



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Agriculture Workgroup

December 2024

Agenda

1 **Nutrient Fluxes from
Small Ag Catchments**

2 **A Deeper Dive into
Beyond 2025**

3 **Announcements &
Updates**

Advancing the Science of Nutrient Fluxes from Small Ag Catchments



Discussion



A Deeper Dive into Beyond 2025

Context for today's discussion

- Continuing high-level overviews of broad topics to help identify areas of interest ahead of prioritization/planning meeting in February

October	November	December	January	February
What is the purpose and role of the AgWG moving forward?				
Brainstorm areas of interest, future deliverables	CESR Report	Beyond 2025	Agriculture Advisory Cmte and other CBP entities	Prioritization of interests, focus areas, at in-person meeting
What would you like to see the AgWG accomplish in the next two years?	How should findings presented in the CESR report influence the direction of the AgWG?	How might Beyond 2025 influence the direction of the AgWG?	How do we engage with the AAC, STAC, other workgroups, to best support our purpose and goals?	

- Plan for this month: a closer look at Beyond 2025 Phase 1 recommendations, identifying topics that may be actionable or of interest

Goals for today's presentation and discussion

- 1) Ensure you are informed about Beyond 2025 so you can effectively engage in the process
- 2) Identify topics of interest for the AgWG in B25 Phase 1 materials and draft priority assignments list

Beyond 2025 Recap

- CBP Watershed Agreement defines 31 outcomes that contribute to the achievement of its 10 goals
 - Several of these outcomes will not be achieved by their 2025 “deadline”
- October 2022 – Executive Council charged Principals’ Staff Committee with recommending path forward prioritizing and outlining next steps for meeting Watershed Agreement goals and outcomes
- June 2023 – Beyond 2025 Steering Committee first convened
- July 2024 – Steering Committee Report first released, detailing recommendations to be elevated to the EC
- December 2024 – EC approved charge with ‘next steps’ in B25 process

B25 and the AgWG

- Beyond 2025 Phase 1 was first discussed at the AgWG in July 2024
 - Draft of the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee Report had recently been released
 - KC Filippino, Ruth Cassilly presented on the process and Phase 1 findings relevant to the workgroup
 - Small groups shared “considerations” with the Steering Committee in 5 distinct topical areas (clean water, climate, healthy watersheds, people, shallow waters)
 - Phase 1 was focused on planning
 - At the workgroup level, interested in the implementation of the recommendations carried forward
- In the last month, several notable advances in the Beyond 2025 process have been made
 - We are taking the opportunity to weave information about newly defined “next steps” into this discussion

Nov Management Board Retreat – Prep for Phase 2

- EC approved the Charting a Course Beyond 2025 charge on 12/10
 - Complete revisions to the 2014 Watershed Agreement (consolidating, reducing, updating, removing, replacing, or adding outcomes)
 - Recommend a simplified and streamlined structure and process for the partnership that supports all partners as they work toward achieving their commitments
- Anticipating receipt of this charge, the Management Board met Nov 13-14 to develop:
 - General plan of action for revising 2014 CBW agreement, making modifications to the existing outcomes
 - Considerations to guide work for “continuing implementation” during Phase 2

