Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Wetlands

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HGIT Co-Chair

Through the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, the Chesapeake Bay Program has committed to…*

Goal: *85,000 Acres*

Outcome: Continually increase the capacity of wetlands to provide water quality and habitat benefits throughout the watershed. Create or reestablish 85,000 acres of tidal and nontidal wetlands and enhance the function of an additional 150,000 acres of degraded wetlands by 2025.

What We Want

Asks:

1. **Assign** leaders and ensure active participation
2. **Centralize** acreage accounting via NEIEN
3. **Shift** structure of workgroup to reflect practitioner interests
4. **Support** participation in annual technical forum to foster information transfer
5. **Incentivize** prioritization using existing data

1

Setting the Stage:

What are our assumptions?

Logic Behind Our Outcome

Following the Decision Framework:

Factors Influencing Success:	Gaps:	Management Approaches:
• Funding • Landowner Willingness • Inaccurate and Incomplete Reporting • Value on Restoration by Decision Makers • Technical Knowledge • Climate Change	• Reporting Discrepancies • Dedicated funding • Technical Personnel Capacity • Comprehensive Maps • Watershed Wide Prioritization	1. Improve Mapping, Reporting and Tracking 2. Identify Barriers to Restoration 3. Increase technical Understanding 4. Prioritize Areas for Restoration 5. Expand Involvement by Local Stakeholders

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Gap: Tracking and Reporting Discrepancies

- Implementation of projects is decentralized
- Tracking definitions are inconsistent among partners and jurisdictions
- Lack of communication between natural resource and regulatory agency contacts
- Complexity of data inputs parallels that for nutrient/sediment load reductions

If Decision-Makers Value Wetlands, why is staff capacity a gap?

In September 2017, a survey was put out to gauge participation and satisfaction:

Would you consider Chairing the Wetland Workgroup:
16 / 19 Respondents said No

I'm not active b/c staff goals reflect on the ground conservation - not meetings. I have to meet delivery goals for conservation.
The workgroup would be very valuable if we could translate work to on the ground accomplishments.

The Bay Program is seen as vast bureaucracy that consumes staff time with no clear agency benefit.

Leading the wetlands restoration expert panel was a drain

I am not the right person to be answering your survey, I don't want to be active. I just read the emails to keep up with BMP changes.

The goals and outcomes of the workgroup do not align with the work I'm doing – I don't need to be more involved.

