Chesapeake Bay Program
Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 7, 2020
10:00 AM to 11:30 AM
Calendar Page: Link

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Decision: WTWG approved the March and April meeting minutes.

Action: Jess Rigelman and Sucharith Ravi will work with ATTAINS to make XML inventory data available on request basis.

Action: Jeff Sweeney will present on credit duration issues to the Ag Workgroup.

Action: WTWG members will submit data from model scenarios showing the effect of back-out and cut-off procedures.

Action: The WTWG will discuss back-out and cut off procedures further at a future WTWG meeting.

Action: Hilary Swartwood will add the following WTWG members to the BMP Verification Ad- Hoc Action Team Membership List:
   o   Matt English, DC DOEE
   o   Brittany Sturgis, DNREC
   o   Ted Tesler, PA DEP
   o   Lisa Beatty, PA DEP

Agenda

<u>10:00 AM</u> – **Introductions and Announcements** – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC (20 min.)

- Approval of March and April Meeting Minutes
   o   **Decision:** WTWG approved the March and April meeting minutes.
- Upcoming CAST webinars – Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting
   o   *CAST Webinar: Modeling Stream Restoration*
      ▪   *Thursday, May 14th at Noon*
   o   *CAST webinars will be on summer break until fall*
- Updates on CAST - 2019
   o   *Conversations with the states separately on changes into the model and answering questions the states have on the model changes.*
      ▪   *Two big questions that have been received and answered:*
         • *planning targets do not change; they were set in 2017 model.*

- - The 2025 goals are the same for CAST 2019. Milestone goals can change because when the new BMPs are received and the new scenarios are run, the trajectory can change.
    - Model Documentation in CAST:
      - Comparison of loads and inputs between CAST 2017d and CAST 2019 Data Visualization tool
      - Technical documentation of the change between CAST 2017d and CAST 2019
    - Information on [CAST 19 version changes](#).
- Member and participant announcements
  - VA is not allowed to use Zoom. WV, DoD, MDA, and DC has access to teams and WebEx. DE does not have access to teams, yet (the work was halted and not sure when it will resume).
  - MDA IT Dept stated that: "State employees will be able to use Google Hangouts or Microsoft Teams as a secure video teleconferencing solution. State employees attending meetings scheduled by external organizations that use Zoom should use the "dial-in" feature if video services or screen sharing is not required or use the "web-client"." MD can join Zoom through the web browser but not through the app.
  - No Adobe Connect: do not have mute function and there were also issues because EPA changed conference lines and those lines were part of the reason why Adobe connect worked for EPA.
  - WebEx and Teams were discussed as alternatives to zoom.

10:30 AM – **Challenges during COVID-19** – Cassandra Davis, NYSDEC and Jeff Sweeney, EPA (15 min.)

Cassandra Davis and Jeff Sweeney will lead a discussion on COVID- 19 and any experienced and/or anticipated challenges with work related to model progress and planning scenarios, restoration projects and tracking and report of BMP data, TMDL accounting, etc.

Discussion:
PA is experiencing some county level staff furloughs, so reporting is delayed. Inspections are down about 60%. About 50% of plan writing is going on. This may trickle up the ladder. They are experiencing some slowdowns in data processing.

MDA's resource conservation districts developed guidelines for them to resume portions of their implementation and data collection. Certainly, expect to see these delays reflected in the data.

VA has vacancies that will remain unfilled, so they are understaffed and don't see that changing in the near future. Bill Keeling said that VA is looking at state employee furloughs.

DE agrees with what is being said. Their cover crop program is not being implemented this year.

DC said that they are in the same boat as everyone else. They have not been able to go out to do inspections, so their numbers are expected to go down.

VA is looking at long-term impact. Most local governments are significantly curtailing improvement projects. There is going to be a lack of implementation as well.

WWTP upgrades may be delayed. MD has a budget freeze and they don't know if that means the bay program restoration funds too.

10:45 AM – **NEIEN Schema Updates** – Jess Rigelman, J7 (15 min.)

