WATER QUALITY GOAL

2025 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs)

2025 PROGRESS
OFF COURSE

OUTCOME: By 2025, have all practices and controls installed to achieve the Bay's dissolved oxygen, water clarity/submerged aquatic vegetation, and chlorophyll-a standards as articulated in the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (Bay TMDL) document.

PROGRESS AS OF 2021: The 2025 WIP Outcome is off course. According to the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST), pollution controls put in place in the Chesapeake Bay watershed between 2009 and 2020 lowered nitrogen loads 13%, phosphorus loads 14% and sediment loads 4%. This is an improvement in nitrogen and phosphorus reductions from the 2009-2019 period when it was estimated that nitrogen had decreased by 11% and phosphorus by 10%. Sediment has remained static at a 4% reduction between the two time periods. As of 2020, conservation practices are currently in place to achieve 47% of the nitrogen reductions, 64% of the phosphorus reductions and 100% of the sediment reductions. The vast majority of the nitrogen and phosphorus reductions to date came from improvements to wastewater treatment facilities and efforts from the agricultural sector helped to lower sediment. Remaining nitrogen reductions are expected to mainly come from the agricultural sector, representing at least a seven fold increase in historical implementation rates.

BACKGROUND: In 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency established the landmark Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)—a federal "pollution diet" that sets limits on the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment that can enter the Bay and its tidal rivers and still meet water quality goals. In an effort to achieve the Bay TMDL, each of the seven watershed jurisdictions created WIPs that spell out detailed, specific steps that each will take to meet their pollution reductions by 2025. Federal, state and local governments coordinate through the Chesapeake Bay Program to develop the WIPs. Now in Phase III, the 2025 WIP Outcome indicates the partnership's progress towards reducing pollution in the waterways that feed the Bay.

BASELINE: The year 2009 was established as the baseline year because it the last year for which pollution reduction progress was assessed prior to EPA establishing the Bay TMDL in 2010. In this year, 297.79 million pounds of total nitrogen, 17,171 pounds of phosphorous and 18,910 pounds of sediment had entered the Bay.

DATA SOURCE: Each year, the seven watershed jurisdictions report the steps they have taken to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution from entering the rivers and streams that flow into the Chesapeake Bay to the Environmental Protection Agency. Chesapeake Bay Program experts then run this information through the Watershed Model to estimate how far its partners have come toward meeting the pollutant reductions goals outlined in the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* and the Bay TMDL.