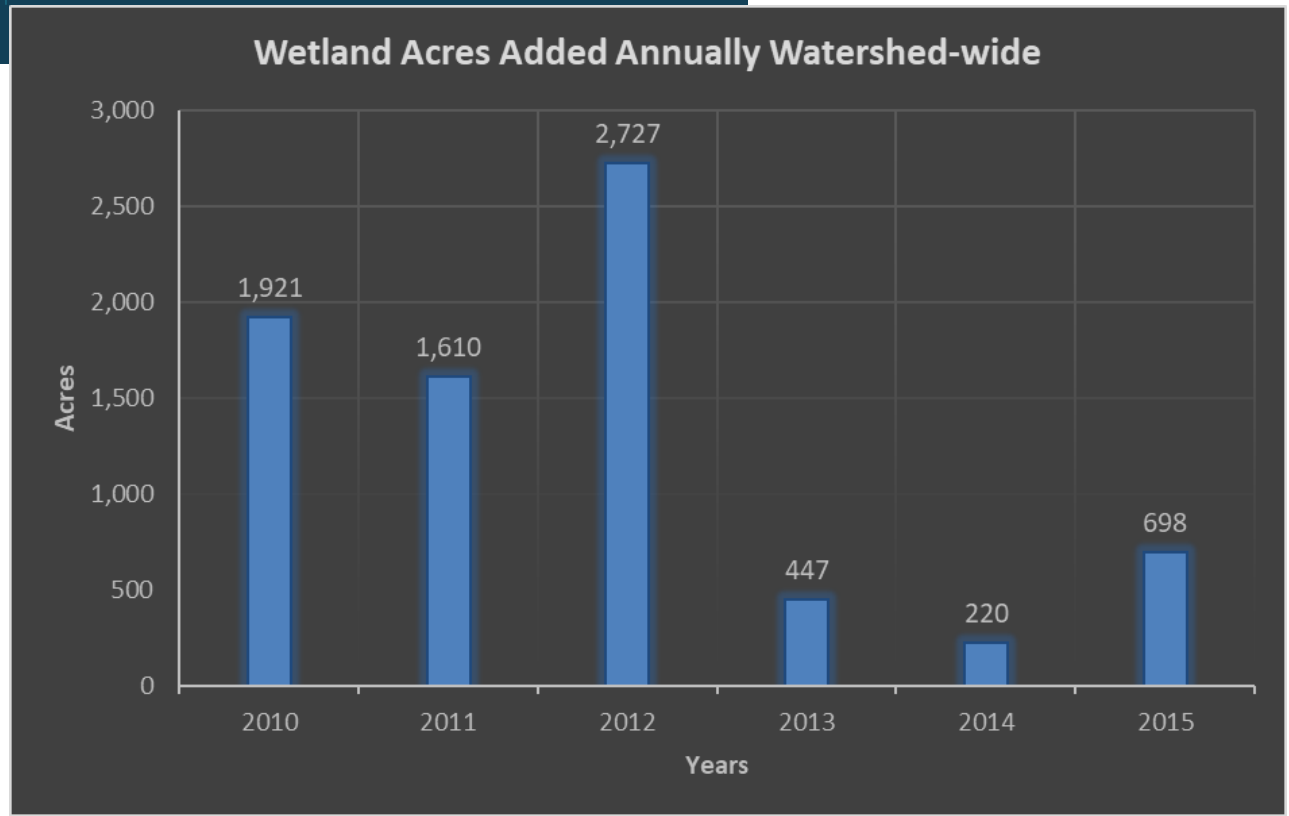
Unless I am directed by my Chain of Command, I will not be able to Chair a Workgroup

2

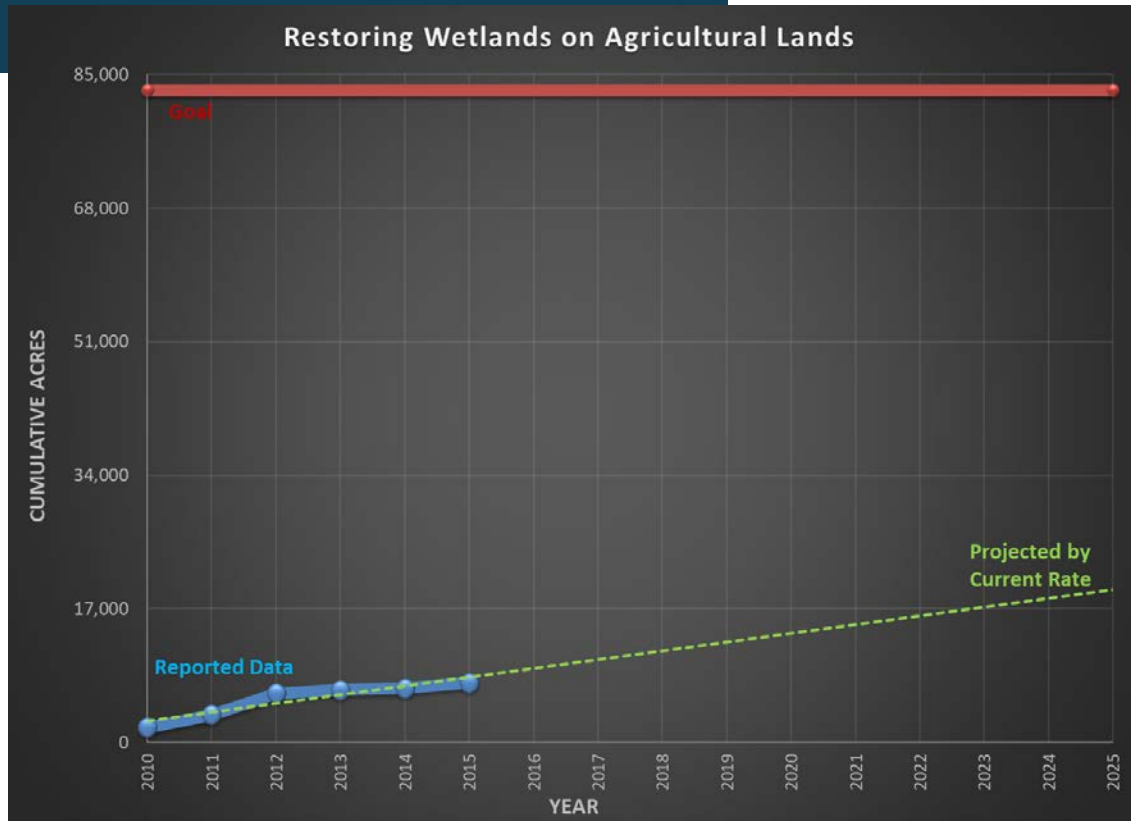
Progress:

