

Chesapeake Bay TMDL Midpoint Assessment: Principles, Priorities and Next Steps

Presentation for Chesapeake Bay Program Principals' Staff Committee
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What is the Midpoint Assessment?

- Review and incorporation of the latest science, data, tools, BMPs and lessons-learned to determine whether Partnership's strategies will result in all practices in place by 2025 necessary to attain water quality standards in the Bay
- WQGIT recommends changes to modeling decision support tools, but midpoint assessment not just about models. Eg, also includes:
 - Integrated assessment of progress, including watershed monitoring and assessment of water quality standards attainment
 - Expectations and schedule for Phase III WIP development
- Findings from Midpoint Assessment may help jurisdictions prepare Phase III WIPs, which will guide milestones and implementation from 2018-2025
- With PSC endorsement, WQGIT will decide on specific priorities and work to be done as part of assessment

Additional Clarification

- Midpoint assessment will not interfere with implementation
- TMDL allocations will remain in place through at least 2017
- Future changes to targets and allocations are a decision point, not a presumption. After midpoint assessment complete, including but not limited to any changes to decision support tools:
 - EPA will work with Partnership to set Phase III WIP planning targets. Note level of effort could change.
 - Based on midpoint assessment and Phase III WIPs, EPA will determine whether to modify Bay TMDL
- To extent possible, enhancements in data and monitoring that are part of midpoint assessment will inform milestone and WIP implementation and reporting leading up to 2017
 - Data and monitoring that require recalibrating the model will not be used for tracking and reporting until after 2017, to avoid “paper only” decreases in pollution loads
 - Bottom line: Only credit actions that actually benefit water quality

Moving Forward on Parallel Tracks

2010

Implementing 60% by 2017

- 2010: Phase I WIPs
- 2011 & 2012: Phase II WIPs
- 2012-2013 Milestones
- 2014-2015 Milestones
- 2016-2017 Milestones
- Annual progress runs
- Tracked using Watershed Model Phase 5.3.2

Midpoint Assessment

- 2012: Gather Partnership input and set priorities
- As directed by WQGIT, gather data, develop methods
- As appropriate, refine and test tools
- Set planning targets for Phase III WIPs
- Develop Phase III WIPs and 2018-2019 milestones

2017

Bottom Line: Midpoint assessment will not interfere with implementation

Modeling Tools for Assessing Progress

	Watershed Model Phase 5.3.2	Updated Watershed Model
Phase II WIPs	✓	
2009 – 2017 progress runs	✓	May rerun for informational purposes
2012-2013, 2014-2015 and 2016-2017 Milestones	✓	
Phase III WIPs		✓
2018 – 2025 progress runs		✓
2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2022-2023 and 2024-2025 Milestones		✓

Note: Will also use programmatic milestones and monitoring data to assess progress

