CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

Washington, D.C. Milestones

2012/2013 FINAL ASSESSMENT

Choose Clean Water COALITION

AT A GLANCE

Urban/Suburban

- ✔ Urban Tree Planting
- ✔ Stormwater Infiltration Practices
- ✘ Stormwater Ponds
- ✘ Street Sweeping
- ✔ Impervious Surface Reduction
- ✔ Urban Stream Restoration

See the charts on the inside of this sheet for more information.

For more detailed information on all of Washington, D.C.'s milestone goals, go to: www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/tmdl/Chesapeake Bay/EnsuringResults.html.

Washington D.C.'s Plan for Clean Water: Is the District On Track?

Residents in the region are starting to see the benefits of investments and improvements made in local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. The practices that protect and restore our waterways—tree plantings, polluted runoff infiltration practices, urban stream restoration, and upgrades to wastewater treatment plants—ultimately improve our quality of life by reducing flooding, securing healthier drinking water, beautifying our neighborhoods, and ensuring safer waters for recreation. Unfortunately, despite making progress, the Chesapeake Bay watershed still remains a system dangerously out of balance. Too much nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution continues to run off our lawns and city streets, and into local streams, the Potomac River, and the Bay.

In 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Bay jurisdictions established science-based limits for these pollutants and state-specific plans to achieve them, together known as the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint. EPA, the states, and Washington, D.C., also committed to implement actions to achieve 60 percent of the needed reductions by 2017 and 100 percent by 2025.

To ensure these clean-water efforts stay on track, each of the states and Washington, D.C., committed to two-year goals or milestones detailing the programs and practices intended to be met in the near-term to achieve the 2017 and 2025 long-term goals. The milestones are a critical accountability tool, providing the opportunity to measure progress in the context of long-term Bay restoration efforts. Because of the importance of the milestones, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Choose Clean Water Coalition are collaborating to evaluate and publicize pollution-reduction progress. This report evaluates, for select practices, whether Washington, D.C., achieved its 2012/2013 two-year milestone goals and whether or not this progress is on a trajectory to achieve 60 percent implementation by 2015 and full implementation by 2025.

Conclusion

Washington, D.C., has exceeded 2013 goals for four out of the six practices selected for evaluation. Washington, D.C., compensated for its two unachieved milestones by exceeding goals in other, more efficient, practices like infiltration practices and impervious surface reduction. We commend D.C. leaders and the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) for achieving their clean-up reductions early and setting more stringent expectations under the Sustainable D.C. Plan.

However, we urge Washington, D.C., to recognize the value of setting bi-annual milestones that reflect its implementation plans so that reported data accurately represents D.C.'s commitment to pollution reductions. The District will need to account for substantial commitments remaining in impervious surface reductions, tree planting, and urban stream restoration. As such, DDOE has developed ambitious milestone goals for 2015 that will encourage significant progress toward D.C.'s 2025 goals.

In addition, the District must redouble efforts to reduce nitrogen pollution. Recent efforts like the 2012 passage of fertilizer regulations, a commitment to fifteen-million-square feet of urban polluted runoff retrofits per year, and increased incentives for landowners to manage runoff, will reduce nitrogen pollution.

We commend DDOE for adopting the new polluted runoff rule and wetlands regulations in 2013, implementing a new credit trading policy, and consolidating polluted runoff permit implementation plans. Washington, D.C., has established itself as a regional and national leader through its commitment to pollution reduction. We call on the mayor-elect for a formal commitment to clean-water plans within established deadlines.

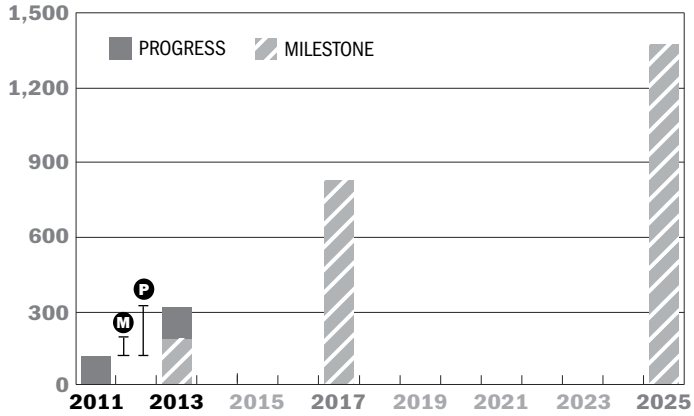
Assessment of D.C.'s Progress on Selected Pollution-Reduction Practices for 2013

Urban Tree Planting *acres*

Although Washington, D.C., continues to exceed its milestone goals, a re-doubling of efforts is necessary to accomplish the Sustainable D.C. Plan goal of 8,600 new trees planted each year by 2032. To prepare for the projected influx of new residents and the additional pollution they will contribute, Washington, D.C., strives to increase its urban tree canopy to 40 percent coverage.

