

**Chesapeake Bay Program Update
Management Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 11, 2012**

CBPO Calendar

Apr 10-12	Environment Virginia Symposium, Lexington, VA
April 11-12	STAC workshop, State College, PA
May 8	Virginia Region 3 Consrv Dist Mtg (Culpepper, Va.)
May 14 (tent)	CBP Principals' Staff Committee meeting (TBD)
May 17	NPDES States' Meeting, Ocean City, MD
May 24-25	Chesapeake Bay Stormwater Partners Retreat, Sheperdstown, WV
Jun 4-6	Choose Clean Water Conference, Lancaster, PA
June 4 (tent)	Chesapeake Executive Committee Meeting (TBD)

TOPIC UPDATES

Final Phase II Watershed Implementation Plans Submitted

On Friday, March 30, the Chesapeake Bay states and the District of Columbia submitted their final Phase II Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) to EPA. The jurisdictions' implementation plans identify how they are working with local partners to put measures in place by 2017 that will achieve at least 60 percent of the nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment reductions needed to restore the Bay. EPA officials will spend the next several weeks conducting a detailed review of the final Phase II Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs), working closely with the states to ensure the viability of their commitments. The Phase II WIP submissions are available online through the EPA website www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl, which provides links to the plans where they are posted on jurisdiction websites.

2011 Progress Runs

A preliminary draft of the 2011 progress run was shared with state technical staff on Monday, April 2. Jurisdictions were asked to review the data and concur with it or provide revised data by Friday, April 6. Based on any changes after this latest review, CBPO will share the progress run results with the WQGIT by about April 16.

Milestones

Work continues on the templates that will be used to communicate progress on nutrient and sediment reductions to the Chesapeake Executive Council at its 2012 annual meeting. The draft templates will be worked through the Milestones Workgroup and we will likely hold a special meeting of the Management Board via conference call in late April to discuss the comprehensive package of materials that will be used to report implementation progress.

CBP BMP Verification Program Development

****See Attachment A (below) for a detailed update**

Decision Framework Implementation

Each Goal Implementation Team (GIT) chair committed to put at least one goal of their respective goal team through the CBP's Decision Framework by the end of March 2012.

Brief summaries, documenting the GITs' work on developing Decision Framework (DF) documentation—based on reports provided to the Decision Framework Implementation Workgroup (DFIW)-- follows.

The Chair of the DFIW will provide more detailed documentation of each GIT's use of the Decision Framework and demonstrate how this information will be used by the MB to coordinate and facilitate across the GITs will be presented during the May 9, 2012 Management Board meeting. Additional information is available on the DFIW website at: www.chesapeakebay.net/groups/group/decision_framework_implementation_workgroup

- *Fisheries GIT*: The GIT coordinator and staffer have been working with DFIW mentors to develop DF documentation for the oyster goal, which were presented to the GIT Executive Board for comment on 3/26/12.
- *Habitat GIT*: Completed: The GIT coordinator and staffer have been working with DFIW mentors to develop DF documentation for the fish passage and wetlands goals. The GIT Executive Committee has been reviewing the documentation and revised drafts will be discussed during the week of 3/27/12.
- *Water Quality GIT*: Workgroup staff have been working with DFIW mentors to develop and revise DF documentation for the stormwater and wastewater goals. DFIW mentors also developed a discussion paper for the overarching GIT goal (related to the TMDL), that was discussed with GIT leadership on March 28. Paper will be revised and shared with WQGIT at their May meeting.
- *Healthy Watersheds GIT*: The GIT has drafted two DFs that document general strategies for the overarching GIT goal and a single project to develop a healthy watershed tracking capability. The drafts are works in progress and will continue to be modified as GIT discussions continue.
- *Stewardship GIT*: The GIT coordinator and staffer have developed draft DF documentation for the public access goal. The GIT will be reviewing the documentation and final documentation will be developed simultaneously with the finalization of the "Chesapeake Bay Region Public Access Plan." GIT 5's land conservation and education teams are each developing processes to identify metrics to measure goal progress. Upon completion of metric identification and goal measurement process, the DF documentation will be completed for the land conservation and education goals.
- *Partnership GIT*: Chair of the DFIW drafted DF documentation for the decision framework goal based on discussions during a GIT conference call. This document is being distributed to DFIW members for feedback during the week of 3/27/12.

