Factoring Climate Change Considerations into the Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans

DECSION: The Principals' Staff Committee agreed to the following framework for addressing climate change impacts in the Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs), recognizing that further information is needed from the Partnership's Modeling Workgroup and Climate Resiliency Workgroup on how the additional nutrient and sediment loads based on 2025 climate change conditions were derived, and the data and assumptions behind those calculations.

1. **Incorporate Climate Change in the Phase III WIPs**
    - Include a narrative strategy in the Phase III WIPs that describes the state and local jurisdictions' current action plans and strategies to address climate change, as well as the jurisdiction-specific nutrient and sediment pollution loadings due to 2025 climate change conditions.

2. **Understand the Science**
    - Address the uncertainty by documenting the current understanding of the science and identifying research gaps and needs.
    - Develop an estimate of pollutant load changes (nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment) due to 2025 climate change conditions.
    - Develop a better understanding of BMP responses, including new or other emerging BMPs, to climate change conditions.
    - In 2021, the Partnership will consider results of updated methods, techniques, and studies and revisit existing estimated loads due to climate change to determine if any updates to those load estimates are needed.
    - Jurisdictions will be expected to account for additional nutrient and sediment pollutant loads due to 2025 climate change conditions in a Phase III WIP addendum and/or 2-year milestones beginning in 2022.

3. **Incorporate into Milestones**
    - Starting with the 2022-2023 milestones, the Partnership will determine how climate change will impact the BMPs included in the WIPs and address these vulnerabilities in the two-year milestones.

ACTION: The Partnership's Modeling Workgroup, working with the Climate Resiliency Workgroup, will develop and distribute a briefing package in advance of the Principals' Staff Committee's February 2018 meeting that will provide greater detail on how the additional nutrient and sediment loads due to 2025 climate change conditions were developed, and the data and assumptions behind those calculations.