



Federal Agencies Committee Meeting Highlights

A Federal Agencies Committee (FAC) meeting was held on August 14, 1997, at the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) in Annapolis, Md. Announcements and highlights from this meeting included:

- The Federal Land Stewardship workgroup is proposing the Elizabeth River as a Brownfields Showcase Communities project. If accepted, the community will receive technical and financial assistance for their cleanup projects. The CBP plans to support these efforts by providing peer assistance, establishing a monitoring network, identifying financing alternatives, and ensuring that memoranda of understanding are developed with the appropriate federal agencies.
- The Coastal America Regional Implementation Team has designated the Baltimore National Aquarium as a coastal ecosystem training center.
- The Habitat Restoration Workgroup is updating the Habitat Restoration Project Priority List. Projects should be multi-agency efforts that have a high potential for public involvement and are innovative models from which other agencies could learn. Contact Janmichael Graine at (410) 671-1687 to suggest projects. The workgroup is developing a Federal Talents List of individuals to work on these projects or provide advice. The workgroup also plans to conduct Habitat Restoration Opportunity Assessments on federal facilities in the coming year.
- Marine Corps Base, Quantico held a Federal Facility Site Assessment in July that focused on the base's stormwater management and land use/land cover practices.
- The National Association of Service and Conservation Corps gave a presentation on their nationwide program that provides training and work experience to youths in exchange for community service hours. In 1995, 22,000 youths worked 12 million service hours building and maintaining trails, landscapes, and observation decks. The corps works directly with federal agencies through national, state, and local corps organizations and plans to expand its program to include stream restoration.
- The Maryland Conservation Corps oversees six crews in Maryland that work on a variety of restoration projects. These projects include reestablishing oyster reefs, planting submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), removing tires and trash, stocking fish, banding birds, controlling erosion, and conducting stream corridor assessment monitoring. Contact Marti Woodfield at (410) 260-8166 for more information.

Implementation Committee Meeting News

An Implementation Committee (IC) meeting was held on August 21, 1997, at the CBP in Annapolis, Md. Announcements and highlights from this meeting included:

- The Executive Council Meeting will be held on October 30, 1997, at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum. The meeting will focus on implementing new nutrient reduction initiatives, establishing wetlands goals, reviewing the riparian forest buffer initiative, and creating a community-based watershed directive.
- The Chesapeake Regional Information Service (CRIS) is a free hotline that provides information about the Bay. The service recently developed a Basinwide Information On-line Service (bios@envirolink.org) that will establish a database of facts about the watersheds that are in the Chesapeake Bay drainage area. For more information, call 1-800-662-CRIS.
- The CBP is developing memoranda of agreement for each agency to sign to ensure participation in the Chesapeake Information Management System (CIMS). The goal of CIMS is to centralize program-wide computer resources support, link related data management efforts, develop data collection standards, and evolve into a distributed management system.

State of the Bay: Dissolved Oxygen

Marcia Olson, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), gave a presentation on dissolved oxygen (DO) at the August 21st IC meeting.

Aquatic plants and animals require DO to live. In the Bay, DO concentrations range from highs around 12 to 15 mg/L to lows of 0 mg/L. When DO levels are low (< 5 mg/L), detrimental effects to reproduction, growth, and susceptibility to disease can occur in Bay plant and animal populations. DO levels of 0 or near 0 for an extended period of time usually result in death.

Olson said that some parts of the Bay and its tributaries suffer from chronic, episodic low DO. Although this has been true historically, the extent and duration of low DO in the Bay have increased this century due to nutrient enrichment and organic loading.

On the average, DO at the bottom of the Bay usually remains above 5 mg/L from fall through mid-spring. In late spring, warmer fresher surface water isolates the bottom water. As a result, DO levels decrease to less than 1 mg/L in parts of the Bay. These first occurrences of low DO usually occur in the bottom waters of the upper Bay. By late May and June, low DO levels extend to the bottom waters of the mid-Bay and remain there through the summer.

According to Olson, each animal species has its own oxygen requirements and tolerances. The CBP has established habitat restoration goals for DO based on these limitations. These goals include the following guidelines:

- DO must be at least 1 mg/L throughout the Bay at all times.
- DO between 1 and 3 mg/L should not occur for periods longer than 12 hours.
- DO must be at least 5 mg/L in above pycnocline or surface waters in spawning and nursery areas.

