



THE ABSTRACT

A Monthly Update from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee

October 2016

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Recent STAC News

September 2016 STAC Quarterly Meeting

September 13-14, 2016

O’Callaghan Hotel – Annapolis, MD

STAC Chair, Lisa Wainger (UMCES) began the September 2016 STAC quarterly meeting with an overview of the meeting’s theme: “water quality trends and implications for aquatic life and management”. STAC heard presentations focused on non-tidal network trends, drivers of phosphorus (P) loss in long-term field studies and its effects on monitored P loads delivered to the Bay, the issues of legacy P and P loss in drainage systems, how N:P ratios can cascade through the food web, and some observed biological effects associated with contaminant concentrations and sources of endocrine disruptors. In addition to these discussions, a panel presented an overview of the following ongoing STAC Midpoint Assessment (MPA) reviews: 1) Phase 6 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model, 2) Scenario Builder/Nutrient Inputs, and 3) Land Use Methodology. Panelists discussed how these three STAC reviews are related, their status, and additional background information. Wainger anticipated that STAC will continue the discussion on the meeting’s topics at the next meeting. This discussion also led to the creation of an *ad hoc* group of volunteers, led by Peter Kleinman (USDA-ARS), who plan to lead an effort to develop a factsheet presenting the state of the science/management of P. STAC members were encouraged to send any topics they would like to see at the December quarterly meeting to Wainger at wainger@umces.edu.

Click [here](#) for more information from the September meeting.

Upcoming STAC Quarterly Meetings

- **2016 STAC Quarterly Meeting Dates**
 - December 6-7th (location TBD)

- **2017 STAC Quarterly Meeting Dates**
 - March 14-15th
 - June 13-14th
 - September 12-13th
 - December 5-6th

STAC Workshop Reports – Next Steps

Re-Plumbing the Chesapeake Watershed: Improving Roadside Ditch Management to Meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Water Quality Goals

On August 16th, STAC received a response from the CBP Management Board (MB) regarding the STAC workshop report entitled “Re-plumbing the Chesapeake Watershed: Improving Roadside Ditch Management to Meet TMDL Water Quality Goals”. In their response letter to STAC, the CBP specifically addressed the following three recommendations: 1) Ensure that the CBP emphasizes water quality and habitat impacts associated with these micro-topographic features and the opportunity to help meet CBP goals by promoting ditch management, including funding and regulatory incentives to ensure implementation, 2) Explicitly recognize the critical roles that roadside ditch networks have on water pollution, flooding, and wildlife habitat by developing a comprehensive, watershed-wide program with cross-jurisdiction team-based leadership and consistent policy and guidelines to promote “re-plumbing” roadside ditch networks across towns, counties, and states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and 3) Create targeted, funded research programs focused on improving our understanding of ditch impacts and better management practices to address these impacts.

Evaluating Proprietary Best Management Practices (BMPs): Is it time for a State, Regional, or National Program?

David Sample (VT) and Norm Goulet (NVRC) presented a few of the workshop’s outcomes and next steps during the September quarterly meeting. Sample and Goulet reviewed the overall recommendation from the workshop, which was to establish an expert advisory panel to develop and adopt an evaluation program for proprietary best management practices (BMPs) proposed as the Chesapeake Bay Technology Assessment Protocol (CBTAP) program. The expert panel is expected to select a protocol, provide guidance for implementation, provide guidance for administering the program, and assess financial requirements by fall 2017. The panel’s outcomes would then be presented to the CBP Executive Council (EC) and the CBTAP program would be administered through the Urban Stormwater Workgroup. Should an acceptable national program emerge, it would also be beneficial for CBTAP to coordinate its operations with that program. STAC is expecting a response from the MB later this month.

CBP 2016 EC Annual Meeting

October 4, 2016

Virginia State Arboretum – Boyce, VA

On October 4th, at the State Arboretum of Virginia, the CBP Executive Council held its annual meeting to review the state of the CBP and set guidance for the coming year. The EC is the top policy-making body for Bay Restoration efforts, and includes the governors from all six states in the watershed, the mayor of D.C., the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator and the Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC).

