Criteria Assessment Protocol Workgroup

Thursday, May 15, 2014

Meeting Webpage:
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/S=0/calendar/event/21723/

Meeting Participants: Peter Tango (USGS/CBPO), Lea Rubin (CRC/CBPO), Dave Parish (VIMS), Roberto Llanso (VERSAR), Cindy Johnson (VADEQ), Don Smith (VADEQ), Tish Robertson (VADEQ), Ken Moore (VIMS), Tom Parham (MDNR), Matt Stover (MDE), Howard Weinberg (UMCES/CBPO), Claire Buchanan (ICPRB), Cheryl Atkinson (EPA), Mark Barath (EPA), Bruce Michael (MDNR), Will Hunley (HRSD)

MINUTES

Draft Ambient Water Quality Criteria Technical Addendum Review – P. Tango, CAP Chair

Peter presented each chapter of the Criteria Technical Addendum and key recommendations. The workgroup was asked to provide feedback on the current addendum. These recommendations will be reviewed by the WQGIT and TMAW.

Draft: Ambient Water Quality Criteria Technical Addendum

Discussion

Chapter 2: Chesapeake Bay Program Segmentation: Western Branch Patuxent River Tidal Fresh Segment Volume Determination

- Is it a priority to have better bathymetry for the West Branch Patuxent River tidal fresh (WBRTF) segment?
    - Given how shallow and small the WBRTF segment is, more bathymetry data wouldn't make a significant difference.

- The workgroup supports the use of the interim volume for the segment used in the Bay model.

Chapter 3: Dissolved Oxygen Dynamics of Nearshore and Offshore Habitats: Considerations Supporting the Management Structure of the Open Water Designated Use.

The method for assessing attainment in the open water designated use combines offshore waters and shallow, nearshore waters into a single volume based evaluation unless a state has specifically delineated a sub-segment within a Chesapeake Bay management segment. The Umbrella Criteria Assessment Team recommends that the definition of open water designated use remains the same but with the option to sub-segment decided upon by the state.

- Federal authorities are going to allow the states move forward with sub-segmentation if they choose?
    - The sub-segmentation will alter the Baywide assessments of dissolved oxygen.
    - While assessing segments it will be important to prioritize areas where we would want more bathymetry data and sub-segmentation.
    - This addendum is giving the states the ability to prioritize monitoring efforts and target areas of interest.

- For sub-segmentation, sampling small tributaries at least 10 times per year for at least 3 years could be burdensome depending on the number of tributaries that are being sub-segmented.
    - In agreeance with the statement above, nontraditional partners could play a meaningful role in sampling the small tributaries where difficult for the states. The additional shallow water monitoring could be beneficial for tracking BMP effectiveness.

Chapter 4: Instantaneous Minimum Dissolved Oxygen Criterion Framework: A Sub-Segmentation Option

Minimum dissolved oxygen criteria have been developed based scientific understanding of lethal oxygen thresholds for aquatic living resources. Among the short-duration dissolved oxygen criteria, the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership had specific interest in revisiting the definition and assessment of instantaneous minimum dissolved oxygen criteria with its assessment protocols and to explore potential alternative interpretations. Outputs of the October 2013 Instantaneous Minimum Workshop suggested exploring a 2-zone assessment approach, nearshore and offshore, applied on a case by case basis supporting states in partial 303(d) delisting options to promote status and incremental progress reporting.

- Who will have control over where the CONMON sensors/buoys are implemented?
- States are not asked to make any commitments in this addendum because implementation will be resource dependent. However, it will be beneficial for states to identify areas where sub-segmentation is a priority.
- Overall, meeting participants were concerned about the uncertainty regarding the sample size for IM dissolved oxygen assessments.

Chapter 5: Update of the Chesapeake Bay SAV Restoration Goal: Alignment with Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Standards

The recommendation in this chapter is for the change of SAV restoration goal based on the state's water quality standards from 185,000 acres to 192,000 acreage goal.

- Overall, the meeting participants agree with this recommendation.

Chapter 6: Assessing Dissolved Oxygen Criteria Attainment: A Focus on Short-Duration Criteria Attainment Assessments

This chapter recommends approaches toward addressing short duration dissolved oxygen criteria in Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries. The Umbrella Criteria Assessment Team findings point to two primary monitoring options for assessing Chesapeake Bay short-duration water quality criteria, option 1) *Enhanced monitoring Approach*, and options 2) *Umbrella Criterion Approach – A Risk-based Assessment*.

- The Chesapeake Bay Scientific Technical Advisory Committee approves this recommendation.
- ACTION: At the next CAP Meeting, Richard Tian will share an example of option 1 and option 2 using real data sets to compare the likelihood of segment criteria attainment failures using the two options.

Chapter 7: Interim Rule for Water Quality 303(d) Listing Status Using the Chesapeake Benthic Index Biotic Integrity to Support Aquatic Life Use Assessments

This is a recommendation for a "Category 3"rule for the classification category for water quality status used as the basis for reporting water quality for Clean Water Act section 303(d) listing assessments. A segment would be labeled a "Category 3" if there is insufficient available data and/or information to make a use support determination.

- Overall, the meeting participants are in support of this recommendation.

Chapter 8: Protocol for Incorporating Nontraditional Partner Data Into Regulatory Chesapeake Bay Dissolved oxygen Criteria Attainment Assessments

This recommendation is for moving forward with the integration of nontraditional partner data for dissolved oxygen. This recommendation still requires the Water Quality GIT approval.

- The concern among meeting participants is the variability involved in a long term record of nontraditional partner data.
    - Volunteers are more eager than we think, retention of volunteers is high, and good coordination is a must for quality data. The main concern is managing the expectation of cost for including nontraditional partners, and costs of upgrading sampling and analysis protocols.

Chapter 9: Development of a Multimeric Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Indicator for Tracking Progress towards Bay Water Quality Standards Achievement

This recommendation includes the addition of a multimeric (DO, SAV/Water Clarity, Chlorophyll a) Bay Health Indicator to the CBP Framework. The Indicator has already been approved by the CBP Management Board and WQ GIT. Peter requested that the CAP Workgroup provide an editorial review for this chapter.