



November 3, 2014

Dear Chesapeake Bay Program Partners:

At the Principals' Staff Committee's September meeting, the PSC approved and adopted the *Chesapeake Bay Basinwide BMP Verification Framework* on behalf of the Partnership. The framework demonstrates our collective commitment to ensure that our accounting of implemented pollution reduction and prevention practices is reliable and transparent. Now is the time for us to put this new structure to work.

The Partnership's BMP Verification Committee is charged with the responsibility for developing a detailed Year 1 implementation plan for ensuring that we follow through on all of our commitments within the basinwide framework. With this letter, I am asking others across our Partnership to respond to this call to action. We must work together to help those with the direct responsibility for delivering technical assistance, cost-share programs, enforcement and compliance activities, and on-the-ground restoration support to build BMP verification directly into the day-to-day operations of their programs.

**Jurisdictional partners** – now is the time to deliver on our commitment for enhancing our existing, and developing new, BMP verification programs. We have just over a year to put in place independent BMP expert panel-reviewed, and EPA-approved, BMP tracking, verification and reporting programs. Let us get this done and use our expanded understanding of implemented practices and increased public transparency as we plan for the third phase of implementation towards our 2025 goal of having all the practices in place needed to reach our assigned cap on pollutant loads which will lead to a restored Chesapeake Bay.

**Federal agency partners** – we are looking to you to take your commitments as partners in this unprecedented watershed-wide restoration program to the next level. The jurisdictions need you reporting on *all* the nutrient and sediment pollutant load reduction practices, treatments and technologies being installed and implemented on your facilities and lands. You comprise 5.5 percent of the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed, an area similar to size of West Virginia's portion of the watershed. Through the basinwide framework, you will be enhancing existing and developing new BMP verification programs and ensuring the verifiable quality of the practice data you submit to your respective jurisdictional partners. The six watershed states and the District are depending on you to provide verified practice data as they, as the ultimate progress data providers, will assume responsibility for the quality of this data. The Bay Program will be working with you on using the new BayFAST tool help set facility pollution reduction targets and to assist you in reporting this information in a consistent and reliable way.

**Goal Implementation Team Chairs** – as you and your teams focus on development of your respective management strategies, please work in full consideration of how BMP verification fits within these strategies, intended outcomes, and their implementation.

**Source Sector and Habitat Technical Workgroup Chairs** – your tireless efforts to develop comprehensive guidance on verifying agriculture, forestry, stormwater, wastewater, streams and wetland

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practices, treatments and technologies has been amazing. We need you to now focus on sharing your guidance and insights with your jurisdictional, local, federal and other partners and stakeholders. Please work with the Partnership's Communications Workgroup to develop and conduct a series of BMP verification webinars and training sessions over the coming year targeted towards our Bay and watershed restoration community members.

**Communications Workgroup and CBP Communications Office** – in the coming year, the Partnership must be talking about BMP verification with one voice, communicating a common set of messages. Please use the full array of communication tools and mechanisms, as outlined within your strategy which is now part of our basinwide framework, and work to achieve your Year 1 objectives.

**Partnership Advisory Committees** – thank you for embracing the challenge of BMP verification and making it a priority over the past two years. Your advice, counsel and challenges back to the partnership have been invaluable. Please continue to keep this focus to help the partnership fulfill its commitment to full implementation of our basinwide BMP verification framework.

**BMP Verification Committee Members** – the groundbreaking basinwide BMP verification framework is truly the product of your labors. The strength of the collaborative decision making process on which this Partnership is based is truly evidenced throughout the framework document. Thank you for working through the literal hundreds of details and decisions that are now embodied within this basinwide framework.

**BMP Verification Review Panel Members** – your investment of many, many hours in meetings and conference calls, in traveling from across the country to the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and in reading hundreds of pages of guidance is recognized and greatly appreciated by your Bay watershed colleagues. Without your efforts and contributions, we would not have been successful in developing and adopting this basinwide framework. In advance, thank you for your final year of service in support of Chesapeake Bay and watershed restoration as you team up with our seven watershed jurisdictions in the independent review of their proposed enhanced BMP verification programs.

As we individually and collectively work toward implementation of our basinwide framework, here are resources being made available to assist in these efforts.

- The final *Chesapeake Bay Basinwide BMP Verification Framework* report and accompanying appendices can now be accessible through the Partnership's website at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/bmpverification>.
- A new set of Chesapeake Bay basinwide BMP verification web pages are being added to the Partnership's website and access be accessed at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/bmpverification>.
- Jurisdictions can seek statistical survey design expert support through EPA's cooperative agreement with Virginia Tech and the six other land grant universities across the Bay

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watershed. For further information on how to request support, please contact Lucinda Power at 410-267-5722 or [power.lucinda@epa.gov](mailto:power.lucinda@epa.gov).

- EPA is providing 2015 funds to the jurisdictions to support their efforts to further enhance existing and develop new BMP verification programs. Funding guidelines and priorities will be developed through the Partnership's BMP Verification Committee. For further information, please contact Rich Batiuk at 410-267-5731 or [batiuk.richard@epa.gov](mailto:batiuk.richard@epa.gov).
- Each of the Partnership's six source sector and habitat technical workgroups will be scheduling and hosting webinars and other training sessions detailing their respective BMP verification guidance in the coming months. Please visit the Partnership's Chesapeake Bay basinwide BMP verification web page at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/bmpverification> for forthcoming contact information and the latest schedules.

The Chesapeake Bay Program partnership is highly regarded and looked at as one of the best working examples of a multi-jurisdictional large ecosystem restoration programs across the country and around the world. Our work on the basinwide BMP verification framework is another illustration of why this is the case. We started with no working example to follow and no pre-defined roadmap and we created a comprehensive, integrated basinwide framework.

Thank you for all your past and future efforts. Let us continue forward on our Bay and watershed restoration journey and work collaboratively and gratefully to embrace the opportunities within our grasp.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Gill, Chair  
Principals' Staff Committee