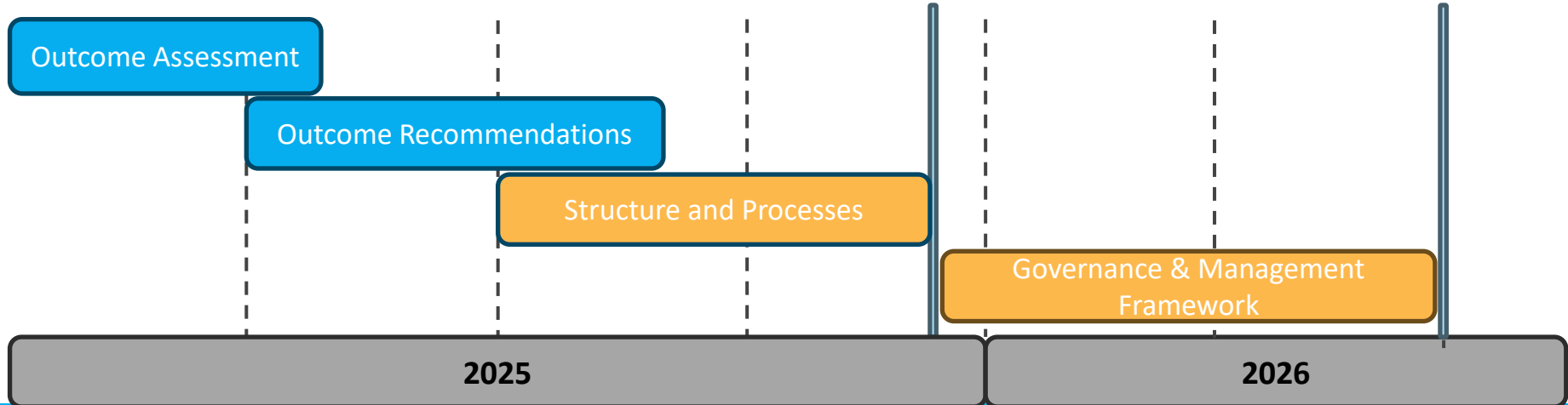
Outcome Review and Priority Projects – Prep for Phase 2

- Two processes kicked off after the retreat (AgWG distribution list received email from Caroline about these on 12/5):
 - Outcome review
 - Management Board requests that appropriate CBP groups provide an answer to an overarching question to help determine next steps to take for each outcome
 - Reminder: the AgWG currently supports the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team in achieving the 2025 WIP outcome
 - Identifying priority projects
 - **Management Board requests that the Phase 1 recommendations be broken into discrete projects to be considered and potentially assigned to goal teams and workgroups.**

Phase II Charge

“...direct the Principals’ Staff Committee to complete the following by December 1, 2025:

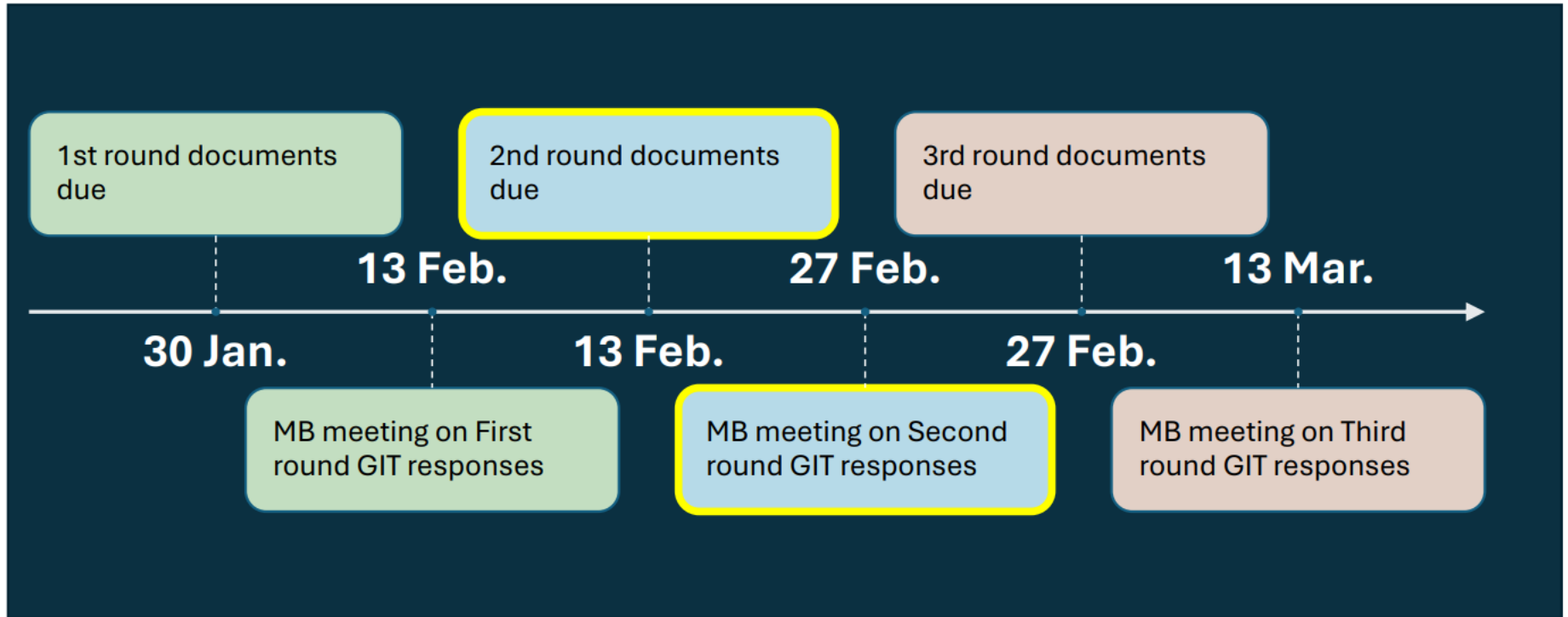
1. Revisions to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement with modifications to the existing vision, principles, preamble, goals, and **outcomes...**”
2. ...Recommending this simplified and streamlined **partnership structure and processes** to the Executive Council in as much detail as possible...”
3. Subsequent changes which incorporate this revised structure and processes into the **Governance and Management Framework** for the Chesapeake Bay Program do not need to occur until June 2026.



