



## Communications Workgroup May Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2021 | 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### Participants:

Gregg Bortz, MD DNR (Chair)  
Rachel Felver, ACB (Coordinator)  
Marisa Baldine, CRC (Staffer)  
Aaron Ferster, EPA  
Adam Bray, ACB/CAC  
Amy Pelinsky, UMCES  
Anjelica Eitel, CBF  
Brian Hamilton, EPA  
Caitlyn Johnstone, ACB/CBP  
Cheryl Vosburg, Greensmith PR  
Cynamon Butler, CBT  
Emily Ramirez, UMCES  
Erin Montgomery, NPS/Chesapeake  
Conservancy  
Greg Barranco, EPA

Jake Solyst, ACB/CBP  
Jessica Fitzpatrick, USGS  
Kelly Donaldson, PA Sea Grant  
Kim Couranz, NOAA  
Kristin Saunders, UMCES/CBP  
Laura Cattell Noll, LGAC  
Lisa Tossey, MD Sea Grant  
Michelle DiNicola, PA DEP  
Mike Smith, Greensmith PR  
Ola-Imani Davis, ACB/LGAC  
Phil Miller, DE DNREC  
Samantha Beers, EPA  
Shannon Wehinger, PACD  
Tom Damm, EPA Region 3  
Will Parson, ACB/CBP

### I. Agenda

#### II. Shared Messaging: May ([Presentation](#)) (Marisa Baldine, CRC)

- A. May is American Wetlands Month and Garden for Wildlife Month.
- B. CBP will be sharing information about wetlands in the Bay region, the benefits of native plants and information about common invasive species.

#### III. Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week planning update ([Presentation](#)) (Marisa Baldine, CRC)

- A. Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week celebrates the culture, history and natural beauty of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- B. For 2021, we are focusing on recreation and the settings in which different activities take place. These themes were designed specifically to allow organizations to personalize daily messaging as much as they want to make the themes fit the mission of their organization.
- C. We need workgroup members to add their events to our “Attend an Events” calendar on [chesapeakebay.net](http://chesapeakebay.net), so we ask that you please share and complete our [Google form](#), so we can collect a list of events happening during Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week.
  - 1. Access the Google form here:  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfVoTu4IRDKJtwgAapSX-Y6bBOMcfqLFSMozGLLu25rFbqIKA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfVoTu4IRDKJtwgAapSX-Y6bBOMcfqLFSMozGLLu25rFbqIKA/viewform?usp=sf_link)
- D. A social media toolkit will be emailed to the entire workgroup before our next meeting and the planning team will provide an overview of the CBAW materials at the next meeting.



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### IV. DNREC Earth Day Video Contest (*Phil Miller, DE DNREC*)

- A. Received video entries from all three of the eligible age groups.
- B. Over 70 were videos submitted to the contest.
- C. Three videos were selected for prizes.
  - 1. Earth Day Video Contest Winners Mashup:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouDBFLRd5nM&list=PLQYeTDcl5WeHZ-J92kpBVOLoBu-pZjuoP&index=7>
  - 2. DNREC Earth Day Winner Ethan F.:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0\\_INRrU5y4&list=PLQYeTDcl5WeHZ-J92kpBVOLoBu-pZjuoP&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0_INRrU5y4&list=PLQYeTDcl5WeHZ-J92kpBVOLoBu-pZjuoP&index=10)
  - 3. DNREC Earth Day Winner John D.:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQs9OzERVaY&list=PLQYeTDcl5WeHZ-J92kpBVOLoBu-pZjuoP&index=11>
  - 4. DNREC Earth Day Winner Iveena M.:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qW8xl378svs&list=PLQYeTDcl5WeHZ-J92kpBVOLoBu-pZjuoP&index=12>
- D. All of the winners received \$500 and a Delaware State Park pass.
- E. The contest was mainly promoted on social media and by reaching out to schools.

### V. Overview of EPA Region 3 American Indian Tribes ([Presentation](#)) (*Brian Hamilton, EPA*)

- A. There's a growing effort to recognize that Europeans were not the first people here and we should recognize that these lands where our country is now situated, have been populated for time immemorial.
  - 1. The land in Annapolis, Maryland had three predominant tribes and inhabitants are still there.
    - a) The Susquehannock people, the Piscataway and the Nanticoke.
    - b) <https://native-land.ca/>
  - 2. The word Chesapeake comes from the Algonquian language.
    - a) "The namesake for our Bay could stem from a variety of places. The word Chesepiooc is an Algonquian word referring to a village "at a big river." The name "Chesapeake" may refer to the Chesepian or Chesapeake people, a Native American tribe who inhabited the area surrounding what is now known as Hampton Roads, Virginia. While some believe "Chesapeake" means something like "great shellfish bay," [Algonquian linguist Blair Rudes says it doesn't](#). Per Rudes, it more likely means something like "great water," or it may have referred to a village at the Bay's mouth."

