



**Reaching 2025 Team**  
**August 14, 2023**  
**3:00-4:00 p.m.**

## Meeting Summary

### In attendance:

- Doug Austin (EPA)
- Kathryn Barnhart (EPA)
- Greg Barranco (EPA)
- Sarah Brzezinski (EPA)
- Sean Corson (NOAA)
- Mariah Davis (CCWC)
- Rachel Felver (ACB)
- Chris Guy (USFWS)
- Mark Hoffman (CBC)
- Jeff Lerner (EPA)
- Kevin McLean (VA DEQ)
- Dave Montali (Tetra Tech/WV)
- Lucinda Power (EPA)
- Peggy Sanner (CBF)
- Kristin Saunders (UMCES)
- Jenna Schueler (CBF)
- Martha Shimkin (EPA)
- Jeff Sweeney (EPA)
- Bo Williams (EPA)

### Action Items & Decisions

- Rachel Felver will revise language related to the TMDL in the Reaching 2025 presentation to the Management Board (MB).
- A follow-up conversation should take place between Dave Montali, Rachel Felver, Jeff Learner, and possibly Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to discuss Dave's feedback on the draft report related to the TMDL and fertilizer.
- Kathryn Barnhart will work to resolve issues that prevent some Reaching 2025 Team members from accessing the [SharePoint folder](#) where public comments are being logged.
- For the purposes of transparency and accountability, the team decided to make all comments received during the public comment period accessible somewhere online.
- The Drafting Team will prioritize making sure that the recommendations in the Reaching 2025 Report are ready to go to the PSC & EC for their approval, with the expectation that the Reaching 2025 Team will continue to work on refining the report and addressing public comments after the EC meeting.
- The comment period for the Reaching 2025 report will not be extended.
- Jeff Learner will call Penn Future to discuss and respond to the request to extend the draft Reaching 2025 Report public comment period.

### Welcome and Agenda Review

- Jeff Lerner welcomed participants to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.
  - This meeting was convened to discuss a process for reviewing and responding to Management Board and public comment.



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- Sean Corson framed the report as a reference document that we hope will be useful for Beyond 2025. The document also provides an assessment of outcomes.
  - From the public comment period we hope to receive input on specific, actionable issues.

### General Comments and Discussion about the Draft Document & Public Comment Period

- Dave Montali commented that there was a bullet point in Rachel's presentation to the MB that said "revise the TMDL," which we aren't doing.
  - Kevin Mclean and Lucinda Power shared concerns and stressed the importance of clarifying that we are not revising the TMDL.
  - Kevin noted that we need to be clear with our language moving forward, and that we need to clarify that there is no recommendation to revise the TMDL.
  - Jeff commented that raising the issue at this team meeting reinforces that we need to be careful with our choice of language when revising the document.
  - Rachel Felver apologized and will revise the language in the PowerPoint.
- Dave will work with West Virginia to provide comments on the language in the report, specifically in relation to the TMDL and fertilizer.
  - Dave asked if he should work with the Drafting Team or if his comments should be formally submitted to change the draft.
    - Jeff indicated that comments should be submitted through the public comment period.
    - Chris Guy disagreed and expressed a hope that we could rewrite the document as a steering committee. He asked if we really need a written response from West Virginia on formal letterhead to address Dave's comments.
    - Jeff clarified that he meant that we don't need responses on formal letterhead, but that if we can get feedback written down, via email or the public comment period, it can help ensure we are able to address substantial comments.
  - Dave would be willing to talk to Rachel and Jeff offline.
    - Jeff commented that if others on this committee have expertise in that area (TMDL and fertilizer), perhaps we can pull them into those conversations.
- Chris mentioned that the report lacks specific actions for the lagging outcomes. It appears to lack a pathway forward. Our recommendations need to be nailed down into smaller groups or rolled-up to ensure we can identify actions to move us forward.
- Mariah thanked the committee for the time for this discussion. Any guidance the committee can provide to Choose Clean Water about the public comments would be appreciated.

### Schedule Review

- Rachel Felver shared the revised timeline with the Reaching 2025 Team. Dates highlighted include, but are not limited to:
  - August 21: Comment Period closes on.



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- In the interim, the drafting team will be working to align comments responding to the draft Reaching 2025 report.
- August 25: A Reaching 2025 Team meeting is scheduled.
  - Assistance from the Reaching 2025 Team and SMEs will be sought to help address comments and revise the document.
- August 28: The Management Board (MB) will have time for a final review.
- September 1: Final MB comments due.
- September 5: The full report will be sent to the Principals' Staff Committee (PSC)
- September 18: Comments due back from PSC
- Responses highlighted that there is limited time available for revisions to the draft document following the public comment period and prior to the MB review. Concerns were expressed about the capacity of the drafting team to meet the deadlines described above. Suggestions for addressing these concerns are included in the following section.

