



Communications Workgroup October Retreat Minutes

October 14, 2020 | 9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Meeting Materials

To find meeting agenda, minutes, presentations and other materials, please visit our Communications Workgroup meeting webpage: https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/group/communications_workgroup

Participants

Gregg Bortz, Chair, MD Department of Natural Resources	Sonia Keiner, Local Concepts, LLC
Rachel Felver, Coordinator, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Rona Kobell, MD Sea Grant
Greg Barranco, EPA-CBPO	Tali MacArthur, PA Environmental Council
Jessica Blackburn, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Claudine McElwain, Southern Environmental Law Center
Heidi Bonnaffon, WashCOG	Phil Miller, DE DNREC
Caitlin Bowman, GreenSmith PR	Laura Cattell Noll, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Michael Bowman, Chesapeake Conservancy/NPS	Will Parson, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Annie Carew, UMCES-IAN	Tuana Phillips, EPA-CBPO
Jay Clark, VA Sea Grant	Emily Ramirez, UMCES
Kim Couranz, NOAA	Renee Reber, PennFuture
Tom Damm, EPA Region 3	Drew Robinson, Choose Clean Water Coalition
Ola-Imani Davis, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Jessica Rodriguez, DOD-CBPO
Michelle DiNicola, PA DEP	Jake Solyst, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Kelly Donaldson, PA Sea Grant	Mike Smith, GreenSmith PR
Caroline Donovan, UMCES-IAN	Carly Sniffen, Chesapeake Conservancy/NPS
Kelsey Everett, Chesapeake Conservancy/NPS	Marisa Sprately, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Sydney Godbey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Jared Stonesifer, PennFuture
Cecile Green, DC DOE	Breck Sullivan, Chesapeake Research Consortium
Amy Handen, EPA-CBPO	Carmera Thomas, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Lucy Heller, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Cheryl Vosburg, GreenSmith PR
Caitlyn Johnstone, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay	Olivia Wisner, Chesapeake Research Consortium
Lisa Jones, MDE	

Round Robin

- Integration and Application Network, UMCES: Has information from recent workshops that will inform new economic and social indicators in the next Chesapeake Bay report card, which will be released in spring 2021. Additionally, the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative recently participated in a Hack-a-thon. Would be interested in presenting on both topics to the Workgroup at a later date.
- Choose Clean Water Coalition: Our civic engagement toolkit is available for Election Day. We recently completed two videos on Pennsylvania's agriculture cost-share program.
- NOAA: October is National Seafood Month. Working on a new species page for the NOAA Fisheries website, as well as an article that will discuss blue catfish and the recently approved management plan. **Will share article when it is published.**
- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay: Registration for the Watershed Forum is open until October 28 and it will be held virtually October 29-30. Project Clean Stream will be running through the end of November.
- MD Sea Grant: The next Chesapeake Quarterly will be print, but the one following will be online only. The focus of the next issue will be on the contributions of black watermen to the seafood industry. **Looking for data sources to inform the article. Any leads, please contact Rona Kobell at rkobell@umd.edu.**
- EPA Region 3: Working on a press release regarding EPA's local government grant funding.
- EPA CBPO: Tomorrow is the October Management Board meeting. Topics include recommendations for building climate change policy decisions into the two-year milestones; clarifying the process for updating CAST-21; STAC recommendations on toxic contaminants of concern; incorporating DEIJ commitments into

our work; STAC efforts to assess the impact of COVID-19 on our outcomes and SRS wrap-up from August clean water cohort review.

- NPS/Chesapeake Conservancy: Information on their website regarding the Champions of the Chesapeake—run, hike or walk to support the creation of a Chesapeake Bay National Area. Recently held a webinar on the intersection of public health, equity and conservation:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZXiWU-m0OU>
- PA DEP: Issue number 5 of our WIP newsletter will be going out next week; past issues available at
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/Pennsylvania%E2%80%99s%20Chesapeake%20Bay%20Program%20Office/WIP3/Pages/Newsletter.aspx>.
- DE DNREC: Sold over 700 rain barrels at annual sale.
- PA Sea Grant: Co-chair of the Mid-Atlantic Water Resources Team with Jay Clarke from VA Sea Grant: a partnership of seven state Sea Grant programs. Working on a website that they would like to show the Comm Workgroup at a future meeting.
- CBP Communications: Issuing a press release later today about the availability of the draft Conowingo WIP for review and comment. Welcome to our new Workgroup member, Jay Clarke from VA Sea Grant!

