



THE ABSTRACT

A Monthly Update from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee

August 2013

Recent STAC News

Management Board (MB) Conference Call – Annapolis, MD **August 8, 2013**

The MB cancelled their normal monthly meeting to hold a brief, two-hour conference call to discuss a range of agenda items including: the 2013 Tidal and Non-tidal Monitoring Network funding shortfall, update on the SAV Aerial Survey funding shortfall, overview of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study, and approval of revised Bay Agreement timeline. The MB offered four options for reductions to make up the monitoring networks shortfall, proposing potential cuts to a total of 18 non-tidal monitoring stations. The MB decided on August 12th to go with Option #2, which will eliminate a January cruise, nutrients from two summer cruises, and a planned benthic analysis on the tidal side, in addition to a 14-station reduction for nontidal monitoring. Option #2 still leaves \$189,000 in funding unaccounted for by the Chesapeake Bay Program. Mark Bennett (USGS) will present final FY13 budget breakouts at the September 12th MB meeting to show how the Board came to this final decision. The full set of options considered for reduction of the monitoring networks can be found here: http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/20881/attachment_ii.b_-_presenation_-_monitoring_funding_options_2.pdf.

The MB also discussed ongoing efforts to address the SAV Aerial Survey shortfall, citing the need for such data collection for the future of the Bay Program:
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/20881/attachment_ii.c_-_update_on_sav_aerial_survey_funding_shortfall.pdf.

The Partnership needs an additional \$163,000 to carry out the 2013 survey. The EPA has provided \$240,000 annually to support the survey, but only pledged \$200,000 in 2013 due to funding uncertainties. The MB will encourage the EPA to provide the same contribution it has in the past, while also seeking continued funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Army Corps of Engineers and possibly, additional funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Finally, the MB approved the most recent Bay Agreement timeline, available here:
[http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/20881/attachment_iv.a_-_revised_agreement_timeline_\(8-8-13\).pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/20881/attachment_iv.a_-_revised_agreement_timeline_(8-8-13).pdf)

CAC Quarterly Meeting – Lancaster, PA **August 22-23, 2013**

The CAC quarterly meeting featured presentations on the new Bay Agreement, the Farm Bill, re-licensing of the Conowingo Dam, an update on forest restoration goals and progress in the Bay watershed, and two presentations on implementation of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). CAC eventually proposed a multi-part motion to recommend additions to the new Bay Agreement including goals for environmental literacy, climate change, Conowingo sediment infill, toxic contaminants, stewardship, land use, and more. CAC also asked STAC Staff to distribute their letter to the CBP regarding BMP Verification and requested that the STAC Environmental Literacy report be distributed to the CAC membership to help inform their environmental education recommendations to the Bay Program. Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Michael Helfrich presented some new information on his studies of the Conowingo Reservoir, noting discrepancies in his data compared to previous studies. Helfrich also mentioned his involvement in the formulation of an alternative Citizen's Bay Agreement, but did not offer much more detail about that effort. Matt Ehrhart (Stroud Water Research Center) and Katrina Thompson (USDA-NRCS) offered perspectives on CREP implementation and Thompson noted that in Pennsylvania, only 60% of farmers want to re-enroll in the program, whereas 40% have opted out, citing increased grain prices on tilled portions of riparian buffers on their lands and increased costs of maintaining buffers as reasons, and in other cases, buffers just do not meet the 70% tree survival rate to maintain enrollment status.

Upcoming Events

STAR Meetings – Annapolis, MD

Date: August 29, 2013 **AND** September 26, 2013

Location: Annapolis, MD

September 2013 Management Board Meeting

Date: September 12, 2013

Location: Joe Macknis Memorial Conference Room (Fish Shack) – Annapolis, MD

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) September 2013 Quarterly Meeting

Date: September 17-18, 2013

Location: Maryland Inn – Annapolis, MD

BMP Verification Committee Meeting

Date: September 16, 2013

Location: Annapolis, MD

Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) September 2013 Meeting

Date: September 26-27, 2013

Location: National Conservation Training Center – Shepherdstown, WV

October 2013 Quarterly Modeling Review

Date: October 2-3, 2013

Location: Annapolis, MD

STAR Updates

STAR and all STAR-associated workgroups are in the process of adjusting the FY2013 monitoring program to accommodate a million dollar shortfall in federal funding. An emergency STAR session was held on July 22nd to develop coordinated monitoring gap closure options. These options were reviewed by the WQGIT between July 29th - August 5th, and another presentation on the current monitoring funding shortfall was given at the August 8th MB meeting. The next STAR meetings are scheduled for August 29th, September 26th, and October 31st. If you have any questions regarding this process, or other STAR activities, please contact STAR Coordinator Peter Tango at ptango@chesapeakebay.net.