(1) [Defining the Chesapeake](#) (Chesapeake Bay Foundation)

- B. Region 3 Tribal Program



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1. Seven federally recognized tribes are in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
  - a) Chickahominy Indian Tribe Providence Forge, VA
  - b) Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division Providence Forge, VA
  - c) Monacan Indian Nation Amherst, VA
  - d) Nansemond Indian Nation Suffolk, VA
  - e) Pamunkey Indian Tribe King William, VA
  - f) Rappahannock Tribe Indian Neck, VA
  - g) Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe King William, VA
2. In 2016, the Pamunkey Indian Tribe became the first federally recognized tribe in Region 3.
  - a) They have a reservation that they would say they have been on for time immemorial. The reservation is about 1,200 acres. Their tribal government is headquartered there. They also have a museum and shad hatchery.
  - b) The land has some agricultural areas, lots of wetlands and about 30 residences.
3. In 2018, the Thomasine E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act was signed into law. This act gave instantaneous federal recognition to six additional tribes.
  - a) These tribes are all similar in demographics and makeup. They all have landholdings, which range in size from about 40 to several hundred acres and some are acquiring more land. Their citizenship enrollment ranges between a few hundred citizens to several thousand.
  - b) These six tribes do not have residences on their land. They might have buildings for government or worship purposes. Their lands might also be saved for recreational purposes.
  - c) There are not any permitted facilities on any of these lands (e.g., those requiring NPDES permits).
4. Tribal Government Structure
  - a) All of the Region 3 tribes have a Chief and a Council.
    - (1) These are elected positions similar to the Executive Branch and Legislative Branch and the powers that go with those in the American government.
    - (2) The Chief of a tribe is similar to the Governor of a state.
  - b) There is also a Tribal Administrator that is not an elected position.
    - (1) They are also a great point of contact for people building relationships working with the tribes.
    - (2) This position is similar to the EPA Deputy Regional Administrator.
  - c) Many of the tribes have departments for housing, education, environment, health, finance and cultural preservation.



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- d) Many of the tribes work through their councils to get approval on requests.
  - (1) If EPA sends a request or proposal, they might not receive any feedback until after the next scheduled council meeting.
- e) Sovereign nation status is an extremely important point of federally recognized tribes. When a tribe is federally recognized, they are deemed a sovereign nation.
  - (1) Becoming a recognized tribe comes with a lot of benefits and a lot of responsibility.
    - (a) One tribe said they received over 800 consultation requests in a single year.

### C. Tribal interests with the EPA

- 1. Tribes are interested in environmental protection.
  - a) Tribal citizens are interested in the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and learning what statutes and programs they can participate in.
  - b) Region 3 works to educate tribal communities on these different state and federal programs. Try to help tribal representatives understand the different US government authorities and what they do.
  - c) Water quality is probably the most important issue for all of the tribes in Region 3.
    - (1) Subsistence and recreational fishing are big interests.
  - d) Other interests include recreation, climate change, aquifer depletion, streamside erosion and indoor and outdoor air quality.
  - e) They want to do community outreach and educate their citizens on these issues.

### D. Federal Trust Lands

- 1. Upon federal recognition, Tribes have an option to move their land into a federal trust.
  - a) Lands are not automatically moved into a federal trust and at this time none of the Tribes in Region 3 have made this transition.
- 2. Land in trust is a special status in which:
  - a) The federal government holds the title to the property.
  - b) Allows the Tribe to make its own decision on how to develop the tax-exempt land and its natural resources.
- 3. Federal trust absolves the relationship the tribe has with the localities and the state.
- 4. Because they're not under oversight of the state, the federal government gives them more freedom to create the laws that they want to and the freedom to pursue the ventures and the endeavors that they want.