Chesapeake Executive Council Meeting Planning

The Executive Council Planning Team has held two meetings to date. The team is meeting every other week in April and will meet weekly in May.) The team has discussed several aspects of the 2012 EC Meeting but no final decisions have been made to date.

The EC Chair, Lisa Jackson, has expressed interest in holding the 2012 EC meeting adjacent to the 2012 Choose Clean Water (CCW) Conference, scheduled for June 5-6 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The CCW Coalition and conference attracts many watershed organizations across the Bay region; many with an interest in attending the EC meeting. The tentative date and location for the EC meeting is Monday, June 4 in Lancaster at the

Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square. The EC Chair is expected to send a letter to the EC members soon, proposing this date and location. *Important note: the EC Meeting will be a stand-alone event, as usual, and not part of the CCW Conference.*

The planning team is already discussing possible themes for this year's meeting. Current ideas for further development (and/or combination) are: Urban & Ag: Working Together for Cleaner Waters; Stewardship at the Local Government Level; Monitoring: Showing that Efforts Make a Difference.

Although EC members should expect to hear directly from EC Chair Jackson about the meeting date, MB members are asked to confirm there is a "hold" on their EC member's calendar.

Final Executive Order 2012 Action Plan and 2011 Progress Report

The final FY2012 Action Plan and FY2011 Progress Report, required by Executive Order 13508 on the Chesapeake Bay, was published on Friday, March 30, 2012. The FY2011 Progress Report illustrates the value of federal agencies working together—drawing on the unique skills and assets of federal programs—to more effectively and more efficiently protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The focus of the first year was on establishing the necessary infrastructure and mechanisms to implement on-the-ground actions over the long run. The advancements reflected in the Progress Report are the result of work by multiple partners, including federal-state collaborations.

The FY12 Action Plan outlines a tangible list of next steps to be taken by Federal agencies in support of the Executive Order for Bay restoration based on the FY12 Presidential budget. Some are continuations of projects started in FY 2011, others are new initiatives that build earlier work. The Action Plan highlights a comprehensive database of key actions and initiatives to be accomplished in FY2012. Both documents are posted on the Executive Order website at: <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net>. The Federal Leadership Committee (FLC) issued a press release and held a press availability call with several FLC representatives.

2011 Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Report

On March 28, the CBP issued a press release on SAV in the Bay. It noted that in 2011, the abundance of underwater grasses in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal rivers declined by 16,590 acres from 2010 figures. Grass beds declined from 79,664 acres in 2010 to an estimated 63,074 acres in 2011. This is the lowest Bay-wide acreage since 2006 and is much more typical of what was observed prior to 1991 when grass acreages were at the lowest levels recorded by the aerial survey. Only 57,956 acres were mapped Bay-wide in 2011 and an estimated 5,119 additional acres may have been present (for an estimated Bay-wide total of 63,074).

Experts agree that extreme environmental conditions in both 2010 and 2011 contributed strongly to the decline last year. The summer of 2010 was unusually hot, causing eelgrass beds in the lower bay to severely die back after they had been surveyed earlier in the year. Then in spring of 2011, during the growth season, heavy rains and freshwater runoff created very muddy conditions for many low salinity species, in the upper Bay and tributaries. This was followed in September and October by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee that again muddied the water."

