

Minutes

CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION
Chesapeake Beach, MD
Sept. 8 & 9, 2005

The Chesapeake Bay Commission held its third quarterly meeting on Thursday and Friday, September 8 & 9, 2005 in Chesapeake Beach, Maryland.

The following Commission members and staff were in attendance

Assistant Secretary Russ Baxter
Delegate John Cosgrove
Representative Russ Fairchild
MD Citizen Representative Bernie Fowler
Senator Brian E. Frosh
Assistant Secretary Ron Guns
Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.
Representative Art Hershey
VA Citizen Representative Irvine B. Hill
Deputy Secretary Cathy Myers
Delegate Albert Pollard
Senator Nick Rerras
Senator J. Lowell Stoltzfus
Senator Michael L. Waugh
Delegate Mike Weir
Senator Noah Wenger
PA Citizen Representative George B. Wolff
Delegate John F. Wood, Jr.
Representative Peter J. Zug

Staff: Ann Pesiri Swanson
Suzan Bulbulkaya
Marel Raub
Pat Stuntz
Paula Hose

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Howard King, Director of the MD Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Service and current Commissioner for the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission gave the members perspectives on fisheries management. Topics included *c. Ariakensis*, the effects of Hurricane Katrina, and the recommendation of both eel and oysters for the federal "Endangered Species List".

Members and staff participated in a field trip with a distinguished panel of scientists out in the Chesapeake Bay.

Walter Boynton, Ph.D.
Professor
University of Maryland Center for
Environmental Science Chesapeake
Biological Laboratory

Vicki Blazer, Ph.D.
Fish Pathologist
National Fish Health Research
Laboratory
U.S. Geological Survey

Anson "Tuck" Hines, Ph.D.
Marine Ecologist and Director
Smithsonian Environmental
Research Center

Robert Orth, Ph.D.
Professor of Marine Science
Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences

Denise Breitburg, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist
Smithsonian Environmental
Research Center

Luke Iwanowicz
Doctoral candidate, University of
Massachusetts
National Fish Health Research
Laboratory
U.S. Geological Survey

Rom Lipcius, Ph.D.
Professor of Marine Science
Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences

Mike Naylor
Natural Resource Biologist
SAV Restoration & Education
Program Manager
MD Dept. of Natural Resources

The members were given the unique opportunity to interact with these scientific experts, first hand, examining what we know about the condition of the Bay's water quality and its living resources and analyzing opportunities to either improve or better manage it.

Friday, September 9, 2005

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Mike Waugh. The May meeting minutes and the agenda were adopted as proposed.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The 2006 Commission meeting schedule was approved. It was also agreed upon that the Commission continue the practice of making the January meeting one day long.

January 5, 2006	Annapolis, Maryland
May 11-12, 2006	Washington, DC
Sept. 7-8, 2006	Strasburg, PA
Nov. 9-10, 2006	Virginia Beach, VA

Chairman Waugh spoke about the upcoming Executive Council meeting, which will take place at the National Geographic Society headquarters in Washington, DC. Although plans for the meeting are still evolving, five major issues that will be discussed at the meeting are:

1. Farm Bill recommendations as part of the Commission's Farm Policy Reform Project.
2. Reducing the impact of animal manure on water quality and the burden of manure management on our farmers. Chairman Waugh said that the manure strategy is a top priority for him during his chairmanship.
3. The suggested Chesapeake Bay Financing Authority. Questions will be addressed regarding fund allocations and the decision-making power the Authority will have.
4. Possible adoption of a new Chesapeake Bay Program wetlands goal.
5. Adoption of a multi-species fisheries management approach.

Chairman Waugh announced that the Commission would be submitting a revised proposal for the Chesapeake Bay Working Lands Nutrient Reduction Pilot Program to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Commission submitted a similar proposal three years ago. Chairman Waugh will ask the Secretaries of Agriculture in each state for their assistance in obtaining their Governor's signature on a letter to USDA Secretary Mike Johanns. The letter will alert Secretary Johanns of the proposal that we plan to submit this fall to pilot innovative new practices on our working lands.

Chairman Waugh reported that staff have been doing a good job keeping within budget and have been awarded two supplemental grants to support the Commission's work on the Farm Bill - \$50,000.00 from the Keith Campbell Foundation and another \$50,000.00 from the EPA.

Another noteworthy announcement was made. Two of our citizen representatives, Mr. Irv Hill and Mr. George Wolff, have received or are soon to receive prestigious awards. Mr. Hill received the Navy League of the United States Superior Service Award and Mr. Wolff will receive the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Frances Flanigan Environmental Leadership Award later in the month.

JOHN SMITH WATER TRAIL

Patrick F. Noonan, Chairman Emeritus and Founder of the Conservation Fund, once again addressed the members on the Captain John Smith Water Trail. Mr. Noonan thanked the members for their support for the project and their help on the passage of Congressional legislation to support a feasibility study for the trail. He also spoke of the challenges that lie ahead and requested that the Commission issue a Resolution to the Secretary of the Interior requesting this project be a priority and that matched funds will be needed. Mr. Noonan's request for the resolution was unanimously approved by the members.

THE CHESAPEAKE BAY FEDERAL FARM BILL REFORM PROJECT

Executive Director Ann Swanson and Ernie Shea of Natural Resource Solutions, LLC facilitated a discussion with the members and described the results of multiple Outreach Sessions that were held in the Chesapeake Bay watershed states.

The top six priorities for Farm Bill reform that arose from the sessions are: (1) enhance funding through existing programs and make the formulas that provide for conservation dollars more equitable; (2) establish a Regional Stewardship Fund; (3) implement the Conservation Security Program as an entitlement program; (4) target funds to maximize environmental benefits; (5)

enhance the viability of agriculture; and, (6) expand technical assistance and outreach. These six priorities form the fundamental basis for the draft report, which is presented in three sections: funding needs; overarching issues; and specific program reform ideas.

It was explained to the members that the final proposal will be presented to the Executive Council for their signatures in November. Also, other actions for the Executive Council were suggested in furtherance of the proposal, including: publicizing the Reform Recommendations and inviting partners to join in supporting the core recommendations; forming alliances with groups inside and outside of the watershed; talking with Federal policymakers to ensure full understanding; and revising the Reform Recommendations as Congressional deliberations proceed.

Executive Director Ann Swanson briefed the members on the progress of the project and the changes suggested in the draft report. The Farm Bill is a significant opportunity to bring federal money into our states, assist farmers, and provide water quality benefits.

LEGACY SEDIMENTS

Dr. Dorothy Merritts and Dr. Robert Walter, both from Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, PA, and Mr. Ward Oberholtzer, a consultant, gave a presentation to the Commission on legacy sediments. The presenters explained what happens to the sediments that build up when streams are dammed, and examined the environmental impacts once these dams are removed or breached.

An examination of hundreds of grist mills across the state revealed that sediment from land clearing and agricultural practices accumulated behind the mills' dams from one to more than 20 feet thick on top of the original floodplains. Stream channel erosion occurring after the dams were removed can carry sediment loads that are orders of magnitude larger than those predicted in current models. Studies show that as much as 50 to 90 percent of the sediment load generated in a watershed is coming from the stream channel banks, rather than from overland flow, as was previously thought.

These sediments carry nutrients that contribute to potentially large nutrient loads to the Chesapeake Bay. The discussion made it clear that we must find new ways to stabilize these stream banks in order to minimize the impairment to our waters.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 P.M.