



**CSPDC Chesapeake Bay TMDL
Watershed Implementation Plan
Stakeholder Meeting**

June 20th, 2023 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

CSPDC Office, 112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, VA 24401

Hybrid meeting Via Zoom Video Conference Call

Meeting Summary

In attendance:

Shereen Hughes, Wetlands Watch	Hunter Moore, CSPDC
Ross Weaver, Wetlands Watch	Zach Beard, CSPDC
Nesha McRae, DEQ	Steve Bolster, CSPDC
Dale Chestnut, JMU	Morgan Shrewsbury, Augusta County
Gabi Kinney, Wetlands Watch (virtual)	Adam Schellhammer, VCC (virtual)
Mary-Carson Stiff, Wetlands Watch (virtual)	Austin Garber, Town of Timberville (virtual)
Peter Kesecker, City of Staunton (virtual)	Tom Roberts, City of Buena Vista (virtual)
Fred Blanton, Lewis Creek WAC (virtual)	

Welcome and Introductions

- Hunter Moore welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining the meeting in-person or virtually. She asked the group to introduce themselves.

Wetlands Watch Presentation: Community Flood Preparedness Funds (CFPF) and other flood-related technical assistance

- Gabi Kinney, Mary-Carson Stiff, Sheeren Hughes, and Ross Weaver

- Shereen Hughes, Assistant Director for Wetlands Watch, started the presentation with a brief overview of the Wetlands Watch organization.
- Gabi Kinney, Community Engagement Project Manager for Wetlands Watch, presented on the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFBF).



- 45% of revenue from Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative auctions go to CFBF and is administered through DCR.
- CFPF has over \$100 million unallocated remaining in the pot, with two more auction cycles anticipates to bring an additional \$60 million in 2023.
- CFPF has 3 grant categories including planning and capacity, studies and projects. Project require local resilience plan.
- Round 4 of CFPF is anticipated to open Fall 2023
- Gabi shared information award cycles and award examples from Virginia. She also shared CFPF opportunities for the CSPDC and list of resources.
- Wetlands Watch provides technical assistance to any VA community interested in applying for all 3 categories of the CFPF.
- Morgan asked about regional resiliency plans or if localities need to create their own plan. Hunter mentioned that in the past, the PDC explored the idea of updating the regional hazards plan to a resiliency plan as well, however, that is no longer in the works at this time. Steve mentioned that the CSPDC is applying for funds for the next hazards plan update. Gabi clarified that a PDC can develop a regional resiliency plan that serves as each locality's plan but needs to include locality specific goals and objectives in the plan.
- Mary-Carson Stiff, Deputy Director for Wetlands Watch, presented on the Community Rating System (CRS), a voluntary National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) that provides reduced flood insurance premiums in communities that go above and beyond the minimum requirements of the NFIP.
- Higher standard actions result in credits (more credits = greater flood insurance discounts). The program is administered by the locality.
- Credit earning activities include public information, mapping and regulations, flood damage reduction and warning and response operations. Promoting resilience and adaptation to increased flooding is a high credit activity.
- Mary-Carson gave an overview of program savings in Virginia and additional resources for the program.
- Shereen then presented on the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professionals (CBLP) which is a program that is expanding the workforce of trained landscape and green infrastructure professionals on the Bay watershed.
- CBLP offers Level 1 and 2 Trainings. Level 1 is a baseline credential in design, installation, and maintenance of sustainable landscapes. Level 2 is an advanced credential for professionals experienced in design and/or installation of conservation landscapes and green infrastructure.
- Shereen shared CBLP partnership options for local government, including custom courses, private trainings, and discounts for staff. She also shared upcoming CBLP events, including Level 1 Field Practicum in Blacksburg on August 9th.
- Ross Weaver, Program Assistant Director for Wetlands Watch, then presented on resilience training for decision makers. Wetlands Watch provides resources and training

opportunities for local planners, floodplain administrators, planning commissions and more.

- Ross discussed their work with the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Guide, AdaptVA data portal, Land Use Education Program's Certified Planning Commissioner Program, resiliency webinars for APA VA and trainings for localities. Ross shared several examples of project types.
- Fred Blanton stated that these projects seem a little overwhelming for smaller groups. There are many environmental groups in the area that do different things and have separate niches. There should be an opportunity where several groups work together on a larger project. Shereen responded, saying that Wetlands Watch is a small organization as well and they work collaboratively with groups. For example, the James River Consortium is funded by NFWF. The PDC can be the organizing or aligning group to work with many other smaller groups, to come up with a plan of action.

CSPDC WIP Program Update:

- Hunter gave an update on 2023 CSPDC WIP activities. Earlier in the year, the CSPDC met one-on-one with 13 out of 16 unregulated communities to reconnect them with the WIP program, gather information on potential BMP needs and activities, and generate ideas for the PDC's 2024 scope of work.
- Many localities expressed interest in tree planting and help with grant assistance from the CSPDC as projects arise.
- Rural counties do not have much municipal land to implement BMPs, most are interested in agricultural BMPs and working with their SWCDs. Assistance with septic pump outs or repairs was also a common need for the counties.
- The CSPDC submitted their draft scope of work for 2024 to DEQ in March. DEQ has asked all PDCs participating in WIP to increase their BMP implantation activities. The CSPDC is looking at what activities will work best and will continue to work with DEQ on the final scope of work that is due in September. The CSPDC is especially looking at ways to include tree planting BMPs activities in their scope.
- Hunter shared about the PDC's assistance on two grants this past spring. They assisted the City of Buena Vista with a National Fish and Wildlife (NFWF) Small Watershed planning grant to fund a BMP needs assessment for the City. The City is interested in assessing their streams, land between the river and levee, green infrastructure and flood resiliency opportunities. NFWF award announcements are expected in September.
- The PDC also assisted the City of Waynesboro on an EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office grant for shovel-ready projects involving buffers, urban trees, and wetlands. The funding requested would have gone towards the planting costs for the City's South River Preserve Project; however, the proposal was not funded.
- The CSPDC will be working on WIP interim reporting due to DEQ on July 17th.



Regional Implementation Partners Discussion

- Hunter shared that they are working on updating their list of potential partners who do BMP implementation work in the region. This is a 2023 scope deliverable, and she shared the PDC's existing list of partners (did not include state department agencies). She asked the group to share any suggestions of organizations to add to their list.
- Additional organizations suggested by the group: Trout Unlimited, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Wetlands Watch, Blue Ridge Prism, Appalachian Conservation Corps, Appalachian Voices, Virginia Native Plant Society (Ridge and Valley chapter), and Piedmont Environmental Council.

Community Updates

- Hunter asked if there was any other business to discuss, news or announcements.
- Gabi shared that Wetland Watch will have a webinar on the CFBF grant manual changes and will share that date with the PDC when it is scheduled.
- Nesha shared a DEQ funding opportunity for section 319 grants funds. Requests for applications are now open and this funding is for TMDL implementation projects. Deadline for applications is August 31st. DEQ anticipates \$1.6 million of funding for projects in the 75 to 300K range with start dates in October 2024.
- Fred added his thanks to Nesha on her work with the Lewis Creek in Staunton.
- Hunter's last day at CSPDC is July 13th and Zach Beard will be coordinating the CSPDC WIP program after her exit next month.

VIII. Adjourn

- With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.