

Agriculture Workgroup Prioritization Document: 2025-2026

Background: The role of the Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG) has evolved over time, with changes in what the group discusses and produces being influenced by broader Chesapeake Bay Program partnership activities (namely, CB model development). The CBP is now entering a new period of change, with the Beyond 2025 effort shifting program-wide structure and function and a newly formed Agricultural Advisory Committee informing the partnership's leadership bodies on high-level, agricultural policy issues. These changes, and the desire expressed by several AgWG members to reevaluate how workgroup time is spent, were the impetus for this effort to identify the group's priorities for the coming two years.

At its October 2024 meeting, the AgWG began the process of identifying priority areas of focus through 2026. Between October 2024 and February of 2025, the monthly agendas included presentations and discussions that described the history and structure of the AgWG and external changes impacting the future of the AgWG. were given to the group focused on high-level topics geared toward big-picture ideas that would potentially influence how the AgWG chooses to spend its time. These topics included: AgWG history and context place within the partnership structure; the STAC CESR report; Beyond 2025; and CBP Advisory Committees, particularly the appointment of the new Agricultural Advisory Committee. Throughout this process, the AgWG leadership team has solicited input from workgroup members and meeting participants regarding interest in having these and other topics explored by the workgroup. The AgWG leadership team has received many ideas and thanks the workgroup participants for their engagement in this process.

Purpose: We now seek to compile what we've heard into a digestible format that this information to identify yes priority topics for the workgroup for the coming 18 months. This will formalize the interests of the AgWG and support agenda-building, project development, and a "workplan" to advance those interests. The AgWG was formed under the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) and is responsible for supporting progress toward achieving the outcomes associated with the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Water Quality Goal (particularly the Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Sediment Outcome*). The topics listed in this document are those that 1) are of interest to AgWG membership and 2) support progress toward achieving the Water Quality Goal and associated outcomes. his workplan seeks to identify priority topics for the AgWG to address in support of the Water Quality CIT and its outcomes, chiefly, Outlining the focus areas of this workgroup is particularly necessary given the significant volume of nutrient and sediment pollution reduction that will be expected to come from the agriculture sector.

On the following pages, we synthesize 5 months of discussions and feedback, identifying a purpose statement for our group to fulfil and two core pillars that support our group's effort to fulfil it. Each pillar has associated objectives: these have been extracted from our discussions and are what the workgroup feels it can and should pursue in the coming 1-2 years. We have also captured possible actions to take to achieve those objectives, which have been assigned to the action categories "learning", "leading", and "improving" to distinguish how differing levels of these activities support the overall objectives.- "Learning" actions are those that support AgWG members and interested parties in enhancing their understanding of a particular topic through informational presentations or the solicitation of specific information through surveys or similar mechanisms. "Leading"

Commented [KC1]: Leadership Team: Consider providing a few sentences about the role of the WG as part of the GIT, the past scope of work, and the magnitude of the responsibility that will be placed on the ag sector to help achieve future nutrient and sediment pollution reduction.

Also consider providing a few sentences about the previous areas of work, what the WG has accomplished / influenced, and our unique composition. Perhaps just some support and grounding for the new items?

Commented [HE2R1]: Most of these suggestions have been incorporated into the updated cover page. Further expansion on the past scope of work may be warranted.

Commented [KC3]: Leadership Team: Please provide links where possible.

Commented [HE4R3]: Links have been added.

Commented [KC5]: Leadership Team: Would be helpful to identify the water quality outcome that we primarily serve.

Commented [HE6R5]: Cover page has been updated.

actions represent novel efforts, either for the workgroup or the partnership as a whole, to achieve the listed objectives. “Improving” actions are those that establish more efficient and effective methods for executing the work that the group already does to achieve our objectives.

While not a significant departure from the long-term, foundational purpose of our group, it is a marked change to how we conceptualize our approach to fulfilling our purpose. We found significant overlap between the prioritization discussions held in 2018-19 and those ~~we~~ had over the last few months; ~~however, but we~~ felt we needed to re-center around the AgWG’s “why?” purpose and renew our commitment to these topics given changing internal and external conditions. This document outlines a strategy for how we can do that.