Jess Rigelman will review changes in DET due to request to make schema elements that are not used in NEIEN or CAST not required.

Discussion:
Jess Rigelman reviewed the minor changes in DET, particularly removing elements that are not required in NEIEN anymore. The document was updated to include changes to the schema that Maryland and Virginia requested last year to the NEIEN schema to simplify what is required. The excel file shows items no longer required/removed from schema in red and added item in green. A BMP label item was added at the request of the Bay Program for tracking future Conowingo BMPs. A large section of items was added to the schema for BMP trading.

Each XML has a contact entity details and information on who is submitting the file. The NPS BMP Identify has information on the contact entity details (agency and state) and that information needs to be repeated for every BMP.

Maryland and Virginia had comments on the added tracking for BMP trading in the NEIEN script. Volume of trading BMPs is small compared to non-trading BMPs. Current priority is reporting non-trading BMPs. Pennsylvania is looking to a modification to the schema to report BMPs. PA currently doesn't have a software developed that can handle trading BMPs.

Bill Keeling said that his name and address for DEQ is not needed just that the submission came from DEQ. He then said removing as much of the contact information as they can from XML would be helpful because it seems overly redundant. Jess Rigelman said that the schema doesn't require all of this information. In general, it doesn't need to be in the file. Bill Keeling said that the point of this was to remove unnecessary redundancy. Greg Sandi stated that the individual identifier is used to identify the different xml files and is definitely a required field. Jess Rigelman asked Bill Keeling to reach out to his IT staff about any redundancies that should be removed and she will do the same.

Jess Rigelman then said that MD and VA had questions and comments on the trading information. Greg Sandi said that he has concerns about expanding the xml, considering the amount of records that they are dealing with in MD. In the future, they may not use this section as frequently as predicted. Until MD starts seeing significant trades, they probably won't use this section as much. Right now, MD primarily focuses on local water quality trading credits and hasn't even started trading across the state.

Bill Keeling said that VA is still having trouble getting regular BMPs recorded so these trading BMPs and green "files" are a low priority. The volume of trading BMPs for VA is low compared to the regular BMPs. Greg Sandi said that he thinks there is time to review any technical flaws before any serious trading begins. He said that this is a foundation we can work with and tweak as we move forwards. However, he doesn't feel that MD will be using this consistently in the immediate future. MD has some other steps they need to take before this would happen. Ted Tesler said that like VA, they use the same platform and while they are looking to do a modification to include this schema, but they are

currently limited. Ted Tesler said he would love to work around this and be able to report these BMPs but they don't have the platform to handle these BMPs. We would welcome refinement of this before they take any sort of development, but PA would welcome short term solution as well.

James Martin said that he knows this discussion has been floating between a few groups in the last few years and he thinks that having this forced into the partnership is not right. James Martin then said that trading BMPs are zero-sum game because as soon as those BMPs sell, then you can no longer use that BMP. Since all states already have trading programs in place, they don't need a tracking device. If these are included in the schema all of them should not be required until some of the complications in the guidance have been addressed. Once this has been addressed, then it should be brought up to the WQGIT.

Jeff Sweeney said that in the trading and offsets WG there was a lot of concern about particular BMPs in trading programs where the certification was millions of pounds of nitrogen for a single facility. It's not a mechanism to duplicate what the states are doing. The question we were asked is how much would the TMDL model say these BMPs are worth.

James Martin asked if you wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of BMP in the TMDL model you simply open CAST and build a scenario, why does it need to be in the schema for our annual progress reporting? Jeff Sweeney said that they have no way of knowing of which BMPs are involved in a trade.

Bill Keeling asked what happens if a BMP is backed out? Jeff Sweeney said that they are not looking at specific BMPs they are only looking at them in general. Bill Keeling stated that CAST didn't exist when states were creating their trading programs. Cassie Davis suggested that this be made a future agenda item.

