

Chesapeake Bay Program Federal Coordination Framework

Federal Coordination

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) serves as the signatory on behalf of the federal government agencies across the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP). Coordination across agencies is necessary to support the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership (Partnership) with the breadth of expertise and resources that agencies provide. This coordination seeks to identify and maximize opportunities for federal agency alignment of resources and budgets to achieve Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (Watershed Agreement) goals and outcomes. As part of this coordination, federal agencies seek consensus to establish a unified federal position on Partnership activities, whenever possible. The following describes how the federal government coordinates within the leadership and goal structure of the Partnership and how it coordinates internally to shape policymaking, set priorities and support decision-making¹.

Executive Council

The federal government is represented by the Administrator of the EPA on the Executive Council (EC). The EPA Administrator may invite representatives from federal agencies to attend private EC meetings based on issues being addressed at the meeting.

Policy Steering Committee

The federal government is represented by EPA's Regional Administrator (or designee) from the agency's mid-Atlantic regional office on the Policy Steering Committee (PSC). EPA will also serve as the federal government's voting PSC member. Federal agencies are invited to have their PSC members (or designees) attend meetings as non-voting members to provide technical expertise, provide agency-specific perspective, or other federal leadership support.

Federal Policy Steering Committee

The Federal Policy Steering Committee (FPSC) supports the EPA PSC voting member as a senior policy-advising body with members that consist of employees from that agency's Senior Executive Service or their designee. Through the FPSC, members will represent their agency to jointly identify cross-cutting priorities aligned with the Watershed Agreement goals and outcomes. The FPSC will provide federal leadership on emerging agency priorities within the CBP partnership to ensure alignment with Administration priorities and to identify opportunities to collaborate and strategically leverage resources to achieve shared objectives. FPSC members generally serve a term of two years and agencies should submit the names of their FPSC representative to the EPA

¹ Under a lapse in appropriation, each agency should work with their General Counsel to determine if it is appropriate to identify individuals within their agency who are excepted from the lapse to support continuity in partnership decision-making. Prior to a lapse in appropriation, Federal Office Director Committee members are responsible for identifying the employee in their agency that will remain exempt or excepted under a lapse to represent their agency on Chesapeake Bay Program matters and communicating that information to the EPA's Partnership representative.

Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) for record-keeping. FPSC meetings are held prior to each PSC meeting with EPA CBPO serving as the chair.

Goal Teams

With management of over 2.23 million acres of federal land within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, federal agencies play a critical implementation role in meeting Watershed Agreement goals and outcomes. Accordingly, the federal government is represented on goal teams by individuals from agencies and departments whose missions align with the relevant goals and outcomes. Federal agencies may serve in Co-Chair, At-Large, or general member roles with voting rights as assigned in the Watershed Agreement's Governance and Management Framework. The federal signatory goal team member will consult with the other federal agencies who are participants on the goal team with the intent to convey the consent federal position or vote in goal team decision-making and when activities and actions are identified. When federal agency members serve as at-large members on the goal team, they represent their agency but should still coordinate in advance with federal signatory goal team member with the objective of presenting a unified federal position.

Federal Office Directors Committee

The Federal Office Directors Committee (FOD) will serve as an operational and implementation body with members that consist of managers or senior experts from their agency. The FOD will coordinate with goal teams and their FPSC representatives on implementation of collective priorities, share technical expertise, address cross-agency challenges, and elevate issues to the FPSC as appropriate. Federal agencies will coordinate funding, technical assistance, and staff capacity to strategically target resources where they can achieve the greatest impact. This coordination may include sequencing investments, leveraging co-funding opportunities or jointly supporting CBP partnership initiatives to maximize efficiency and measurable outcomes across the watersheds. FOD members generally serve a term of two years and agencies should submit the names of their FOD representative to the EPA CBPO for record-keeping. FOD meetings are held monthly or on an ad hoc basis with EPA CBPO serving as the chair.