

BIENNIAL STRATEGY REVIEW SYSTEM

Chesapeake Bay Program



Narrative Analysis

PROTECTED LANDS – AUGUST 2019

The narrative analysis summarizes the findings of the logic and action plan and serves as the bridge between the logic and action plan and the quarterly progress meeting presentation. Based on what you learned over the past two years from your successes and challenges, you will describe whether the partnership should make adaptations or change course.

Use your completed pre-quarterly logic and action plan to answer the questions below. After the quarterly progress meeting, your responses to these questions will guide your updates to your logic and action plan. Additional guidance can be found on [ChesapeakeDecisions](#).

1. Examine your red/yellow/green analysis of your management actions. What lessons have you learned over the past two years of implementation?

Summarize what you have learned about what worked and what didn't. For example, have you identified additional factors to consider or filled an information gap?

Progress in land protection is primarily facilitated or constrained by available public and private sector financing for land conservation actions. Newly collected data indicates that state and federal land protection financing combined totaled over \$300 million within the six state region. Sustaining—and in some states, enhancing—this level of funding is critical to maintaining progress and achieving the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement goal.

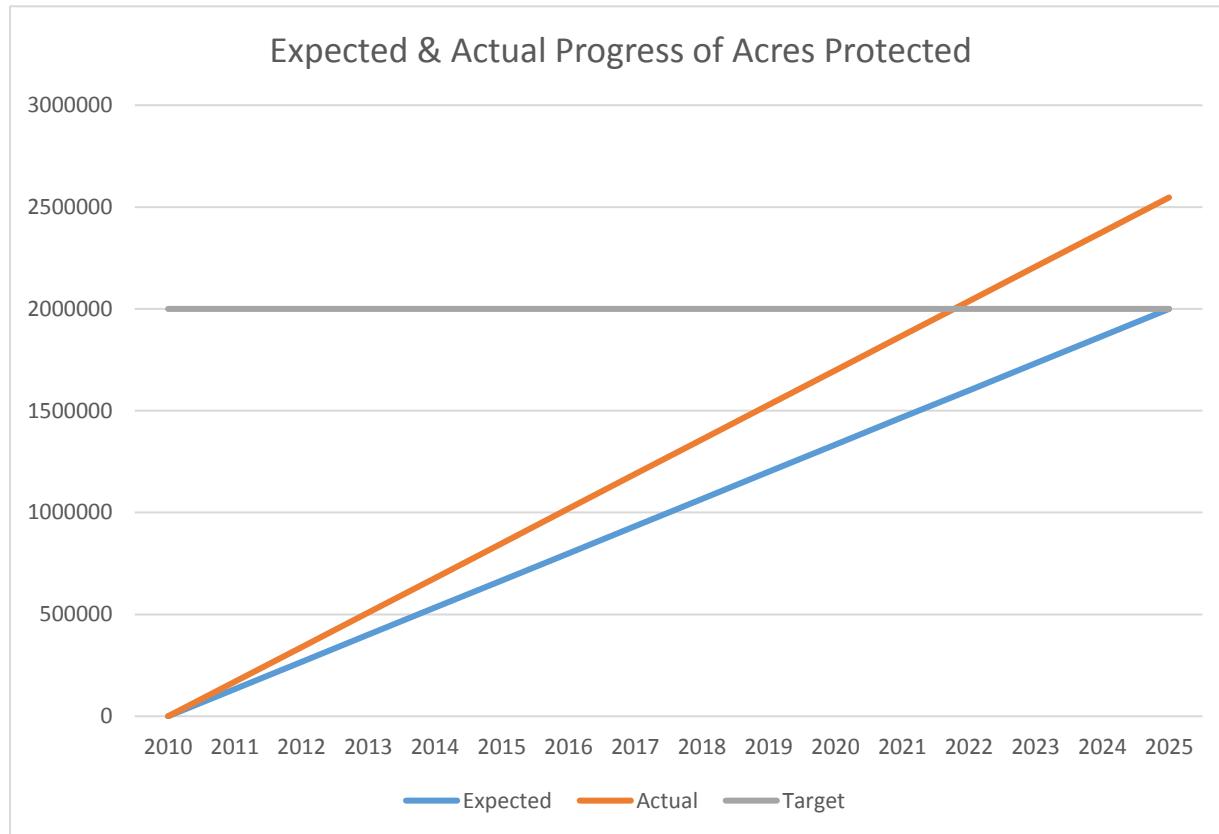
Management actions are largely designed to provide information and education that supports public financing and policy and develop new financing sources, as well. Significant funding increases in Maryland and Delaware in 2019 are indicative of success.