*Previously the 2025 WIP Outcome

~~Our request:~~ Please take time to review this draft. Specifically, we would like to know whether we’ve accurately captured the topics of interest for the group to pursue that were identified during our planning discussions. Further, if you have ideas for action items that fall under the objectives listed in this document, we encourage you to propose them.

Commented [KC7]: Leadership Team: Provide a few sentences here to distinguish between learning, leading, and improving - particularly leading and improving. Is one internal and one external?

Commented [HE8R7]: Text added.

Pillar 1: Implementation of Agricultural Best Management Practices

One of the ways in which the partnership can advance toward achieving its ag-sector pollution reduction targets is through the implementation of pollution-reducing Best Management Practices. A tremendous amount of work has been done to this point to install practices, and this work must **not only continue, but accelerate, if we are to meet water quality outcomes. A unique strength of the AgWG is the dedicated presence of multiple stakeholders representing diverse agricultural, environmental, and government sectors. As a result, the AgWG The Ag Workgroup can is poised to explore innovative implementation strategies, bringing a variety of stakeholders to the table—including those who are most impacted by our decisions—and to ultimately decide recommend** how the partnership can most efficiently and effectively address the remaining ag nonpoint-source pollutant load.

Objectives:

- 1) Accelerate BMP implementation **across the Watershed.**

Significant resources have been devoted to implementing conservation practices throughout the watershed. As we have not historically met our nutrient and sediment pollution reduction targets on assigned timelines, we must focus on accelerating BMP implementation. Therefore, the AgWG can and should discuss **provide a forum to assess and recommend** strategies for accelerating **implementation.**

Learning	Actions	
	Leading	Improving
Explore innovative engagement implementation strategies employed within and beyond the CBW	Explore Identify and assess alternative implementation incentivization strategies, such as pay-for-performance, financial and technical program supports, and innovative engagement strategies	Enhance partnership support of on-the-ground implementation efforts to which we can provide value
Develop a survey to be delivered to NRCS FO, District Employees, and others to solicit information on the least-implemented BMPs (and why they are least implemented), and the subsets of producers that may need additional incentives to support buy-in.	Identify and assess mechanisms for increased implementation based on best available social science	Better integrate social science and associated strategies into discussions Develop recommendations for program supports to increase implementation

- 2) Enhance cross-partner communication/idea-sharing.

CBP partners are doing excellent work to reduce ag nonpoint-source pollution. One of the key roles of the AgWG is to serve as a forum for information exchange **and learning**, reducing

Commented [KC9]: Member 1: Implementation discussions should continue with the committee regularly being exposed to new and best methods for outcomes of N, P, and sediment reductions—as shown by research based scientists and others with practical, verifiable multiple year data.

Commented [KC10]: Member 2: Relative to more than one jurisdiction and significantly important step to getting on track with current targets and timelines.

Commented [KC11]: Member 3: Local practitioners who work one-one-one with ag producers already will provide the best information regarding what practices are the least implemented (and why) and perhaps what subsets of ag producers need additional incentives (ie. Historical lack of participation). Consider this group to develop a survey to be delivered to NRCS FO, District Employees, others to complete for our workgroup's discussions and implementation strategies.

Commented [HE12R11]: This suggestion would make an excellent proposed action item. This has been added to the Actions table under this objective under Learning.

Commented [HE14R13]: Mitigation banking is not something that the AgWG has explored, but we can work with the proposing member to determine applicability and, if appropriate, bring the topic forward to the workgroup.

