out if any edits are needed on the QAPPs as a result of the delayed process.
- A recent meeting took place on Progress communications related to the release of the three products (2025 Annual Progress, Milestones Evaluation, and 2025 Assessment). WTWG

members should reach out if there are questions regarding what to expect in the communications materials for these products.

- The conclusion of this Progress season will lead up to the next Progress season. Once this is complete in August, September 1<sup>st</sup> will be the start of the 2026 Progress season, and the QAPP process will begin.

**Actions:**

1. Please reach out to Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)) if you have any necessary adjustments on the QAPPs given the delay and/or if you have any comments or concerns related to communications surrounding the release of the 2025 Annual Progress, Milestones Evaluation, and 2025 Assessment. The tentative timeline for release is August 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Progress Scenario/communications and August 10<sup>th</sup> for the Milestone Evaluation and 2025 Assessment/communications. Please note these times are subject to change.

**Discussion Notes:**

**Norm Goulet (in chat):** Auston, could you put those progress release targets you just mentioned in the chat please..

**Auston Smith (in chat):** By targets, do you mean the targeted dates of release?

**Norm Goulet (in chat):** Yes.

**Auston Smith (in chat):** Assumptions we are working on now but subject to change:

~August 3<sup>rd</sup> for progress scenario and PR ~August 10 for the milestone eval and 2025 assessment and PR.

### III. Federal Facilities Workgroup & Partnership Updates

Lead: Auston Smith, EPA

Caroline Kleis, CRC and Auston Smith, EPA, provided the group with relevant Partnership and Clean Water Goal Team updates related to structure/membership, including the next steps for the Federal Facilities Workgroup. This overview also included relevant highlights from the June Clean Water Goal Team.

**Actions:**

1. The WTWG will proceed with the functions of the Federal Facilities Workgroup integrated into the Watershed Technical Workgroup on an anticipated quarterly basis. The groups will meet for the first combined meeting in August to discuss membership, workgroup processes, the potential need for a planning target action team, nutrient credit trading confirmation, and other topics relevant to both groups. Please begin to consider your preferred membership structure for the Watershed Technical Workgroup, given the combined functions of the Federal Facilities Workgroup.

**Discussion Notes:**

**Kevin Du Bois (in chat):** I would like to suggest that we start discussions early on the methodology that jurisdictions intend to use in establishing new Federal Planning Goals. The RENPS timeline shows this effort beginning in 2026.

**Joseph Schell (in chat):** I should be listed as the primary for Delaware - just as an aside

**Caroline Kleis (in chat):** Thank you, Joseph! I will make that update. Noting for other signatories if you have any edits to please send those to me. Thank you!

**Joseph Schell (in chat):** Thanks, Caroline!

**Kevin Du Bois:** I am sorry I don't know the answer to this. Does the membership go to the agency or the person?

**Auston Smith:** In the Federal Facilities Workgroup in the past?

**Kevin Du Bois:** In whatever construct is going to move forward with the Watershed Technical Workgroup.

**Auston Smith:** Well, I think that is a decision for us to make. In a 9-6 format, we have the 9 pretty much covered. So, would the six at large positions maybe all be federal agencies or at least as many federal agencies that would be interested?

**Kevin Du Bois:** I see that the signatory members have a primary and a secondary. So, it seems like for them, right, the membership is based on the signatory agency or jurisdiction. So, I'm just wondering if we should mirror that structure for the at-large as well, with primary and secondary based on the agency or organization that that at-large membership represents.

**Auston Smith:** Right, I think, yes, that that would be great if we could include a secondary voting member for DOW or anyone, if you have a secondary that you'd like us to provide. You can see in some cases a second isn't necessary. But yeah, as they're available, absolutely. We can update this membership list. I do see some additional comments in the chat.

**Norm Goulet:** At-large members everywhere have always been a person, not an agency. So, I think I'd have a little bit of heartburn if we started assigning agencies. Now, that person will always represent their agency, and they can certainly have an alternate for their voting, and it could be within their agency or outside of their agency. I guess my main question was, I don't ever remember there being more than three or four at-large members on the WTWG at any point in time. So, if we're allowed to have six, clearly we could fill two or three of those empty slots with somebody for the Federal Facilities Workgroup.

**Caroline Kleis:** Yes, and just to provide some background on how we got to this, we have always had the six at large with three up for election each year. But, we decided back in November that we would extend the terms for the four we currently had through December of 2026 because it was kind of unclear when the term end dates would be. So, historically, we've had three open up each year, but we didn't get anyone who wanted to fill these. So, that's kind of how we ended up with only four out of the six filled.

**Norm Goulet:** That's what I mean, Caroline. Actually having them filled with a body as opposed to being vacant. We always seem to have two or three vacant slots. So, it would be no problem at all to assign those to the federal side.

**Mark Dubin (in chat):** It appears from the expanded scope of the two combined workgroups that the proposed structure from the CWGT may not work and a waiver may be needed for the above reason.

**Kevin Du Bois (in chat):** I would like to suggest that you send out a poll for interest in the At-Large seats.

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, both. That's exactly what we kind of want to chew on in August. We're pretty used to already only having four at-larges. So, maybe if we get a magic number of two other federal agencies that would want to fill these other two spots, so that on those quarterly calls there's a great representation of federal agencies across the voting membership for those issues, maybe that's a great compromise or at least place to start from to see if it works. But again, we want to get some additional insight or guidelines from the Clean Water Gold Team on the structure. Are there any other immediate points of discussion? So, this is kind of where we are. Any other final questions or points of suggestion for the group? This has been helpful feedback.