Ted Tesler said that if there was simpler way to do this, then that would be better. Jeff Sweeney said that this is the purpose of this discussion. The whole idea of using NEIEN is to get a sense of what BMPs are involved in trades. James Martin said that each state's trading program has this information. Jeff Sweeney asked if the information is easily accessible and simple? The states said that there aren't that many pages of data. Jeff Sweeney said this might be an easier way to do it as opposed to inputting everything into NEIEN. Jess Rigelman clarified that everything she went over, which includes the trading elements, are not required. She also specified that the EPA already approved the schema.

Action: Jess Rigelman and Sucharith Ravi will work with ATTAINS to make XML inventory data available on request basis.

11:00 AM – **Schedule for TMDL-Related Measures + BMP Verification** – Jeff Sweeney, EPA (30 min.)

Jeff will provide an update on the current schedule for TMDL-related measures including 2019 Progress (CAST17) and Milestone evaluations. Also, the WTWG will continue to discuss and advance assignments from the WQGIT related to BMP verification.

Discussion:
EPA has finished evaluations of progress to date and of the next milestone period. Currently conducting one-on-one discussions with the jurisdictions to review numeric and programmatic milestones. There are no milestone scenarios from the states, the numeric milestones are included as part of the programmatic milestone. Milestones evaluations will be available publicly July 29th.

On the letter from WQGIT to the management board, issues III and IV have been resolved and no other actions are needed to be taken. The remaining actions will be discussed in the BMP ad-hoc team.

Issue II: Timing of Review and Approval of QAPPs
Action needed: Charge the WTWG to develop options for more consistent approaches for reporting and documentation inspection dates as part of the annual BMP verification reporting to the EPA CBPO. Recommendations will then be shared with the WQGIT for their review and approval.

Action taken: December 1st or later date.

Bill Keeling asked for clarification on when QAPPs would be due. Jeff Sweeney stated that in the minutes, people concurred that QAPPs should be submitted, at the earliest, by December 1st but can also be submitted later. Bill Keeling stated that later would be better for VA.

Issue VI: Revisiting Credit Duration
Action for Issues V and VI: The WQGIT was charged with convening an ad-hoc action team to discuss BMP credit duration and lifespan. Composition of this action team should include all WQGIT signatory representatives; WQGIT at-large members; a representative from each source sector workgroup; and a representative from each of the three Advisory Committees (Local Government, Citizens, and Science & Technical). Additional membership to include national experts on verification could be explored.
- A specific charge, the purpose, and targeted objectives will be developed, as well as a timeline for fulfilling the charge. It is likely that this action team may be convened in the future to discuss new verification concerns and issues

Not directed to the WTWG but it would be good to have discussions on this topic. Plan to reform verification group to discuss these topics. Workgroups need to make proposals to credit durations.

James Martin said that the WQGIT is looking at a potential GIT-funded project to do some of this literature review, for lack of a better word, for the BMP Verification Action Team. Jeff Sweeney asked if jurisdictions are okay with this or if it should go to the WGs? Sarah Lane asked how many practices are dealing with credit- duration are we looking at? Jeff Sweeney said that there are over 300 practices but of the 300 can be grouped into categories, but they would have different credit lives in the model. Norm Goulet said that he would be somewhat concerned that this stuff may be forced into our groups. I think it should be up to the WG/ source sector groups to come up with a solution. Loretta Collins said that process wise this action team said that this group is mostly people appointed from the WQGIT, but do we need to establish and have an action team meeting before we go after credit duration? Loretta Collins also agrees with Norm that rather than reviewing 300 BMPs, maybe we need to highlight the ones people have concerns with specifically instead. From a technical point of view there is a push and pull between what the science says and the realities of doing inspections on the ground. Jeff Sweeney said that these are good points and it may be better to wait till the committee meets before this group makes any decisions regarding this action item.

Action: Jeff Sweeney will present on credit duration issues to the Ag Workgroup.