October Shared Messaging

- Our October shared messaging focused on National Seafood Month and Hispanic Heritage Month. Content can be found at:
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/40277/chesapeake_bay_program_october_shared_messaging.pdf

Inclusionary Messaging and Outreach Training Part One

- Training led by Erica Atwood from First Degree Consulting, LLC.
- Goals for the day:
 - Discuss the historical context of people of color in messaging and media.
 - Introduce a framework for developing an inclusive communications strategy.
 - Introduce a framework for developing inclusive communications.
- Activity #: Level Setting.
- Participants were asked to rank the following as “Comfort Zone, Learning Edge or Danger Zone”
 - Going to a gay bar with a group of colleagues.
 - Ask close family to cover phone bill for a month.
 - Have a conversation with family member about election.
 - Give a speech in auditorium in front of 400 people.
 - Go to Catholic church service.
 - Lead team building for 50 peers.
 - Tell a friend you can’t afford to go out.
 - Correct a coworker on gender pronouns.
 - Interact with a police officer.
- Identity
 - Throughout history, images of different ethnic groups have been problematic. Some of these are old terms, others are new.
 - We need to be cognizant that what we do doesn’t perpetuate these stereotypes.
 - Intersectionality: A theoretical framework that posits that multiple social categories (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status) intersect at the micro level of individual experience to reflect multiple interlocking systems of privilege and oppression at the macro, social-structural level. (e.g. racism, sexism, heterosexism)
 - What makes me special can also make me marginalized.
 - We need to think about what people’s experiences are, as well as what they look like.
 - We need to look at the whole person, not just their race when we talk about inclusion and diversity.

- Inclusive Vocabulary
- Race: a social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance; particularly color, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification and the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time. Racial categories subsume ethnic groups.
- Gender: One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.
- Sexuality: An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.
- Disability: A physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition that impairs, interferes with, or limits a person's ability to engage in certain tasks or actions or participate in typical daily activities and interactions.
- How do you know what is the appropriate term to use?
 - Do your research. Ask experts.
 - EPA: People have moved away from saying "people of color" to BIPOC (Black, indigenous and people of color).
 - Erica: The Black community is not accepting of the term "BIPOC". But this is a growth area for communities of color that needs to be adopted.
 - NPR Codeswitch: <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/29/918418825/is-it-time-to-say-r-i-p-to-p-o-c>
 - Comment: In education, disability is beginning to be referred to as "differing ability".
- Important Terms
 - Ally: Someone that supports a group other than their own (in terms of racial identity, gender, faith identity, sexual orientation, etc.) awareness of oppression.
 - Culture Fit (The likelihood that a job candidate will be able to conform and adapt to the core values and collective behaviors that make up an organization) Are we examining the diversity of that organization when you say culture fit?
 - Diversity (Individual differences and group/social differences that can be engaged in the service of learning)—it's political, social, economic, race, ethnicity, etc.
 - Dominate Culture (The cultural beliefs, values and traditions that are centered and dominant in society's structures and practices) What does it mean to show up multi-culturally that enables us to learn?
 - Implicit Bias (the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner) They are activated involuntarily. If we know where they lie within yourself, then we know where we need to do work.
 - Inclusion (A dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a fair, healthy and high-performing organization or community.)
 - Microaggression (this term describes the tiny, casual, almost imperceptible insults and degradation often felt by any marginalized group)
 - Privilege (A right or advantage that only some people have access or availability to because of their social group membership) Privilege can be education, income, etc. How do you leverage and use your privilege to make space and not take over as much space?
 - Sponsorship (An action that allies and those with privilege can take to advance the careers of members of marginalized groups) New concept—leans further in than just being an ally—more of an accomplice. Prepare, protect and push them. FYI—could be a colleague that takes you under their wing.
 - Tokenism (The practice of including one or a few members of an underrepresented group in a team or company, without their having authority or power equal to that of other group members)
 - Tone Policing (A silencing tactic used in arguments or discussions that focus on the emotion behind a message rather than the message itself.) Being cognizant of the tone behind a message. What you say versus what you say. Four Agreements – don't take it personal.

