

Chesapeake Bay Program Principals' Staff Committee
Meeting Actions and Decisions **Updates**
May 14, 2012

Program Update

- Action – CBP staff will provide a revised charge for the ongoing independent evaluator function and will include a discussion about this function on the agenda for the next PSC meeting.
 - The revised draft charge for Goal Implementation Team 6 has been provided to the PSC for discussion at the December 5, 2012 meeting.

Using the CBP to Support Individual Jurisdictions' Restoration Implementation

- Decision - The Principals' Staff Committee agreed to follow through on the proposed actions/requests/ideas identified during the discussion by:
 - 1) Documenting the PSC membership's priorities and feedback within the meeting summary;
 - 2) Categorizing the specific requests for partnership support and focus;
 - 3) Assigning each request to the appropriate Goal Implementation Team;
 - 4) Appointing a Chesapeake Bay Program Office staff person to follow through with the assigned GIT; and
 - 5) Integrating these requests for partnership support into the GIT decision framework.
- Action - Chesapeake Bay Program Office staff will circulate the draft list of PSC recommendations and priorities to PSC members organized by category with the recommended lead Goal Implementation Team and Chesapeake Bay Program Office staff person assigned.
 - A draft list of PSC recommendations was distributed to the PSC on June 8, 2012. In progress.
- Decision – The PSC agreed that the partners should work together to seek USDA cooperation in sharing aggregate BMP data, working the existing process for developing the basinwide BMP verification program.
 - In progress. The BMP Verification Committee held a conference call November 19 that was focused specifically on the topic of working with USDA (specifically NRCS and FSA) to get the jurisdictions full access to federally cost shared conservation practices. The Committee will be bringing specific recommendations and requests—as part of a broad BMP verification framework—to the PSC at their late spring meeting for review, discussion and adoption.

- Decision – Individual PSC members agreed to continue conversations about working with USDA on issues related to Farm Bill reauthorization (including the sunset of funding for certain key programs).
 - In progress. Congress has not completed its work on the 2012 Farm Bill which would provide up to five years of funding for many agricultural conservation programs, many of which would benefit Chesapeake Bay water quality. The Chesapeake Bay Commission has reached out to CBP partners and continues to work on this important legislation. Although Congressional members on both sides have indicated the Farm Bill is on the short list of outstanding issues to resolve during the lame duck session, it is unclear whether a full Farm Bill package is achievable in the short time left, or whether interim legislation will be enacted in preparation for a renewed Farm Bill debate during the next Congress. Regardless, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative has expired and is not included in existing Farm Bill extension language. In place of CBWI and other regional earmarks, both the House and Senate versions of a new Farm Bill would create a new Regional Conservation Partnership Program, in which regions across the country would compete for a pool of conservation dollars.

- Decision – The PSC chair will ask EPA staff to work with others to put together a plan for reaching out to USDA to address Agricultural Certainty and farm bill funding issues.
 - In progress. EPA and USDA continue to support state efforts to develop Agriculture Certainty programs. EPA and USDA have responded to letters from the MD and DE Agriculture Secretaries expressing support for these state programs. EPA and USDA continue to participate in MD’s on-going stakeholder meetings they are holding to develop the program. DE has formed a focus group and Steering Committee and developed draft legislation. VA Ag Certainty regulations were drafted and underwent public review this fall.

Emerging Issues from the Proposed Partnership-wide BMP Verification System

- Decision – The PSC approved the revised schedule for the CBP BMP Verification Program Development.
 - An update on the BMP Verification Framework, including an updated schedule will be provided at the December 5 PSC meeting.

The role of CBP Advisory Committees

- Decision – The PSC chair tabled the discussion about the role of CBP Advisory Committees; members agree to work off-line to further discuss roles and by-law modifications and bring back to the PSC during a future if necessary.
 - No additional requests for action have been made.

Progress on Reducing Nutrient and Sediment Pollution

- Decision – PSC members agreed to the draft briefing package—as presented—that will be used at the 2012 Executive Council meeting to show progress on reducing nutrient and sediment pollution.
 - The draft briefing package was presented at the July EC meeting.

Assessing Progress Toward Chesapeake Restoration Using Expanded Nontidal Monitoring Data and Improved Tidal Monitoring Analysis to Achieve Water Quality Standards

- Decision – The PSC approved using a three-pronged approach to explain restoration progress (1. Progress in BMP implementation; 2. Nutrient and sediment trends; and 3. Attainment of standards).
 - The three-pronged approach for explaining restoration progress is now being used.

Decision Framework Implementation

- Decision – The PSC agreed that the Goal Implementation Teams should continue their work to implement the CBP Decision Framework and requested an update on their progress at future meetings.
 - GITs continue to implement the Decision Framework; an overview of goal development and governance alignment issues will be provided at the December 5 PSC meeting.

Planning for the Executive Council Meeting

- Action – The PSC requested that the EC planning team refine the proposed theme for the 2012 Chesapeake Executive Council meeting and report the revised theme to members.
 - Completed.
- Decision – PSC agreed there should be only two discussion items for the EC private lunch.
 - Completed.