

January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025 Conowingo WIP Programmatic and Numeric Two-Year Milestones

The Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan (CWIP) will reduce nitrogen delivered to the Chesapeake Bay by 6.7-million pounds per year. The final CWIP was approved by the Principals Staff Committee in September 2021. This document builds upon the 2022/2023 milestones and develops the 2024/2025 milestones to implement the CWIP. Understanding that CWIP implementation is a collaborative, innovative and phased approach, the CWIP Steering Committee has developed consensus-based milestones that focus on building implementation capacity, expanding partnerships, and fostering innovations intended to complement jurisdictional WIPs and accelerate Chesapeake Bay restoration overall.

Action Item	Target Date	Milestone (WIP page reference)*	Deliverable	Lead Agency	Comment
	Capacity Building				
	- Finance				
1	December 2021	Draft plan for the CWIP financing authority submitted to SC. (p.32)	Draft plan	Act 2	Complete.
2	Spring 2022	Complete financing system implementation, enable course adjustments and establish the permanent Conowingo financing system (p.30)		Act 2	Complete.
3	Mid 2022	Begin to deliver implementation funding		Act 2	Complete.
4	July 2022 – July 2023	Launch implementation of financing authority and restoration investments. (p.32)		Act 2	Complete.
	- Technical				
5	Ongoing	Updated QAPP detailing how BMP data will be collected and submitted annually to the CBP officer, assurance that the data is valued, and how the data will be interpreted for further use. (p.47)	Updated QAPP	Jurisdictions	Each State is responsible for updating their own QAPP as necessary. Guidance and support provided through Activity 3.
6	October 2023 – December 2023	Roll out of the BMP Opportunity Analysis with support to local stakeholders on the data tools produced to support planning of projects to implement the CWIP. (p.21)	Web-map with report generator.	Act 1	BMP opportunity data developed using the latest land use and land cover data. Create web tools and share the GIS resources locally and regionally.

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7	October 2023	Updated draft of Audit Framework to SC for review and comment. The Audit Framework is the development guide for tracking and validating data through FieldDoc. It will be used to ensure that projects being tracked towards the Conowingo WIP are being implemented as reported and do not overlap with other BMPs being tracked for jurisdictions' WIPs. This framework will help CBP staff and CWIP steering committee members understand how an automated and semi-automated series of audit steps can increase accountability and lower verification costs, as they will be compatible with existing CBP validation requirements. It will also align with BMP Verification programs through state offices/EPA. (p.47)	Audit Framework	Act 3	The audit framework is in the process of being revised and will be shared with the Steering Committee pending feedback on data validation and BMP verification protocols.
8	Early 2022	Establish CWIP tracking and monitoring process; ensure coordination with jurisdictions' WIP 3 tracking processes. (p.47)	CWIP Project tracking module in FieldDoc.	Act 3	Complete.
8A	Annually on December 1 st starting in 2023	Annual Submission of BMP Progress and Verification Data	Reporting in NEIEN.	Jurisdictions	Submit load reduction progress information for tracked, reported, and verified practices over the prior July 1 through June 30 period. Submit to EPA into the National Environmental Information Exchange Network (NEIEN).
9	Summer/Fall 2022	Implementation of new features/services necessary for Audit Framework in FieldDoc.		Act 3	Complete.
	Fostering Innovation				

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10	Ongoing	Explore financial innovations, including pay-for-performance options and private-public partnerships. (p.45)			The PENNVEST RFP and the MDE/SRBC RFP target pay-for-performance projects. Criteria for awarding pay-for-performance contracts will emphasize innovative financing and greatest return on investment in terms of nitrogen reductions. Projects with co-benefits will be incentivized to foster new public-private partnerships.
11	Ongoing	Explore contingency plans and opportunities as needed. (p. 48). Re-evaluate Tier II BMPs that are currently under expert review (p.26). Track expert panels and expert panel exploratory groups for dredging behind the Conowingo dam, freshwater mussel restoration, and manure treatment technologies.	Annual report; re-running CAST scenarios as needed.	Act 1, CBPO	Ongoing review of initiatives to evaluate new BMPs. Participation in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Region Freshwater Mussel Partnership .
Identifying and Building Partnerships					
12	Ongoing	Forming, tracking, and developing cooperative or informal agreements with partners in the Susquehanna River watershed to further CWIP goals and implementation. (p.13)		SC, Act 1 & 3	Targeting partnerships with the Octoraro Watershed Association, Octoraro Source Water Collaborative, Upper Susquehanna Coalition, SRBC, and the Chesapeake Bay Program.
Pilot Project Development and Implementation					
13	July 2024	Identify and scope/ one or more implementation pilot projects to achieve numeric CWIP goals. Provide detail on the pilot project to reduce 25% of the nutrient reduction identified in the CWIP.		Act 1 & 3	A CWIP Implementation Framework was developed that establishes a two-tiered implementation process of Smaller-Scale Pilot watersheds using traditional grant programs in addition to Broader Scale State-wide pay-for-success implementation efforts with SRBC and PENNVEST. The State-wide projects will be awarded in late 2023/early 2024 for implementation to begin in Summer 2024.
Securing CWIP Funding					