Are we doing what we said we would do?

What is our progress?



Are we on track?



While this outcome includes a target to restore 85,000 acres of tidal and non-tidal wetlands in the watershed, 83,000 of these restored acres should take place on agricultural lands.

Analysis

Key Issues (Current and Future):

1. Reporting / Data collection
2. Landowner engagement

Wetlands Work – Landowner Willingness Progress

- GIT Funded Projects in multiple years to:
  - compile database of wetland programs/providers
  - conduct survey of landowner attitudes/willingness
  - target landowners based on survey results
- Wetlands Work website currently in development - with CBP Web team and Green Fin Productions
  - scheduled for release by end of summer 2018
  - content tailored to effectively engage landowners

3

Challenges:

Are our actions having the expected effect?

Challenges

Lessons Learned

- Overall lack of parity exists for data analysis and science support for outcomes other than water quality
- Data reporting burden hurts ability to recruit workgroup leaders and active participants
- Financial support to research wetland BMPs would inform Wetland Expert Panels and decisions on Phase 3 WIP implementation

4

Adaptations:

How should we adapt?

Based on what we've learned, we plan to…

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Management Approach 5

Ask 1: Assign leaders and ensure active participation

Lack of participation on Wetland Outcome is:

- Chronic (often raised, not effectively dealt with)
- Serious (impacts CBP's ability to make progress)
- Therefore deserves Management Board attention

Management Approach 1

Ask 2: Centralize Wetland Reporting Function via NEIEN

- Management Board recommend that wetland data collection function be assumed by the Chesapeake Bay Program Office
- Benefits:
  - streamline coordination among State agency staff
  - allow wetland acreages to be reported via InputDeck
  - allow workgroup members to focus on implementation

Ask 3: Shift structure of workgroup to reflect practitioner interests

- Establish an Action Team structure based on workplan items within a prescribed timeframe
- *Examples:*
  - *Science supporting wetlands as BMPs*
  - *Innovative restoration techniques and application*
  - *Crediting based on functionality*
  - *Financing options for projects*

Ask 4: Support staff participation in annual technical transfer forums

- Member-identified Need: efficient method for sharing of detailed technical information
- Support for Chesapeake State and partner wetland staff to participate in regional workshops or seminars
- Annual basis would allow consistency and long term collaboration among partners

Management Approach 4

Ask 5: Incentivize prioritization using existing data

- Project implementation is largely opportunistic
- GIS data exists that would prioritize site selection for water quality and habitat
- Incentivize via Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grants
- Overlay with cross-outcome benefits (black duck wintering/breeding, SAV, land protection, climate resilience)

