

Background and Questions for Facilitated Discussion at Hampton Roads Watershed Roundtable Meeting January 25, 2012

At the Watershed Roundtable Meeting, Wetlands Watch will present the results of their research into existing public/private/non-profit partnership programs working to increase watershed stewardship and voluntary use of retrofit-type BMPs on private property in order to reduce stormwater runoff, improve surface water quality, prevent erosion, and protect and restore habitat. Model programs like the Anne Arundel County Watershed Steward Academy (WSA) as well as other similar programs in Hampton Roads and other Virginia localities will be discussed. The research and the results of this workshop will support localities efforts to develop strategies to increase best management practices on private property to achieve nutrient and sediment reduction goals for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

In addition, the research and workshop will support a Bay-wide effort of the Chesapeake Bay Program Watershed Steward Action Team “to determine how best to expand the existing model master watershed stewards programs for training citizens to organize and conduct restoration in a series of priority landscapes and watersheds” in response to the Chesapeake Executive Order 13508 goal “to expand citizen stewardship by fostering a dramatic increase in the number of citizen stewards of every age who support and carry out local conservation and restoration”.

In preparation for the facilitated discussions, please take the time to review the information in the links provided in Attachment 2A and consider the following:

1. Does Hampton Roads need a comprehensive and consistent watershed steward academy program in Hampton Roads?
2. Is this type of program a good nutrient and sediment reduction strategy for Hampton Roads localities for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL?
3. What is the interest in forming a regional consortium to design, implement, fund and manage the program?
4. Could a regional effort support the local, community-based efforts of the partners, yet be applied consistently throughout the Hampton Roads Area and eventually, other regions in Virginia?
5. What are the desirable elements of a regional program?
6. What are the barriers to regional program implementation?
7. Who are potential consortium members and partners?
8. What BMPs should be used on urban/suburban residential and small business private properties?
9. What are your experiences with the design, installation, and maintenance of urban/suburban BMPs on private property?
10. What positive and negative experiences have you had with property owners, trained volunteers, non-profit organizations, private landscape, environmental, or stormwater professionals, regulatory agencies, etc.?