EC Chair, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe presided over the public meeting, which began with a private breakfast at the Arboretum. Representatives from CBP leadership, Advisory Committees, and staff members attended the hour long public session and press conference.



The 2016 Chesapeake Executive Council assembles at the 2016 Chesapeake Executive Council Meeting at the State Arboretum of Virginia. Photo

Beginning the meeting, CBP Director, Nicholas DiPasquale (EPA-CBPO) reported the improving state of the Chesapeake Bay, cautioning that there was still much work to be done. Last year, the CBP announced the release of 25 management strategies that outlined the specific plans for achieving the goals and outcomes of the watershed agreement. DiPasquale noted that earlier this year, CBP partners drafted two-year workplans detailing the short-term actions, commitments, and resources needed for success. Additionally, DiPasquale reported that some of the observed outcomes and indicators (i.e., submerged grasses and crabs) already suggested improved water quality since the last EC meeting. DiPasquale also provided some anecdotal examples of unexpected indicators of positive Bay health this year, including the dolphin pods and swarms of mayflies spotted in the Chesapeake Bay over the summer. Finally, DiPasquale presented the partnership's future agenda for Bay restoration including: gearing up for the 2017 MPA which will review each jurisdiction's progress toward meeting pollution reduction goals, collaboration and communication between the GITs, the release of the Phase 6 Watershed Model, submission of Phase III Watershed Implementation plans (WIPs), and the evaluation and possibility of including local area planning goals into those Phase III WIPs.

During the meeting, Governor McAuliffe was re-elected as Chair of the EC to serve another term. In addition, the council received a briefing on the launch of a new Bay restoration planning effort. This effort is a result of an earlier collaboration between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to identify a wide range of activities that can be undertaken across the watershed to revive the Chesapeake's water quality and enhance its habitat for fish and wildlife. Additionally, the EPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania pledged to invest a total of \$28 million more in the coming year on measures aimed at assisting Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts. This announcement came as a result of the

group acknowledging Pennsylvania's need to increase efforts to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution flowing from its rivers into the Chesapeake.

Furthermore, the EC agreed to sign a resolution supporting local government engagement, commending the actions taken by local governments to address their wastewater pollution reduction goals and committing to raise awareness about the benefits of investing in protection and restoration efforts at the local level.



Advisory Committee members meeting with Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe on October 6th.

On October 6th, Governor McAuliffe held a private meeting with leadership from the CBP's three advisory committees – the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) and STAC. The main goal of the meeting was focused on helping McAuliffe structure his chairmanship of the EC, and discuss recommendations from the local government, citizen and scientific communities for the upcoming year

Click [here](#) to learn more about the 2016 EC Meeting.

Other Activity Updates

STAC FY16 Workshops

STAC will be hosting the following four workshops in FY16. Planning is underway for several of these upcoming activities.

- 1) *An Analytical Framework for Aligning Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Monitoring Efforts to Support Climate Change*
- 2) *Legacy Sediment, Riparian Corridors, and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)*
- 3) *Quantifying Ecosystem Services and Co-Benefits of Nutrient and Sediment Reducing Best Management Practices (BMPs)*
- 4) *Understanding and Explaining 30+ Years of Water Clarity Trends in the Bay's Tidal Waters*

FY15 Workshop Reports

STAC distributed a workshop report entitled "Conowingo Reservoir Infill and It's Influence on Chesapeake Bay Water Quality" on August 18th, 2016. This report summarizes the findings from a January 2016 workshop focused on discussing the state of the science surrounding the behavior of nutrient transport and sedimentation dynamics at Conowingo Reservoir. The report also contains recommendations on immediate and future management actions regarding impacts to Bay water quality. Click [here](#) for the full report.

