



## Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Executive Board (EB) Call April 22, 2016

**Members:** Brian Benham, Donna Bilkovic, Kirk Havens, Marc Ribaud, Mark Luckenbach, Lisa Wainger, Gene Yagow

**Administration:** Bill Ball, Rachel Dixon, and Renee Kelly

### STAC Members Attendance

The STAC Bylaws state that any member who misses two or more consecutive meetings (and is not represented by a designated alternate) will be contacted concerning his/her absence. There is currently one member that has missed two or more consecutive meetings. STAC Chair, Lisa Wainger (UMCES) will reach out to that member regarding attendance.

**ACTION:** Kelly will forward contact information to Wainger. Wainger will contact the STAC member to address STAC's concern regarding attendance.

### Updates

Kelly presented a request regarding the FY14 "Shallow Water" workshop report, which is almost a year overdue. Marjy Friedrichs (VIMS), STAC workshop lead, requested permission to combine the FY14 and FY15 Shallow Water workshop reports into one final product. Friedrichs reasoned that the workshops are truly a part I and part II that would be more effective as a single product, and more efficient for STAC to review. The EB discussed the appropriateness of this request. The steering committee should be reminded not to omit any vital outcomes of the first report. The EB approved Friedrichs request. STAC staff will update Friedrichs and ensure that combined report adheres to the strict 90 day deadline.

Next, Kelly presented the recommended budget transfer for supporting the fifth FY16 workshop. To support the fifth workshop, STAC staff proposed withdrawing the additional \$3,000 from the FY16 review budget. Staff does not anticipate funding any large reviews in FY16 (other than the Midpoint Assessment (MPA) reviews which are FY15 (and previous years') funds). The technical review on boat wakes previously approved by STAC at the March quarterly meeting is already accounted for and the budget would still be able to support smaller reviews throughout the fiscal year if need be. The EB agreed that this transfer was appropriate, given confirmation that the MPA reviews would still have funding and smaller requests could still be supported.

Kelly then presented an update from the Microplastics review panel. The review panel is currently considering a range of target options for further extending the scope of the review. The review panel is considering an article in Environmental Science & Technology (ES&T), an article in Scientific American magazine, and/or an expanded piece on STAC's website. The panel is developing a portfolio of options within the next week which will help determine the amount of honoraria requested and additional administrative support. The EB suggested that the most capable group to develop an infographic (or policy factsheet) would be the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC), with scientific data provided by the STAC review. Ann Swanson (CBC) wrote, in an email following the distribution of the Microplastics report, that the CBC could help develop something that could be produced under the CBC masthead (with all the proper credits). The EB would still like to learn more about the extended scope and the detailed plan developed over the next few weeks. The review panel should determine the shared goals between

CBC and the Microplastics review panel. The EB will consider the approval of honoraria for this request once a more detailed plan and definite cost can be provided.

Finally, STAC staff and STAC Executive Secretary, Bill Ball (CRC) provided an update of the STAC-sponsored peer reviews. A revised timeline was provided to EB members prior to the call. The Criteria Addendum review panel has submitted initial comments to Peter Tango (USGS) who is expected to incorporate comments by the end of April. The Scenario Builder review questions are expected to be completed before the end of April, after minor revisions. Review questions seem focused on nutrient inputs to the watershed, not necessarily the entire tool. Ball and Gene Yagow (VT) are in the process of discussing potential reviewers for this review and reviewers will be provided the first chapter of the watershed model as background information. A beta version of the watershed model (Phase 6) is expected to follow in May. Kelly provided a brief update on the timing of the remaining reviews.

**ACTION:** The EB approved Friedrichs request to combine the FY14 and FY15 Shallow Water workshop reports into a final product. **STAC staff** will notify Friedrichs and reiterate the strict 90 day deadline.

**DECISION/VOTE:** The EB approved the transfer of \$3,000 out of the FY16 review budget to the FY16 workshop budget, supporting the fifth approved FY16 workshop.

**ACTION:** **STAC staff** will communicate the EB's feedback to the Microplastics review panel. The EB requests more information of a finalized plan of action from the review panel including: the type of publication the panel wants to pursue, associated cost, amount of administrative support needed. The EB is also interested in learning how the CBC can work with the review panel to create the (infographic) factsheet.

### Upcoming STAC Member Rotations

STAC member Jeffrey Skousen (WVU), West Virginia STAC representative since 2005, reached out to STAC staff noting his poor attendance and involvement with STAC over the past few years. Skousen presented a request to replace himself with the new Director of the Institute of Water Science, Dr. Jason Hubbart (WVU). EB members receive Hubbart's CV and biosketch. STAC staff received an official appointment letter from the West Virginia Governor. Louis McDonald (WVU) will remain the alternate. Hubbart was invited to the upcoming June quarterly meeting.