(P) 201 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL PROGRESS) / (M) 65 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL MILESTONE) = **309%**

Progress Relative to Long-Term Goals (*acres*)

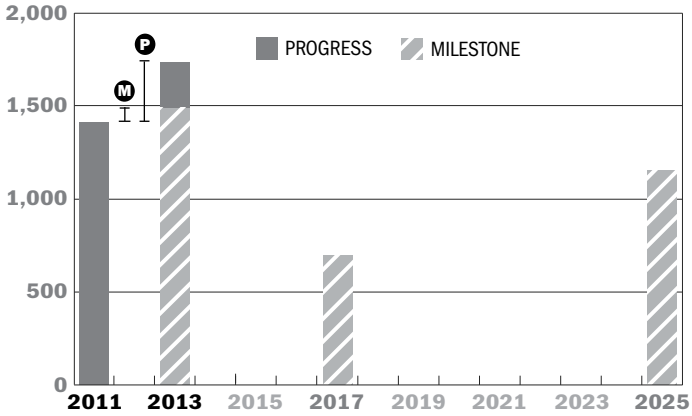


Stormwater (Polluted Runoff) Infiltration Practices* *acres*

Washington, D.C., annually surpasses its milestone goals for traditional polluted runoff practices. Yet overall, nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution from urban runoff are not on track to meet 2017 and 2025 target reductions. Infiltration is an extremely effective practice and helps achive requirements of the polluted runoff permit and regulations. We believe these goals could be more agressive.

(P) 316 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL PROGRESS) / (M) 70 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL MILESTONE) = **451%**

Progress Relative to Long-Term Goals (*acres*)

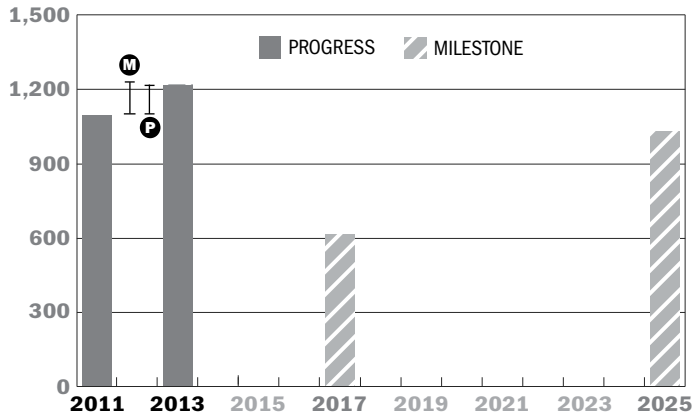


Stormwater (Polluted Runoff) Ponds** *acres*

The District's new polluted runoff rule, released in July of 2013, instituted performance standards for superior retention on large development sites. This will lead to greater runoff reductions when the rule soon goes into effect. We call on Washington, D.C., to avoid a third consecutive year of failing to meet milestone goals for stormwater ponds in 2015.

(P) 114 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL PROGRES) / (M) 122 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL MILESTONE) = **93%**

Progress Relative to Long-Term Goals (*acres*)



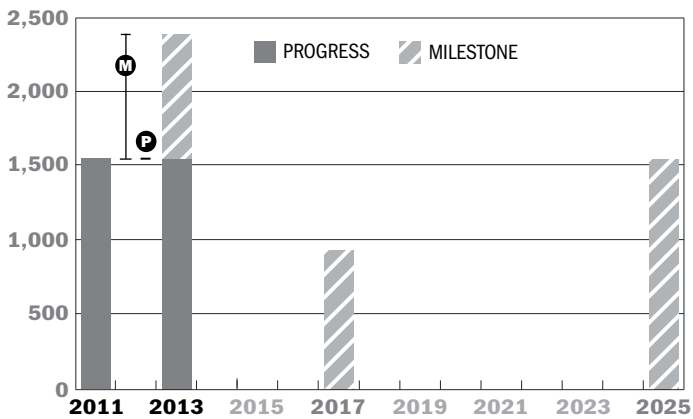
**Wetponds & wetlands, dry ponds, extended dry ponds.

