

Program Committee Discussion

The Committee provides strategic guidance for the establishment of new program areas and recommendations for the expansion, refinement, or elimination of existing programs. Assists the Alliance staff in monitoring program results, evaluating success, and seeking new grant and funding opportunities.

Emerging Opportunities

A variety of emerging issues and opportunities were discussed that may present opportunities for program development for the Alliances. These included: New stormwater fees and growing local government programs, local government assistance for implementation, businesses interest in being green and sustainable, growing environmental literacy and community service in schools, growing diversity and untapped volunteer reservoir, new Bay Agreement Management Strategies, and need for acceleration of agricultural BMPs and conflicts related to manure.

Alliance Program Goals

The Alliance delivers its mission through both regional and local programs that focus on action in three primary goal areas or themes.

GOAL ONE: ENGAGING DIVERSE WATERSHED COMMUNITIES

Broadening the base of participation in the Bay restoration effort. Bringing people together to find common ground, build collaborative solutions and achieve restoration goals.

Current Programs/Efforts

- Chesapeake Bay Program Support - Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC), and CBP Communications Office
- The Watershed Forum.
- The Chesapeake Network.
- Forests for the Bay (including Real Forestry for Real Estate)
- The Stormwater Partners Retreat
- Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake

Possible Program Expansion Opportunities

- Build Forum*Plus* - Convening regional gatherings and web education
- Forests for the Bay Training
- Increased Local government education and leadership development-Determine needs

Potential for New Program Development

- Launch Businesses for the Bay – 2014 Forums and Development of Program Elements
- Initiative in Agricultural Sector (discussion of poultry growers initiative) (grant submitted)
- Build partnership with Sportsman Groups engaged in restoration
- Reach out to the Faith/Minority Communities -Convene Conference/Meeting
- DOD and Forestry/Nutrient Trading

Priorities for 2014

- 1) Businesses for the Bay – First Forum held in Virginia in March, need for follow-up report and formation of committee to discuss further development in VA. Host additional Forum in PA, MD/DC region to further gather input and build audience. Seek Sponsorships and Founding Members for support. Continue to lead from VA Office but need to determine staffing. *(\$5000 in Alliance Funds committed to date.)*
- 2) Expand engagement with Agricultural Sector – ED is working with partners in MD to submit a proposal to NRCS that will launch an engagement of Poultry Industry and farmers on Eastern Shore of Maryland to evaluate issues and find solutions related to over-application of manure on crop fields (phosphorus) and alternative uses of manure. Project would also involve substantial stakeholder engagement to resolve tensions *(Alliance matching funds)*
- 3) Implement ForumPlus - Lou will continue to negotiate with NFWF and will other partners to implement a number of regional gatherings and educational events to stretch Forum goals across the year and build momentum and ideas for annual Watershed Forum event. *(Some potential to use Program Income)*
- 4) Local Government Watershed Leadership Development – There was interest in continuing to explore how to build further connections with and support local governments (evolution of circuit rider ideas) as well as reach out to development/builders community. *(No concrete proposal yet -build off PA Growing Greener Grant with LGAC)*

GOAL TWO: CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE BAY AND THEIR LOCAL RIVER

These are programs that can connect people with nature and create opportunities to build personal knowledge and experience. Community volunteer programs empower adults and youth to take on conservation challenges. Increasing the power of citizen stewardship is the key.

Current Programs/Efforts

- Chesapeake Bay Program and Alliance websites (www.chesapeakebay.net and www.allianceforthebay.org)
- Project Clean Stream
- River Trends Citizen Monitoring.
- Film Festivals – Annapolis and PA Wild and Scenic Festival

Possible Program Expansion Opportunities

- Expand the reach of Project Clean Stream– schools (service learning credits), businesses (sustainability initiatives), Homeowner associations, regional leaders

