

# Creating a “BMP Guide” for Chesapeake Bay Program Phase 6 Best Management Practices (BMPs)

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# Need for a “one-stop shop” for basic information of CBP BMPs

- 200+ BMPs (depending how you count BMPs like cover crops)
- Numerous lengthy reports and appendices
- Not every sector has “user guide” materials or fact-sheets (e.g., CSN fact sheets for stormwater BMPs)
- Plenty of information available online (e.g., CAST documentation), but not always easy to find or understand

Working title:

*Chesapeake Bay Program Quick Reference Guide for Best Management Practices (BMPs): Nonpoint Source BMPs to Reduce Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment Loads to the Chesapeake Bay and its Local Waters*

# Expectations for the BMP Guide

Overall BMP Guide will be comprised of two basic parts—

## 1. Background and introductory materials

- “Read me” about the BMP Guide: purpose, contents, disclaimers, etc.
- BMPs in the modeling tools 101

## 2. “Quick reference sheets” or “quick information sheets”

- Organized by sector in which the BMP is applied (Agriculture, Developed, Natural, Septic)
- One reference sheet for individual or logical groups of P6 BMPs (see posted Overview document for current draft list of 61 reference sheets)
- NOT “fact sheets” that have more detailed information or specific audiences, e.g., CSN fact sheets
- As “bare bones” as possible with basic general and CBP-specific information; provide links to more detailed resources to the extent that’s reasonable

# Expectations for the BMP Guide, continued

- Designed with future maintenance in mind
  - Reference sheets organized with Letter-Number system
  - Each sheet will have a version and history statement (when reference sheet was published and when the BMP definition/efficiencies were last reviewed)
  - Future panel revises a BMP = update the existing reference sheet
  - Future panel reviews a new BMP = add new reference sheet with appropriate letter-number
  - Simple template so that anyone at CBP can provide new or updated reference sheet once a report has been approved and published
- Future home on website TBD

# Current timeline

- Draft outline of overall document and individual BMP reference sheets: **May 2017**
- Draft mock-up/examples: **May 2017**
- Review/feedback from WTWG of draft outline and mock-ups; work with CBP communications team on quality info sheet template: **May – June 2017**
- Fill in draft info sheets, work internally with CBP staff and with external partners as needed. In general, the most common BMPs or BMPs that account for greater reductions in the WIPs will be prioritized and less common BMPs will be completed towards the end. **June – November 2017**
- Share draft document and draft info sheets with workgroups for general feedback and addition of missing state-specific information as they become available: **June – November 2017**
- Make additional edits and improvements based on feedback; work with CBP communications team on complete document: **November – December 2017**
- Share complete draft-final document for final corrections/edits: **December 2017 – January 2018**
- Final “guide” document published for use by partners during Phase III WIP development: **January – February 2018**

# Summary of feedback so far

- Lots of support! Other feedback boils down to –
- Process
  - Start with “heavy-hitters” and save less common BMPs for last. Start with Ag sector.
  - Provide drafts in batches for review and feedback
  - Be wary of length, mission creep, workload
- Reference sheets
  - Be mindful of target audience and what is included or excluded
  - BMP names – NEIEN names vs CBP/model names vs NRCS or other names
  - Align with state terminology? (response: unable to do this)

# BMP names: conservation tillage example

- *CBP/Model BMP name (NEIEN name(s))*: CBP definition, related NEIEN and NRCS practices
- *Low Residue Tillage (Reduced Tillage)*: A conservation tillage routine that involves the planting, growing and harvesting of crops with minimal disturbance to the soil in an effort to maintain 15 to 29 percent crop residue coverage immediately after planting each crop. Some common practices that qualify under this definition are: NRCS practice code 329; strip tillage and no-tillage, and; reduced tillage as defined by the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC).
- *Conservation Tillage (Mulch Tillage, Ridge Tillage, No Tillage)*: A conservation tillage routine that involves the planting, growing and harvesting of crops with minimal disturbance to the soil in an effort to maintain 30 to 59 percent crop residue coverage immediately after planting each crop. Some common practices that qualify under this definition are: NRCS practice code 345; mulch tillage as defined by the CTIC, and; ridge tillage as defined by CTIC.
- *High Residue, Minimum Soil Disturbance Tillage (High Residue Tillage Management)*: A conservation tillage routine that involves the planting, growing and harvesting of crops with minimal disturbance to the soil in an effort to maintain at least 60 percent crop residue coverage immediately after planting each crop.

# BMP names: conservation tillage example

CBP BMP name	NEIEN BMP name(s)	NRCS Practice Name and Code(?)
Low Residue Tillage	Reduced Tillage	329
Conservation Tillage	Conservation Tillage Mulch Tillage No Tillage Ridge Tillage	329, 345
High Residue, Minimum Soil Disturbance Tillage	High Residue Tillage Management	329

# Next steps

- Specific suggestions still welcome re: list of practices and contents of the reference sheet (see posted Project Overview and Conservation Tillage Mock-up).
  - The sooner the better: **prior to June 8<sup>th</sup> please.**
- Production of drafts begins after EC meeting.
- **Please note that any requested changes that apply to the 60+ reference sheets will become increasingly burdensome over time.**
- Drafts will be posted for workgroups on monthly calendar entries as they become available.
- Special request: please brainstorm and share online resources that may be useful for multiple reference sheets (e.g., CSN fact-sheets).

# Thank you!

Questions, suggestions or other thoughts on the BMP Guide? Please contact me—

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