



**Chesapeake Bay Program
Principals' Staff Committee Meeting
May 26, 2016**

Actions and Decisions

Attendees:

Lisa Wainger, STAC
Charlie Stek, CAC
Penny Gross, LGAC
Chuck Hunt, NPS
Gayle Barry, USDA
Edwin Kee, DE DOA
Shawn Garvin, EPA
Jim Edward, EPA
Molly Ward, Chair, VA Nat. Res.
Russ Baxter, VA Nat. Res.
David Paylor, VA DEQ
Ann Swanson, CBC
Marel King, CBC
Tommy Wells, DC DOE
Pat Montanio, NOAA
Jennifer Greiner, USFWS
Mike Tupper, USGS

Jeff Laitila, DOD Navy
Diane Davis, DC DOE
Jackie Lendrum, NY DEC
Jason Dubow, MD DEP
Karl Blankenship, Bay Journal
Seth Logan
Reggie Parrish, EPA
Chris Day, EPA
Daniel Rosen
Lindsey Thomas
James Davis Martin, VA DEQ
Mark Belton, MD DNR
Lee Currey, MD DOE
Linda Miller, EPA
Scott Mandirola, WV DEP
Ben Sears, NY DEC
Col Ed Chamberlayne, USACE

Nicki Kasi, PA DEP
Nicole Lehmer, CRC
Emily Freeman, CRC
Carin Bisland, EPA
Greg Barranco, EPA
Kristen Saunders, UMCES
Mary Gattis, LGAC
Renee Kelly, STAC
Julie Winters, EPA
Peyton Robertson, NOAA
Scott Philips, USGS
Tom Wenz, CBP
Rachel Felver, AFB
Ben Grumbles, MD DOE
Dana Aunkst, PA DEP

Actions and Decisions

Independent Evaluator

Decision: Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) members generally agreed that the National Academy of Science is their preferred option to serve as the Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP) independent evaluator. Shawn Garvin indicated he would discuss the PSC's preference with the EPA Administrator who has the authority under the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act (CBARA) to appoint the independent evaluator, based on the Chesapeake Executive Council's nomination.

Decision/Action: If the National Academy of Science is the final choice to serve as the independent evaluator, the cost will be shared among the signatories. EPA will develop proposed funding options to cover the costs.

Status: EPA developed a proposed funding option for PSC consideration during the August 10 call.

Action: CBP staff will develop for the independent evaluator a draft charge for the initial 180 day evaluation required under CBARA. The PSC agreed that the charge should include a review of previously completed evaluations and audits on the Chesapeake Bay Program as well as recommendations for next steps for future evaluations.

Status: The draft charge was developed by GIT 6 and will be presented to the PSC on their August 10 call. The charge is focused on a review of previously completed evaluations and audits.

Water Quality Issues

Preliminary findings from Watershed and Tidal WQ Monitoring Trends

Action: PSC members indicated they would like to see additional information on the following water quality trends:

- Trends for specific watersheds
- Why are more recent river-input trends in nitrogen and phosphorus either flattening out or increasing?
- What are the causes of increasing trends in phosphorus at Conowingo Dam when upstream stations are showing downward trends?
- What additional pollutant loads are needed before we see more tidal water-quality response?
- What are the lag times for tidal water-quality responses to pollutant load reductions from the watershed?
- Local and SAV trends over past 40 years
- Challenges we are facing fully restoring eelgrass
- What additional improvements in water clarity are needed to see the next significant increase in SAV?
- What additional reductions are coming from the Clean Air Act?
- What more is possible from wastewater sector/septic systems?
- What further reductions from agriculture are likely by 2025?
- What further reductions from urban stormwater are likely by 2025?

Status: *In progress.* STAR's Integrated Trends Analysis Team along with the Water Quality GIT and its source sector workgroups are developing responses to the bulleted questions above. The next report out on addressing these questions and requests will be at a proposed December 2016 PSC meeting followed by additional information reported at finer scales and more detailed explanations of the observed monitoring trends at six-month increments, timed with PSC meetings to be scheduled out through 2018.

Changing Nature of Watershed Pollutant Loads and Policy Implications

Decision: PSC members agreed on the following six water quality challenges as the focus of follow-up work by the CBP Water Quality Goal Implementation Team's (WQGIT) source sector workgroups and the CBP Scientific, Technical, Analysis and Reporting (STAR) Team's Integrated Trends Analysis Team:

- River input nitrogen loads are flattening out, river input phosphorus loads have increased in the past decade
- Identification of the highest yielding areas are in the lower Susquehanna, Eastern Shore, and middle Potomac for nitrogen, phosphorus
- Further load reductions from wastewater and atmospheric deposition are close to diminished;
- Agriculture is being asked for most of the remaining reductions by 2025

- Pennsylvania agriculture will be responsible for a significant portion of all the remaining nitrogen load reductions by 2025
- Phosphorus saturated soils and groundwater lags will hinder timely water quality responses
- Achieving the remaining pollutant load reduction levels currently assigned to the urban stormwater sector.