- Expand Homeowner’s stormwater website and increase outreach to local officials

Potential for New Program Development

- Host a Chesapeake TedX Event
- Implement a River/Bay Sojourns Initiative: Sojourns – business employee engagement, targeted local solutions, limit to 1-2 day max, educational for specific group.
- Drinking water protection through forest and watershed conservation– watershed wide approach
- Connect non-English speakers to information about the Bay and its rivers and how to make a difference – web, videos, how to documents especially homeowners

Priorities for 2014

- 1) Investigate Chesapeake TedX – This was considered an exciting and highly visible opportunity. ED will meet with Jennifer Troy to discuss and evaluate its potential as well as identify the best timing and expected costs related to planning and/or hosting this event. *(could require some Alliance up-front investment)*
- 2) Spanish speakers outreach – Ideas were discussed that included outreach with branded messages to Spanish speaking media outlets. Staff lead is not yet known but we have several fluent in Spanish. *(Will discuss further).*
- 3) Expand delivery of web-based information on stormwater – Lou Etgen, Dan Brellis, and Drew Siglin will develop a proposal for expansion and marketing of the reduce your stormwater website. *(Dan and Drew will prepare a grant proposal for the latest NFWF RFP in order to seek funding support. Lou and Dan are also working with USFWS to move the online native plant guide to the Alliance Website for public use.)*

GOAL THREE: HEALING THE LAND AND WATER

On-the-ground restoration projects demonstrate successful cost effective approaches and support local governments. Projects take place in urban & suburban neighborhoods and farms and forests.

Current Programs/Projects

Trees and Forests

- *TreeBaltimore Urban Tree Canopy Initiative*
- *10,000 Trees - Governor’s Buffer Program (Maryland)*
- *Conococheague Riparian Buffer Project (Pennsylvania)*
- *Forest Mitigation Banking Demonstration (Maryland and Bay-wide)*
- *Carbon Offsets through tree planting (Altria) (Bay-wide)*

RiverWise Communities/Rain Gardens and Stormwater

- DC River Smart Homes Program
- Greening Virginia’s Capital/Jefferson Greenway
- Reedy Creek Watershed Initiative

- READY – Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth – Howard County, MD

Technical Service Provider Program - PA – Cumberland, Franklin, and Lancaster Counties,

Possible Program Expansion Opportunities

- Watershed Tree-planting Initiative potentially linked to carbon offsets
- READY Model/Green Jobs Expansion – Queen Anne’s County, DC, AACo, etc.
- Expand work with Faith Community (IPC) on stormwater (grant submitted)
- RiverWise Program local delivery and training - (grant submitted)

Potential for New Program Development

- Landscape Contractor training and certification (CCLC/green stormwater practices/Bayscapes) (consider connection to Master Gardeners)
- Headwaters – Brook Trout – working with land Trusts to conserve forests

Priorities for 2014

- 1) Landscape Contractor Training and certification – Opportunity to expand on training efforts currently underway as part of DC River Smart and Alliance River Wise programs. *(Staff will explore how to deliver and to partner with the CCLC and Master Gardeners on a certification program).*
- 2) RiverWise Communities Program demonstration – River Wise Communities Program will be complete in 2014. Challenge for Alliance will be outreach and demonstration. Nissa Dean in VA will work with other staff to expand awareness and outreach to local governments when the program is ready for launch later this year. *(Nissa is preparing a grant proposal for this demonstration and outreach through NFWF RFP due in June. Seek help from new Development/Communications person.)*
- 3) Riparian Buffers/Trout/Headwaters – Eric Sprague and ED will work with other partners such as Stroud Water Research Center, CBF, Potomac Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Nature Conservancy and others to develop a strategy for restoration of linked landscapes that benefit both water quality and coldwater fish. *(Investigate potential for grant resources through the new Farm Bill RCPP Program).*

Business Centers (fee for service)

The Alliance management team discussed forming program elements that are not directly grant funded but create a service or product delivered by staff for which a fee can be charged.

Possible Fee-for-service Opportunities

- BMP Verification services – Third party certification
- Sojourns – Business employee team building, schools, issue focused, river exploration
- Landscape Contractor training and certification

Priorities for 2014

Decision was not to pursue development of a specific fee for service effort in 2014.