Cross-Outcome Considerations

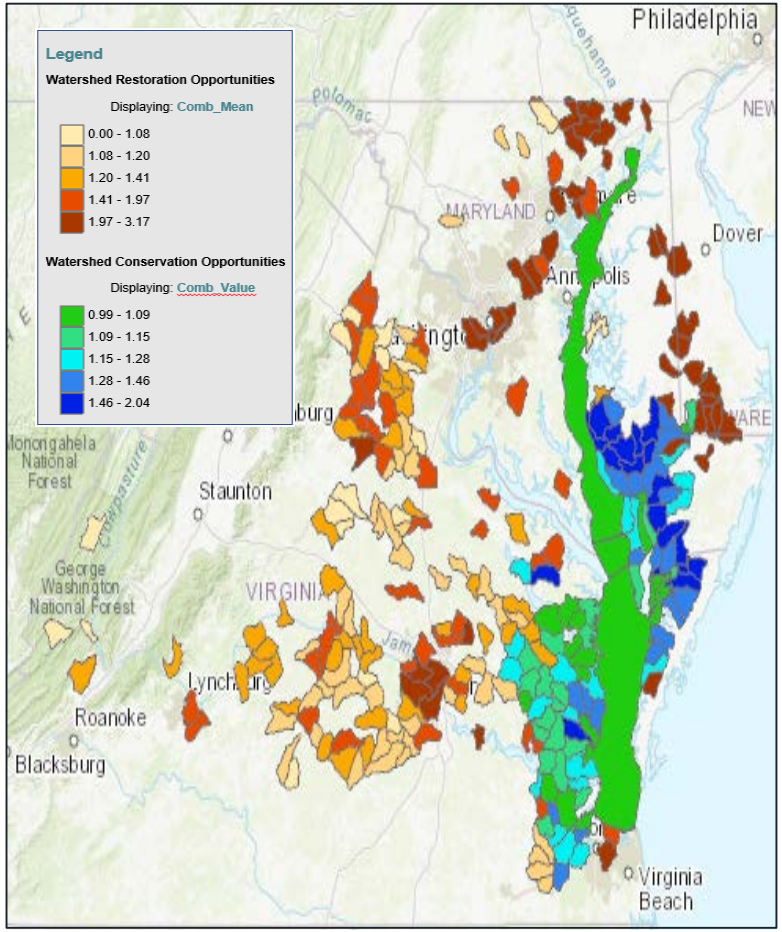
Restoration Metrics –

- Wetlands
- High pollution loading
- Marsh migration
- Low food availability (black duck)

Conservation Metrics –

- Wetlands
- Healthy Watersheds
- Marsh Migration
- High food availability (black duck)

Brown (restoration) and **Blue** (conservation) = High co-benefit opportunities



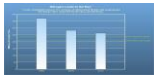
Agreement Goals and Outcomes

Sustainable Fisheries

- Blue Crab Abundance
- Blue Crab Management
- Oyster
- Forage Fish
- Fish Habitat

Vital Habitats Goal

- Wetlands
- Black Duck
- Stream Health
- Brook Trout
- Fish Passage
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV
- Forest Buffer
- Tree Canopy



Water Quality Goal

- 2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP)
- 2025 WIP
- Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring

Toxic Contaminants Goal

- Toxic Contaminants Research
  Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention

Healthy Watersheds Goal

- Healthy Waters

Stewardship Goal

- Citizen Stewardship
- Local Leadership
- Diversity

Land Conservation Goal

- Protected Lands
- Land Use Methods and Metrics Development
  Land Use Options Evaluation

Public Access Goal

- Public Access Site Development

Environmental Literacy Goal

- Student
- Sustainable Schools
- Environmental Literacy Planning

Climate Resiliency Goal

- Monitoring and Assessment
- Adaptation Outcome

What We Want

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Discussion