

Being Accountable/Communicating Assessment Information to the Public in 2013

Update to the STAR September 2013

Purpose of This Briefing:

- Present Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) “Bay Barometer” timeline
- Provide indicator updates including information about the new water quality standards indicator
- Provide recommendations for indicator deletions from “Track the Progress” section of the ChesapeakeBay.net

Background:

- **CBP Indicators** – approved by Management Board (MB) and available from the “[Track the Progress](#)” section of the ChesapeakeBay.net website (where all CBP-approved indicators are featured). Each indicator webpage includes chart(s) and/or map(s); links to data used and the analysis & methods documentation; and text summarizing the information and data portrayed.
- **Bay Barometer** – document is the CBP partnership’s annual health and restoration assessment of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. It is a synthesis of the data that has been vetted, approved by the Goal Implementation Teams (GITs) and posted on www.chesapeakebay.net over the course of the year. [Last year’s Bay Barometer](#) was short (8 pages) and succinct in style and emphasized visual readability and clear messaging. It featured brief and highly summarized information from many of the CBP-approved indicators (but not all, since some were not updated last year).

Bay Barometer Timeline:

- 9/23/2013: MB members will receive text for review and are asked to return it to Margaret Enloe (menloe@chesapeakebay.net) by 9/27/2013 at 3pm.
- 9/30/2013: Updated indicator data (2012 or 2013, if available) and updated analysis & methods documentation due to Nita Sylvester (Sylvester.Nita@epa.gov).
 - Most GITs/STAR workgroups have already updated their indicators.
 - Deadline applies to meeting production schedule for hard copy report.
 - Indicators will continue to be updated on the website after 9/30/2013. For example, some indicators will be updated with 2013 data this fall in preparation for the Executive Order Progress Report. Those indicators will be updated on the website as soon as updated data and analysis & methods documentation are provided.
- 10/4/2013: All text and images to designer.
- 10/24/2013: Final report to printer.
- 11/4/2013: Report completed.
 - Purpose of report is to drive folks to the website. Even if most current information is not featured in hard copy report, when folks go to website they will see the most current information.
 - 11/6/2013 is tentative date for news release.
- For additional details, please refer to “[2012 Bay Barometer Production Schedule](#)” and the meeting summary from the Sept 2013 [joint meeting of the Indicators Workgroup and Coordinators/Staffers Group](#)

Update on Indicators:

What was updated since the last Bay Barometer was published?

- [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Population](#)
- [River Flow](#)
- [Bay Grass Abundance - Baywide](#)
- [Bay Grass Abundance by Zone](#)
- [Bay Grass Density](#)
- [Bottom Habitat \(Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity\)](#)
- [Blue Crab Abundance \(Age 1 and older\)](#)
- [Am. Shad Returning to Chesapeake Bay](#)
- [Dissolved Oxygen Standards Attainment](#)
- [Health of Freshwater Streams in Watershed](#)
- [Reducing Nitrogen Pollution](#)

Being Accountable/Communicating Assessment Information to the Public in 2013 Update to the STAR September 2013

- [Reducing Phosphorus Pollution](#)
- [Reducing Sediment Pollution](#)
- [Wastewater](#)
- [Bay Grasses Planted](#)
- [Wetlands Restoration Efforts](#)
- [Re-Opening Fish Passage](#)
- [Blue Crab Fishery Management](#)
- [Planting Forest Buffers](#)
- [Public Access Sites](#)

What will be updated; when?

- [Nitrogen Loads and River Flow To the Chesapeake Bay](#); Fall 2013
- [Phosphorus Loads and River Flow To the Chesapeake Bay](#); Fall 2013
- [Sediment Loads and River Flow To the Chesapeake Bay](#); Fall 2013
- [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Forest Cover](#); 2015
- [Tidal Wetlands Abundance](#); possibly by end of 2013
- [Chemical Contaminants](#); Fall 2013
- [Nitrogen in Rivers Entering the Bay: Long-Term Flow Adjusted Concentration Trends](#); Fall 2013
- [Nitrogen Short-Term FAC Trends in Watershed Streams/Rivers](#); Fall 2013
- [Nitrogen Yields in Watershed Streams/Rivers](#); Fall 2013
- [Phosphorus in Rivers Entering the Bay: Long-Term Flow Adjusted Concentration Trends](#); Fall 2013
- [Phosphorus Short-Term FAC Trends in Watershed Streams/Rivers](#); Fall 2013
- [Phosphorus Yields in Watershed Streams/Rivers](#); Fall 2013
- [Sediment in Rivers Entering the Bay: Long-Term Flow Adjusted Concentration Trends](#); Fall 2013
- [Sediment Short-Term FAC Trends in Watershed Streams/Rivers](#); Fall 2013
- [Sediment Yields in Watershed Streams/Rivers](#); Fall 2013
- [Protected Land](#); 2014

What is new?