WQGIT Efforts to Date

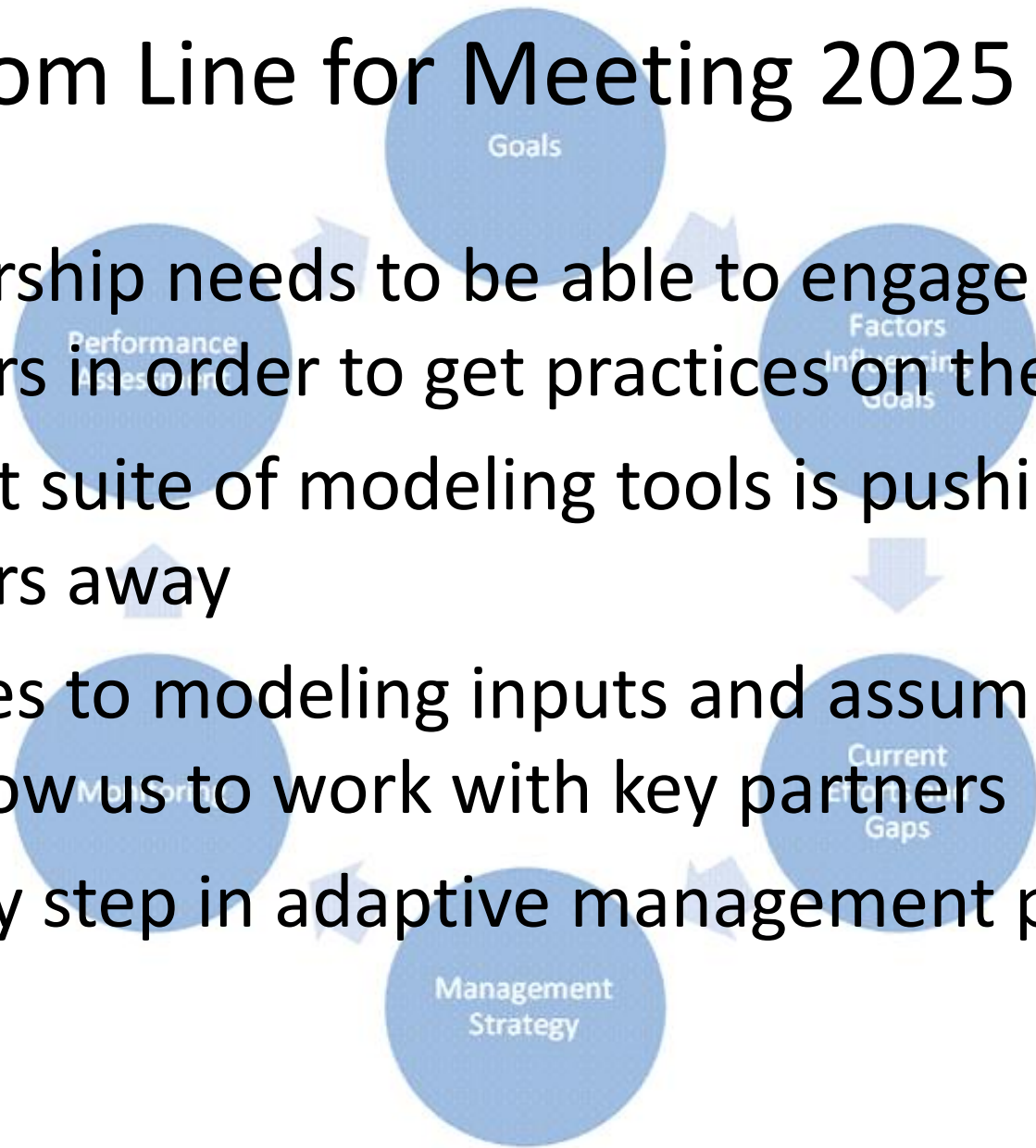
- WQGIT gathered input on midpoint assessment guiding principles and priorities starting in July 2012
- Deliberated priorities on October 22-23
- 9 Workgroups and STAR considered:
 - Do priorities address barriers to implementation?
 - How do the priorities align with the Guiding Principles?
 - Roughly speaking, how much of a difference would it make in load, expected reductions, or implementation decisions in each state?
 - Are there downsides to priority?
 - What would happen if this change were not made as part of the midpoint assessment?
- Outcome: Identification of high and other, lower priorities, and schedule and process moving forward

Proposed Guiding Principles

1. Continue implementation, tracking progress and reporting results, with stable tools through at least 2017
2. Enhance decision support and assessment tools to enable successful engagement of local partners
3. Incorporate new or refined BMPs and verification of practices into existing accountability tools and reporting protocols
4. Address emerging issues that may impact current strategies and future plans
5. Prioritize midpoint assessment actions and use adaptive management to ensure water quality goals are met

Bottom Line for Meeting 2025 Goal

- Partnership needs to be able to engage local partners in order to get practices on the ground
- Current suite of modeling tools is pushing partners away
- Changes to modeling inputs and assumptions will allow us to work with key partners
- Healthy step in adaptive management process



Summary of High Level Priorities

- Incorporate better model input data from local partners, particularly for current, historic and future land uses and their associated pollution loading rates
 - Consider using 2025 projections to develop Phase III WIPs to incentivize conservation and smart land use planning. This priority is **not** a change in allocation methodologies to credit growth.
- Revisit model calibration methods and assumptions so modeling results better align with monitoring data
 - Includes accounting for decreased trapping capacity behind dams, though this is not just a modeling issue
- Make CBP models more transparent, easier to understand, and better decision-support tools
- Adjust Phase III WIP deadlines to take into account whether states met the "60% by 2017" goals
- Other priorities, such as BMP panels and enhanced use of monitoring data, will also be addressed in midpoint assessment despite receiving fewer votes so long as do not interfere with higher priorities

Recommended Next Steps:

November 2012 – February 2013

- November: Workgroups and STAR develop work plans for priorities
- December WQGIT call - Report out:
 - Proposed work plans for high priorities
 - Who is lead for lower priorities identified by multiple Workgroups
- February WQGIT call: Leads present work plans for other, lower priorities
- Through September 2016: Leads work on priorities, get WQGIT approval and review results

Bottom Line: Partnership effort, and much data will come from states. Not just CBPO modeling team.

WQGIT Schedule Recommendation: 2016 - 2018

- Fall 2016 – Spring 2017: Partnership reviews “proposed final” model updates
- December 1, 2017: Complete final changes to model based on Partner review and set Phase III targets
- Spring 2018: 2017 progress run complete. Determines whether jurisdictions met 60% by 2017 goal
- Spring - Fall 2018: Draft and Final Phase III WIPs due
- Based on Phase III WIPs and Midpoint Assessment, EPA determines whether to modify Bay TMDL
 - Note: Schedule for Phase III WIPs and potential TMDL modifications will not slow down implementation and/or permitting

**More detailed schedule included in
Guiding Principles Appendix**

Does PSC concur on:

- Guiding Principles?
- Summary of priorities?
- Next steps and schedule?