



**Meeting Notes: GWRC Environmental Managers Meeting
September 21, 2021, 1:00PM – 3:00PM EST
Prepared by Luke Peters**

In attendance:

Aaron Wendt – DCR-SEAS
Adam Lynch – FOR
Andy John
Benjamin Leach
Brandy Buford
David Nunnaly – Caroline County
Angela Davis – DCR
Emily Torrey
Jeff Flood – CZM, DEQ
John Saunders
Julio Reyes – VDEM
Les Johnson
Mark Killgore – DCR
Matt Gerhart – NVCT
Patrick Coady
Scott Rae – Fredericksburg
Tyler Gelles – Fredericksburg
[University of Mary Washington]
Bryant Bays – DOF
Lara Johnson – DOF
Matt Poirot – Water Quality Management, DOF
Darren Coffey, AICP – CEO, Berkley Group
Nadya Syazsa – Intern, Berkley Group
Celeste Greene – Executive Manager, Berkley Group
Luke Peters – Environmental Planner, Berkley Group

Meeting Notes

WIP presentation/meeting #4 and CZM meeting #?

WIP Updates:

- Scott: Urban Stream Restoration BMPs will no longer be accepted – keep ear open for why the 2022 guidance says this. [Find out where it says that??]

Bryant Bays, DOF Presentation on Programs Offered:

- GWRC is 69% forest – 595,377 acres, 59% is hardwood, 22% loblolly, 14% oak/pine.

- Lots and lots of hard and softwood removal (hopefully sustainable).
 - Active forest management provides a better return on environmental services.
 - More growth than removal: 23mil vs. 9mil soft, 27.5mil vs. ~15mil hard.
 - Worth \$13mil.
- Eastern Region has lost 320,000 acres since 1977 due to development – leveling off recently.
- Working to prevent wildfires through education, because almost all are man-made.
- Forest management planning, costshare programs to reforest and prevent pine beetles, and creation of seedling nurseries.
- Trying to bring the carbon market to forest landowners (and create other markets).
- Increased pine productivity 2-fold. Research is also figuring out how to bring back diminished species, including American Chestnut.
- Working with individual landowners to help prevent conversion – creating conservation easements, especially to keep the land undivided (contiguous). 36,000 acres currently.
- No state forests and just 2 conservation easements in the GWRC region.

Sentinel Landscapes:

- Land: focuses on military encroachment, forests, arable land, forests, and flood and fire abatement;
- Water: SLR, resiliency, water quality, habitat loss, and encroachment.
- David (Caroline): local forestry office has been a good partner for 15 years.



- Going to create a large area that focuses on both military readiness and environmental quality.

Lara Johnson, DOF: Financing and Tracking Urban Forestry Grants

- Staff of 2, gets federal money.

- Virginia Trees for Clean Water and Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program are the 2 big programs.
- VTfCW: reimbursement, requires site visit, match-what-you-can (doesn't require cash). Community engagement is required.
- UaCFGP: also RFP + reimbursement, but this one requires 50% match. This one has been doing a lot of workforce development – training students and others to care for trees planted through this program.
- Tracking Trees: <https://arcg.is/WryDG> (also on DOF website). They'll come verify them towards urban BMPs. Example: Woodlawn Learning Center urban orchard.

Matt Poirot, DOF – Water Quality Program

- Harvest Inspection Program: one-on-one contact with loggers, getting them to implement BMPs as part of their business models. Also informs them on Silvicultural Water Quality Law. Looked at 3,800 logging jobs last year. Avg. harvest size is 45 acres.
- Law Enforcement: civil law infringements under the Administrative Process Act. If a log-skid would put sediment in the water, they can enforce a stop-work order.
- [David Nunnally: “Can DOF work with VDOT on tree harvests adjacent to VDOT right-of-ways? Often, we see a single line of trees left standing along the roadway that are very susceptible to storm damage.”]
- Work on BMP training for loggers.
- IFRIS notification system identifies Water Quality related inspections (IFRIS).
- Things that get counted: Harvesting BMPs get counted, Urban Tree Canopy (by Lara), Riparian Forest Buffer Miles, Afforestation, etc.
- Monitor 240 BMP tracts per year, selected randomly.
- Riparian Forest Buffer Program – hired a contractor through a EPA grant. No cost to certain landowners.
 - Tax Credit: 25% of the timber retained, up to \$17,500/year. 2019 had 112 applications, \$738,721 on \$3,258,227 worth of timber. Have to leave buffer for 15 years.
- Continuity of funding is difficult for WQ projects.
- Water Quality Program Committees:

- Provides DOF Representation on:
 - ◆ Chesapeake Bay Forestry Workgroup
 - ◆ Sustainable Forestry Initiative State Implementation Committee (SFI-SIC)
 - ◆ Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
 - ◆ So. Group of State Foresters - Water Resources Committee
 - ◆ Various Chesapeake Bay TMDL Advisory Groups
 - ◆ SHARP Logger Training Committee
- Provides Annual Report on:
 - ◆ BMP Monitoring Report – used by SFI- SIC, SHARP Logger Program, Various research efforts, Chesapeake Bay Harvest reporting.
 - ◆ House and Senate Finance Committee Report on Implementation of Silvicultural WQ Law
 - ◆ State of The Forest Report – Water Quality Section

Celeste Greene, Berkley Group – Environmental Justice:

- “Social equity is about fairness, right, justice, and freedom from the effects of bias... it is a pragmatic condition that describes access to and distribution of public goods.”

- Equality vs. Equity vs. Justice

The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local and tribal programs and policies (U.S. EPA, 1998).

- Lot of lead in old houses. Lots of pesticide exposure to farmworkers of color.
- Age, race, density, literacy, geographic factors, income, health care access, pollution concentrations, etc.
- 2010 Obama appointed first AA to lead EPA (Lisa Jackson).
- Federal Tools: Title IV, 14th Amendment, EO 12898 (1994, Clinton), Established Interagency Working Group (EPA, 11 department heads, meets monthly).
- Texts: Bullard, Dumping in Dixie, Coye & Lavelle, article in National Law Journal; Boerner & Lambert (critics), Murphy-Greene (2022) incorporate EJ more fully into agencies. “EJ and Resiliency in an Age of Uncertainty”.
- Three Goals at Dept. of Energy:
 - Identify programs with adverse impacts
 - Enhance credibility and public trust by increasing public participation
 - Improve data collection methods RE risk for minority and low-income.
- Dept. of Trans strategy: case studies showing outreach to minorities, etc.
- State Efforts:
- 2021: DEQ hired first Director of EJ (Renee!).
- Focusing on redlining and urban heat islands (Baltimore and Richmond). Working to increase tree canopy.