- Underrepresented Group (This term describes any subset of a population that holds a smaller percentage within a significant subgroup than it holds in the general population). We are not at the table, in places of leadership, etc.
- Question: How do you feel about the term “underrepresented”?
 - It is historically correct, but it doesn’t feel good. The term minority hasn’t gone away but it’s not applied to a group of people much anymore—now it’s a data set or looking at facts, opposed to people. It’s not just Black communities—could be poor, Hispanic, etc. Internal and external language—talk about problems vs. talking about people.
- Is it better to use historically excluded, oppressed or underrepresented?
 - Prefer to use opposed. Underserved could be taken as red-lining or suppressed.
- Activity #2: Developing your self-story.
 - What stories can you share about your life that will enable others to “get you”?
 - How can you enable others to experience the values, sources that move you not only to act or to lead?
 - A good public story is drawn from a series of choice points that have structured the “plot” of your life—the challenges you faced, choices you made and outcomes you experienced.
 - Challenge:
 - Why did you feel it was a challenge?
 - What was so challenging about it?
 - Why was it your challenge?
 - Choice
 - Why did you make the choice you did?
 - Where did you get the courage—or not?
 - Where did you get the hope—or not? How did it feel?
 - Outcome
 - How did the outcome feel?
 - Why did it feel that way?
 - What did it teach you?
 - What do you want to teach us?
 - How do you want us to feel?
 - Examples: Cecile Green from DC DOEE
 - Finished Bachelors’ degree with no direct career path chosen. First job was a dead-end but was exposed to LEED building standards and fell in love with the concept of sustainability. Furthered that love when she was the Mobile Mardi Gras Queen and saw sustainability actions in place. Decided to go back to school to get masters’ in sustainability at American University. Outcome was getting accepted at American U and scored a fellowship at DC DOEE—worked in lead safe and healthy housing division and turned into a real job.
 - Examples: Rona Kobell from MD Sea Grant
 - Challenge is that I’m taking on a master’s degree 27 years after graduating college and has two children virtually learning and working full-time. Classes are hard. Want to learn new skills and becoming passionate about a project she wants to research. Right now, am learning how to code but doesn’t have a lot of hope that it will go well. But working with classmates on getting better at it. In class with people closer to my children’s age than mine and sometimes I feel humiliated and old. But it’s good to be challenged at different stages of your life. It’s good to be reminded that things can kick your butt!
 - Examples: Lisa Jones from MDE