Issue V: Alternatives to the "all or nothing" approach to BMP verification
Ted Tesler said that the time element has always been a challenge and this whole effort to try to parce sub conditions, it's really easy to get lost in the weeds on this. Jeff Sweeney said that the Ad- Hoc team may task the WGs to look at credit- duration, if funding is not provided to do this. Dave Montali asked

if credit duration and Issue 5 or just credit duration? Jeff Sweeney said that the BMP Verification Ad-Hoc Team is addressing all these issues. Since the WTWG has already addressed some of the issues, Jeff Sweeney wants to be prepared to give an update at the verification team's meeting. The Ad-Hoc Action Team is supposed to include members from source sector workgroups etc. James Martin said that WTWG should consider itself a source sector workgroup and have a representative present for the meetings.

Issue IV: Ensuring transparency in how verification is treated in terms of Credit Duration
Action needed: The WTWG was charged with finding solutions to the condition where error and validation reports for Progress BMP submissions are not publicly available.

Actions taken: This has been discussed at previous WTWG meetings. Validation and error reports will be made available through CAST for the final versions of the Progress scenarios. Lucinda Power will follow up with the CAST development and Chesapeake Bay Program Communications teams to discuss options for presenting the error reports (e.g., graphical representation or numeric tabular form), as well as the development of fact sheets about the overall progress and verification reporting and assessment.

James Martin asked whether the validation and error reports will be integrated into the credited reports or does it mean that links will be provided in CAST. Jeff Sweeney said the latter. James Martin said that making the final progress scenario available only through a link may not be sufficient. Jeff Sweeney said that these reports are related to something in CAST 2017 and now we are using CAST 2019, so that's one of the issues. Olivia Devereux stated that they don't have all the data in CAST that is in NEIEN so it's unclear what the technical solution would be. Jess Rigelman said that there is a lot of translation before NEIEN ever gets in CAST. They are two separate reports/ systems. James Martin said that they are translated already-so if you have the translator, couldn't you take that and translate the validation and error reports into CAST too? Jess Rigelman said that that isn't really how it works. They can't back-translate. Bill Keeling said that they are looking at a link then base on this discussion. Jeff Sweeney said that this can evolve through time in terms of refining CAST to better serve the users.

Issue VII: Back-out and cut-off Procedures
Jeff Sweeney said that this issue is related to another issue regarding dropping off efficiencies over time as oppose to the whole thing dropping off at a certain point. In the interest of time, we can look at this at a different meeting. We had asked states/ jurisdictions to provide feedback on this issue so that we have that information to provide the WQGIT. States can still provide feedback regarding back-out / cut- off procedures.

Action: WTWG members will submit data from model scenarios showing the effect of back-out and cut-off procedures.

Action: The WTWG will discuss back-out and cut off procedures further at a future WTWG meeting.

Action: Hilary Swartwood will add the following WTWG members to the BMP Verification Ad- Hoc Action Team Membership List:
- o Matt English, DC DOEE
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- o Ted Tesler, PA DEP
- o Lisa Beatty, PA DEP

- o Emily Dekar, USC
- o Cassie Davis, NYSDEC

<u>11:30 AM</u> – **Adjourn**

Next meeting: **June 4th, 2020 from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

<u>Call Participants</u>
Hilary Swartwood, CRC
Alana Hartman, WVDEP
Elizabeth Hoffman, MDA
Jess Rigelman, J7
Brittany Sturgis, DNREC
Clare Sevcik, DNREC
Emily Dekar, USC
Cassie Davis, NYSDEC
Olivia Devereux, Devereux Consulting
Arianna Johns, VA DEQ
Ted Tesler, PA DEP
Jeff Sweeney, EPA
Lisa Beatty, PA DEP
Dave Montali, Tetra Tech WV
Matt English, DOEE
Clint Gill, DDA
Norm Goulet, NOVA
Bill Keeling, VA DEQ
KC Fillippino, HRDPC
Jessica Rodriguez, DoD
Sarah Lane, UMCES
Ruth Cassilly, UMD
Jeremy Hanson, VT
Loretta Collins, UMD
James Martin, VA DEQ
Greg Sandi, MDE
Sucharith Ravi, UMCES