



Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP)
Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)
June 2025 Meeting | Setting the Science Agenda for 2026
June 16-18, 2025

National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia
[Meeting Webpage](#)

****Exact Times Are Subject to Change****

Sunday, June 15th

Evening **S'mores Around a Bonfire** (starts at 7:30 pm)
Sit around the Lemon Fire Ring to enjoy s'mores and company!
The fire will be banked at 10:30 pm.

Monday, June 16th – "STAC's Strength and Strategy"

6:30 am **Breakfast** (hot food served until 8:30 am)

9:00 am **Archives Tour**

NCTC historian Mark Maddison will give a tour of the USFWS Museum and Archives house, with films, photos, and documents chronicling the rich heritage of wildlife conservation. Meet at the Fallen Comrades Statue at 8:50 am.

10:15 am **Call to Order, STAC Business – *Larry Sanford (UMCES, STAC Chair), STAC Staff***

- Introductions (name, affiliation, research/expertise/interests)
- Membership Updates
- STAC Liaisons
 - Kaylyn Gootman (EPA, Bay Program Coordinator), Breck Sullivan (USGS, STAR Coordinator), Rachel Felver (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Bay Program Communications)
- Recap of STAC March 2025 Quarterly Meeting
- Approval Requests:
 - March 2025 Quarterly Meeting Minutes
 - March Executive Board Call Minutes
 - April Executive Board Call Minutes
 - May Executive Board Call Minutes
 - Transition to new meeting structure
- STAC FY24 Workshops
 - Striped Bass Survey Assessment and Habitat Connections
Convened February 13-14 in Annapolis, MD
 - Leveraging Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to Advance Chesapeake Bay Research and Management: A review of status, challenges, and opportunities
Convened February 24-25 in Annapolis, MD
 - Blueprint for Building Partnerships and Recommendations for Scaling Brook Trout Restoration in Stronghold and Persistent Patches
Convened May 29 in DuBois, PA; June 3 in Westminster, MD
 - Advancing Market-Based Approaches in the Agricultural Sector to Support Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration
Scheduled July 8-9 in Annapolis, MD

- STAC FY25 Workshops
 - Challenges and Opportunities in Operationalizing Coupled Human and Natural Systems (CHANS) Research in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed
 - State of the Science of Salinity Risks in the Chesapeake Bay and Its Tributaries: Connecting Monitoring, Modeling and Management
 - Healthy Forests: Proactive Strategies for Managing Threats and Promoting Conservation
- Review of Proposed Document Revisions and Amendments
 - Bylaws
 - Operational Guidelines
 - Workshop protocols
- Member Announcements and Updates

11:10 am **The Future of the [C-StREAM Program](#) – Gabriella Giordano (CRC)**
 Gabriella Giordano (CRC) will present an overview of the Chesapeake Student Recruitment, Early Advisement, and Mentoring (C-StREAM) program and discuss how the program will continue to support the career development of qualified students in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed through the current changing landscape.

11:30 am **Goals and Objectives for the STAC June Meeting**
 STAC will discuss the desired outcomes of the meeting.

12:00 pm **Lunch**

1:00 pm **STAC Lightning Talks**

1:30 pm **Lightning Talk Discussion**
 Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members’ expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.

1:50 pm **Setting the Science Agenda for 2026: STAC in the Present**
 PSC Response Letter to STAC’s 2024 Recommendations to the EC – Larry Sanford (UMCES)

Video viewing: A collage of interviews from individuals with insights into STAC's role in the Bay Program and Chesapeake watershed conservation, created through [Green Fin Studio](#). The responses highlight the uniqueness and strengths of STAC and provides feedback to guide STAC’s future decisions.

Larry Sanford (UMCES, STAC Chair) and Denice Wardrop (CRC, PSU, STAC Executive Secretary) will lead a discussion of STAC’s strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. STAC members will also propose subjects for future topical meetings.

STAC will begin drafting a brief justification of the committee.

3:00 pm **Break**

3:30 pm **STAC Lightning Talks**

4:00 pm **Lightning Talk Discussion**
 Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members’ expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.

- 4:20 pm** **Living Resources Feasibility Charette Debrief – Kaylyn Gootman (EPA)**
Key individuals met May 6-7, 2025, to discuss and develop a workplan on increasing conservation efforts towards linking water quality management decisions with living resources responses. This was one of the recommendations from the CESR report. Kaylyn Gootman (EPA) will give a debrief on the Charette.
- 4:35 pm** **CESR Updates**
Denice Wardrop (CRC) will provide a refresher on the impacts of the [CESR report](#). Updates on efforts following the report’s implications and recommendations will be given by Mark Monaco (NOAA) and Kenny Rose (UMCES) on CESR-related publications and by Kurt Stephenson (VT) on Tiered Implementation of the TMDL.
- 5:00 pm** **CESR Debrief, Potential Future STAC Products**
STAC will discuss the implications of CESR as a STAC product. The committee will share thoughts on the process, suggest changes for potential future products, and consider if another product is necessary and feasible.
- 6:00 pm** **Dinner** (food served until 7:30 pm)
- Evening** **Bingo** (starts at 7:00 pm)
Play bingo and potentially win a small prize in the Social Lounge or at the Headwaters Patio (weather dependent). This activity is open to all NCTC guests and lasts about one hour.
- Hangout at the Headwaters Patio** (starts at 7:00pm)
Relax and chat around the propane fire tables at the Headwaters Patio. Each person will receive a Bar Ticket that can be redeemed at the bar in the Social Lounge for one small draft beer, bottled beer, glass of house wine, soft drink, or bottled water.
Outside alcoholic beverages are not permitted. The Social Lounge is open until 11:00pm.