STAC has not found a replacement to fill the vacant federal appointee position previously held by Kurt Gottschalk (USFS). During the last EB call, Kirk Havens (VIMS) suggested that the EB nominate Martin Lowenfish (USDA-NRCS). At the March quarterly meeting, STAC members suggested that the EB should learn more about Lowenfish before recommending his appointment. STAC staff has been unable to obtain Lowenfish's CV or biography. The EB agreed that although Lowenfish has been unresponsive, Havens should still try to obtain those documents for further review. In addition, Wainger mentioned STAC's concern with Lowenfish's expertise focused in management rather than science. Havens stressed that Lowenfish would help further STAC's interest to continue collaboration with NRCS, USGS, and the EPA. As potential alternates, Wainger suggested nominating Charles Rewa (USDA-NRCS) from Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) Modeling Team, and agreed to reach out to Rewa to gauge his interest in joining STAC. Havens and Wainger will provide updates and relevant documentation, via email, to the EB to continue the discussion.

Finally, as a result of STAC member Russ Brinsfield's (UMD Wye Research Center) retirement, the Maryland State Appointee's office requested that STAC recommend three nominees to fill Brinsfield's vacancy. Donna Bilkovic (VIMS) nominated Matthew Ogburn (SERC) who has expertise in marine,

estuarine, and fish ecology. Ball suggested Upal Ghosh (UMBC) and Kenneth Staver (UMD Wye Research Center). The EB agreed that each of these nominees possessed expertise that would be valuable to STAC. Ball agreed to reach out to his nominees to gauge interest and collect CV's, however, Ball will postpone contacting Staver until it is determined if Rewa is a viable candidate. In the event that Ghosh was unable to accept the nomination, Wainger suggested nominating Andrew Heyes (UMCES) a toxics expert. The EB was not sure if Ogburn could serve as a state appointee, due to his federal employment status. Kelly will check whether Ogburn's employment status disqualifies him from serving as a state appointee on STAC. If there is no conflict, Kelly will reach out to Ogburn to seek his interest in joining STAC and obtain a CV. The EB agreed to keep the conversation going via email, to determine which nominees will be sent to the State Appointee's office.

**ACTION: Havens** will attempt to obtain a CV/biography from Lowenfish. If successful, Havens will send this information to the EB for further discussion.

**ACTION: Wainger** will contact Rewa regarding potential appointment to STAC. Pending Rewa's interest, Wainger will collect and distribute Rewa's CV and bio to the EB.

**ACTION: The EB** will take action on the nomination process once updates from Wainger and Havens have been received.

**ACTION: Ball** will contact Ghosh (and Staver, after Wainger confirms Rewa is a viable candidate) to gauge their interest in joining STAC and collect CV's. If Ghosh is unable to accept the nomination, Wainger will reach out to Heyes with the same request.

**ACTION: Bilkovic** will contact Ogburn regarding his interest serving on STAC and to collect a CV.  
**Update:** Ogburn is employed by the Smithsonian Trust, so he is not a federal employee. Ogburn expressed a willingness to serve on STAC and will be providing a CV.

### **Independent Evaluator (IE)**

The Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) held a meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup> featuring a presentation regarding the "Independent Evaluator and Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act (CBARA) Report Funding." Three options for establishing an IE were presented and discussed at that meeting. The PSC is seeking comments and suggestions for final approval of an approach at their May 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Carl Hershner (VIMS), Wainger, Ball, and Natalie Gardner (CRC) drafted and reviewed a document regarding STAC's recommendations on the establishment of an IE. Wainger reviewed the STAC recommendations with EB members and requested feedback. Wainger and Havens presented some background information regarding the establishment of the IE. Havens reminded members that the IE is not meant to hurt the CBP, but to track expenses so funds could be used in more effective ways. Marc Ribaud (USDA-ERS) and Mark Luckenbach (VIMS) each provided suggestions to the recommendations. Wainger approved and incorporated Ribaud and Luckenbach's revisions and sent a revised version to EB members, requesting any additional suggestions be emailed to Wainger by Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. A finalized document will be distributed to STAC for final approval. Once approved, the recommendations will be shared with the PSC prior to their May 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**ACTION: EB members** will email IE comments and revisions to Wainger by April 27<sup>th</sup>. STAC staff will distribute the final recommendations document to STAC members for approval and then to the PSC, prior to May 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **Quarterly Meeting Agenda: June 7-8, 2016 STAC Quarterly Meeting**

Wainger began the conversation by providing an overview of the current agenda. Wainger requested that this meeting be reduced to a single day and to include working sessions for STAC members to get work done on upcoming activities. Wainger suggested inviting Vicki Blazer (USGS) to present on the “state of the science” of endocrine disruptors which would coordinate with recent interest in the topic raised by the CBC. Wainger then requested information regarding the ecosystem services modeling task-group agenda item. Bilkovic explained that this item has been something on Tom Ihde’s (ERT) radar and mentioned the need for a modeling group that is focused on living resources and habitat. Wainger suggested making this item a breakout group themes during the work session; Bilkovic agreed.

