



Chesapeake Bay Program

Science. Restoration. Partnership.

STRATEGY REVIEW SYSTEM - LOOKING BACK QUESTIONS

Fish Passage Outcome

December 2023

CELEBRATING ACCOMPLISHMENTS & BEST PRACTICES:

1. Since your last QPM, what key successes would you like to highlight to the Management Board?

- Engaging new and strengthening existing partners with new statewide fish passage subcommittees being formed in VA and PA, additional WG participation from NY, and collaboration with Dam Safety program in MD.
- PA continues to be the leader in dam removals across the country.
- Additional grant funding is available from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).
- Increased interest in barrier removal through compensatory mitigation programs.

EVALUATE OUR PROGRESS:

2. Are we, as a partnership, making progress at a rate that is necessary to achieve this outcome? Would you define our outlook as on course, off course, uncertain, or completed? Upon what basis are you forecasting this outlook?

Despite set-backs caused by COVID 19 pandemic in recent years, the outlook is on course due to increased grant funding available through BIL and increased emphasis on road-stream crossings. Fish Passage Workgroup (FPWG) members are working with partners to pursue BIL funding.

3. How would you summarize your recent progress toward achieving your outcome (since your last QPM)? If you don't have an indicator, would you characterize this progress as an increase, decrease, no change, or completed?

The COVID 19 pandemic paused projects and increased costs, and therefore affected progress over recent years.

LESSONS LEARNED

4. If our outlook is off course, what has been the most critical influencing factor or gap that needs to be addressed to accelerate progress?

N/A

5. For "red" actions, what is preventing us from taking action? Are these actions still needed?

Landowner willingness, and technical and funding capacity continues to be a challenge for fish passage.

6. What have we learned over the past two years that we'll need to consider in the coming two years?

- There is increasing interest and funding available to improve infrastructure resilience, including fish passage at road-stream crossings.
- FPWG is working with Social Scientist from the Chesapeake Bay Program to develop tools and approaches to better align with needs and barriers of priority audiences to remove dams.

ASSESSING OUR EFFORTS AND GAPS

7. Summarize here any newly identified influencing factors, and why they were added to your Management Strategy. If any factors have been deleted, are they the result of our actions, and what have we learned as a result?

N/A

8. Prioritize and summarize here the factors best tackled as a Partnership (or GIT/workgroup), that have the greatest impact to achieve our outcome.

- Funding is a factor influencing success in our Management Strategy. BIL has increased grant funding available for dam removal and fish passage restoration at road-stream crossings.
- Landowner willingness is another factor influencing success in our Management Strategy.

9. For those high priority factors summarized above, what is getting in the way of addressing them or what gaps continue to exist despite the current efforts to address those factors?

- Staff capacity to manage and implement projects, non-Federal match, and funding to support project planning and design.
- Landowners of dams targeted as high priority sites for fish passage restoration are not interested in removal.

FOCUSING ON THE NEXT TWO YEARS: ACTIONS & NEEDED SUPPORT

10. Describe any scientific (including the impacts of climate change), fiscal, or policy-related developments that have already or may influence your work over the next two years.

FPWG members are working with partners to pursue BIL grant funding to support dam removal and fish passage restoration projects at road-stream crossings. Emerging aquatic invasive species can affect benefit:risk and therefore ecological uplift of fish passage projects.

11. Based on these developments and the learning discussed in the previous sections, summarize any new actions you are planning to address these gaps over the next two years.

Engaging Federal and State DOT partners will be essential for road-stream crossing work, and developing tools and approaches to better align with landowner needs and barriers for dam removal projects.

12. Have you identified new needs, or have previously unmet needs, that are beyond the ability of your group to meet and, therefore, you need the assistance of the Management Board to achieve?

N/A

13. What steps are you continuing, or can you take, to ensure your actions and work will be equitably distributed and focused in geographic areas and communities that have been underserved in the past?

The Chesapeake Fish Passage Prioritization Tool was updated to incorporate the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. The workgroup will continue using the Prioritization Tool to guide and track fish passage restoration projects and help consider if our work is being inclusive of disadvantaged communities.