2. Regardless of how successful your short-term progress has been over the past two years, indicate whether we are making progress at a rate that is necessary to achieve the outcome you are working toward. The example graph below illustrates this concept.

According to data collected in 2018, approximately 1,358,456 acres of land in the watershed have been permanently protected from development since the 2010 baseline. This marks an achievement of 68 percent of the land conservation goal adopted in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and brings the total amount of protected land in the watershed to 9.2 million acres. The actual average annual rate of protection (169,807 acres) since 2010 is above the average annual rate required (133,333 acres) for meeting the 2025 two million acre goal.

While some increases in acreage can be attributed to improvements in data collection—for instance, by reporting previously protected but newly digitized, corrected or refined parcels of

land—other increases can be attributed to newly protected parcels of land, and data clearly indicate a general increase in protected lands in the watershed over time.



3. What scientific, fiscal and policy-related developments will influence your work over the next two years?

Fiscal: *Legislators and executives continue to face pressure to reallocate state and federal land protection financing for other uses. In some states these funding sources have not fully recovered from the recession of 2008-2009. Sustained information and education is crucial to maintaining and growing public financing programs. At the federal level, changes in the 2018 Farm Bill and the Land & Water Conservation Fund may increase allocations for land protection in the watershed; this is helpful, though federal funding is a relatively small proportion of the overall public sector financing mix. An assessment of other public (local) and private financing is planned for the coming year.*

Of growing interest is the potential for private capital investment in land protection and restoration. There is ongoing work to pilot and demonstrate how this might apply in the watershed, but substantial growth in this financing source is likely more than two years away.

Policy: *In the near term, key policy areas that could influence land conservation include: (1) development of policies enabling private capital investment in conservation and restoration and “pay for success” procurements; this could stimulate investment in land protection; (2) development of policies related to commercial scale solar and wind generation, which could influence both existing protected lands and lands identified as important for conservation; (3) continued consideration of policies influencing the mitigation of impacts from proposed linear*

infrastructure projects; and (4) policies adopted at the state or local level for implementing land policy BMPs as part of phase III WIPs.

Scientific: *In face of several evolving trends (climate, biodiversity, food preferences, urban populations, development), significant investment is needed in analyzing potential or projected influences on land conservation. Among these: How will changing temperature and precipitation regimes (and priorities for carbon sequestration regionally and globally) influence forests, habitat and agriculture, three of the top priorities for land conservation? How will evolving trends, preferences and technology influence agricultural land patterns? How will the preferences and needs of urban populations (currently 70% of the watershed population) influence priorities for land protection?*

4. Based on your response to the questions above, how will your work change over the next two years?

The Chesapeake Conservation Partnership is working toward both the 2025 goals and looking beyond those to long-term conservation goals for the watershed. This enables short term work plans in the context of longer term strategies. Generally, the core management approaches and actions identified in the current 2 year work plan remain sound and on target. The work of the Partnership and its members continues apace, as evidenced by the progress in land protection.

5. What, if any, actions can the Management Board take to help ensure success in achieving your outcome?

The Management Board and the Principals' Staff Committee can help most, by: (a) stressing the fundamental importance of land conservation to the quality of life of current and future citizens and strongly advocating for sustaining and growing public financing; (b) funding science and research that addresses trends influencing land conservation; (c) investing in collaborative initiatives designed to engage a fully representative 21st century generation of land conservationists; (d) supporting continued research and development in new sources of financing for land conservation, including private capital.