

## Setting the Phase III WIPs on 2025 Forecasted Conditions

### Proposal for Using 2025 Forecasted Conditions

- ❖ **A decision before the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership in 2016 will be whether to develop Phase III WIPs based on 2025 forecasted conditions.**
  - This would entail running the Phase III WIP input decks on these 2025 conditions.
- This approach **accounts for growth in pollutant load** (and any declines) directly into the development of the Phase III WIPs. Jurisdictions would still need to offset any increases in growth, which is consistent with the expectation in the 2010 Bay TMDL, only this time directly in the Phase III WIP planning and commitments.
- It's **similar to the method we are currently using for the two-year milestones**, which is using short-term forecasts of growth in pollutant load for setting the future conditions for each set of milestones. Pending partnership review, EPA expects jurisdictions to continue developing post-2017 two-year milestones based on these short-term forecasts of conditions (e.g. 2018-2019 milestones will be based on 2019 forecasted conditions) which will be developed using the same methodology as that used to produce the 2025 forecast.
- The use of 2025 forecasted conditions for the Phase III WIPs **provide a way to “credit” conservation**.
  - For example, growth offsets can be reduced through conserving forests in areas vulnerable to development.
  - States and local partners can target their land conservation efforts and development patterns in ways in which they can decrease future expenditures to offset growth in pollutant loads.

### Schedule

- A partnership decision on the use of 2025 forecasted conditions in the Phase III WIPs is scheduled for May 2016 by the WQGIT and in early summer 2016 for the MB and PSC.
- The timing for a decision is based on the need to reach agreement on the specifics of the 2025 forecasted conditions by the fall 2016 and have everything ready for management application starting in 2017.

### Background of Issue

- The midpoint assessment includes a decision point asking the CBP partnership (WQGIT, MB and PSC) if the Phase III WIPs should be set on proposed 2025 forecasted conditions.
  - A midpoint assessment work plan for land use changes was developed in December 2012. This document states that “a 2025 land use will be explored if jurisdictions or the WQGIT desire this to inform their Phase III WIPs or offset strategies.”
  - Phase I and Phase II WIPs were developed on “current” conditions, which were 2010 at the time.
- A proposed 2025 forecasted land use condition has not yet been vetted through the CBP partnership. However, **2025 forecasted conditions have been modeled for all of Maryland and Delaware using the newly revised Chesapeake Bay Land Change Model**.
  - The forecasting methodology will be reviewed by the Land Use Workgroup in the early spring 2016 and will be subject to partnership approval.
- In June 2013, the Chesapeake Bay Commission issued a report of land conservation and the EPA Region III Administrator responded to the policy recommendation for use of a 2025 baseline in that report:
  - “Use of 2025 land use conditions would allow the Phase III WIPs to more quantitatively account for pollution loads resulting from predicted growth and provide a numeric credit when that growth is avoided through conservation efforts.”

### Offsets & Sector Growth Demonstrations

- EPA has asked the jurisdictions to consider how growth will impact sectors through 2025 in their sector growth demonstrations.
  - Offset programs and 2013 sector growth projections are currently being reviewed by EPA and **jurisdictions will provide updates to their sector growth demonstrations in 2017.**
- 2025 forecasted conditions will evolve as new information (e.g., new Census, 2017 Ag Census, LiDAR data, etc.) come in. However, **the Phase III planning targets will not change.**