Street Sweeping *acres*

According to the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) data, two percent fewer streets were treated in 2013 than in 2011, but the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) raised concerns that this was inaccurate. We commend the District for exceeding its 2025 deadline requirement early in 2010, but we call on CBP and DDOE to work together to ensure consistency in reported data.

(P) -14 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL PROGRESS) / (M) 828 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL MILESTONE) = **-2%**

Progress Relative to Long-Term Goals (*acres*)



*Infiltration practices, filtering practices, bioretention, and bioswale.

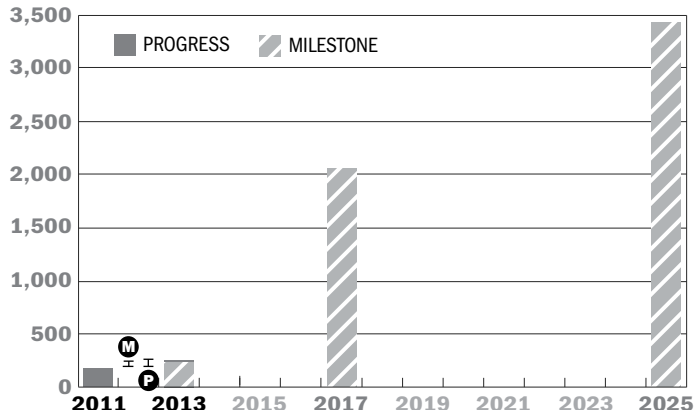
Ⓟ 2-YEAR INCREMENTAL PROGRESS Ⓜ 2-YEAR INCREMENTAL MILESTONE

Impervious Surface (e.g. roads, roofs, etc.) Reduction *acres*

The Sustainable D.C. Plan calls for 75 percent of the District's landscape to capture rainwater for filtration and reuse by 2032. We commend the District's Department of the Environment for accelerating the pace in its 2014-2015 draft Milestones. This will address the significant commitments in D.C.'s Watershed Implementation Plan to reduce or retrofit impervious surfaces. This reduction will be instrumental toward mitigating growing urban runoff rates.

Ⓟ 67 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL PROGRESS) / Ⓜ 50 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL MILESTONE) = **134%**

Progress Relative to Long-Term Goals (*acres*)

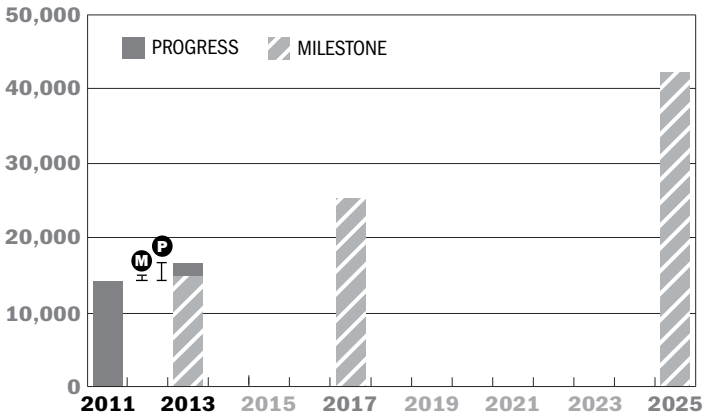


Urban Stream Restoration *feet*

This milestone was exceeded, though D.C. saw no increase in stream restoration between 2012 and 2013 due to permitting obstacles. DDOE will restore roughly 28,000 additional square feet by 2016. D.C. has made honorable commitments to restoring and planting an additional 50 percent of wetlands that will provide resiliency in riverside and streamside communities.

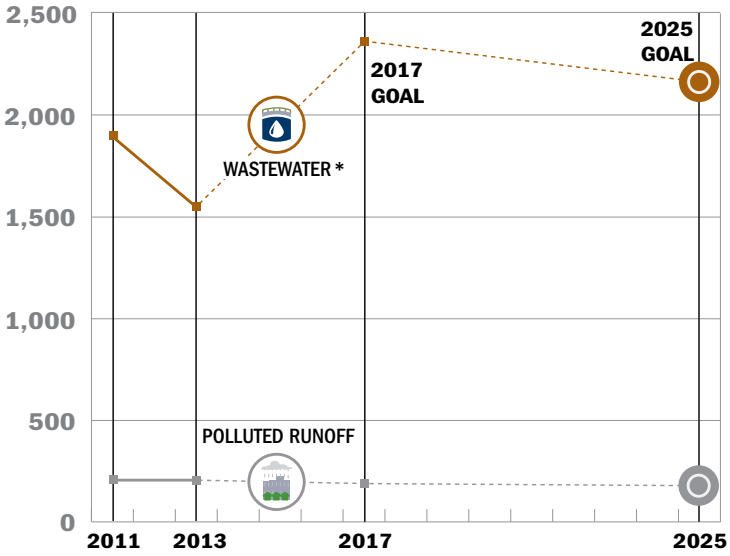
Ⓟ 2,150 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL PROGRESS) / Ⓜ 566 (2-YEAR INCREMENTAL MILESTONE) = **380%**

