



# THE ABSTRACT

*A Monthly Update from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee*

November 2013

## *Recent STAC News*

### **Management Board (MB) Conference Call – Annapolis, MD** **October 23, 2013**

The new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and Bay Agreement timeline were briefly discussed at the latest MB meeting. The MB voted to support a timeline that will send the latest agreement, with comments from the September 24<sup>th</sup> Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) meeting, back to the PSC on October 31<sup>st</sup> for final edits before a joint PSC/ Federal Leadership Committee Designees (FLCD) call on November 13<sup>th</sup>. There will be a four week signatory review from that date until the December 12<sup>th</sup> Executive Council (EC) meeting, followed by a 60 day public comment period. The signing of the new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement is now scheduled for the May 2014 EC meeting. The updated Bay Agreement timeline is attached.

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Monitoring Network budget cuts were also discussed, and Mark Bennett and Peter Tango presented the Phase II BASIN (Building and Sustaining Integrated Networks) Schedule for the next two years. See the full presentation here:

[http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel\\_files/18759/attachment\\_ii.b.\\_2013star\\_phase\\_ii\\_review\\_presentation.pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/18759/attachment_ii.b._2013star_phase_ii_review_presentation.pdf).

Overview of Phase I, II, III Monitoring Network Review:

[http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel\\_files/18759/attachment\\_ii.a.\\_2013sept\\_mgt\\_bd\\_overview\\_phase\\_i\\_ii\\_iii\\_mon\\_review\\_ptmrb\\_%28final%29.pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/18759/attachment_ii.a._2013sept_mgt_bd_overview_phase_i_ii_iii_mon_review_ptmrb_%28final%29.pdf).

Nita Sylvester (EPA) provided an update on Chesapeake Bay Program Indicators from the "Track Our Progress" section of the Bay Program website. The Phytoplankton and Wetlands Enhancement and Rehabilitation will be removed. The Striped Bass Abundance, Juvenile Menhaden Abundance, Native Oyster Abundance, and Restoring Oyster Reefs pages will remain online. The Bay Gateways and Water Trails in the Bay Watershed indicator pages will remain online, but will no longer be updated. See her full presentation here:

[http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel\\_files/18759/attachment\\_iii.b.\\_presentation\\_2013\\_indicator\\_update\\_mb\\_102313.pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/18759/attachment_iii.b._presentation_2013_indicator_update_mb_102313.pdf).

CBP Communications Director Margaret Enloe presented several proposed design elements of the 2012 Bay Barometer, to be released in 2013, and Enloe briefly mentioned she is working with an artist/designer to prepare a mock draft in the near future.

CBP Director Nick DiPasquale announced that the Bay Program has been reviewing STAC workshop reports and he presented the response letter to STAC regarding the M3.1 (Multiple Management Models Shallow Water Pilot Project) workshop findings and recommendations. The MB also provided a response to the STAC Umbrella Criterion Report on October 25<sup>th</sup>. More response letters are on the way: The response to the STAC Incorporating Lag Time Report is due November 11<sup>th</sup>. The M3.1 response letter can be seen here:

[http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel\\_files/18759/attachment\\_v.a.\\_mult\\_models\\_letter\\_stac\\_m3-1\\_ws\\_ltr\\_3-7-131.pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/18759/attachment_v.a._mult_models_letter_stac_m3-1_ws_ltr_3-7-131.pdf).

## **STAC Reports and CBP Responses**

Other reports awaiting response include the “Real World Sustainable Wastewater Practices” report, “Research-Based Best Practices for Environmental Education” report, “Lag Times in the Watershed and Their Influence on Chesapeake Bay Restoration” report, and “Evaluation of the Use of Shellfish as a Method of Nutrient Reduction in the Chesapeake Bay” review. Pending STAC reports include the “M3.2 – Multiple Models for Management in the Chesapeake Bay” report, “Designing Sustainable Coastal Habitats” report, and “Critical Issues in Implementing Trading Programs in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed” report.

## **STAC FY2013 Workshops: In Planning Stages**

- **In My Backyard: An Innovative Look at the Advances of Onsite Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems – Workshop Lead: Glynn Rountree (NAHB)**  
**Date:** December 17-18, 2013  
**Location:** National Association of Home Builders Headquarters (NAHB) – Washington, D.C.
- **Management Effects on Water Quality Trends – Workshop Lead: Gene Yagow (Virginia Tech)**  
**Date:** January 28-29, 2014 (Tentative date – subject to change)  
**Location:** Westin Annapolis Hotel – Annapolis, MD (tentative)
- **The Peculiarities of Perviousness – Workshop Lead: Tom Schueler (Chesapeake Stormwater Network)**  
**Date:** February 2014  
**Location:** TBD
- **Designing Sustainable Stream Restoration Projects Within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed – Workshop Leads: Bill Stack (Center for Watershed Protection), Neely Law (Center for Watershed Protection), and Rich Starr (USFWS)**