- [Achievement of Bay Water Quality Standards](#)
- This indicator measures progress towards the achievement of water quality standards for dissolved oxygen, water clarity/underwater bay grasses and chlorophyll a for each 3-year assessment period beginning in 1985.
 - The indicator is fully consistent with how DE, DC, MD, and VA currently list their portion of the Bay's tidal waters, and provides a means for illustrating improvements through time.
 - Additionally, this indicator is being used to measure progress toward the [Chesapeake Bay Executive Order Strategy's](#) water quality outcome
 - As with most indicator pages, you will see a statement of status above a chart and be able to access the indicator data and its analysis and methods documentation. You can also read about its importance and trends and also access related videos.
 - If you scroll down on the page you will find "Additional Information", the contact, the source of the data and links to related indicators.
- The "related indicators" are the [dissolved oxygen](#), [underwater bay grass abundance](#), [water clarity](#) and [chlorophyll a](#) indicators.
 - Dissolved oxygen: tracks attainment of water quality standards so it remains "as is" for now.
 - It will be revised by the end of 2013 to feature the attainment status by designated use segment (as opposed to volume).
 - CBPO plans to continue to update the current indicator (volume in attainment) and it will be linked to from this revised page.
 - Underwater bay grass abundance: will remain "as is" since the indicator data are used to help determine attainment of water quality standards in the "Shallow Water/Underwater Bay Grasses" designated use.
 - Water clarity: current indicator reports mid-channel water clarity data but does not track attainment of bay water quality standards

Being Accountable/Communicating Assessment Information to the Public in 2013 Update to the STAR September 2013

- It will be revised by the end of 2013 to report attainment of water quality standards in the “Shallow Water/Underwater Bay Grasses” designated use (based on underwater bay grass data and shallow water clarity data).
- CBPO is no longer updating this indicator, however, UMCES is planning to continue updating this indicator as part of the “Bay Report Card”.
- When this indicator page is revised it will include a link to direct people to the mid-channel water clarity data available at the “Bay Report Card” site.
- Chlorophyll *a*: the current indicator reports chlorophyll *a* data in all tidal waters but not in relation to bay water quality standards.
 - It will be revised by the end of 2013 to report attainment of chlorophyll *a* water quality standards in the few bay segments where these standards are applicable.
 - CBPO is no longer updating this indicator, however, UMCES is planning to continue updating this indicator as part of the “Bay Report Card”.
 - When this indicator page is revised it will include a link to direct people to the chlorophyll *a* data available at the “Bay Report Card” site.

What else will be revised; when?

- [Am. Shad Returning to Chesapeake Bay](#); completed, awaiting your approval
- [Health of Freshwater Streams in Watershed](#); perhaps in 2014 (may be replaced)

What was already revised this year?

- [Bay Grasses Planted](#); target revised in 2012 per MB agreement

What will be replaced; when?

- [Native Oyster Abundance \(Biomass\)](#); 2014
- [Restoring Oyster Reefs](#); 2014
- [Education and Interpretation](#) (AKA “MWEE”); 2014
- **Requested Decision:** Recommend to MB that the current oyster indicators are removed in the interim from “Track the Progress” section.
 - Understanding that information about oysters will continue to be available in other locations of the ChesapeakeBay.net website (e.g. “Discover the Chesapeake” and “Learn the Issues” sections) since they are of interest to website users. Com WG will continue to work with STAR to ensure those pages refer to the best science available on these topics.

What will be developed?

- New indicators to track new outcomes in new Agreement: e.g. brook trout

What is recommended for deletion from “Track the Progress”?

- [Phytoplankton \(Index of Biotic Integrity\)](#); unable to update due to lack of MD data
- [Striped Bass Abundance \(Spawning Female Biomass\)](#); species managed outside CBP by ASMFC; no Chesapeake Bay-specific management targets
- [Juvenile Menhaden Abundance in Maryland](#); species managed outside CBP by ASMFC; no Chesapeake Bay-specific management targets
- [Wetlands Enhancement and Rehabilitation](#); unable to update due to lack of cooperation from jurisdictions
- [Developing Watershed Management Plans](#); tracking discontinued; not essential to support adaptive management of GITs' strategies
- [Bay Gateways Designated](#); tracking discontinued after goal achieved
- [Water Trails in the Bay Watershed](#); tracking discontinued after goal achieved
- **Requested Decision:** Recommend to MB that these indicators are removed from “Track the Progress” section.
 - Understanding that information about these topics (e.g. striped bass and menhaden) will continue to be communicated in other parts of ChesapeakeBay.net website (e.g. “Discover the Chesapeake” and “Learn the Issues” sections) since they are of interest to website users. Com WG will continue to work with STAR to ensure those pages refer to the best science available on these topics.

For additional details, please refer to [“Review of 2011-12 Bay Barometer Indicators”](#)