- Worked at a non-profit educational organization when received an opportunity in state government. Left comfort zone but it was good to step out and be uncomfortable into an unknown world.
 - CRC Question: What happens when your challenge wasn't your choice? It was something that happened to me that I had no control over.
- Defining and Leading with Values
 - Basic values you can define and lead with as an organization. They may work, they may not, but this is a guide to how you can have shared values.
 - Equality: The benefits and burdens of society should not depend on what we look like or where we come from. Equality means celebrating our differences while challenging stereotypes and breaking down barriers.
 - Mobility: Where we start out in life should not determine where we end up. Inherent in mobility is the belief that everyone who works hard should be able to advance and participate fully in society.
 - Voice: We should all have a say in the decision that affect us. Our voices must be heard in voting booths, at public forums and across the media.
 - Redemption: We all grow and change over time and need a chance to start over when things go wrong. To foster redemption, we must provide conditions that allow people to develop, rebuild and to reclaim full responsibility for their lives.
 - Community: We share responsibility for each other and for the common good; the strength of our nation depends on the vibrancy and cohesiveness of our diverse populations.
 - Security: We should all have the tools to meet our own basic needs and the needs of our families. Without economic and social security, it is impossible to access the other rights and responsibilities society has to offer.
 - This aren't necessarily the reality people face, but rather our values.
 - We should all have the tools to meet our basic needs.
 - COVID has shown a light on a lot of the disparities that exist. How can we make sure our community has security?
 - How do we ensure everyone is represented in an equitable manner? How do you make space for young people? What does it mean to have that different voice? Leading and leaning into our values.
 - CBP Comment: We should assess our blogs to ensure they align with our organization's values—all content creators should think about this. How does your content align with your organization's and what you need to promote?
- Activity #3: Implicit bias test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- Various Learning Styles
 - Visual (better with symbols, boxed, charts, colors), verbal (reciting info out loud, writing your own notes/highlighting key points, writing), kinesthetic (involves using your body, sense of touch to learn, hands-on learning, can't sit still for a long time), aural (sounds, music), logical (learn by asking lots of questions, kids are logical learners), social (learn in groups than on their own, like brainstorming with others), solitary (tend to be independent, introspective)
 - How are we adaptive to other styles of learning?
 - Sometimes we just do what we are used to.
 - Helps us understand who we are, what we are dealing with, how people perceive us and learn from us.
- Simplifying technical jargon.
 - Simplify technical Info.
 - Outline the process as simply as possible.

- Omit jargon.
- Format copy for quick and easy reading.
- Use visual aids. (story maps, infographics, Canva)
- Test out your draft. (bounce stuff off your trusted messengers)
- The Enlightened Insider: Someone who has spent time within the system that you want to change, recognize its faults and is willing to speak about this.
- Experts: Someone to provide the big picture, the statistics, and studies that show how this issue affects the whole community and who can make the point that the issue must be solved at the policy, not individual, level.
- The affected/change agent: Someone directly affected by the flawed system and who took action to change it. It's important that this person's success was related to changing a system, a policy, an entire way of thinking—and not just successful for their own individual gain.
- Question from DC DOEE: Influencers are beneficial too. Especially in the government space when we need to communicate about regulations to our stakeholders. It helps to put the people behind the story.
- Communicating and Setting Expectations.
 - Inform: Tell community what is happening.
 - Consult: Listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, give space for community to provide feedback.
 - Involve: Ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives.
 - Collaborate: Look to community for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate recommendations in the decisions.
 - Empower: Implement community informed design.
 - *Most usually stop at Involve and rarely get to collaborate and empower. Should be transparent about how much power the communities will have.
 - We go to communities to ask for feedback and advice, but we struggle with implementing their information.
 - How can we give over advice, power to the community? E.g. give them a board seat, hire someone from the community.
 - DOD Question: Do we stop at involve due to time restraints or culture?
 - More culture than time restraints but both. Also, values.
 - The person tasked with community engagement is rarely a vice-presidential or management position. It's something else for someone to do. Need a culture shift to where community engagement is placed at a higher level—will see culture shift how we can move to empower more frequently.
 - DC DOEE: How can we be a conduit for people to share their own story, to empower their own communities and organizations? (Us. We, How storytelling method)
- Activity #4: When you hear the word community, what is the first word that comes to mind?
 - Respect, healthy, receptive, safe, empowering, welcoming, acceptance, together, fair, love, connected, warm, heartfelt, valuable, enriched, sharing.
- Discussion
 - We need to move away from communicating to/for and move toward communicating with.
 - Feeding people (treating to lunch or coffee) goes a long way when trying to reach communities that are over-surveyed, over-reached, under-listened and under-resourced. It goes a long way in building trust if you are willing to break bread with them.
 - Bring community involvement up to the executive level. Often times things will stop because the community engagement person does not have the power to go beyond the “involved” process.

- Be more intentional in your messaging. It pushes us to be responsible. Be more proactive and less reactive.
- It's more important to do your best than to be perfect.
- How do you recover when you unintentionally offend a community or organization?
 - It's restitution, hard work and figuring out who the influencers/trusted messengers/leaders/stakeholders are in that community. It's saying I'm sorry, asking what you can do to make restitution. Give space to allow them to define how the relationship should be restored. Work it with one person at a time.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 4, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.