STAC is continuing work to finalize six reports from the following FY15 workshops. The workshop steering committees are in the process of drafting reports that will be distributed to the Partnership over the next few months. Information regarding each workshop – including agendas, presentations, and reports (as available) – can be found on the [STAC workshop webpage](#).

- 1) *Linking Wetland Workplan Goals to Enhance Capacity, Increase Implementation*
- 2) *Assessing Uncertainty in the CBP Modeling System*
- 3) *Cracking the WIP: Designing an Optimization Engine to Guide Efficient Bay Implementation*
- 4) *The Development of Climate Projections for Use in CBP Assessments*
- 5) *Integrating and Leveraging Monitoring Networks to Support the Assessment of Outcomes in the New Bay Agreement*
- 6) *Comparison of Shallow Water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making (Part I and II)*

For more information on the workshops or reports above, contact STAC Coordinator, Rachel Dixon (CRC) at dixonra@si.edu.

Update on STAC Peer Reviews

STAC distributed a review report entitled “Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Review of Nutrient Input Estimation to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model” on October 10th, 2016. The report is a summary of the panel recommendations of the Chesapeake Bay ‘Scenario Builder’/Nutrient Inputs review. The report can be found on the [STAC review webpage](#).

STAC has five additional review activities currently in progress. Details of those reviews are listed below.

Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Criteria Addendum

The STAC Criteria Addendum review panel is still finalizing its review of the 2015 Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Criteria Addendum. The review panel suggested a clarifying re-write of the addendum and then requested additional revisions to the updated document. The review panel is in the process of working with the CBP to produce a new and improved document incorporating the panel’s comments.

James River Chlorophyll a Criteria Re-evaluation

The review panel completed their review of the requested documentation in September and have finalized a report of their recommendations. The panel’s report is undergoing preparation to be distributed to the Partnership within the next couple weeks.

Phase 6 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model

The review panel convened in late September to discuss the material to be reviewed with CBP representatives. The panel is currently working to finalize its review, which will take place over the next few months.

General Additive Models (GAMs) Approach on Tidal Trends

In late September, STAC approved the review request on Generalized Additive Model (GAM) approach for tidal trends from the WQGIT and STAR's Integrated Trends Analysis Team. STAC is currently finalizing the review panel. This review will take place over the next two months.

Boat Wake Wave Impacts on Shoreline Erosion

STAC approved the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC) requested STAC technical review of potential impacts of boat generated waves on shoreline stability and attendant ecosystem properties, and provide advice on available policy actions to minimize adverse effects. A review panel has been formed and work is currently underway. The review will take place over the next several months, with the goal to assemble an initial working document by mid-October.

Upcoming Reviews

STAC is working closely with CBP representatives to plan for approximately four additional STAC-sponsored independent scientific peer reviews between now and 2017. These STAC reviews will help inform the Partnership's 2017 MPA. The remaining review requests are expected in the coming months.

- 1) *Application of WRTDS to watershed WQ trend analysis and explanations*
- 2) *Chesapeake Bay Water Quality/Sediment Transport Model (WQSTM)*
- 3) *Approach being taken to factor climate change considerations into the 2017 Chesapeake Bay TMDL Midpoint Assessment*
- 4) *Phase 6 Land Use Backcasting Methodology*

For additional information regarding the reviews above, contact STAC Coordinator, Rachel Dixon at dixonra@si.edu or visit the [STAC review webpage](#).

Key Events

There are a number of relevant conference calls and meetings to which STAC members should pay special attention. All upcoming CBP related events can be found on the [CBP meeting calendar](#). Each listing provides logistical information and meeting materials, when available.

STAR Updates

STAR, along with the GITs, previously identified a CBP [Science Needs](#) List. This list should be referenced to identify additional science providers who would be interested on collaborating in these issues. In addition, STAR is supporting the Cross-GIT Mapping project, utilizing monthly meetings to solicit feedback on mapping priorities from the GITs and next steps. STAR is also playing a role in presenting indicator options for GITs in outcomes of the Bay Agreement.

