

SUMMARY
Trading and Offsets Workgroup (TOWG)
Conference Call
Wednesday, March 19th, 2014, 10:00AM – 12:00PM
<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/21189/>

Introductions & Updates

- David Foster (Phoenix Initiatives; TOWG Chair) convened the call and reviewed the [agenda](#).
- Jeremy Hanson (CRC, CBPO; TOWG Staff) verified participants

Updates

- Hanson called for updates from the workgroup; none were raised.

Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) project updates

- Molly Cark (CBF) described the Foundation's CIG project titled Operationalizing Water Quality Trading in the Chesapeake Bay. She reviewed the project background, objectives, approach, and the timeline for the project. View [her presentation](#) for more details.
- Olivia Devereux (Devereux Environmental Consulting): who enters the data into NutrientNet? How much interaction does the farmer have with NutrientNet directly?
 - Clark: The conservation staff (VA) or Red Barn (PA). Not much farmer interaction directly with that tool. They return to the farmer with results from the tool and scenarios.
- Russ Baxter (VA Dept. Secretary of Natural Resources): we have regulations in development to establish baselines for agriculture. Is that the baseline for VA, or are they using the tool based on land use and installed BMPs? Might want to look at the draft regulations since they change.
 - Clark noted that Mindy Selman (WRI) is keeping an eye on the regulations and baseline discussions. The tool gives a numeric baseline, just for information purposes.
- Ridge Hall (Chesapeake Legal Alliance): A distinction between performance and practice based baselines was mentioned. The focus seemed to be on baseline. Are you also looking at where farmers are going beyond baseline for credit generation?
 - Clark: The main purpose is generating information for the tool and evaluating when a producer meets baseline. Once we have all the farms entered we can see where they are in relation to baseline. The analysis will include an assessment of how many credits
 - Bevin Buchheister (CBC): how do interfaces differ from state to state?
 - Clark: Same tool, but each state interface allows mapping in that state and includes differences in baseline requirements.
 - Clark noted that for all deliverables they are at least 3 years away.
- Eric Sprague (ACB) described the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's CIG project for facilitating forest-based offsets. He explained Forests for the Bay, which is a network of professionals to help provide access to funding and provide assistance to landowners. He reviewed the tools and approach of the project. View [his presentation](#) for more details.

- Sprague noted the crediting platform is not live at this time. That is why some of the text is in Latin in the screenshots within the presentations.
- Foster: permanent or 20-30 year harvest cycle?
 - The rules depend on the program. With forest mitigation banking it has to be permanent.
- Foster: Have there been any calculations for cost-effectiveness? How does the cost-effectiveness of Forest based BMPs compare to other BMPs for Nitrogen and Phosphorus?
 - Sprague: Not through this project, but the Forestry Workgroup has been doing work on this. Forest conservation is very cost-effective over the long term and they also provide many other benefits.
- Buchheister: is there a tool that anyone can use that summarizes the benefits of a forest vs developed site?
 - Sprague: The crediting platform can provide an estimate of the air and water quality benefits.
 - Buchheister: is forest mitigation banking unique to Maryland, or is it common in other states?
 - Sprague: Maryland is unique because of its Critical Area Law and the Forest Conservation Law.
 - Ron Entringer (NYSDEC) noted the Upper Susquehanna Coalition runs a wetlands mitigation program and are interested in the prospect of forest mitigation and conservation banking.

Adjourned

Participants

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
David Foster (Chair)	Chester River Association
John Rhoderick (Vice-Chair)	Maryland Department of Agriculture
Pat Gleason (Coordinator)	EPA Region III
Jeremy Hanson (Staff)	Chesapeake Research Consortium
Russ Baxter	VA, Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources for the Chesapeake Bay
Robert Boos	PENNVEST
Allen Brockenbrough	VA DEQ
Bevin Buchheister	Chesapeake Bay Commission
Sally Claggett	U.S. Forest Service, CBPO
James Davis-Martin	VA DEQ
Olivia Devereux	Devereux Environmental Consulting
Ron Entringer	NYDEC
Patrick Fanning	AquaLaw
Ridge Hall	Chesapeake Legal Alliance, Inc.
Chris Hartley	USDA, OEM
Craig Highfield	Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Nicki Kasi	PA DEP
Rick Parrish	Southern Environmental Center
Susan Payne	MDA
Elizabeth Price	UMCES
Nicole Rovner	The Nature Conservancy
Ginny Snead	Berger Group
Eric Sprague	Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Melinda Tomaino	Associated General Contractors
George van Houtven	RTI