**Date:** February 2014

**Location:** TBD

## ***Upcoming Events***

### **November 2013 Management Board Meeting**

**Date:** November 21, 2013

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

### **Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) December 2013 Quarterly Meeting**

**Date:** December 3-4, 2013

**Location:** Hilton Garden Inn – Annapolis, MD

### **Local Government Advisory Committee/Citizen's Advisory Committee (LGAC/CAC) December 2013 Joint Quarterly Meeting**

**Date:** December 5-6, 2013

**Location:** TBD – Annapolis, MD

### **Chesapeake Bay Program Executive Council 2013 Annual Meeting**

**Date:** December 12, 2013

**Location:** TBD

\*Please see the Chesapeake Bay Program Calendar for more specific event times:

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar>.

## ***STAR Updates***

STAR continues to discuss the process of adjusting the FY2013 monitoring program to accommodate a million dollar shortfall in federal funding. STAR previously considered four different funding allocation options and selected Option 2. STAR Coordinator, Peter Tango, said that Option 2 will result in the tidal monitoring network losing \$55,000 with the nontidal monitoring network slated to lose about \$700,000. Additional funding from EPA (\$300,000), USGS (\$100,000), and state partners reduced nontidal network losses for 2013. “The losses in the end for this year are slightly more balanced between tidal and nontidal as a result,” Tango said. “We are coordinating the final outlook based on all the amazing gap closing efforts underway, but the result of all the additional effort appears to be that 4 stations (instead of 18) will be reduced from the nontidal network.” Under this option, a monitoring funding gap of \$189,000 must still be addressed by the CBP.

Now that a funding option has been selected, STAR will move forward with Phase 1 of the Monitoring Review and Phase II and III BASIN. If you have any questions regarding this process, or other STAR activities, please contact STAR Coordinator Peter Tango at [ptango@chesapeakebay.net](mailto: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 (GIT 1)**

The Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) prioritized blue crab research and data needs identified in the 2013 Blue Crab Advisory Report:

([http://www.chesapeakebay.net/documents/Final\\_CBSAC\\_Advisory\\_Report\\_2013\\_.pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/documents/Final_CBSAC_Advisory_Report_2013_.pdf)).

The top priorities are any research needs that support and improve the accuracy and precision of the Winter Dredge Survey. The Executive Committee approved the prioritization and tasked CBSAC to develop cost and timeline estimates.

The Invasive Catfish Task Force is moving forward with their draft final report which includes management recommendations to mitigate the spread and minimize the impacts of invasive catfish. The Task Force was broken into small teams to accomplish specific tasks before an in-person meeting on October 30<sup>th</sup>. This meeting will include discussions with local watermen about their experience with catfish in the Bay.

Reef construction and seed planting are expected to be 50% complete in Harris Creek by the end of this year. The Maryland Oyster Interagency Workgroup is currently developing tributary plans for the Tred Avon and Little Choptank tributaries.

The Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee approved the revised shad abundance indicator after the Shad Action Team's presentation at the September 23<sup>rd</sup> Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee meeting.

Contact: Bruce Vogt, [bruce.vogt@noaa.gov](mailto:bruce.vogt@noaa.gov)

### **Habitats Goal Implementation Team (GIT 2)**

The Habitat GIT will have a steering committee conference call on November 21<sup>st</sup> to set a date for the next GIT meeting in early 2014.

Along with leadership from other GITs, the Habitat GIT is leading a conversation on a more structured format for integrated GIT operations subsequent to the New Agreement.

Contact: Jennifer Greiner, [Jennifer\\_greiner@fws.gov](mailto:Jennifer_greiner@fws.gov)

### **Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (GIT 3)**

Following review by the Agriculture and Watershed Technical Workgroups on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup>, the Water Quality Goal Team approved three agricultural BMP Expert Panel Reports for Cover Crops, Conservation Tillage, and Nutrient Management on October 15<sup>th</sup>. These three BMPs will now be available for 2013 progress reporting. WQGIT members approved the formation of a subgroup to address future forecasting of agriculture on October 21<sup>st</sup>.

Contact: Lucinda Power, [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto:power.lucinda@epa.gov)

### **Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT 4)**

Tuana Phillips joined the Healthy Watersheds Goal Team (GIT4) staff on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Phillips has been hired through the Chesapeake Research Consortium's career development program. She is a 2013 Cum Laude graduate of Duke University with a B.S. in Environmental Science.

GIT 4 sponsored two 90-minute sessions about healthy watershed protection strategies at the 2013 Chesapeake Watershed Forum, and participated in the evening poster session. The poster demonstrated GIS capability to inform healthy watershed protection targets using data on the threat of future development pressure and the degree of land protection already in place.

