



Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP)
Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)
**Healthy Forests: Proactive Strategies for Managing
Threats and Promoting Conservation**
Workshop | February 24-25th, 2026
The Delaplaine Arts Center | Frederick, Maryland
[Workshop Webpage](#)

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

This meeting will be recorded to assure the accuracy of meeting notes.

Workshop Objective: Identify major stressors to forest health in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and evaluate how they affect forest resilience, water quality, and Bay goals; explore proactive management and stewardship strategies (e.g., silviculture, invasive species control, policy tools, and community engagement) to strengthen forest conservation beyond traditional easements and develop actionable recommendations for the Partnership.

- **Day 1 Objective:** Identify and understand the major stressors to forest health and resilience, and how they interact to affect Bay outcomes.
- **Day 2 Objective:** Develop and prioritize actionable recommendations for proactive forest management and stewardship, distinguishing short-term from long-term strategies.

February 24, 2026

8:45 am Coffee & Light Breakfast (Provided)

9:15 am Welcome and Introductions – Katie Brownson (USFS), Craig Highfield (ACB)
Steering Committee co-chairs will kick off the workshop with a welcome and introductions. They will outline the objectives of the workshop and summarize the new Forestry goals in the Bay Watershed Agreement.

9:45 am Conceptual Model Discussion – Matt Baker (UMBC)
Steering Committee will introduce a draft model connecting stressors to forest health, water quality, and Bay outcomes. Participants are requested to provide feedback and refinement.

10:00 am Level-Setting Plenary: Major Ecological Stressors to Forest Health
Experts will present on important ecological stressors affecting forest health in the Chesapeake Bay watershed (e.g., climate change, land use, invasive species, pests/disease) and the management relevance of these stressors.

Panelists:

- *Chris Hayes (USDA FS)*
- *Matt Hurd (MD DNR FS)*
- *Jill Rose (PA DCNR)*

11:00 am 20-minute Break

11:20 am Panel: People and Forests

Panelists will talk about the roles of people (e.g., landowners, community groups, stewardship programs, local governments) in forest management.

Panelists:

- *Allyson Brownlee Muth (Center for Private Forests, PSU)*
- *Isaac Hametz (The Nature Conservancy)*
- *Jenny Willoughby (City of Frederick)*
- *Jon Geyer (Hardwood Development Council)*

12:20 pm Lunch (provided)

1:20 pm	Panel: Lessons from Practice Case studies of proactive forest management that will help inform the strategy moving forward.
	Panelists:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kyle Myers (PA DCNR), Roy Brubaker (PA DCNR)</i> • <i>Nancy Baker (land steward, landowner)</i> • <i>Matt Pienkowski (Woodland Stewardship Network, ACB)</i> • <i>Dave Mausel (USFS)</i>
2:20 pm	20-minute Break
2:40 pm	Breakout Groups: Stressors in Context Participants will discuss the urgency of stressors, examine how multiple stressors interact, and identify knowledge gaps in understanding stressors to forest health.
4:00 pm	Breakout Group Report-Out and Discussion
4:30 pm	Wrap-Up Discussion: Key Takeaways from Day 1 – led by workshop Steering Committee
4:45 pm	Recess
4:45 pm	Optional Dinner STAC Staff will share a list of nearby restaurants within walking distance of the workshop location.

February 25, 2026

8:00 am	Optional Tour of the Delaplaine Arts Center Staff-guided tour of the Delaplaine Arts Center, including information on the facility's history, programs, and exhibitions.
8:45 am	Coffee & Light Breakfast (Provided)
9:00 am	Recap of Day 1 & Framing for Day 2 – Steering Committee Summary of Day 1 outcomes and Framing Day 2
9:15 pm	Lightning Talks: Tools and Approaches for Scaling Forest Management Lightning talks highlighting practical tools and policies that have supported proactive forest management.
	Speakers:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guy Dunkle (Foundation for Sustainable Forests)</i> • <i>Jeff Larkin (IUP/ABC)</i> • <i>Sabina Dhungana (VA DOF)</i> • <i>Amy Shields (Allegheny Hardwoods Utilization Group, Allegheny Forest Health Collaborative)</i> • <i>Phyllis Joris (Neighbor Space)</i>
10:30 am	Breakout Groups: Strategies for Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What proactive management/stewardship strategies can address the priority stressors? • Short-term vs. long-term approaches
11:30 am	20-minute Break
11:50 am	Breakout Out Groups Report Out
12:30 pm	Keynote: Inspiring Forest Futures – <u>Ethan Tapper</u>

2:00 pm **Group Discussion: Synthesis and Next Steps** – *led by workshop Steering Committee*
This session will summarize key takeaways from both days and focus on identifying three priority areas for follow-up.

3:00 pm **Closing Remarks and Workshop Conclusion** – *led by workshop Co-Chairs*

3:15 pm **Adjourn**