

## **Chapters 735 and 736 Stakeholder Advisory Group**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** May 15, 2025

**Time:** 3:00 PM – 4:13 PM

**Location:** Virtual

### **STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT**

The Honorable Stefanie Taillon, Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Matthew J. Lohr, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Co-Chair  
Matthew Wells, Director, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Tom Dunlap, James River Association  
Jay C. Ford, Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Adrienne Kotula, Chesapeake Bay Commission  
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation  
Lindsay Reames, Virginia Agribusiness Council  
Jim Riddell, Virginia Cattlemen's Association  
Jim Timberlake, Virginia Association of the Commissioners of the Revenue  
Dr. Kendall Tyree, Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

### **STATE AGENCY STAFF PRESENT**

Darryl Glover, DCR  
James Martin, DCR  
Lisa McGee, DCR  
Christine Watlington Jones, DCR  
Darrell Marshall VDACS  
Andrew Smith

### **OTHER ATTENDEES**

Trey Davis, Virginia Agribusiness Council  
Matt Kowalski, Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Kendra Shifflett, SFAC  
Participants introduced themselves, including members from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

### **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

- Secretary Taillon opened the meeting, outlined objectives for the session, and emphasized alignment on the content and timeline for the upcoming progress report due July 1, 2025.
- Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Matt Lohr, thanked staff and stakeholders for their commitment and emphasized the importance of the group's continued work.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- The minutes from the April 14, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved.

### **Chesapeake Bay Agreement Update**

- Secretary Taillon provided an update on the revision process for the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Agreement.
- The revised agreement is expected to go out for a 60-day public comment period beginning July 1.
- Stakeholder engagement is planned for late July, with targeted feedback sessions.
- Virginia will be represented by Secretary Taillon at the Principal Staff Committee level and by Kevin McLean at the Management Board.

### **Data Updates**

- James Martin (DCR) reviewed data related to VACS funding and BMP implementation.
- Updated visuals and tables (similar to those in last year's report) reflect FY2024 progress and show forecasts through FY2027.
- Key data included:
  - VACS program remains fully funded through FY2026.
  - Progress on BMP implementation was shown by basin and pollutant type.
  - Updated implementation and forecast tables will be included in the 2025 report appendices.

### **Draft Report Outline Discussion**

- Christine Watlington Jones (DCR) presented the proposed structure of the upcoming progress report.
- Key sections include:
  - Executive Summary with updated priorities.
  - Section on current and future funding, including uncertainties at the federal level.
  - Review of programmatic initiatives (e.g., nutrient management, livestock stream exclusion).
  - Pathways to enhance progress, including updates on pay-for-outcomes pilots and BMP tracking surveys.

### **Discussion Highlights**

- Members discussed the need to address potential changes in modeling and Bay Program targets post-2025.
- Mixed views on how to incorporate this into the report without confusing current WIP progress evaluations.
- Stakeholders emphasized improving clarity and education for legislative readers.

## **Recommendations and Strategies**

- Continued support for:
  - 100% cost-share for livestock stream exclusion practices.
  - Capturing expired/voluntary BMPs through survey efforts.
- Strong support for:
  - Programmatic innovation to increase adoption of practices (particularly nutrient management).
  - Greater emphasis on exploring tweaks to existing programs, including technical assistance models.
  - Improving data-sharing and coordination with NRCS for unreported practices (especially fencing).

## **Future Work of the Group**

- Topics identified for 2025–2026 work plan:
  - Enhancing program delivery models and technical assistance structures.
  - Expanding the whole-farm approach.
  - Exploring differentiated technical support for structural vs. agronomic practices.
  - Reducing barriers to engineering support and project approval.
  - Encouraging more inclusive partnerships and supply chain investment.
- A DEQ presentation on pay-for-outcomes programs was suggested for the next meeting.

## **Meeting Schedule and Format**

- Group agreed to meet quarterly, with a mix of in-person and virtual meetings.
- Virtual meetings may not exceed 50% of total meetings and cannot be held consecutively, per FOIA rules.
- Members supported consolidating stakeholder meetings (e.g., merging with Ag Needs Assessment meetings where practical).

## **Next Steps**

- Draft progress report will be distributed by June 6, with comments due by June 13.
- Staff will incorporate feedback and finalize the report by the July 1 statutory deadline.

## **Public Comment**

- No members of the public provided comment.

## **Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:13 PM with thanks from Secretary Lohr and Stefanie Taillon.

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