



► Beyond 2025 Clean Water Team Stakeholders Advisory Committee

February 22, 2024

Jill Whitcomb, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Scope of the Clean Water Team - 5 Topic Areas



TMDL

Planning Targets
Accountability Framework
Modeling Updates
Progress Reporting and
Milestones



Water Quality Assessment

Shallow Waters focus vs.
Chesapeake Bay “deep channel” for
Water Quality Standards Attainment



Nonpoint Source Management

Current and future restoration
programs
Connecting local efforts with
Chesapeake Bay goals and
outcomes



Water Quality Monitoring

Local water quality monitoring
inclusion in Chesapeake Bay
watershed
Trends analysis at local and non-
tidal/tidal scales
Maintaining and growing water
quality monitoring and assessment
data collection to continuously
inform decision-making



Water Quality Standards

Evaluation of current Water
Quality Standards
Toxics and emerging
contaminants

Chesapeake Bay TMDL - Accountability Framework

► Recommendation 1

Review and revise the accountability framework to improve our effectiveness, particularly in reducing nonpoint source pollution, and increase emphasis on measured outcomes and water quality data in our assessment of progress.

The Accountability Framework includes four key elements: 1) Jurisdictions' development of Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs), 2) Jurisdictions' development of two-year milestones to demonstrate progress, 3) EPA's commitment to tracking and assessing progress, and 4) EPA's commitment to taking appropriate federal actions if jurisdictions fail to develop and implement WIPs or fulfill milestones. The Chesapeake Bay Program can review and revise the first three of the four framework components. The goal is to create space for jurisdictions to pursue opportunities that may improve water quality and living resource response but are not currently being incentivized when determining progress through the use of the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST). Another primary objective is to identify resources needed to abide by the Accountability Framework and to effectively manage nonpoint sources of pollution.

For progress assessment, we recommend maintaining the use of CAST, but also incorporating multiple lines of evidence and additional measures of progress. Specifically, we recommend increasing emphasis on measured outcomes and water quality data in our assessment of progress.

Chesapeake Bay TMDL - Tiered Approach

► Recommendation 2

Since the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) was developed to achieve attainment of tidal water quality standards for 92 segments, identify a tiered implementation approach recognizing pollutant reductions are needed throughout the watershed and can be phased over time consistent with state/regional workplans and resources. This approach will align with state and/or local water quality priorities, anticipated habitat, living resource, and watershed responses, cost effectiveness, and climate resiliency.

Water Quality Monitoring and Water Quality Assessments

► Recommendation 3

Establish and promote effective cross-program coordination for water quality monitoring to inform watershed health, and water quality restoration programs focusing on data-driven decision-making. Promote the use of state and local monitoring and assessment for incorporation into program goals, as appropriate, which may include learning, status and trends analyses, and evaluation of meeting water quality and living resource goals.

Nonpoint Source Management

► Recommendation 4

Provide opportunities to increase nonpoint source implementation and incentivize effective and innovative nonpoint source management across all sectors. Demonstrate measurable ecosystem responses, target and empower small-scale watershed restoration that addresses the needs of the community, and promote outcome-based efforts. Address known challenges associated with nutrient mass imbalances to include fertilizers and unknown sources.

Nonpoint Source Management

► Recommendation 5

Identify opportunities to expand on existing local liaisons programs that connect, empower, and inform the federal, state, and local partners to grow awareness, educate, provide administrative and technical assistance, and increase implementation efforts across the watershed.