

CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE WEBINAR SUMMARY-DRAFT

July 15, 2022

LINK TO ALL MEETING PRESENTATIONS AND MATERIALS:

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2022/7/15/chesapeake-bay-and-water-resources-policy-committee/>

Decisions and Actions:

- Members worked with staff to develop talking points for the September Annual Forum.
- Members recommended piloting the CBPC Paper Competition as a scholarship for the coming year instead of an award. Since there are scholarship databases it will make it easier for students to learn about the Paper Competition.
- Members voted to provide support for the alternative water supply study.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

Chair Amy Jackson welcomed everyone and announced that the September 16th CBPC Annual Forum with EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) and the states will be held in-person at COG, and asked members to RSVP for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation boat tour on October 21 out of Alexandria. It coincides with Alexandria's Oyster Week so there will be the opportunity to go out for oysters afterward. She announced the arrival of the River Renew boring machine for Alexandria's combined sewer overflow remediation project. Chair Jackson has seen the boring project at DC Water, and Steve Bieber offered that COG could arrange a DC Water tunnel tour in spring.

2. CBPC MEETING SUMMARY APPROVAL

Members approved the draft summary of the July 2022 CBPC Meeting.

3. CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM UPDATES AND FORUM TALKING POINTS PREPARATIONS

Karl Berger, COG Principal Planner, provided updates about Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) issues as we approach 2025. Mr. Berger and Ms. Bonnaffon offered suggested Forum talking points (Chesapeake Bay Program talking points are italicized below) for the September Forum and asked members for their feedback.

- Modeling is indicating that the Bay Partnership will not meet the Bay total maximum daily load (TMDL) planning targets set for 2025, due to nutrient reduction shortfalls in Pennsylvania. Overall, there are still approximately 42 million pounds of nitrogen reduction needed by 2025, 32 million pounds of which are in Pennsylvania's. Pennsylvania's loadings are primarily from the agricultural sector, unlike our region which benefited from wastewater treatment plant nutrient reductions. *COG staff recommend that other Bay states should not be asked to make up for reduction shortfalls in Pennsylvania, but instead additional federal support should be provided to Pennsylvania (see CBPC advocacy letter to EPA).*
- Model updates, the Conowingo WIP (Watershed Implementation Plan), and accounting for climate change are all making it harder to achieve 2025 planning targets, because they are adding additional loads. *The 2025 deadline is not a legal requirement. The load reductions will need a longer horizon than 2025. Wastewater treatment plants are at their limits of technology and need to preserve capacity for growth.*
- Monitoring of the Bay's deep-water channel shows it is out of compliance with water quality standards, although doing better. An increased focus on monitoring of shallow water is likely to show non-attainment in areas as well. The shallow water portion of the Bay, along shorelines and tidal provides the greatest habitat for submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) and living resources.
- Modeling uncertainties in the Bay Program raise the question of whether a single set of

numbers is an effective way to evaluate water quality progress.

Several of the proposed Bay Program talking points have been italicized above, and additional points are below.

- Local governments must integrate flooding reduction measures into their stormwater programs in addition to the nutrient and sediment reductions.
- COG members would like recommendations for how to apply for the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act funding via their SRF (State Revolving Fund) programs.

Members provided excellent remarks on the draft talking points, which were revised, accordingly, for the September 16th Forum.

4. THE FUTURE OF CBPC'S PAPER COMPETITION

After three years of the paper competition, Chair Jackson asked for member feedback, given the low level of submissions over the years. Members, not wanting to burden staff with promotion to universities, recommended turning the award into a scholarship. Scholarship listservs will allow COG to share the competition more widely. It was agreed that if the submissions are not quality, there is no obligation to give the scholarship.

5. STAFF AND MEMBER UPDATES

- A. Steve Bieber briefed members on COG's drought plan, enabling regional coordination and communication, developed as a result of a 1999 drought. The drought plan primer may be accessed via the link at the top of this document. COG briefed the CAOs (Chief Administrative Officers) and wanted to let newer members of the CBPC know about the drought plan's existence.