Continued Management Board Process and Timeline

April 10, 2025	Continued discussion to consolidate, reduce, update, remove, replace or add new outcomes. Outcomes identified as being kept or combined are assigned to workgroups for rewriting
May 7-8, 2025	Finalize outcome assessment/evaluation
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PSC Check in on Draft List of Outcomes. Share approach for structure development and governance review• Advisory Committee Presentation – all together
June 12, 2025	Work through any PSC feedback on outcomes. Prepare final outcome list for public sharing
July 1, 2025	Discussion of overall Partnership Structure. Includes all partnership Goal Teams/workgroups/action teams
August 14, 2025	Continue Grouping /Structure Development/ Governance
August 2025	PSC Check-in Grouping /Structure Development/ Governance
September 11, 2025	Continue work on Structure/ Governance and draft list of outcomes
October 9, 2025	Finalize outcomes and Complete Draft of New Structure
October 2025	Presentation of Final Draft to PSC
November 2025	Preparation of Final Package Based on PSC feedback

Timeline



Dates/schedule to keep in mind

WIP or Toxics or Forestry outcomes	Overall / Multiple Outcomes
Dec 9 – Today's monthly WQGIT meeting	
Dec 11 – Toxic Contaminants WG office hours #1	
	Dec 12 – MB (process)
	Dec 20 – PSC (process)
Jan 8 – Monthly Forestry WG meeting (TC + RFB)	
Jan 14 – Office hours (WQ outcomes)	
	Jan 23 – Monthly STAR meeting (multiple outcomes)
Jan 27 – Monthly WQGIT meeting	
Feb 13 – materials due for meeting #2	Feb 13 – MB meeting #1
Feb 24 – Monthly WQGIT meeting	
Feb 27 – materials due for meeting #3	Feb 27 – MB meeting #2 (WQ + forestry)
	March 13 – MB meeting #3 (toxics)

Beyond 2025 Projects

Purpose: Identify actions needed to advance the EC Charge in the long-term

- Projects that will help determine the work ahead and how it will be achieved-- for example, to inform outcome revisions, setting of implementation targets, tracking of progress and development of indicators
- Phase 1: B25 Steering Committee Report, Small Groups, Charting a Course to 2025, ERG
- Initial GIT submission deadline of Jan.3, but iterative and dynamic process
- Identified during review of outcomes and addressing “Big Question”

