



Principals' Staff Committee

September 26, 2023

Actions and Decisions

Meeting Purpose: Briefings and discussions about the programmatic work and scientific findings to help the partnership prepare for the October Executive Council and the work ahead related to the EC's Charge on Reaching and Beyond 2025.

Reaching 2025: Consensus on Charting a Course to 2025 Report

Reaching 2025 Steering Committee discussed the report's key findings, and significant public comments and asked for the PSC to give approval for the report to be delivered to the Executive Council.

- Decision: The PSC approved the final Charting a Course to 2025 Report to be delivered to the Executive Council at their October 19 meeting. They also agreed that the Executive Council charge has been met.

Final Recommendations in Response to PSC Charges on CAST

A final set of recommendations in response to the Principals' Staff Committee's August 2022 charge to resolve actions related to the updates to the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST)2023 were presented for approval.

- PSC Decision 1: *Over the next year, as a partnership, we will figure out how the unaccounted additional loads are addressed post-2025, and on what timeframe, as we work to 'recalibrate' the goal line.*
 - The PSC approved the method for defining unaccounted additional loads. Unaccounted additional loads will be added to the existing Phase III WIP Planning Targets to create Interim Planning Targets. Unaccounted additional loads shall be addressed in the Phase 7 model along with 2035 Climate Change loads.
- PSC Decision 2: *Convene a committee to develop short-term, interim resolutions to fertilizer data concerns before moving forward with CAST-23 as well as long-term resolutions for Phase 7 model.*
 - The PSC approved the methods developed by the USWG nutrient task force, Agricultural Fertilizer Expert Group for incorporation into CAST-23.
 - DE Amendment: Eligibility and timing of nutrient application will be addressed prior to the release of CAST-23. This is the only additional change that will be considered for CAST-23.
 - CAST 23 still has a goal of being released by the end of 2023.
- PSC Decision 3: *Refine the process to include additional safeguards to prevent data analysis variations and to assess reasonability of modeling results after Chesapeake Bay Program protocols are applied.*
 - The PSC approved the methods developed by the WTWG for addressing illogical model results.
- CAST Schedule: *CAST-23 will be the last model update for Phase 6, Change from current schedule.*

- The PSC approve the recommendation that CAST-23 be the last update to the phase 6 suite of models

Recommendation to Create an Agriculture Advisory Committee

On July 28, 2023, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, on behalf of the six state agriculture department secretaries/commissioners, submitted a letter to EPA Regional Administrator Adam Ortiz recommending the creation of an Agricultural Advisory Committee. Specially, they sought to include the recommendation in the “Charting a Course to 2025” (Reaching 2025) set of recommendations from the PSC to the Executive Council. The PSC had a discussion on the a path forward for full consideration of the recommendation.

- Decision: The PSC supports the *pursuit* of a Chesapeake Executive Council Directive to establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee for the purposes of advancing the role and voice of agriculture in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.