#### Discuss Process for Comment Review and Response

- Katheryn Barnhart explained that public comments are being uploaded into a [SharePoint folder](#) that team members have access to.
  - Some team members do not have access to the SharePoint folder.
  - Katheryn will work to resolve issues that prevent some Reaching 2025 Team members from accessing the SharePoint folder where public comments are being logged.
- Some of the comments received thus far have had a stronger Beyond 2025 focus – in such instances, there will likely be a response indicating that the Drafting Team will forward comments to the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee.
- Should comments received be made publicly available, and if so, how? Will comments be included as an appendix at the end of the document? Will they be posted online?
  - Several team members were in favor of making comments publicly available.
  - Rachel is planning to list public comments out in a single document, which will be uploaded online so people can see the comments received and the responses.
  - **Decision:** Make all comments that come in accessible somewhere online.
- Will there be a formal matrix of like comments associated with responses?
  - Greg Barranco commented that the Partnership has managed public and stakeholder feedback processes in several different ways in the past. Since this isn't a formal EPA process, we don't necessarily need a process-heavy response.
  - Sean Corson commented that he favors a light process for responding to comments, especially given the timetable. He suggested that conversations with stakeholders could be conducted in parallel with the public comment period to begin the revision process.
    - Mariah cautioned the Drafting Team to be mindful of who would be leading conversation (if it is someone without decision making authority, it can feel like an ineffective process).



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- Martha commented that there will likely be a lot of comments received. A comment response document probably isn't feasible in the short amount of time available. There will not be time for the document to undergo another round of public comments if substantial changes were to be made. We might be able to narrow in on what needs to be completed before the Executive Council (EC) meeting. Martha asked the team to consider what must be done now, versus what bridges to 2025, and what goes to beyond 2025.
- Dave Montali suggested that the drafting team look at comments, review them with SMEs.
- Rachel reminded the team that the EC charge says that PSC needs to approve the Reaching 2025 report. She suggested that we hammer home the recommendations in the report for the PSC, then continue working on the full report after approval.
- Martha asked the team to consider focusing on and submitting the first 25 pages of the report to the EC (from the Executive Summary up to the Outcome Attainability Chart). She recommended that we deal with the first third of the document now, then continue working on the final two-thirds after the PSC meeting.
- Mariah expressed concerns about the capacity of this group, both to address public comments in the limited time available and to continue to meet and work following the PSC and EC meetings. She asked about plans for the future of the Reaching 2025 Team.
  - Rachel noted Mariah's concerns and commented that the original intent was that this group would sunset after the EC meeting.
  - Chris noted that if we do what Martha is suggesting, we buy ourselves a lot of time. Work carrying on beyond the EC would require a commitment from this group.
- Mariah mentioned that having a voice from the Reaching 2025 group on the Beyond 2025 group would be useful for making sure that nothing falls through the cracks.
  - Dave commented that Martha, who is on the Reaching 2025 team, is a co-chair of the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee.
  - Mariah clarified that she was suggesting that we have someone take singular and distinct ownership of such a role.
  - Martha commented that there is overlap between those who attend the Reaching and Beyond 2025 meetings. She noted that several Beyond 2025 Steering Committee members participated in this meeting.
- Given that we will still be trying to get to 2025 following the EC meeting, it was suggested that perhaps this group needs to continue to meet.
- Chris commented that there seem to be three types of recommendations:
  - Recommendations that we are actively working on and making progress towards, even if we might not achieve them by 2025.
  - Recommendations that fall in the middle. Things that need a champion. They may have been started, but they are stuttering and need some support.
  - Nebulous recommendations that we probably won't get started on until around 2025.
  - If we do continue to meet, Chris commented that we could focus on those recommendations that need a champion.



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- What is our path forward for dealing with the report?
  - The deliverable and the charge to this group are the high-level recommendations and comments, in preparation for the PSC and EC.
  - **Decision:** The Drafting Team will prioritize making sure that the recommendations in the Reaching 2025 Report are ready to go to the PSC & EC for their approval, with the expectation that the Reaching 2025 Team will continue to work on refining the report and addressing public comments after the EC meeting.
- Rachel commented that team members and stakeholders making public comments should let the Drafting Team know if they feel that the information in the recommendations is not reflective of what is in the snapshots or other sections of the report. The Drafting Team will address such comments and make appropriate revisions to the draft report before the PSC meeting.

#### Comment to Extend Review Timeline

- Rachel reviewed a letter submitted through the public comment period from Penn Future, requesting an extension of the public comment period.
- A team member commented that without a technical justification, there isn't a need to provide an extension and reminded the team that this is not a NEPA document (for example, a scoping process was not required).
- The letter that requests the extension called into question the equity and inclusivity of the length of the comment period.
- Equity and inclusion of the public comment period were discussed. No meeting attendees expressed that the public comment period and process for the draft Reaching 2025 Report was inequitable or lacked inclusion.
- Jeff commented that this is the only letter received thus far requesting an extension.
- Rachel asked if there was anyone on the call who felt strongly that there should be an extension. No responses were received.
  - **Decision:** The comment period for the Reaching 2025 report will not be extended.
- **Decision:** Jeff Learner will call Penn Future to discuss and respond to the request to extend the draft Reaching 2025 Report public comment period.