The Citizen-Based and Non-Traditional monitoring project group is preparing for a Prioritization Workshop on October 13th. At this workshop, the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative will be asking attendees to contribute guidance on priority areas that will help focus networking efforts on monitoring integration.

The Climate Resiliency Workgroup's (CRWG) FY16 GIT funding proposal to develop a suite of climate change indicators and metrics for the CBP was selected for funding. The next workplan action item related to the MPA is to develop a list of possible options for incorporating climate considerations in Phase III WIPs. A small workgroup has been tasked with completing this document. In addition, an upcoming climate change webinar hosted by the STAR Team's Modeling Workgroup Co-Chairs and Coordinators will discuss recent climate change analyses for sea level rise (SLR) projections, projected changes in water column temperatures, estimates for wetland inundation, and the changes in the climatology and hydrology in the watershed. This webinar will take place on October 18th from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm. This webinar would be extremely helpful to those STAC members participating in the Climate Change review. Click [here](#) for all materials and links to the webinar, which will be recorded and posted for further reference.

The CBP recently charged the Criteria Assessment Protocols Workgroup to reconvene with the task of 1) critically reviewing the existing tidal waters chlorophyll *a* criteria assessment procedures, and 2) providing consensus recommendations on any alternatives to consider in revision of the existing procedures. Three meetings were conducted during August and September, where draft recommendations were developed. A final set of recommendations will be presented to the Water Quality GIT (WQGIT) and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VADEQ) during fall 2016.

The Status and Trends Workgroup will use the [Indicators Framework](#) to evaluate how our existing indicators support our needs under the new Bay Agreement, identify gaps, assist in developing new indicators, and ensure there are updated indicators for all Partnership products. During the last workgroup meeting, members reviewed a draft workplan for the group, and discussed necessary changes and additions.

The Modeling Workgroup presented initial preliminary scenario analyses of Conowingo infill as well as the influence climate change has on Chesapeake water quality standards during the October 4-5th Modeling Workgroup meeting. The Phase 6 Beta 3 version of the Watershed Model was used for the analyses.

If you have any questions regarding STAR activities, please contact STAR Coordinator, Peter Tango at ptango@chesapeakebay.net or visit [STAR's webpage](#).

GIT Updates

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

Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT 1)

The Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee hosted a conference call on September 26th. The meeting featured discussion of a variety of topics, including relevant issues in fisheries, planning a workshop for managers to communicate their approaches of oyster management in each jurisdiction, further detailing the expected deliverables from the FY2016 GIT Funding projects, reviewing and offering feedback on the proposed oyster indicator, and identifying topics for the upcoming full GIT meeting December 6-7th.

The Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) met in early September to discuss potential impacts of an increased minimum size limit for male hard crabs. This was proposed by the Sustainable

Fisheries GIT member Billy Rice (Maryland Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission) and supported by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission. Jurisdictional managers are currently discussing feedback received from GIT members on this issue, a Bay-wide minimum size limit of 5.25 inches for male hard crabs, and how/if to move forward with the evaluation of the allocation-based management framework under the Agreement.

The Sustainable Fisheries GIT was awarded funding for an oyster shell/habitat loss study, evaluation of ecosystem factors affecting blue crab study, and a pilot study on benthic and forage sampling nearshore by local watershed groups. The Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) will issue an RFP this fall.

The Habitat GIT Co-Chairs and Sustainable Fisheries GIT Chair, Peyton Robertson (NOAA) met to discuss shared priorities between the GITs and potential collaborative efforts to advance Habitat and Fisheries outcomes.

For more information on the Fisheries GIT, contact Bruce Vogt (NOAA) at bruce.vogt@noaa.gov or visit the [Sustainable Fisheries GIT webpage](#).