Tuesday, June 17th – “Power of the Partnership”

- 6:30 am** **Breakfast** (hot food served until 8:30 am)
- 8:30 am** **Engagement Activity**
- 8:50 am** **The Bay Program: Present and Future – Kaylyn Gootman (EPA), Breck Sullivan (USGS), Rachel Felver (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)**
STAC Liaisons Kaylyn Gootman (EPA), Breck Sullivan (USGS), and Rachel Felver (Alliance) will provide an update on changes within the Bay Program and the progress in Phase II of the Beyond 2025 timeline. They will also apprise STAC of upcoming activities that may require the committee’s attention at the request of the Bay Program.
- 9:20 am** **Role of Advisory Committees in Bay Program Governance**
Joined by *Laura Cattell Noll (LGAC Coordinator)* and *Jess Blackburn (Stakeholders’ AC Coordinator)*
Discussion on where the Advisory Committees fit into the governance/restructure of the Bay Program and how the Advisory Committees will coordinate efforts in the next year+.
- 10:10 am** **Break**

- 10:30 am** **Lightning Talks**
- 10:55 am** **Lightning Talk Discussion**
Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.
- 11:15 am** **Nature-Based Solutions and Capital Accounting – Vamsi Sridharan (Tetra Tech), Julia Fucci (CRC)**
Vamsi Sridharan (Tetra Tech) and Julia Fucci (CRC) will present on the objectives of the STAC Synthesis project, "Evaluating the performance of nature-based coastal protection solutions for natural capital accounting in Chesapeake Bay" and information on Natural Capital Accounting (NAC)
- 12:00 pm** **Lunch**
- 1:00 pm** **Lightning Talks**
- 1:30 pm** **Lightning Talk Discussion**
Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.
- 1:50 pm** **Setting the Science Agenda for 2026: Navigating Uncertainties**
With more information on Bay Program, etc., STAC will continue its strategic planning for the next year(s). STAC will discuss ways to build resilience in a changing landscape and continue to progress in the next year+.
- 3:00 pm** **Break**
- 3:25 pm** **Understanding STAC's Perspectives on Environmental Decision Support Tools – Alex Gunnerson (USGS), Sophie Waterman (USGS)**
As the Chesapeake Bay Partnership evaluates future directions for conservation and restoration in the watershed, the Chesapeake Bay Program Geospatial Science and Applications Team (GSAT) is conducting user research to understand the environmental decision support needs of key audiences, including scientists who both utilize and contribute to the development of geospatial resources. During the presentation, participants will learn about existing decision support tools and be invited to share their insights on how geospatial resources can be enhanced and evolved to better support their research and application efforts in the environmental decision-making process.
- 3:45 pm** **Perception of Knowledge**
Item currently being designed by SSWG
- 6:00 pm** **Dinner** (food served until 7:30 pm)
- Evening** **Trivia** (begins 7:30 pm)
Group up and test your collective knowledge on a variety of topic areas in the Social Lounge or at the Headwaters Patio (weather dependent). This activity is open to all NCTC guests and lasts about one-and-a-half hours.

Wednesday, June 18th – "Pushing for Progress"

- 6:30 am** **Breakfast** (hot food served until 8:30 am)
- 7:30 am** **Bird Walk**
NCTC ornithologist Jim Siegel will lead a walk through the woods and help identify birds by sound and sight. Wear walking shoes and appropriate clothing for the weather; binoculars will be provided. Meet at the Bridge at the Commons at 7:20am.
- 8:40 am** **STAC Lightning Talks**
- 9:10 am** **Lightning Talk Discussion**
Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.
- 9:30 am** **"Next Big Thing"**
STAC will discuss potential topics and actions to tackle in the next year. Propose topics for the STAC Letter to the Executive Council (EC) to be sent before the EC Meeting on December 2, 2025.
- 10:00 am** **Break**
- 10:20 am** **STAC Lightning Talks**
- 10:50 am** **Lightning Talk Discussion**
Considering the lightning talks, STAC will discuss how to best utilize its members' expertise and consider what scientific topics need attention going forward.
- 11:10 am** **Formation of ad-hoc workgroups**
STAC Staff will inform on the process of ad-hoc workgroups.
STAC will discuss and create ad-hoc workgroups, assign selves into workgroups.
- 11:50 pm** **Working Lunch — ad-hoc workgroups breakouts**
- 1:00 pm** **Meeting Summary (Webinar)**
The meeting summary will be streamed and recorded. This listen-only session can be publicly attended virtually.
- 3:00 pm** **Break**
In-person participants wrap up with networking and reflect, destress, grab a snack before leaving.
- 3:30 pm** **Meeting Adjourn**