Kelly reviewed the remaining agenda items including: an update of decisions made by the PSC regarding the IE, updates from Kathleen Boomer (TNC) and Ihde regarding their MB presentations, an update of the draft communications plan that STAC staff and Ball will be developing, Mid-Point Review Update, and a breakout session for STAC members. STAC staff, Rachel Dixon (CRC) presented the Enhancing Capacity workshop steering committees’ plan to invite Cross-Program Coordinator, Kristin Saunders (UMCES) to the June quarterly meeting. Lara Fowler (PSU) plans to lead the discussion at the June meeting with Saunders and provide an update to STAC regarding progress that has been made with the workgroups. The steering committee is in the process of scheduling a call with Saunders to develop some next steps leading up to the quarterly meeting. In addition, Wainger suggested inviting decision scientist, Michael Runge (USGS) who has worked prioritizing efforts with federal agencies. Wainger then requested more time be added to the agenda for the worksession report out allowing cross-pollination with STAC. STAC staff will email workshop steering committees for interest in joining work sessions at the meeting. Wainger reminded EB members that the water quality theme originally meant for the June quarterly meeting, has been postponed until the September meeting due to scheduling conflicts. Pat Glibert (UMCES) and Jeremy Testa (UMCES) have added the September quarterly meeting dates to their calendars.

**ACTION: Wainger and STAC staff** will work together to revise the June quarterly meeting agenda, in accordance with the suggestions made during the EB call.

**DECISION/VOTE:** The EB agreed to host a one day meeting in June 2016.

**ACTION: STAC staff** will follow up with Fowler to plan the Enhancing Capacity agenda item, and will keep Wainger informed on conversations with Saunders prior to the June meeting.

**ACTION: STAC staff** will inform workshop steering committees to extend an invitation to relevant steering committee members to the STAC work session.

### **Following up STAC Executive Board (EB) Call May 31, 2016**

**Attendance:** Bill Ball, Donna Bilkovic, Rachel Dixon, Natalie Gardner, Kirk Havens, Renee Kelly, Marc Ribaldo, Gene Yagow, Adel Shirmohammadi

### **Maryland Gubernatorial Appointee Vacancy**

On the April EB call, four nominees were recommended to fill the MD Gubernatorial appointment previously held by Russ Brinsfield (UMD). Those four nominees include: Andrew Heyes (UMCES-CBL), Upal Ghosh (UMBC), Matthew Ogburn (SERC), and Ken Staver (UMD). Following the call, the four nominees were approached to see if each were willing and able to serve. All four agreed to serve if appointed. Wainger discussed the nominees with members of the Bay Cabinet and those nominees, and others, are being considered. The MD Bay Cabinet will discuss the STAC vacancy at its upcoming

meeting and provide a recommendation to Governor Hogan shortly thereafter. The remaining nominees will be considered for the next At-large vacancy in 2017.

**ACTION: Ball, Bilkovic, and Wainger** will contact their nominee(s) to update them on the appointment status and next steps in the process.

### **Status of Federal Appointment Vacancy**

There are currently three nominees to fill the STAC federal appointee vacancy previously held by Kurt Gottschalk (USFS). Nominees include: Martin Lowenfish (NRCS), Lisa Duriancik (NRCS), and Sarah Low (USFS). The EB discussed each nominee's expertise and relevance to the committee's current and future visions. The EB could not come to a consensus on which nominee to recommend to the Bay Program. The full STAC membership will discuss the candidates at the June quarterly meeting.

### **Upcoming Federal Appointment Vacancy**

Scott Phillips (USGS) and STAC member, Bob Hirsch (USGS) requested that the EB discuss expertise needs to replace Hirsch when he rotates off the committee in December. The STAC EB discussed several USGS experts that could serve as a federal appointee. Experts include: Judy Denver (USGS) and Bob Shedlock (USGS). EB members discussed the need for expertise in emerging topics such as toxic contaminants and endocrine disruptors. Wainger suggested this conversation continue at the quarterly meeting to get direct feedback from Hirsch and Phillips.

### **Upcoming CBP Executive Council Report**

STAC must produce an annual report to the CBP Executive Council (due early September). On the EB call, Wainger solicited volunteers to lead a work session at the quarterly meeting to discuss emerging issues of concern and priority science needs. Yagow agreed to lead this discussion at the June quarterly meeting. The work session discussion will be summarized at the report out at the end of the meeting.