Status: *In progress.* Work on the six challenges described above is underway. The Water Quality GIT is working to ensure that the appropriate Partnership workgroups and teams are making progress on the identified challenges (above) and will address each of the challenges during its October 24-25, 2016 meeting in Lancaster, PA, ensuring.

Action: CBP staff will prepare and distribute jurisdiction-specific versions of the 1985 and 2015 nitrogen and phosphorus source sector pie charts to each of the jurisdictions.

Status: *In progress.* CBP staff will be producing and distributing these jurisdiction-specific versions of the source sector pie charts in September 2016.

Decision: The PSC charged each of the partnership's WQGIT's source sector workgroups—agriculture, forestry urban stormwater, and wastewater treatment—and the Modeling Workgroup (given its work on quantifying the water quality benefits from Clean Air Act implementation) to turn increasing attention toward evaluating and analyzing the challenges to meeting their 2025 goals and the pollutant load reduction opportunities for their source sector in preparation for the jurisdictions' development of the Phase III WIPs. Part of this charge includes analyzing what additional load reductions are possible from their respective source sectors—agriculture, urban stormwater, wastewater treatment, septic systems, and atmospheric deposition—by 2025 within and across the jurisdictions.

Status: *In progress.* To date, the source sector workgroups have been focusing efforts on delivering the needed decisions and input data for the Partnership's suite of Phase 6 models and completing the work by their BMP expert panels. Post the end of September, these source sector workgroups will be re-directing their attention to address the above PSC charge. The Water Quality GIT will focus its attention on how to best fulfill this charge to its workgroups at its October 24-25, 2016 meeting in Lancaster, PA, ensuring the appropriate source sector workgroups understand their assignments and have the needed direction.

Engaging Local Partners

Decision: The PSC charged the Local Government Advisory Committee with convening a forum that focuses on how the partnership can best move forward on local engagement. Participants should include all recent and existing entities within the CBP partnership.

Status: LGAC convened a forum with multiple participants. The group agreed to continue working together over the next six months. LGAC will provide an update to the PSC on the August 10 call.

BMP Expert Panels

Action: The PSC accepted the WQGIT's updated status of the existing 19 BMP expert panels.

Status: *In progress.* Since the May PSC meeting, several BMP expert panels' recommendations and reports have been reviewed and approved by the Partnership. For the remaining panels, the Water Quality GIT has agreed to schedule for which sets of Panel recommendations must be reviewed and approved by the standing September 30th deadline and which panel recommendations can be reviewed and approved in the coming year. The Water Quality GIT will discuss contingency plans at its October 24-25 meeting for any panels which have missed their September 30th deadline.

Midpoint Assessment Schedule

Action: The PSC adopted the Management Board's recommended revised midpoint assessment schedule; however, they agreed to change the date the draft Phase III WIPs are due to EPA from September 2018 to August 2018.

Status: *In progress.* The Water Quality GIT is currently working under the revised midpoint assessment schedule adopted by the PSC. At its October 2016 meeting, the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team will be discussing a more detailed midpoint assessment schedule which lays out all the required decisions by the partnership by the proposed months of upcoming Water Quality Goal Implementation Team, Management Board and Principals' Staff Committee meetings and conference calls, from July 2016 through January 2019.

Environmental Finance Symposium

Action: The PSC requested the Environmental Finance Center provide the partners with an early version of the preliminary draft Environmental Financing Symposium Report so there can be continued translation of the findings and recommendation coming from the symposium into the work of the jurisdictions' on preparing for their Phase III WIPs.

Status: EFC provided an initial draft to the CBPO. The CBPO shared the draft with the Management Board members to

1.) Determine if the report captures the discussions that took place in the symposium; and 2.) Determine if the report offers recommendations that evolved from symposium discussions and offer possible action items to be taken by the Chesapeake Executive Council this fall.

EC Planning

Action: The PSC requested that Executive Council Planning Committee review and consider the following additions to the EC agenda: follow up from EC 2015 actions; an update from the USACE report; and an update on environmental literacy work. The EC Planning Committee will provide a final agenda to the PSC for their review and approval.

Status: An update on planning activities will be provided to the PSC on the August 10 call.

USACE Chesapeake Bay Comprehensive Plan

Action: the CBP partners signed on to the cost-sharing agreement related to the US Army Corps of Engineers' Chesapeake Bay Comprehensive Plan.

Next Meeting

- Chair Molly Ward proposed that the September PSC meeting be changed to a conference call and moved to September 19.
- The last PSC meeting of the year will be planned for October or November and will potentially be held in Pennsylvania.