Contact: Mike Fritz, [fritz.mike@epa.gov](mailto:fritz.mike@epa.gov)

### **Foster Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT 5)**

The GIT 5 Education Workgroup, Public Access Planning Action Team, and Land Conservation Priorities Action Team developed new and revised outcome and goal language that was submitted to the PSC for approval. Two new outcomes were added under the Land Conservation Goal: the Land Use Methods and Metrics Development Outcome and the Land Use Options Evaluation Outcome, both approved at the September 24<sup>th</sup> PSC meeting. Revised language for the Public Access Site Development outcome was unanimously approved, and revised language for the Environmental Literacy Goal was also approved.

Contact: Amy Handen, [AMHanden@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:AMHanden@chesapeakebay.net)

### **Partnering and Leadership Goal Implementation Team (GIT 6)**

GIT 6 has been focused on assisting the Bay Partnership with the development of the new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. GIT 6 Chair, Carin Bisland, presented the latest version of the Agreement at the PSC meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>. This version of the Agreement was supposed to be made available to the public for comment between September 23<sup>rd</sup> and October 23<sup>rd</sup>, but was delayed due to the government shutdown. Now the Agreement will go through a four week signatory comment period between November 12<sup>th</sup> and the December 12<sup>th</sup> Executive Council meeting, before being made available to the public again for a 60-day comment period ending on February 13<sup>th</sup>. GIT 6 will track all comments during this time period and

discuss/incorporate new suggestions, along with the help of the CBP Editorial Board and Issues Resolution Committee.

Contact: Greg Allen, [allen.greg@epa.gov](mailto:allen.greg@epa.gov)

## ***STAC Spotlight***

### **STAC's New Dynamic Duo: Kirk Havens, STAC Chair, and Lisa Wainger, Vice Chair**

Although it's been only a month and a half since they assumed the respective roles of STAC Chair and Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Kirk Havens and Lisa Wainger have already begun to settle into their new positions. Between fielding calls from STAC Staff to attending various Chesapeake Bay Program events and planning their methods to further enhance STAC's role as advisor to the CBP, the two took some time out of their busy schedules to discuss their goals and expectations for the future of the committee.

Having served under former Chair Chris Pyke for the last two years, Havens said he is excited and feels well-prepared to now take on the role of Chair for himself. "Chris brought a breadth of knowledge and inspiring enthusiasm," Havens said. "He has the ability to cut right to the point, but explain it fully at the same time. I hope to continue Chris' and STAC's efforts to improve engagement with the other advisory committee's and partners."

Havens added that he wants to provide more guidance to the Bay state Governors and their staff so they can make greater use of STAC's range of expertise in their statewide and local efforts to restore the Bay and its watershed. "Those partners should think about their main issues and come to us for the answers," Havens explained. "Any management decision on any level should be informed by the full breadth of available scientific and technical knowledge."

When asked about the increasingly regulatory state of the CBP and impact of the TMDL, Havens replied that the more recent incarnation of the Program only makes STAC's role in providing objective scientific and technical guidance that much more vital. New Vice Chair Lisa Wainger agreed and provided a slightly different take on Chris Pyke's statement that the regulatory landscape has made the Bay Program's structure a bit more difficult to navigate. Wainger explained: "To me, as an economist, regulation is an opportunity. In an economic setting, regulation, if used well, can drive advancement."

"It's clearly a challenge to work within a highly regulated landscape, but we need to look for opportunities to work within that system – and there's actually a lot of flexibility to get things implemented. The regulation is often broader than the implementation rules that we confine ourselves to, and we should be adaptive in changing our methods of implementation as the need arises," Wainger said. "We have an important role to promote use of the best science within the CBP, but we also should try to walk a mile in their shoes, so to speak, and see what it takes to get these management practices implemented."

Currently, Wainger's main areas of focus are agricultural sector engagement in the TMDL, urban diffuse sources, and the issue of how to incorporate climate change into Bay restoration.

“Restoration of the Bay has to be multi-faceted and we need to look for cost-effective opportunities to reduce nutrients and sediment inputs to the Bay,” Wainger said. “In the agricultural sector, we’re seeing innovation in nutrient reduction practices but implementation has been uneven and we need to find ways to further, and more positively, engage this sector. I’d like to be more forward looking in what we do now to make sure the Bay is resilient to climate change. The Bay will change and we can’t prevent that, but reducing stress now will reduce the chances of shifting the Bay into an undesirable state.”

Havens and Wainger certainly have a lot of issues to prioritize in the coming months, but both seem primed to take on the challenges before them with the help of the entire committee. Please be sure to reach out to them and assist them as they continue to adapt to their new roles.

- Matt Ellis, STAC Staff