Progress Relative to Long-Term Goals (*feet*)



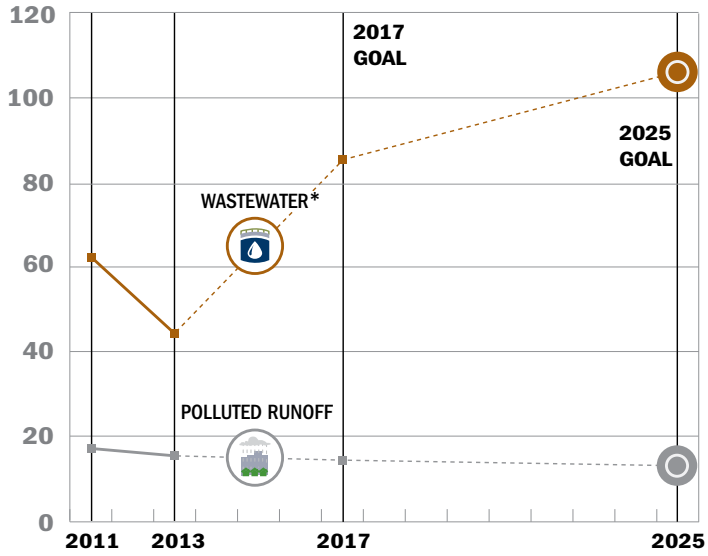
Modeled Nitrogen Loads and Long Term Goals in Washington, D.C., by Sector (thousands of pounds)

Washington, D.C., has already exceeded its 2025 nitrogen-reduction goals by 220 percent. However, D.C. has only secured 4 percent of its 2017 nitrogen-reduction goal from urban runoff. Though D.C. has met its 2025 nitrogen reductions through wastewater treatment, it must accelerate efforts to address the greater challenge of polluted runoff.



Modeled Phosphorus Loads and Long Term Goals in Washington, D.C., by Sector (thousands of pounds)

As of 2013, Washington, D.C.'s, total phosphorus load is decreasing, but it has only achieved 33 percent of its 2025 goal for phosphorus reductions from polluted runoff. We encourage Washington, D.C., to commit to achieving these phosphorus reductions for polluted runoff despite exceeding total reduction goals.



Source: Chesapeake Bay Program Watershed Model 5.3.2 *Pollution reduction is ahead of schedule for this sector.

Pollution Reduction in Washington, D.C., at a Glance

Washington, D.C., has seen net reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution. However, nitrogen and sediment load reductions from the urban sector are not on track to meet the long-term goals. This should be of greatest concern to Washington, D.C., leaders as the population grows and creates pressures that exacerbate polluted runoff.

How this Report was Compiled

We selected a subset of implemented practices within two pollution source categories—urban/suburban sources and wastewater treatment—based on their potential to provide substantial nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution reductions and offer important lessons for implementation moving forward. For each practice, progress (% achievement) was evaluated by looking at incremental progress between the base year, 2011, and 2013, compared to the 2013 milestone goal. Progress during this milestone period was also compared to the long-term (2017 and 2025) implementation benchmarks that the states and Washington, D.C., committed to in their Watershed Implementation Plans. Data were provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program Office.

Success Story

Canal Park is a new public community natural space in the heart of the recently revitalized Capital Riverfront area of southeast Washington, D.C. The award-winning park's design incorporates advanced sustainability features for polluted-runoff management and water use. Canal Park is an example of what diverse public and private partnerships can accomplish in the name of cleaner waterways and community revival. Today, Washington, D.C., residents can enjoy this public natural space while its aesthetic environmental site design improves the natural environment.

This historic park was first conceptualized in the late 1990s when The W.C. Smith Company purchased and invested in land along the Washington Canal that largely consisted of vacant lots and abandoned warehouses. Today, this once-desolate area is a redeveloped, river-friendly community, bringing economic prosperity back to the southeast region of the city.

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