

# Workshop Updates



**Healthy Forests: Proactive Strategies for Managing Threats  
and Promoting Conservation**

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**Craig Highfield (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)**





# Healthy Forests: Proactive Strategies for Managing Threats and Promoting Conservation

## **Purpose:**

to integrate insights from scientific research, expert testimony, and case studies to build a comprehensive framework of monitoring programs, adaptive management strategies, collaborative efforts, and other measures for achieving meaningful conservation outcomes.

**Will convene Winter/Spring 2026**  
in the Frederick area

## **Co-Chairs:**

Craig Highfield (Alliance for the Bay)  
Katie Brownson (USFS)

## **STAC members:**

Matt Baker (UMBC)

## **Objectives:**

- Identify major stressors to forest health and resilience in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including from changing environmental conditions, land use change, non-native species, pests, diseases, and other stressors.
- Evaluate whether and the extent to which the major stressors identified (and interactions between multiple stressors) may lead to declines in forest health through impairment of forest ecology.
- Evaluate how impairments to forest ecology may impact the ability of forests to improve water quality, how these impairments may lead to forest loss, and the implications of these for meeting the Bay Program's goals.
- Develop actionable recommendations for improving forest health and resilience to enhance conservation outcomes through silvicultural practices, invasive species management, policy, community engagement, and other incentives, in addition to traditional conservation.



# Healthy Forests: Proactive Strategies for Managing Threats and Promoting Conservation

## Day 1 Objective:

Identify and understand the major stressors to forest health and resilience, and how they interact to affect Bay outcomes.

## Agenda Overview:

- Plenary: Major Stressors to Forest Health
- Discussion: Conceptual Model
- Lightning Talks: Current Research and Management Insights
- Panel: Lessons from Practice
- Breakout Groups: Stressors in Context

## Day 2 Objective:

Develop and prioritize actionable recommendations for proactive forest management and stewardship, distinguishing short-term from long-term strategies.

## Agenda Overview:

- Lightning Talks / Panel: Tools and Approaches for Scaling Forest Management
- Breakout Groups: Strategies for Action
- Discussion: Synthesis and Next Steps
- Closing Keynote: Inspiring Forest Futures