### E. The pillars of EPA Tribal work:



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### 1. Grants

- a) The General Assistance Program (GAP) grant is the most important.
  - (1) This is the foundational, non-competitive grant the EPA offers to tribes.
    - (a) In Region 3, this grant can offer up to \$110,000 annually.
    - (b) The grant helps Tribes build environmental capacity.
      - (i) After the initial stages of building environmental capacity, they can start to access other pots of money such as funds from the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act or brownfields money.
    - (c) The main goal of this grant is to help tribes create an environmental department and to create environmental strategies.
    - (d) Six of the Region 3 Tribes are active GAP recipients and all seven Tribes have received GAP grants.
      - (i) Six environmental directors have been hired through the GAP grant.
        - (a) Instead of working with the Chief or Administrator, EPA and partners can now work directly with the environmental directors.
- b) Most government grants list states and tribes as eligible for receiving grant money. However, some grants stipulate the Tribal land must be held in a federal trust.

### 2. Technical assistance

- a) Every federally recognized tribe is eligible for technical assistance from EPA. This includes water quality monitoring advice, guidance and assistance as well as land ecological assessments.
  - (1) EPA will send water quality experts to help tribes evaluate their lands and create improvement plans.

### 3. Consultation

- a) EPA's policy is to consult on a government-to-government basis with federally recognized governments when EPA actions and decisions may affect tribal interests.
- b) The national policy for consultation and coordination with Indian Tribes was finalized in 2011.
- c) The regional policy for consultation and coordination with Indian Tribes was finalized in September of 2020.



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### F. Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC)

1. This is a committee composed of EPA and representatives of Region 3's federally recognized Tribes.
2. The purpose of this committee is to create opportunities for communication and collaboration between Region 3 and the Tribes.
3. The committee holds a monthly meeting with all seven tribes.
  - a) Two Tribal citizens are the Chair and Vice-Chair and create the agenda for each meeting.
  - b) If you have something to present at one of these meetings, you can send it to Brian, and he will share it with the Chair and Vice-Chair for agenda consideration.

### G. Federally recognized tribes are treated as sovereign nations by EPA, state-recognized tribes are treated as environmental justice communities by EPA.

1. From a legal perspective, there's a very big difference between state-recognized and federally-recognized tribes.
  - a) There are two different ways a tribe can be federally recognized.
    - (1) One is with an act of Congress, such as the Thomasina Jordan Act that recognized six of Region 3's tribes.
    - (2) The other is a very lengthy process done through the Bureau of the Interior. It's a very costly process. For example, the Pamunkey Indian Tribe started the process in 1995, and it costs them tens of millions of dollars.
      - (a) Citizens have to prove that they have been on the land for a continuous period of time.
        - (i) In the 1920s, the Commonwealth of Virginia had a Department of State director that decided Native American citizens were not allowed to identify themselves as such on the census. So now, Native American citizens in Virginia can't use census records to prove their status.
        - (ii) The Mattaponi Indian Tribe is a state-recognized tribe. They have a treaty that was signed by King George in 1687.
    - (3) In Virginia there are four state-recognized tribes, in Maryland there are three state-recognized tribes and in Delaware there are three state-recognized tribes.
  - b) Once a tribe is federally recognized they are to be treated the same as a state, which means the state cannot go on their land, cannot set their water quality standards and cannot conduct inspections if they move their land into a federal trust.

## VI. Round robin



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- A. Anjelica Eitel, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
  - 1. Continuing to promote Walk the Watershed.
    - a) The event takes place from April 5 - May 15
    - b) Learn more: <https://www.cbf.org/events/walk-the-watershed/index.html>
  - 2. Planning Clean the Bay Day as a socially distant, clean the Bay your way event.
    - a) The event takes place from May 31 - June 5
    - b) Learn more: [https://secure.cbf.org/site/TR?fr\\_id=1180&pg=entry](https://secure.cbf.org/site/TR?fr_id=1180&pg=entry)
- B. Ola-Imani Davis, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
  - 1. The Local Government Guide to the Chesapeake Bay is now available.
    - a) It contains non-branded, editable modules that you can tailor and adapt for local governments in your network. The content is very flexible and useful for lots of different formats.
    - b) The modules are posted to the [Local Government Advisory Committee](#) and the [Local Leadership Workgroup](#) pages.
    - c) Access the editable versions of these files here: <https://bit.ly/3eiOIEq>
    - d) Please provide feedback on the modules here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSekvElv7S2b8-D97XMikUkx2ed6P9Wk4CTYuysSNQyy0f6B-A/viewform?gxids=7628>
  - 2. On June 3, the Local Government Advisory Committee will host their quarterly meeting.
  - 3. The annual Local Government Forum will focus on developing collaborative watershed partnerships.
- C. Cynamon Butler, Chesapeake Bay Trust
  - 1. As CBT progresses with their DEIJ work, they are thinking about when it is appropriate to make public statements.
- D. Mike, GreenSmith
  - 1. GreenSmith received a [Hermes](#) award for their work on the Chesapeake Bay Report Card for UMCES and NFWF's Chesapeake Stewardship Fund grant announcement.
- E. Aaron Ferster, ORD/EPA
  - 1. Would like to share with the Workgroup an upcoming research project that provides a high-resolution GIS data set for the Mid-Atlantic region using EPA's Report on the Environment.
- F. Amy Pelinsky, UMCES
  - 1. Chesapeake Dolphin Watch is back
    - a) Dolphin Watch is an app that community scientists can use to report their dolphin sightings in the Chesapeake Bay. Professor Helen Bailey and her team use this data to identify the best