Habitat Goal Implementation Team (GIT 2)

The Habitat GIT will hold their fall 2016 meeting at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, WV on November 14th, 2016. This meeting will build upon the momentum created at the spring meeting. The Habitat GIT will be moving forward by coalescing the state actions and tools shared into a watershed-wide, landscape-scale vision to further the Chesapeake Conservation Design concept. In addition, an extension of the Habitat GIT meeting will take place on November 15-16th at NCTC for members of the SAV Workgroup and the Black Duck Action Team as Tetra Tech and the Climate Resiliency Workgroup present decision making workshops on their Climate Resiliency Assessment and Decision-Making Matrix project. To prepare for these workshops, steering committee members have been selected and will be interacting with the project lead, Tetra Tech, over the next few months.

The Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Workgroup is also in the process of planning a SAV Aerial and Ground Surveys Design Workshop for March, 2017 in Annapolis, MD. Participants will be given a background on the survey's design, logistics, and evolution of data and products with the hope for the group to create alternative design options to better fit the needs of data given available funds.

For more information regarding the Habitat GIT, please contact Kyle Runion (CRC) at Runion.Kyle@epa.gov or visit the [Habitat GIT webpage](#).

Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (GIT 3)

The WQGIT held two conference calls in August. These meetings addressed how to prioritize the review and approval of upcoming Best Management Practice (BMP) expert panel reports due to the time restrictions and number of reports that needed to be approved prior to September 30th. The WQGIT was also briefed on the latest United States Geological Survey (USGS) analysis of long and short terms nutrient and sediment load trends in the Bay, as well as ongoing efforts to explain those trends. The WQGIT also discussed the Climate Resiliency Workgroup's recommendations for climate projections, sea level rise (SLR) and tidal wetland loss as a primer for the upcoming October webinar. The WQGIT was also presented an overview of the timeline for decision-making process with regard to climate components of the MPA.

The WQGIT also held calls on September 12th and 26th. These meetings began the review process on a number of the BMP expert panel reports. STAC member Gene Yagow (VT) briefed the WQGIT on the STAC Phase 6 Scenario Builder Peer Review Panel's findings and recommendations prior to the final report's release. The WQGIT members also prepared briefings for an upcoming in person meeting October 24-25th.

In addition to the Climate Change review webinar, the WQGIT will also host a webinar on October 20th from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, focusing on the future assessment of Conowingo Infill into upcoming Partnership decisions and the Phase 6 model and Phase III WIPs. Click [here](#) for all materials and links to this webinar.

For more information regarding the WQGIT, please contact Lucinda Power (EPA) at power.lucinda@epa.gov or visit the [WQGIT webpage](#).

Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT 4)

The Healthy Watersheds GIT committee is currently planning for their next meeting scheduled for mid-October in Pennsylvania. Recently, two project proposals received by the Healthy Watershed GIT for FY16 have been awarded full funding. In addition, the Healthy Watersheds GIT sponsored a project related to a stream mapping study titled "Methodology for Developing High-Resolution Stream and Waterbody Datasets for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed".

For more information regarding the Healthy Watersheds GIT, please contact Renee Thompson at rtompson@chsapeakebay.net or visit the [HW GIT webpage](#).

Fostering Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT 5)

The Diversity Workgroup has tentatively scheduled a workgroup meeting for November 2nd in Baltimore, MD. The main objectives will be to get updates from stakeholder groups on important priorities related to the diversity workplan to engage non-traditional groups and to track progress on 2016 workplan activities by federal, state, non-governmental organization (NGO), and other partners.

In addition, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay completed its collection of partner demographic information at the end of August. The profile was sent to the Principals Staff Committee (PSC), MB, Advisory Committees, GITs, and workgroup members. Overall half of the total surveyed individuals participated. The diversity workgroup will be working with partners like indicators workgroup, Green 2.0, to further analyze the data and provide information to Bay program leadership for moving forward to further share results and to determine indicators.

For more information regarding the Fostering Stewardship GIT, please contact Amy Handen (NPS) at ahanden@chsapeakebay.net or visit the [Fostering Stewardship GIT webpage](#).