Steering Committee Sets Course for FY 98



The Army Chesapeake Bay Initiative (CBI) Steering Committee met at Fort Story, Va., on September 16, 1997. The committee is composed of representatives from the U.S. Army Environmental Center (USAEC); Headquarters, Department of the Army; the major Army commands; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); and installations within the Bay watershed. The primary purpose of the committee is to review the current status and projects of the Army's Bay program and establish directions and guidelines for the future.

Johnny Noles, Integrated Training Area Management (ITAM) coordinator for Fort Eustis and Fort Story, welcomed the participants to the workshop and provided an overview of Fort Story and its mission.

Janmichael Graine, USAEC, gave a historical overview of the Army's efforts toward the restoration and protection of the Bay. Since the Corp's early hydraulic studies of the Bay in 1965, the Army has become increasingly involved in the Chesapeake Bay restoration and protection effort. In 1984, 1990, 1993, and 1994, the Army, through the Department of Defense (DoD), signed agreements with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that have established increasingly specific goals for the Army's environmental program in the Bay watershed.

Graine also discussed the support USAEC provides to Bay installations. USAEC oversees the Army's efforts in the Bay watershed. This oversight includes determining the overall direction of the Army's program; acting as a liaison between the Army, other federal agencies, and the CBP; and coordinating workshops, programs, and communication forums that help installations understand their role in the Bay's restoration and protection.

Aileen Smith, DoD Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, gave a presentation on the DoD Quality Management Board. This board is composed of service and installation representatives who meet quarterly to exchange information and coordinate Bay issues among all the Bay installations. The board helps the services set priorities, disseminates news and information, projects funding, and coordinates with the CBP. For fiscal year (FY) 98, the Board is coordinating the DoD Chesapeake Bay Conference, developing a federal implementation plan on riparian forest buffers, defining Bay Integrated Pest Management initiatives, and planning two workshops for installation personnel.

Martin Elliott, Office of the Directorate of Environmental Programs (ODEP), gave a presentation on the Army CBI homepage. The homepage is up and running and can be accessed at www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/env/cbi. This homepage is linked to several other homepages, including USAEC, the Garrison Commander, Defense Environmental Network Information Exchange (DENIX), and CBP homepages.

Helene Merkel, Horne Engineering Services, Inc., gave an overview of USAEC's support to Army Bay installations in FY 98. The projects include preparing the Army Chesapeake Review newsletter, tracking Bay compliance status, conducting Federal Facility Site Assessments, creating an Army CBI database, conducting a stormwater management workshop, preparing articles on installation CBI success stories, reviewing installation Master Plans, maintaining the Army CBI homepage, conducting CBI assistance visits, and nominating an Army installation for a Bay Partner Communities Award.

The Steering Committee reviewed their standard operating procedures and the action items established in the 1993 DoD/EPA Agreement. At the end of the meeting, Noles took the participants on a tour of Fort Story. The tour focused on the post's beachfront where the installation is using a new



Committee members learn about geotubes ¾ a low-cost technology that is helping Fort Story combat shoreline erosion.

low-tech erosion control concept called geotubes to fight the erosion that is threatening to consume the post's beach and three historic sites. Geotubes are 200-foot long polyurethane bags that, once filled with sand, act as a buffer between the ocean and the primary dunes and help prevent further erosion and even restore the dunes.

The project involved a partnership between the

installation; USACE, Norfolk District; and the 11th Transportation Battalion. Together, the teams filled 10 giant sandbags and entrenched them in front of the primary dunes along more than 2,000 feet of shoreline. Once filled, the 11th Transportation covered the bags with sand and planted approximately 80,000 grass seedlings of American beachgrass on top of the tubes. These grasses are helping restore the primary dunes, providing habitat for area wildlife, and protecting the bags from the infra-red rays of the sun, which can cause the materials of the geotube to break down. The post's Department of Public Works and ITAM staffs have teamed together to maintain and monitor the geotubes, ensuring that they are covered with sand, minimizing any undercutting of the bags caused by wave activity, and patching any rips that occur in the bags.

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The newsletter is distributed via e-mail or through the Army CBI homepage. The homepage address is www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/env/cbi/index.htm