**DRAFT 1/30/2012**

**DECISION FRAMEWORK OUTLINE**

**FOR GIT4**

**HEALTHY WATERSHED TRACKING PROJECT**

The purpose of this document is to provide an outline of a project management tool – a decision framework - with which the CBP Maintain Healthy Watersheds Goal Implementation Team (GIT4) can manage a single project to establish and maintain a CBP collective capability to track and communicate up-to-date key information on healthy watersheds. This project has been identified as a key action in the GIT’s general strategy, as presented in the GIT’s decision framework for its overarching goal to identify and protect healthy watersheds across a range of landscape contexts.

**1. PROJECT GOAL:**

*(Guidance: explicit, unambiguous, measurable, realistic, attainable)*

Using currently available data, in 2012 create and maintain an annual reporting capability to:

1.1 Identify ecologically healthy watersheds, (proposal is to use state designations; we need to resolve this against existing CBP IBI metric)

1.2 Characterize their status with respect to threats to their long-term ecological health, (we believe Peter Claggett is able to provide this info across the Chesapeake Basin; will states have finer info they want to use?) and

1.3 Characterize their status with respect to protection against such threats (propose to measure four factors, and those would be: direct land protection in a healthy watershed, local land use policy, state anti-deg, and citizen stewardship).

**2. KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING PROJECT GOAL ATTAINMENT:**

*(Guidance: consider what has to be managed to attain the goal. The answers to that question comprise a simple model of “the system” within which we intend to execute our project (a.k.a. our “intervention.” Also, it is key at this step to avoid letting the perfect be the enemy of progress.)*

2.1 **Partner Commitment:** Must have commitment of CBP partners, especially key State staff, to participate in the project according to a defined schedule; management level commitment also is required.

2.2 **Staff Time:** Must have commitment of CBPO staff time for coordination and analysis (GIS Team)

2.3 **Data Availability:** Sufficient availability of key data, including state and local government data

2.4 **Data Quality:** Scale, age of data, etc.

2.5 **Agreement on Working Definitions**:

2.6 **Execution:**

**3. CURRENT EFFORTS AND GAPS:**

*(Guidance: this review should follow the outline of the key factors listed above. Based on this information, we want an honest assessment of our capacity to manage the key factors.)*

3.1 **Partner Commitment:**

- GIT4 is the CBP unit where partner commitment will be sought.

- The CBP Management Board supports the GIT4 mission, including an initiative to consider options to track healthy watershed protection (Management Board briefing 4/12/2011)

3.2 **Staff Time:**

- GIT4 coordinator Mike Fritz and GIT4 staffer Anna Stuart Burnett are available

- CBPO GIS staff availability is subject to negotiation with GIT Team leader John Wolf.

- Analysts on the CBP Scientific and Technical Analysis and Reporting (STAR) group may be available to assist. To be determined.

3.3 **Data Availability:**

Burnett has collected information on State approaches to healthy watershed definitions.

Healthy watershed identification data may be particularly challenging because:

* Some States identify healthy waters (per CWA requirements) but not the watersheds associated with those waters
* We have no clear criteria for identifying healthy watersheds

Peter Claggett (USGS) completed a basin-wide threat assessment several years ago.

TNC briefed GIT4 on 1/11/2012 on a highly relevant TNC analysis of existing data.

3.4 **Data Quality:**

3.5 **Agreement on Working Definitions**:

The GIT already has agreed to proceed based on existing, albeit different, definitions and criteria used by CBP partner jurisdictions to identify healthy waters and healthy watersheds.

GIT discussions will be necessary to establish criteria for assessing threats and protection status.

3.6 **Execution**

**4. PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

*(Guidance: again, this should follow the outline of two sections above, identifying strategies to close manageable gaps in current efforts that address key factors. Strategies should articulate explicit, measurable actions (interventions), and identify clear, observable outcomes.)*

4.1 **Partner Commitment:**

Obtain the commitment of key CBP partners to participate in the project

 - identify project leader

4.2 **Staff Time:**

Confirm CBP STAR analysis assistance following further project scoping (CBPO GIS Team).

4.3 **Data Availability:**

GIT4 and STAR staff coordinate with State participants to assess data availability

4.4 **Data Quality:**

[TBD]

4. 5 **Agreement on Working Definitions**:

4.6 **Execution**

- Conduct initial project scoping based on this document

 - identify key data

 - identify analysis priorities

 - estimate analytical workload

 - develop a project work plan and schedule of deliverables

- Assemble data

- Conduct data analysis, prepare draft report findings

-Consider the option to conduct pilot scale analysis where the data is available

- Discuss draft findings at GIT4, CBP STAR, and CBP Management Board

- Respond to reviewers’ comments and produce final project report

4.6 GIT4 Communications Workgroup coordinates with CBP Communications Office to publish findings

**5. PROJECT MONITORING PROGRAM**

5.1 Quarterly project progress reports at GIT4 meetings

 - are CBP partners participating?

 - data availability issues?

 - analytical staff availability issues?

**6. ASSESS PROJECT PERFORMANCE**

6.1 Quarterly project assessment discussion at GIT4 meetings

 - is the project on schedule?

 - are the project outputs suitable for publication?

**7. MANAGE PROJECT ADAPTIVELY**

 7.1 Discuss project management annually at a January GIT4 meeting

 - How could the project run more efficiently?

 - Did we make any erroneous assumptions in our project plan?