Enhancing Partnering, Leadership, and Management Goal Implementation Team (GIT 6)

A final selection of projects submitted for GIT funding took place on August 16th with CBP Director, DiPasquale, the GIT Chairs, Coordinators and Staffers. Fifteen projects will be funded. The GITs are working with the Chesapeake Bay Trust to develop detailed statements of work, which will be used when issuing a Request for Proposals to seek bidders in October 2016.

A draft version of the Biennial Strategy Review System has been presented to GIT Chairs and the Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management GIT for review and comment. The GIT Chairs and the Enhancing Partnering, Leadership, and Management GIT recommended that a model based on cross-outcome collaboration and tied to the release of indicator data is the preferred model. Next steps include soliciting feedback from MB members and incorporating those comments into the model before the Enhancing Partnering, Leadership, and Management GIT presents a final recommendation to the MB in November or December 2016.

In addition, the Enhancing Partnering, Leadership, and Management GIT convened a small group during September to draft recommended solutions to each of the proposals revisions to the Governance Document. These recommendations will be presented to the GIT at the October 2016 meeting.

For more information regarding the Partnering and Leadership GIT, please contact Greg Allen at allen.greg@epa.gov or visit the [Enhancing Partnering, Leadership, and Management GIT webpage](#).

Welcome New STAC Staff, Elaine Hinrichs



I joined the Chesapeake Research Consortium (CRC) as STAC Staff in early September 2016, a few months after graduating from Oberlin College with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and a minor in Physics. One of the things I enjoyed most while at Oberlin was being a member of the Green EDGE Fund, a student board that supports and funds local environmental sustainability, resource conservation, and carbon-offsetting projects. I also loved running and biking around rural Ohio as part of my training for Oberlin College's cross country and track and field teams. I'm really looking forward to finding lovely running spots in the Annapolis area too.

I grew up in Ames, Iowa, then in State College, Pennsylvania, surrounded by agricultural lands and research. My concerns about the nearby, downstream, and global effects of human land management led me to the Environmental Studies department at Oberlin. A variety of internships during my college years honed my passion for environmental research and adaptive management, as well as my desire to help restore and protect waterbodies and their watersheds. In January of 2015, I interned with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy in northern Ohio and modeled water quality at the subwatershed level within the Lake Erie basin. During the summers of 2014 and 2015, I assisted with agroecosystems research in the Sustainable Dairy Cropping Systems project at Penn State University (PSU). Due to its location within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, one of the project's priorities is investigating the ability of dairy farms to reduce nonpoint source pollution of waterways. This past year I extended some of the research I conducted in the project with PSU and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) researchers into an Oberlin College senior honors thesis comparing measures of available soil nitrogen and nitrous oxide in no-till corn within diverse dairy crop rotations.

My honors project helped me realize that, although I enjoy conducting scientific research related to environmental issues, I want to be more involved with communicating that science and promoting environmental stewardship in order to effectively address these issues. STAC member, Lara Fowler (PSU) pointed me toward this particular position when I spoke with her after a seminar on effective science communication that she gave during my summer internship with the Network for Sustainable Climate Risk Management (SCRiM) at PSU. I am very excited to be working with the CRC and STAC

facilitating important scientific and technical activities and communicating guidance for management in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. I enjoyed meeting STAC members and learning about emerging science and Chesapeake Bay Program efforts at the September quarterly meeting, and I look forward to learning more about the intersection of science, management, policy, and outreach as the newest member of the STAC staff.

Hinrichs' main duties as STAC staff will focus on planning for STAC quarterly meetings, Executive Board meetings and continuing development of a STAC recommendations database. During this transition time at CRC, Rachel Dixon (CRC) stepped into the role of STAC Coordinator as of July 2016, and Renee Kelly (CRC) will continue her role as STAC staff, where she will be facilitating workshop planning and the upcoming workshop proposal process for FY17.