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14	Ongoing	Identify and secure one or more funding sources for CWIP implementation over the 2-year milestone period, as well as continuing current partnership CBRAP support of CWIP.		Act 2	Complete.
14A	April 2024	Develop SRBC Financing authority structure including process by which funding will be managed, project selection, and project oversight.		SC, SRBC	SRBC and MDE are working to develop selection criteria and details on funding administration. The Project Utilization Clause restricts the use of nutrient-based environmental outcomes to only those Pay-For-Success Projects that are attributable to Maryland’s commitment under the CWIP
Outreach/Engagement					
15	Ongoing	Providing support to stakeholders to support implementation and the tracking verification and reporting. (p. 22)	Up to 12 training sessions. Written and recorded tutorial.	Act 1, 3	Continued engagement with stakeholders is occurring and specific engagement strategies will be guided by Steering Committee members from each jurisdiction involved with implementation. Training sessions will be scheduled to occur virtually and, when possible, in person across the Susquehanna River watershed. Invitees may include, but are not limited to, CAP coordinators in PA, Agency staff from the three implementing jurisdictions, and members of SRBC, the Financing Authority.
15A	June 2024	Identification of specific target audiences for local, regional, and federal engagement in the CWIP and milestone implementation process where BMP implementation is expected to occur.			Includes interested parties contact information.
15B	June 2024	Description of the specific roles that local, regional, and federal partners will play in implementing programmatic and numeric commitments in each of the identified source sectors of the CWIP and two-year milestones between 2022-2025.		Act 1	Descriptions will include tracking, verification, and reporting of those commitments.

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Action Item	Target Date	Milestone (WIP page reference)*	Deliverable	Lead Agency	Comment
16	Fall 2022	Annual progress report, due to EPA on January 15, 2023. (p. 48)	Annual progress report	Act 1, 3	Complete.
16A	Annually on January 15 th	Annual progress report due to EPA/	Annual progress report	Act 1, 3	Present draft progress report and receive feedback from Steering Committee prior to annual submission.
17	Summer/Fall 2023	Reconvene stakeholders to evaluate progress and make recommendations on the next set of two-year milestones due January 15, 2024. (p. 22)	Up to 12 stakeholder meetings	Act 1, 3	The Steering Committee Co-Chairs meet weekly to discuss CWIP progress. The weekly meetings include staff from the Chesapeake Bay Program, the EPA Grantees, and others as needed based on the topics of discussion. 2024/2025 draft milestones discussed at the June 5, 2023 and September 11, 2023 SC meetings.
17A	Fall 2025	Reconvene stakeholders to evaluate progress and make recommendations for the 2026-2027 milestones due January 15, 2026.	Milestone report	Act 1, 3	Provide updated milestones to reflect the phased implementation approach and progress to date.
	Numeric Milestones				
18	December 2025	Implement practices sufficient to reduce at least 25% of the nitrogen reductions identified in the CWIP, or 1.675-million pounds.		CWIP	Funding is in place to solicit projects through a pay-for-performance model to target the reduction of 25% of the nitrogen reductions identified in the CWIP.
18A	December 2025	Implement practices sufficient to reduce at least 25% of the phosphorus reductions identified in the CWIP		CWIP	Funding is in place to solicit projects through a pay-for-performance model to target the reduction of 25% of the phosphorus reductions identified in the CWIP.
	Programmatic Capacity				
19	June 2024	Develop plans for changes to existing programmatic capacity or development of new programmatic capacity to implement the necessary BMPs to achieve at least 25 percent of the CWIP nutrient target by 2025.		Jurisdictions	Include evaluation of which programs will be targeted (existing and new) and how to balance resource and technical assistance needs with the existing jurisdictions' Phase III WIPs.

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20	June 2024	Identify the specific funding, financing, cost-share, technical assistance, voluntary, incentive, policy, programmatic, legislative, and regulatory actions needed to be taken to achieve at least 25 percent of the CWIP nutrient target by 2025.		Jurisdictions	Include increasing and/or sustaining financial cost share, technical assistance, regulatory oversight, and other incentives to deliver the necessary agricultural conservation practices as defined in the CWIP.