



Charting a Course to 2025: Progress & Recommendations

PRINCIPALS' STAFF COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 26, 2023

Today we'll cover...

Recap on report
background,
findings and
comments received.

Deeper dive on
Forest Buffers and
Wetlands.

Critical path
forward: What is
our emphasis for
the next two years?

Today, we are
looking for
concurrence
on...

Has the Executive Council
charge been met with this
effort?

Can the report be delivered
to the Executive Council at
their October 19 meeting?



Executive Council Charge

“The PSC is to report back to the Executive Council at our 2023 annual meeting with recommendations on how to best address and integrate new science and restoration strategies leading up to 2025.”

**Including snapshots of outcome attainability under the Watershed Agreement.*

Charting a Course to 2025

Executive Summary

Recommendations

Focused sections:

- Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans/Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load
- Forest Buffers/Wetlands
- Climate Change/Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice
- Emerging Science, Monitoring and Analysis

Outcome Attainability Templates

Goal Implementation Team	Outcomes On-Course	Outcomes Off-Course	Outcomes Uncertain
Sustainable Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Crab Abundance Blue Crab Management (completed) Fish Habitat Forage Fish Oysters 		
Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish Passage Stream Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black Duck Brook Trout Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Wetlands 	
Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2017 WIPs (Completed) Toxic Contaminants Research Water Quality Standards Assessment & Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 WIPs Forest Buffers Toxic Contaminants Policy & Prevention Tree Canopy 	
Maintain Healthy Watersheds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Use Methods and Metrics Land Use Options Evaluation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Watersheds
Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Literacy Planning Protected Lands Public Access Sustainable Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity Student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stewardship
Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Leadership 		
Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Monitoring & Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Adaptation 	

Outcome Attainability Status

Important Successes

Stream Health

- 68% of watershed streams healthy with native invertebrate communities.
- Key support for many freshwater species.
- Accounting, tracking and monitoring in place.

Fish Passage

- Opened 619 stream miles every two years; far above target of 132 miles per year.
- Habitat gains for shad, herring, striped bass, eel.
- Important to regional economy and ecology.

Oysters

- Seven out of 10 tributaries are complete, along with an additional “bonus” tributary.
- Internationally recognized success. 5 billion oysters.
- Generate more oysters, fish habitat and clean water.

Public Access

- 231 out of 300 new access sites opened.
- 21 new sites per year.
- Key for equity and inclusion.
- Important to public health and garners support.

Summary of Comments Received

Opened for 30-day public comment period on July 21.

391 comments from 20 different organizations.

- Two advisory committees, one local government, individuals, non-profits, two coalitions, federal agencies, two state agencies and one Goal Implementation Team.

Comments were divided into five categories:

- Grammatical edits to be made in next version of the report.
- Refer comments to subject matter experts for their response.
- No response required.
- Refer comments to Beyond 2025 steering committee.
- General comments that applied to the entire report.



High-Level Recommendations

Accelerate Investments

- Increase speed and scale – IIJA/IRA, state investments
- Target toward lagging outcomes

Integrate Emerging Science and Monitoring

- Geographic Targeting
- Shallow Waters
- Social Science
- Climate and Rising Temps
- Robust monitoring network

Fast-Track Implementation of Action Plans

- Forest Buffers
- Wetlands
- WIPs
- DEIJ
- Climate



Deeper Dive on Forest Buffers and Wetlands

- Identified as key outcomes in need of additional partnership focus in 2021.
- 2022 leadership workshops.
 - ~100 participants in the Forest Buffer workshops; ~150 in the Wetlands workshop.
 - Led to the development of Forest Buffer and Wetlands action strategies.
- Key outcomes from workshops/action strategies:
 - Shift in focus to flexible, landowner-friendly programs.
 - Reorganization of Wetlands Workgroup to focus on both tidal and nontidal wetlands.
 - Increased forest buffer plantings and better wetlands tracking.

Perspectives on Forest Buffer Restoration from PA



FLEXIBLE FUNDING MODELS
TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS



CAPACITY AND LIMITATIONS



NEED FOR A HOLISTIC,
COLLABORATIVE APPROACH



Has the Executive Council charge been met with this effort?



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Concurrence

Thank You!

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