Despite Bay-wide losses, there was also some good and surprising news for underwater grasses last year. Researchers were pleased to find that a huge, dense bed on the Susquehanna Flats, which had increased 3-fold in size since 1991 and passed restorations goals in 2008 through 2010, persisted through the storms and demonstrated how resilient such grass beds can be to water quality disturbances. Additionally, due to a growth of widgeon grass (which fluctuates annually), grass acreages increased over 1,200 acres in Eastern Bay, 2,400 acres in the Choptank River and over 300 acres each in the Little Choptank and Honga Rivers. For more information: http://www.chesapeakebay.net/blog/post/underwater_bay_grass_acreage_decreases_21_percent_in_2011

CBP Goal Implementation Team Updates

GIT 2 – Habitat

The Habitat GIT continues to work with the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture to refine brook trout restoration metrics. The Management Board will be provided a detailed briefing during the May meeting.

GIT 2 also will be working with STAC on a "Targeting Restoration of Coastal Habitat Complexes" workshop planned for winter 2013. The workshop will refine targeting for coastal wetlands, living shorelines, and SAV to help Chesapeake Bay Program partners meet multiple goals by providing maximum benefits to water quality and living resources.

GIT 3 – Water Quality

2011 Progress Runs – A preliminary draft of the 2011 progress run was shared with state technical staff on Monday, April 2. Jurisdictions were asked to review the data and concur with it or provide revised data by Friday, April 6. Based on any changes after this latest review, CBPO will share the progress run results with the WQGIT by about April 16.

GIT 6 – Partnering and Leadership

Two GIT 6 workgroups—the Decision Framework Implementation Workgroup and the ChesapeakeStat Workgroup—are supporting the other GITs as they implement the adaptive management process through the newly-adopted decision framework. Each GIT chair committed to put at least one GIT goal through the CBP's decision framework by the end of March. Individual development leads from GIT 6 have been working directly with each of the other GITs and their workgroups upon request. The results of this process will be discussed at the May Management Board meeting. The GIT is also helping to develop a process for managing and implementing the program's multi-step process related to program alignment approved by the PSC.

Following a program commitment that responds to a request from the PSC to consider options to address the CBP's ongoing need for independent evaluation, the GIT staff is drafting a charge document. The charge will be offered to the PSC for their consideration, and once final, will be returned to the GIT to guide work to develop options.

The GIT developed a 2012 workplan which defines the structure and goals of the team. Specifically, its goals for 2012 are: (1) enhance meeting management, (2) provide superior information technology support, (3) support GITs in implementing adaptive

management through the decision framework, (4) address governance issues, (5) continue to develop a Chesapeake*Stat* website to support decision-making, and (6) develop and implement options for independent evaluation of the program to promote continual improvement.

Partner Updates

Maryland Passes Bay-related Legislation

In the last hours of the 2012 Legislative Session, the Maryland General Assembly adopted several bills intended to help Chesapeake Bay watershed restoration efforts:

- HB 987, Stormwater Management – the Assembly passed the Senate version of the bill which requires Maryland's largest localities, including Baltimore City and its suburbs, to levy fees to pay for controlling polluted runoff from streets, parking lots and buildings. State, county and municipal governments and volunteer fire companies from having to pay any fees.
- HB 446, Bay Restoration Fees – this bill increases the so called “flush fee” –from \$2.50 to \$5 monthly—charged to Maryland households and businesses in the Bay watershed. The increase is expected to bring \$385 million in additional revenue to the Bay Restoration Fund by 2017 to upgrade 67 wastewater treatment plants. Money from the fund is also used to subsidize septic system upgrades and farm cover crops.
- SB 236, Sustainable Growth and Preservation Act – the “septic bill” creates a four-tiered system that restricts where developers can build large-scale residential developments that use septic systems rather than public water and wastewater treatment facilities.

All three bills will be sent to Governor Martin O'Malley for signature.

Lafayette River Oyster and Wetlands Restoration Event

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and partners will celebrate oyster and wetlands restoration work in the Lafayette River at an event at 10 a.m. on April 27 at the Hermitage Museum and Gardens in Norfolk, Virginia. Speakers will include NOAA Acting Assistant Administrator Sam Rauch, Virginia State Senator Ralph Northam, and Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim (tentative), as well as representatives from the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office, NOAA Restoration Center, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Elizabeth River Project, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The event will highlight NOAA's contribution of more than \$320,000 in funding for oyster restoration (including survey work by the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office) and \$130,000 for wetlands restoration. Media and congressional staffers are expected to attend.

