

Proposal to form a Chesapeake Bay Program Land Use Workgroup

Background:

Land use is one of the most critical data sets for the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Watershed Model. Land use data have previously been prepared by the CBP Land Data Team in consultation with the CBP Watershed Modeling Team. Land use classifications have been driven by available data and by the expressed needs of CBP workgroups to inform management decisions. The work of the Land Data Team has been reviewed by CBP Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) in 2008 and 2010. During the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) process, differences have come to light between the land use data set used by that CBP that covers the entire watershed over a multi-decadal period and local-scale information. These differences have caused difficulties in implementation planning and reporting in support of the WIPs. As the responsibility to implement restoration efforts is pushed to the local governments, it is vital that the land use data used in the watershed model is perceived as relevant at the local government scale. To this end, a Land Use / Land Cover Workgroup is proposed to directly involve stakeholders in the generation of land use data for modeling. The challenge will be to assemble a more accurate baseline dataset using local information to the extent possible while estimating historic land use acreages in a clear, transparent, and logical fashion.

Goals:

1. To create a temporally, spatially, and categorically consistent and accurate land use dataset from 1982 to 2012 for all jurisdictions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed using the best available data at all scales.
2. To approve methods for projecting future land use conditions for all jurisdictions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Charge:

To improve the temporal, spatial, and categorical accuracy of land use data that will be used to inform the next versions of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model, the Land Change Model, two-year milestones, and state offset strategies.

Membership:

Membership should consist of State and Local Government professionals that are involved directly with collecting land use/cover data, land use mapping, land use planning, or spatial analysis. Examples of such are those with responsibilities to provide mapping technical assistance, local program plan review or planning design services. An example at the state

agency level is the Maryland Department of Planning or at the local government level, a Comprehensive Planning Department. Secondary membership could include the WIP II Project Managers.

Chairperson:

In order to minimize Federal, States and Local Government resource commitments, a Non-Governmental Organization that is directly involved with either local or state land use planning and is familiar with the Chesapeake Bay Program could serve as the Chair of the Workgroup. A desire to Chair the Workgroup has been expressed by the Hamptons Road Planning District Commission and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

Coordination and Staff Support:

The Chesapeake Bay Program Office will provide coordination and staff support for the workgroup, including scheduling meetings and calls, working with the Chairperson to set agendas, ensuring advanced materials are available to participants, providing logistical and technical support for conference calls and meetings, and maintaining minutes for calls and meetings.

Oversight:

The Workgroup would be placed under the auspices of the CBP Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) as its membership is already quite familiar with many of the prior land use/land cover issues and the watershed model inputs/outputs. The WQGIT is also responsible for the oversight of the 2017 Midpoint Assessment of the Bay Model; one component of which will be the 2014 Land Use/Land Cover information.

Structure:

The Workgroup will meet monthly primarily alternating with in-person meetings and conference calls. If the need to meet more or less frequently arises it will be the decision of the Chair with input from the workgroup on the structure.

Duration:

It is proposed that this Workgroup not become a standing CBP Workgroup. As the land use/land cover information will be needed for the next generation of the model by the Summer 2015; it is anticipated that the Workgroup will sunset following the completion of its charge around that 2015 timeframe.