

Education, Communication and Outreach (ECO) Working Group
of the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC)

July 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was convened at 10:30 at the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) by Allison Rich, ECO Co-Chair.

Attending in person: Allison Rich (MD Environmental Health Network), Pat Harcourt (UMCES), Grant Samms (Washington College Center for Environment & Society), Kaymie Owen (MEA), Donna Balado (MSDE), John Coleman (MDP), Colleen Turner (MDOT), Steve Charles (MDOT), Laura Rogers (MDOT), Tad Aburn (MDE), Mark Shaffer (MDE), Liz Entwisle (MDE), Brian Hug (MDE), Lisa Nissley (MDE), Jess Herpel (MDE), Adrienne Diaczok (MDE), Steve Pattison (EcoLogix), Bob Hoyt (EcoLogix).

Attending by phone: Lori Arguelles (Ferguson Foundation), Allison Gost (MDH), Coreen Weilminster (DNR), Michele Peterson (Honeywell), Kris Hoellen (National Aquarium), Dave Costello (IEER).

Welcome and Introductions. Co-Chair Allison Rich convened the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.

Climate Photo Essay Update. Grant Samms reported that approval of the photo essay social media campaign packet was pending from the Governor's office. Both Brian Hug and Kaymie Owen were working to get approval and Kaymie reported that the Governor's social media team advised her that agencies should decide for themselves what they want to push out and if the Governor's office likes it they will push it out too. Tad noted that any requests to push materials in the future should go through Secretary Grumbles to the Governor's office.

State Agency Outreach Updates.

MDE. Tad reported on several recent community outreach meetings including with SAFE, an after-school program for Baltimore City students where there is an opportunity for a climate ambassador pilot and building solar go-carts, Bon Secours Community Works where planning is underway to train their Clean and Green Team as climate ambassadors, and Greater Baybrook Alliance and the Diesel Roundtable. Donna Balado suggested that that the ambassador program could provide a platform for Maryland Green Schools to become Green Ribbon Schools.

DNR. Coreen Weilminster provided updates in five areas: 1) local government outreach in the lower Eastern Shore and Mid-Shore on using green infrastructure to reduce coastal hazards and additional outreach in Ellicott City and Baltimore City; 2) collaborating with Pat Harcourt and MADE CLEAR on consistent K-12 climate messaging and Climate 101 training for teachers; 3) organizational conferences such as MACO and MML; 4) outreach to vulnerable and minority communities including working with an African American church in Annapolis to protect its graveyard from flooding and mapping flood vulnerability and developing resiliency strate-

gies; and 5) training courses for NOAA and other groups on water level data tools and techniques.

MDH. Allison Gost reported on several outreach projects underway: a climate ambassadors initiative at the Suitland Community Hub; 2) partnering with the Environmental Justice Commission to identify vulnerable communities on the Eastern Shore; and two community forums on the Eastern Shore and western Maryland.

MEA. MEA did not present an outreach update at the meeting but submitted a written summary of its outreach activities following the meeting, which appears below.

Communicators List and Toolkit Update. Liz Entwisle reported that the small workgroup that was formed to recruit volunteers in government, businesses, universities and NGOs to become presenters and/or information sharers on climate change topics has begun to populate the communicators list. ECO members are encouraged add names to the list. Liz shared the users' guide for the outreach toolkit and noted that as the toolkit evolves, resources will likely be organized by specific topics for different audiences. Tad Aburn suggested that the Outreach Plan be revisited in the Fall to reflect what has been learned, noting that from his experience meeting with many different communities over the past few months, community members may be the best climate communicators. Pat Harcourt said these people may be afraid of answering specific questions that come up so the toolkit resources are important.

Hatcher Fact Sheets Update. Allison Rich reported that the fact sheets are going through final review by state agencies and other contributors prior to submittal to the MCCC Steering Committee for review at its July 27 meeting. Spanish translations and decisions about how to disseminate the fact sheets are needed.

Climate Ambassadors and Climate Champions Update. Tad recapped the Bon Secours ambassador pilot under development and the possibility for a pilot with the SAFE program. He reported that John Kumm is working with others on the Climate Champions voluntary action program for businesses, universities and other organizations and that a letter from Secretary Grumbles may go out announcing the program and linking it with the Maryland Green Registry. He noted that that voluntary actions such as these may be creditable under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act.

MCCC Position on Paris Climate Accord. Brian Hug reported that following ECO's recommendation to the MCCC at its June 21 meeting that it communicate on the Trump Administration's decision to withdraw from the Paris Accord, MDE worked with the ECO co-chairs and Secretary Grumbles to draft a position statement that would have a good chance of getting MCCC approval. He said the statement, which had been distributed to ECO members, would be submitted to the Steering Committee for consideration at its July 27 meeting. A discussion ensued. Pat Harcourt recommended that other climate impacts beyond sea level rise be included and offered to draft a couple sentences. There was consensus that the statement be submitted to the Steering Committee with Pat's amendments. Following discussion about whether to recommend that the Steering Committee issue a press release to accompany the statement, consensus was reached that ECO recommend that the Steering Committee consider how to publicize any statement it adopted. Lori Arguelles said a press release would have low value this long after the Trump de-

cision and favored posting it on the MCCC website. Tad noted that any statement would probably be included in the 2017 MCCC report. Allison Rich asked members to consider how the process could be improved to enable the MCCC to take action more quickly in the future.

MCCC 2017 Report. Brian reviewed the timeline for developing the 2017 MCCC report, which calls for working groups to discuss their recommendations with the Steering Committee at its August 24 meeting. Given that ECO will not meet again before then, Brian suggested the co-chairs form a small working group to develop the recommendations. Tad encouraged members to send their ideas to the co-chairs, and Allison encouraged members to look at ECO recommendations from the 2015 and 2016 MCCC reports.

Meeting Adjournment and Next Meeting. Allison adjourned the meeting at 12:00. The next meeting will be on September 20 at MDE.

Summary of MEA outreach activities per July 19 email from Kaymie Owen:

“MEA will be presenting at MACO during a panel on energy efficiency and green jobs in Maryland. After the event, I will forward our deck to ECO, we have a good collection of data that may be useful to other agencies. Our presentation will make the case for increased energy efficiency from a business standpoint to the counties.

MEA will be focusing on a rural Maryland campaign that will highlight the energy efficiency agriculture grants (\$200K for FY18), combined heat and power grants (\$10M for FY18) and our animal waste to energy program (\$3M for FY18 from MEA and \$2M from Dept. of Ag for FY18). We will be expanding our annual sponsorship with Maryland Public Television around Maryland Farm and Harvest and NOVA. The MPT sponsor opportunities are very reasonable and offer the widest reach for media buying in the state across a mass demographic.”