#### **IV. \*Additional Topic Requested: NEIEN Appendix**

Lead: Jess Rigelman, J7 LLC/CBPO Contractor

Jess Rigelman, J7LLC/CBPO Contractor, requested an additional agenda item to discuss the NEIEN Appendix. In particular, Jess noted that the NEIEN Appendix edits are typically discussed this month. However, this was not added to the agenda, and no comments or changes have been requested to the Phase 6 or the Phase 7 Appendix being used for calibration. Jess noted that the hope is to make any edits and approve the Appendix in August. As such, requested edits to the Appendix should be sent to Jess, Auston, and Caroline, for approval at the August WTWG meeting.

### **Actions:**

1. Caroline Kleis, WTWG Staffer, will send an email to the WTWG requesting edits to the [Phase 6 NEIEN Appendix](#) via email, in advance of subsequent discussion and decision at the August Watershed Technical Workgroup meeting. Please send all requested edits and questions to Jess Rigelman ([jrigelman@j7llc.com](mailto:jrigelman@j7llc.com)), Auston Smith ([Smith.Auston@epa.gov](mailto:Smith.Auston@epa.gov)), and Caroline Kleis ([Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov](mailto:Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov)).

### **Discussion Notes:**

**Dylan Burgevin (in chat):** Just wanted to note that the new UNM is listed as Released, not Draft, is that correct?

**Jess Rigelman:** The Phase 6 ones stay as they are in the current Phase 6 NEIEN Appendix. The Phase 7 ones are there as well. The “no fertilizer” one is draft. The other two map to the middle one. So, Phase 6 and Phase 7 are available in both Phase 6 and Phase 7. In Phase 7, the new ones are available. The old ones, if they're the nutrient management plan, they map to, I think, “no soil test”. The two Maryland specific “do-it-yourself” are both retired in Phase 7.

**Kevin Du Bois (in chat):** I thought the new non-fertilizer BMP was not available for use until after Phase 7 was adopted.

**Tyler Trostle (in chat):** Will the NEIEN Appendix name now change? Just curious.

**Auston Smith (in chat):** We are in discussion on this renaming now! Hope to have that adjusted during the 26 progress year, thanks Tyler!

**Kevin Du Bois:** Jess, I am not sure I followed you on that. I thought the new “non fertilizer” BMP was not for use until after Phase 7.

**Jess Rigelman:** It is not available for use, it is available in Phase 6 Appendix as draft so that you can report it. It won't make it through to CAST, but it won't fail. We have it in there so that if you do report it, meaning when I run it using the Phase 7 Appendix, which I've been doing for calibration, it will be used with the Phase 7 Appendix. So, it's in both. It's just really only going to get through in Phase 7. Phase 6, it's just going to show up as “this BMP is draft in this version”.

**Kevin Du Bois:** Okay, so when we met about how we have our installations report, I think our advice to them was to go ahead and report it, and then we're going to compile that data and report to jurisdictions like we always have, with the understanding that we won't get credit. But, we're just going to continue to report it so that ultimately when it does get credit, hopefully we will have worked out the kinks on proper reporting procedure and proper handling by the jurisdiction so that, when it goes live, everything is turnkey. That's our advice. Would you agree with that?

**Jess Rigelman:** Yeah, I 100% agree with that. If the jurisdictions have it or if the jurisdictions are going to get it this year, I suggest that they report it because both Phase 6 and Phase 7 are live now. It just depends on what version I run it in. So, I have already run the Phase 7 calibration data set which uses the Phase 7 Appendix which basically just takes all the data you have in there and translates it to Phase 7. So yes, I want you and the jurisdictions to report all the data that you have, whether it be Phase 6 or Phase 7. How it gets used depends on which version of the appendix I pull it using.

**Kevin Du Bois:** Okay, well, I hope the recording is still going because I want to have this on the record that all of our jurisdictions are going to submit non-fertilized acres. When we did a poll of them in last year's data call that we sent them, there were tens of thousands of acres that were not being fertilized. So, that's going to be a big new add to our data reporting in each jurisdiction.

**Auston Smith:** Thank you, Kevin, and thanks a lot, Jess, for being able to illuminate on the transition of those BMPs. If there's nothing else, I think that that's it.

## **V. Wrap-Up**

Lead: Caroline Kleis, CRC

## **VI. Adjourn**

**Next Meeting:** August 6, 2026 from 10:00AM-12:00PM (Federal Facility Focused)

### **Attendees:**

Sushanth Gupta, MWCOG  
Christina Lyerly, MDE  
Auston Smith, EPA  
Caroline Kleis, CRC  
Samantha Cotton, DNREC  
Carol Cain, MD DNR  
Joseph Schell, DNREC  
Holly Walker, DNREC  
Tyler Trostle, PA DEP  
Tom Butler, EPA  
Norm Goulet, NVRC  
Mark Dubin, VA Cooperative Extension  
Josh Glace, Larson Design Group  
Arianna Johns, VA DEQ  
Cass Klingaman, NY DEC

Andrew Leight, MDA  
Dylan Burgevin, MDE  
Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA  
Pat Thompson, Energy Works  
Sabine Miller, DOEE  
Ashley Hullinger, PA DEP  
Rachel Owrutsky, DNREC  
Jess Rigelman, J7 LLC/ CBPO Contractor  
Eugenia Hart, Tetra Tech  
Lori Brown, DNREC  
Scott Heidel, PA DEP  
Kevin Du Bois, DoW  
Bella Konchar  
John Lancaster, PA DEP