Member discussion:

- Supervisor Gross said even though the original effort was contentious, it is a comfort to know that this Drought Plan is a living document.
 - Councilmember Davis said in 1999 the reservoir levels were dropping, but without the coordinated Drought Plan, people in different jurisdictions had differing conservation measures for their residents, causing tensions between neighbors. The Plan establishes the same rules for everyone.
- B. Lisa Ragain provided a briefing on a group of chemicals, known as perfluorinated alkyl compounds, or PFAS.
 - These chemicals are used on products to make them fireproof, slippery or waterproof, such as Gortex or Teflon, and are ubiquitous in the environment and do not break down. Camping products, dental floss, pizza boxes all contain PFAS. PFAS is in the blood of most human samples. They are in minute traces in water.
 - In mid-June EPA issued health advisories in parts per quadrillion, which are unmeasurable, for four PFAS compounds in water. A health advisory is not a regulation but rather a suggestion of detection levels. The health advisory levels are extremely low, such as a single hair on one person's head out of all the human hair on the planet.
 - There is a lot of research and metropolitan Washington utilities are going to be testing for PFAS starting this summer. The region's utilities have a set of Frequently Asked Questions.

- States are starting to regulate drinking water, wastewater, and land application of biosolids.
- C. Heidi Bonnaffon summarized the findings of COG's Community Engagement Campaign's (CEC) third annual survey of the public's water and wastewater knowledge, beliefs, and actions survey.

Member discussion:

- Chair Jackson asked the CEC to provide CBPC members with Instagram posts and social media posts to utilize to spread water quality information. It mitigates questions and can help to inform people about their source of drinking water.
- D. Steve Bieber shared that Dr. Denison, University of Maryland Center for the Environment Science (UMCES), will be developing a Potomac River Report Card and is gathering stakeholder advice on which metrics to include. The report card will be out next year.

6. MEMBERS-ONLY BRIEFING: METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY STUDY

Lisa Ragain briefed the CBPC on the significance of funding a U.S. Army Corps study for alternative supplies of drinking water— besides the Washington Aqueduct— for the District of Columbia and Arlington County. If the Potomac River was unusable for some reason, they have only a 24–48-hour supply of water. Loudoun Water and Fairfax Water have acquired quarries to add resiliency. Alternative supplies are important to buffer the long-term effects of climate change and the short-term possibility of a Potomac emergency (e.g., a spill). Congress will need to authorize the study in the WRDA (Water Resources Development Act) Bill and secondly, appropriate the funding. This study is the foundation for future studies. The CBPC and water utilities have sent advocacy letters. The CBPC will be asked to provide letters of support at appropriate times, and there will be briefings to the COG Board and CAOs and the Board of Trade.

Member discussion:

- Supervisor Gross suggested including VACO, VML, MML, and MACO in sending letters, since this is a regional issue.
 - Councilmember Davis recommends approaching the major cities in the region versus MML, given the number of townships in MML.
 - Councilmember Davis asked to share generic letters that others could send out.
- Lisa Ragain said COG is asking for full federal investment, including the military, for resiliency.
 - Supervisor Gross chairs the NVRC Community Military and Federal Facility Partnership and could schedule a briefing of this partnership.
- Members voted to provide support for CBPC advocacy on this issue.

7. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 12:00 P.M.

Members and Alternates:

Amy Jackson, City of Alexandria, Chair
Cindy Dyballa, City of Takoma Park
Ella Hanson, DC Council
J. Davis, City of Greenbelt Council

Keith Levchenko, Montgomery County Council
Kenny Boddye, Prince William County Council
Maria Mackie, Vice Chair, College Park Council
MC Keegan-Ayer, Frederick County Council
Penny Gross, Fairfax County

Susan Whitney, City of College Park Council
Allison Deines, Alexandria Renew Enterprises
Andrea Crooms, Prince George's County DEP
Beth Forbes, Gaithersburg
J. Davis, City of Greenbelt
Jessie Maines, City of Alexandria
Joel Caudill, WSSC Water
Matt Reis, DC Water
Maureen Holman, DC Water

Nasser Kamazani, Montgomery County DEP
Pam Kennel, Loudoun Water
Steve Shofar, Montgomery County DEP
Tiffany Wright, City of Bowie

Guests:
Aashini Choksi, Council
Kathy Hoekstra
Kishia Powell, DC Water
Kyle Redden, Council
Tom Johnson, Council

COG Staff:
Ata Adeel
Heidi Bonnaffon
Karl Berger
Lindsay Smith
Lisa Reynolds
Steve Bieber
Tom Gates
Wyetha Lipford