Recent Events

March 1-2	Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting (Charlottesville, VA)
March 1-2	Local Government Advisory Committee Meeting (Washington, DC)
Mar 30	Final Phase II WIP submissions

Attachment A:

Chesapeake Bay Program's BMP Verification Program Development Update

April 11, 2012 CBP Management Board Conference Call

Working Up Through the Partnership

All the partnership's policy committees and advisory committees have been fully briefed, and all the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team's workgroups have discussed the partnership's BMP verification program at least twice now.

Policy Committees

- **Principals' Staff Committee:** February 16
- **Management Board:** February 8, March 6

CBP Advisory Committees

- **Citizens Advisory Committee:** March 1
- **Local Governments Advisory Committee:** March 1
- **Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee:** March 27

Goal Implementation Teams

- **Water Quality Goal Implementation Team:** January 9, February 13, March 12, April 9
 - **Agricultural Workgroup:** January 12, March 8
 - **Forestry Workgroup:** February 1, February 27, March 6
 - **Trading and Offsets Workgroup:** January 18, February 22
 - **Stormwater Workgroup:** February 8, March 20
 - **Wastewater Treatment Workgroup:** February 7, April 3
- **Vital Habitats Goal Implementation Team** (being scheduled)

BMP Verification Steering Committee Established

Under the WQGIT, the BMP Verification Steering Committee has been convened and met via conference call on March 27.

The Steering Committee membership, listed below in alphabetical order, is based on jurisdictional appointments and requests which went out to the WQGIT's workgroups and key involved stakeholders.

- Bill Angstadt, Delaware Maryland Agribusiness Association
- Russ Baxter, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Evan Branosky, World Resources Institute
- Valerie Frances, USDA Office of Environmental Markets

- Jack Frye, Chesapeake Bay Commission
- Roy Hoagland, Hope Impacts, Inc.
- Susan Marquart, NRCS Pennsylvania State Office
- Beth McGee, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Matt Monroe, West Virginia Department of Agriculture
- George Onyullo, District of Columbia Department of Environment
- John Rhoderick, Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Aaron Ristow, Upper Susquehanna Coalition
- Ann Swanson, Chesapeake Bay Commission
- Jennifer Volk, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
- Andy Zemba, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection*
- Hank Zygmunt, Resource Dynamics Inc.

* Pat Buckley, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, alternate

Set of BMP Verification Principles Drafted/Reviewed

The Steering Committee has reviewed and begun commenting on the preliminary draft list of BMP verification principles starting at its March 27 conference call. Based on feedback from that conference call as well as one-on-one phone calls with each Steering Committee member, a revised draft set of BMP principles will be shared with the WQGIT, Vital Habitats GIT and the source sector/habitat workgroups within the next two weeks for their use, review, and comment.

BMP Verification Panel Charge/Membership Drafted/Reviewed

The Steering Committee has reviewed and begun commenting on the preliminary draft charge to the BMP Verification Panel and recommended membership starting at its March 27 conference call. Based on feedback from that conference call as well as one-on-one phone calls with each Steering Committee member, a revised draft BMP Verification Panel charge and membership will be shared with the WQGIT, Vital Habitats GIT and their source sector/habitat workgroups within the next two weeks for their use, review, and comment.

BMP Verification Web Page Content Drafted/Reviewed

The Steering Committee has reviewed and begun commenting on the proposed format and content for a BMP verification web page starting at its March 27 conference call. The web page will be posted on the CBP partnership's www.chesapeakebay.net web site. The web page is being designed as an information source for the partners and the growing number of stakeholders involved in the development of the watershed-wide BMP verification program, where one can access the latest briefing materials, links to other verification documentation, and the meetings and conference calls where verification is on the agenda.