GIT Updates

***The following updates are provided by the Chesapeake Bay Program. Some GITs do not have recent updates to provide at this time.**

Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team

The Sustainable Fisheries GIT held a meeting on August 19th. At that meeting they conducted a membership review, discussed Fisheries GIT outcomes for the New Bay Agreement, including new management outcomes related to blue crab abundance, restoration of oyster habitat and population, and the possibility of adding a forage fish and habitat outcome to the Agreement. Other orders of business included discussion of Peyton Robertson's letter to the U.S. Navy supporting their telemetry array for potential use as a long-term tracker of migratory fish. GIT 1 also discussed December dates for their annual two-day full GIT meeting. The next Fisheries GIT meetings will take place on September 23rd and October 21st.

Habitats Goal Implementation Team

The Habitat GIT held their last meeting on July 18th. They addressed tasks laid out during the Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board Retreat including coordination with the Fisheries GIT to develop language to use as a potential outcome statement for habitats specifically linked to priority fisheries restoration efforts. Additionally cooperation was sought developing

language to acknowledge and communicate the discrepancies between wetland acreages in Watershed Implementation Plans and 75,000 acres listed in the current CBP goal, among other Bay Agreement related tasks. More details can be found here:

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/S=0/calendar/event/20857/>.

Water Quality Goal Implementation Team

The Water Quality GIT held their last meeting on July 8th. The GIT agreed that CBP jurisdictions will submit their 2015 milestones by January 15, 2014, based on the September 2013 version of 2015 land use projections, and also decided that final milestone inputs should be run on the updated 2015 land use projections once they are available. Matt Johnston (CBPO) volunteered to track the availability of new data sets, and the GIT will receive updates on these new data sets and may adjust their recommendations based on future circumstances. GIT 3 also made changes to the Water Quality Criteria Technical addendum. A summary of the July 8th conference call meeting can be found here:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/18973/wqgit_minutes_07082013.pdf.

Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team

The Healthy Watersheds GIT met with the EPA Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds on July 25th to discuss the possibility of funding for a pilot healthy watershed assessment project in the Chesapeake Watershed as part of the National Healthy Watersheds Initiative. The next Healthy Watersheds GIT meeting will take place on September 11th.

STAC Spotlight

UPDATES FROM THE GOVERNOR'S CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT (July 25, 2013)

Matt Ellis

Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley gave an extensive speech on the potential effects of climate change and spoke to Maryland's role as a national leader in addressing and adapting state infrastructure and policy to better prepare for the environmental changes to come.

O'Malley stressed the need for evaluation and verification of progress as it relates to climate change and the state's ability to respond to and mitigate depreciation of the current environment. O'Malley offered support for cap and trade programs, saying, "It is the way forward." He also discussed the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, which is expected to create \$1.6 billion in additional revenue and create 37,000 jobs in Maryland, the future of forest management in Maryland (43,000 additional acres planted by 2020), and the long-term goal of becoming a "zero-waste" state.

After O'Malley's talk, he sat down for a panel discussion with Don Boesch (UMCES), Chestertown Mayor Margo Bailey, Mike Tidwell (Chesapeake Climate Action Network), Dr.

Cindy Parker (Johns Hopkins University), Fred Mason (Maryland State and District of Columbia, AFL-CIO), and Scott Wiater (Standard Solar). Panelists discussed the need for environmental literacy in young students moving forward, noting that their actions will determine the future response to climate change. Mason added that environmental adaptation is intrinsically linked to the economy and the two will only help to support each other if comprehensive policies aimed at improving both sectors are put in place. Tidwell followed up on that idea, saying the U.S. needs a national plan for cap and trade programs. Tidwell expressed concern about the current state of nutrient trading programs and said these programs need to be revised to incentivize cleaner businesses and greener energy, not just the reallocation of pollution credits.

At one of the afternoon workshops, titled “Messaging Climate Change: ‘How to’ and ‘What Works,’” Ed Maibach (George Mason University), went over the five key beliefs associated with climate change: human-caused climate change is happening now, climate change is real, humans have largely contributed to these changes through anthropogenic forcing, and these changes are harmful to human health; BUT, the fifth belief is that all of these issues are “solvable,” and require human reaction on an immediate, global scale.

NOTE: Beginning in October 2013, the STAC Abstract Newsletter will be published regularly on the first of every month and include details of meetings and events from the previous month, while also looking forward to future events that all STAC members should be aware. The Abstract will also bring back the STAC Spotlight section, which will focus on the life and work of a different STAC member. This August newsletter will be published on September 1st, 2013 and the October newsletter will be published on October 1st (due to the September 2013 STAC Quarterly Meeting).