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locations in the Bay to place underwater microphones to track the dolphins coming in and out of the region.

- b) Nearly 8,000 people in the region have signed up and are using this app to report dolphins in the Bay.
- c) Learn more about Chesapeake Dolphin Watch:  
<https://chesapeakedolphinwatch.org/>
- d) Access the Chesapeake Bay Magazine story:  
<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/video-dolphin-spotting-on-the-rise-among-bay-boaters-as-2021-sightings-begin/>
- e) Join the webinar on May 13 to learn more:  
<https://www.umces.edu/events/watershed-moments-helen-bailey-umces-cbl>
- f) UMCES is looking for more ways to financially support this program. It is currently funded mainly through private donations and a few foundations. If you have any fundraising ideas, please reach out to Amy Pelinsky at [apelinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelinsky@umces.edu).
- g) Please share information about the app and the May 13 webinar.

### G. Erin Montgomery, NPS

- 1. Working on the State of the Trail report.
  - a) Needs some generic photos of the Chesapeake Bay to use in the report. Shoreline photos of the Bay would be ideal.
  - b) Please send any photos to  
[emontgomery@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:emontgomery@chesapeakeconservancy.org).

### H. Gregg Bortz, MD DNR

- 1. Maryland State Parks are planning for an increase in attendance this summer, as they saw a 45% increase in 2020.
- 2. Focusing outreach on leave no trace messaging.
  - a) Launching the Create Your Own State Park Challenge for 2021.
    - (1) This was an initiative launched in 2020 that challenges residents to create their own park in their backyard.
    - (2) Learn more here:  
<https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/Create-Your-Own-State-Park.aspx>

### I. Michelle DiNicola, PA DEP

- 1. Pennsylvania DEP released the 2021 Climate Change Impacts Assessment.
  - a) Read the report:  
<http://www.depgreenport.state.pa.us/elibrary/GetDocument?docId=3667348&DocName=PENNSYLVANIA%20CLIMATE%20IMPACTS%20ASSESSMENT%202021.PDF%20%20%3cspan%20style%3D%22color:green%3b%22%3e%3c/span%3e%20%3cspan%20style%3D%22color:blue%3b%22%3e%28NEW%29%3c/span%3e%204/30/2023>





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### J. Tom Damm, EPA

1. Diana Esher, Acting Regional Administrator is looking forward to speaking to CAC, LGAC and STAC at their upcoming meetings.

### K. Greg Barranco, EPA

1. May 12 and 13 is the biennial meeting for the Strategy Review System. This meeting looks at the progress the Bay Program has made including a review of the *Watershed Agreement's* 31 outcomes. It is a time for the partners to come together to talk about updated policy changes, science and economics.
  - a) Communications departments should be prepared to field questions from reporters after the Biennial Meeting. We know there are some reporters planning on attending.
2. The next Principal Staff Committee meeting will take place on June 2.
  - a) This meeting will review the Climate Change Directive, planning for the Executive Council meeting, the Conowingo Implementation Plan and provide an update on the DEIJ work.

### L. Lisa Tossey, MD Sea Grant

1. Planning the next issue of Chesapeake Quarterly. The issue will focus on invasive species within the watershed.
  - a) The Fall/Winter issue will focus on environmental justice issues in the Bay region.
2. An intern is joining the team in mid-June and will help with environmental justice work.

### M. Rachel Felver, ACB

1. The next Executive Council meeting is planned for Friday, October 1 at the Brock Environmental Center in Norfolk, Virginia.
2. The Communications Office is hosting a webinar on wetlands for American Wetlands Month on May 17 at 12 PM.
  - a) Learn more:

<https://www.chesapeakebay.net/action/attend/wetlands-webinar>

**Next meeting: June 2, 2021 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**