

[Chesapeake Bay Watershed Region Freshwater Mussel Partnership](#)

Steering Committee Meeting Summary for Friday 07/25/2025 | 09:00 to 10:00

Meeting Agenda

| No. | Description |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Welcome/Introduce new & recent members |
| 2. | FWM Partnership newsletter |
| 3. | Chesapeake Bay watershed FWM taxa list |
| 4. | Chesapeake Bay Program Beyond 2025 – FWM as Outcome in non-tidal Fish Habitat GIT; and, |
| 5. | News/Announcements |

Attachment: DRAFT (rev 07/24/2025) C/B Watershed FWM Taxa List

Meeting Summary

Participants: Brian Watson/VA DWR; Ashley Hullinger, John Lancaster, Scott Heidel, Tyler Trostle/PADEP; Lance Butler /Philadelphia Water Department; Joe Wood/CBF; Matt Ashton/MDNR; Jamie Shallenberger/SRBC

1. New & Recent Members

At suggestion of Danielle Kreeger, Lance Butler the chief scientist for Philadelphia Water Department’s Mussel Hatchery and watershed restoration center joined us in June. The July 2025 Newsletter includes information about PWD’s FWM research including projects that reintroduce FWM to urban watershed settings.

New members who were not present included: George Doumit from DNREC and Kevin Eliason from WV DNR.

2. FWM Partnership newsletter

The second issue newsletter was distributed by email to ~165 recipients. The newsletter is accessible on the FWM Partnership webpage (part of SRBC.gov) and also is promoted through SRBC’s social media apparatus (LinkedIn, Instagram).

❖ Action Item:

Steering committee members are encouraged to share/promote the Newsletter & Partnership to colleagues as well as via their organization’s outreach mechanisms.

3. Chesapeake Bay Watershed FWM Taxa List

There's abundant complexity inherent in developing a FWM list for the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including incomplete historic survey records, uncertainty for identification, changes in taxonomic classification, and shifting expectations from SRBC such as Native vs. Non-native status and invasive designations.

Matt expressed view that others supported which is to establish basic parameters for this list, including eliminate sub-watershed classification and limit consideration to just Unionid Mussels. Brian suggested the list include both Native and Naturalized (but not invasives – which also are excluded by limiting to Unionid). Joe asked whether restoration is/would be proposed for “naturalized” FWM and Brian confirmed that for Virginia, certain naturalized FWM are restored in certain settings and the group concurred that naturalized FWM are appropriate as a parameter.

Consensus was reached to place final discretion for each jurisdiction's taxa list with the person/people in position(s) to be most knowledgeable about each jurisdiction.

Brian described *Utterbackia imbecillus* (Paper Pondshell) as likely to occur in all Bay jurisdictions, but it tends/-ed to be omitted from FWM surveys because its habitat preference (lacustrine, soft substrate) is contrary to most Unionid FWM.

SRBC updated the “confirmed” draft taxa list spreadsheet during the discussion to capture Unionid mussel occurrence for: VA, MD, DC, and WV.

❖ Action Item:

The updated draft taxa list spreadsheet is attached and includes highlighted columns for NY, PA, and DE to indicate the jurisdictions for which we lack status confirmed by an authoritative source. By way of this meeting summary, SRBC requests that Annie Stupik (NY), Nevin Welte (PA), and George Doumit (DE) review, update as warranted, and confirm Unionid mussel occurrence for their respective state by the August Partnership meeting on Friday 08/22.

4. Chesapeake Bay Program Beyond 2025 – FWM as Target Outcome in non-tidal Fish Habitat GIT

SRBC is working on draft of second edition of a newsletter for circulation with intent to keep our broader Partnership members apprised of steering committee activities and to spread news about FWM.

Jamie recently was approached by a staff person at Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) and was informed that PWD has the Aquatic Research and Restoration Center, which includes capabilities for FWM propagation as well as on-going research into fish host capabilities, urban waterway reintroduction, and ecosystem benefits measures. Lance Butler and Shannon Boyle of PWD joined today's steering committee meeting – Jamie/SRBC to interview Lance and perhaps others from ARRC week of 7/7 as well as tour the ARRC facility (located on Schuylkill River in Philadelphia, PA) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Jamie spoke with Jordan Allison of Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission about the on-going NFWF-funded project ***Restoration of FWM to West Branch Susquehanna River*** and will include essay/interview in the next newsletter.

The next newsletter also will include discussion about Beyond 2025 FWM Target within non-tidal Fish Habitat GIT and recommendation for the reader/audience to examine for themselves, the Bay Watershed Agreement and if inclined, to submit Public Comments.

❖ **Action Item:**

- SRBC staff to draft and circulate a newsletter prior to the July 25th Steering Committee meeting.
- If you have content ideas/suggestions for the newsletter, please furnish to SRBC by 7/10.

5. News and Announcements

Joe Wood/CBF announced a FWM and Riparian Buffer Symposium sponsored by Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the James River Association will take place Tuesday August 12 in Goochland, Virginia. The event is in-person only, free to attend, and advance registration is required.

More info and registration is available here:

<https://events.cbf.org/mandbsymposium>

Steering Committee Meetings are scheduled for 9 to 10 am on the 4th Friday of each month:

Next Meeting is 7/25

If you have questions, comments, adjustments to this summary, or suggestions for an upcoming agenda, please contact Jamie, Ellyn or Tyler.

Thank you for your time and insight.

James Shallenberger

Program Manager | Monitoring & Protection
Susquehanna River Basin Commission
4423 N. Front Street | Harrisburg, PA 17110
Direct: 717-238-0423 X 1115
Email: jshallenberger@srbc.gov