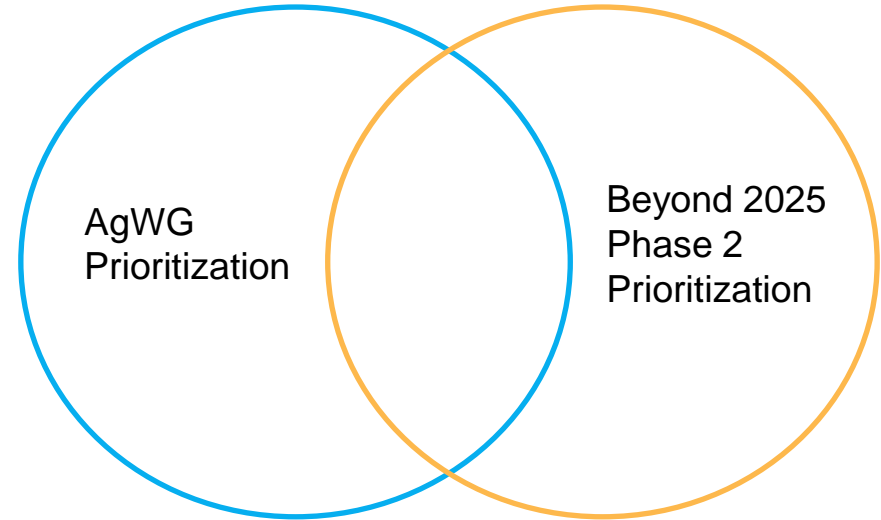
What does this mean for us?

Outcome Review

- Potential changes to WQGIT outcomes
- Possible introduction of new outcomes

Identifying Priority Projects

- Evaluate list being discussed at GIT level
- Determine what, if anything, the workgroup would like to contribute





Small Group Recommendations and Priority Assignments



Small Group Recommendations	Priority Assignments
CW3 – Enhance use of monitoring/assessment HW1 – Data, Tools and Monitoring	Water quality monitoring data incorporation (p.11) Monitoring Network – Funding the Future (p.21)
CW4 – Increase nonpoint source management implementation; address mass imbalance	BMP Verification – Remote Sensing (p.5) Geographic targeting: BMP implementation (p.20) NPS incentivization-tracking-communicating (p.8)
CW5 – Expand support for local government capacity HW3 – Local Engagement P2 – Connect CBP priorities to the needs of people P4 – Create intentional partnerships	Network strategy for capacity building (p.14) Social science incorporation (p.15)
C3 – Promote carbon stewardship actions	
C5 – Promote regenerative agricultural production	
HW5 – Outcomes-based approach	
<i>CW1 – Revise Accountability Framework</i>	<i>Future planning efforts – WIPs/Milestones (p.6)</i>
<i>CW2 – Adopt tiered approach to TMDL</i>	<i>Tiered implementation targets (p.9)</i>

Small Group Recommendations

Clean Water Small Group Recommendation #4

- Increase and incentivize nonpoint source management implementation and identify, track, and address nutrient mass imbalances.
 - How-to strategies (phase 2 actions):
 - Incentivize actions and approaches to small-scale watershed restoration and identify nonpoint source BMPs that are most important to water quality improvement through providing funding and staff resources, targeted and enhanced water quality monitoring, and communicating importance of these efforts through the social science lens through use of demonstration sites, workshops, etc.
 - Dedicate federal and state staff time and resources to connect CWA 319(h) and CBP. Develop state-supported recommendations to integrate the programs.
 - Identify and support partnership-endorsed approach to tracking mass imbalances.

Small Group Recommendations

Clean Water Small Group Recommendation #5

- Expand support for local government capacity.
 - 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.
 - How-to strategies:
 - Identify existing networks within and outside of the CBP partnership
 - Co-produce assistance tools to maximize local utility and application complementing regional management needs
 - Develop/expand on a network of networks to connect small watershed groups throughout the CBW and share best practices
 - Identify successful small watershed groups, what's working, what's not, and how successful programs can be replicated throughout the watershed

Small Group Recommendations

Climate Small Group Recommendation #5

- Promote regenerative agricultural production and regionally based food systems in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
 - This is a long-term recommendation that, to fully realize, would require a systems-based, sustained approach. However, incremental steps to lay the groundwork will also benefit the partnership's current water quality and watershed restoration efforts.
 - How-to strategies:
 - Identify specific stakeholders to engage who are currently involved with efforts to develop regenerative and regional based food systems across multiple sectors
 - Evaluate the potential to develop a soil health outcome and new indicators to measure success that take carbon storage, sequestration, emissions reductions and other benefits into account.
 - Determine how the partnership's various groups and work products could be more strategically utilized to support regenerative and regional food systems.

Draft Priority Assignments

- **BMP Verification – Remote Sensing** (page 5 of priority assignments document)
 - Assigned to WQGIT and its workgroups
 - “Develop methods to remotely sense as many BMPs as possible. Utilize remote sensing as the primary mechanism for all BMPs in the list so that future re-verification is completed by remote sensing.”
 - Assignments
 - Develop list of candidate BMPs for remote sensing-based verification
 - Develop rules for verification of remotely sensed BMPs

Draft Priority Assignments

● **NPS incentivization-tracking-communicating** (page 8)

- Assigned to WQGIT and its workgroups
- “Investigate methods to incentivize Non-point source (NPS) pollution reductions, track and highlight innovation, and develop communication materials that display all activity initiated since the TMDL or Mid-point assessment.”
- Assignments
 - Strategize and develop new/innovative options for scaling up and incentivizing NPS pollution mitigation
 - Develop options for gathering information on NPS mitigation activities (new programs, new funding, scaled up implementation effort) from jurisdictional partners to highlight activities occurring throughout the watershed

Draft Priority Assignments

● **Network strategy for capacity building** (page 14)

- Assigned to Stewardship GIT, STAC, SET *
- “Create intentional partnerships with networks focused on issues related to Watershed Agreement goals.”
 - These organizations are already connected to and have trusted relationships with key demographics of people (e.g., farmers,) and can help to not only engage these audiences in the restoration effort more but serve as a feedback loop to the Partnership on their needs and concerns.
- Assignments
 - Research the existing networks across the watershed, identifying their role, audience, operating area, and gaps in existing networks
 - Determine capacity needs of existing networks to support the work of the partnership and foster connections at the local level



Menti Questions



Announcements & Updates



AMT Updates – Tom Butler



2024 Executive Council Update

- EC met on Tuesday, 12/10 in Annapolis
 - **Approved Charge to Principals' Staff Committee: *Charting a Course Beyond 2025***; directs PSC to complete by December 31, 2025:
 - Revisions to the 2014 Watershed Agreement
 - A simplified and streamlined structure and process for the partnership
 - **Approved Directive No. 24-1: *Establishment of a Chesapeake Bay Program Agricultural Advisory Committee***; EC members agree to:
 - Affirm the Agricultural Advisory Committee bylaws adopted by PSC in June 2024
 - Secure sufficient funding to support the AAC (hiring staff, convening meetings, publishing materials and work products)
 - Direct Secretaries/Commissioners of Agriculture and Director of DC DOEE to appoint two members each to the AAC
 - Commit to at least one appointment per jurisdiction being a producer

CBPO, AgWG, and EPA R3 Personnel Updates

- Martha Shimkin, CBPO Director, will be retiring effective December 31, 2024
 - Lee McDonnell, Chief of CBPO's Science and Implementation Branch, will serve as interim Director
- District of Columbia representation on the AgWG
 - Rosita Musgrove, DOEE, will be DC's primary AgWG representative; Kate Lee, DOEE, will serve as alternate
 - Welcome, Rosita!
- Hannah Sanders selected to serve as EPA R3 Agriculture Advisor

AgWG At-Large Membership

- 2025-26 At-Large Membership
 - Terms of 6 at-large members expiring; call for nominations has been released. Send nominations to Caroline (kleis.caroline@epa.gov) and Eric (hughes.eric@epa.gov) with nominee name, affiliation, contact information, and short resume/bio
 - **Nominations due Jan 9, 2025**
 - Next month, we will explain the procedure for selecting members

For Awareness:

- Chesapeake Agroforestry Network (CAN) Meeting
 - Tuesday, January 7th, 2025, 11:00am-12:30pm
 - AgWG has been invited to participate in this meeting, which will have items on the agenda that may be of particular interest to our group:
 - Dr. John King (NC State University) will provide an overview of his research on the productivity of coppiced sycamore systems for bioenergy feedstock
 - Marjorie Hegstrom (Green Lands Blue Waters) and Meghan Filbert (No Fence) will present on Virtual Fencing and how it may expand options for graziers
 - Reach out to Ruth Cassilly (rcassilly@chesapeakebay.net) for more information.

Anything else?

- Send to Caroline Kleis (Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov) for inclusion in “Recap” email

Thank you!

Any questions?

You can contact me at Hughes.Eric@epa.gov



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