Commented [KC15]: Member 2: Great objective to uphold, giving space for collaborative insights and growth through proven steps to successfully achieving similar goals.

redundancy in effort and building coalitions to help advance projects more efficiently. Further, enhanced communication among workgroup members will help us collectively avoid "reinventing the wheel" by building on successes experienced and avoiding pitfalls found by others.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Spotlight "success stories", including legislation, policies, and programs championed by partners	Discuss and assess cutting-edge research, technology, and programs	<u>Develop and regularly implement consistent method for hearing updates from AgWG members. Identify opportunities for cross-partner collaboration on implementation projects, if and when such opportunities exist.</u>
Better understand implementation challenges and barriers faced by partners		
<u>Allocate time on agendas for AgWG members to deliver presentations on topics of their choosing to advance cross-partner learning; coordinate these presentations as far in advance as possible.</u>		

Commented [KC16]: Member 3: We could flesh out the ask her - and then develop an annual calendar of the AgWG members month to present on one of the "learning" objectives. An annual calendar could folks time to work into their busy schedules - not all members have to participate

Commented [HE17R16]: This could also fit into the document as an action and has been added to the table under the Learning header.

Commented [KC18]: Leadership Team: this feels more like a "learning" option. "improving" to me is more action oriented - maybe building shared practices or identifying opportunities to work together?

Commented [HE19R18]: Edited the action item accordingly.

3) Expand AgWG reach through external communication and education.

Greater public awareness of the challenges facing the Chesapeake Bay – and the excellent work that is being done to address those challenges – may increase support for our collective (and individual) efforts. The AgWG is a platform to communicate information about the partnership, the work of our partners, and more, not just to each other but to a much wider audience, too.

Workgroup members have identified an opportunity for the group to expand its reach through better connecting with communicating with external parties (ranging from interested individuals, such as those tapped to participate in the Agricultural Advisory Committee, to conservation district staff and TA providers, to industry associations). There are many ways in which the AgWG could do this; however, in recent years, we have not dedicated time to external outreach. Enhancing external connections will ultimately bring additional Bay stewards into the fold and expand the input we receive from producers/those most impacted by our decisions.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving

Commented [KC20]: Leadership Team: Clarify what it is we want to share.

Commented [HE21R20]: See changes to description below.

Commented [KC22]: Member 3: I'm not entirely sure what we want communicate or educate about to external partners here. Issues in the Bay, the work of the jurisdictions, AgWG activities, Bay Agreement - ?

Commented [HE23R22]: All of the above! The objective may be poorly worded, but hopefully edits to the description offer some clarity.

Commented [KC24]: Member 2: Good goal to work towards as folks continue to engage and find the need for ideas, input and feedback on their work.

Commented [KC25]: Leadership Team: Consider providing examples of "external parties"

Commented [HE26R25]: Examples provided.

Understand how similar partnerships engage stakeholders	Develop/test innovative outreach strategies	Use AgWG website as a repository for watershed-wide ag information
	Visualize implementation through mapping (to the extent possible given data privacy concerns)	Visualize implementation through mapping (to the extent possible given data privacy concerns)

- 4) Track and understand agricultural industry trends and their implications for agricultural non-point pollution.

Understanding trends in agriculture from industry professionals can inform the workgroup's efforts and ensure that we remain focused on salient ag issues and priorities.

Learning	Actions	
	Leading	Improving
Hear directly from industry representatives about industry directions and challenges for implementation of BMPs and related conservation programs	Pursue private-public partnerships that recognize industry changes that will to support implementation efforts	Determine priorities proactively, understanding what is "on the horizon" for our ag stakeholders

Commented [KC27]: Member 3: Consider making all of these priorities "SMART". So do we want to plan for 1 industry representative annually to present?

Commented [HE28R27]: This is an important consideration given the effort underway through Beyond 2025 to encourage the development of SMART "targets" for each outcome. Because the work under objectives can be so varied, we encourage these specifics to be determined for individual proposed actions.

Commented [KC29]: Member 2: Very relevant to increasing awareness and staying ahead of the curve in terms of agricultural advances or disadvantages.

Commented [KC30]: Member 1: Tracking and understanding ag and ag trends is very important in order to recommend strategies to influence and incentivize producers.

- 5) Assess options for innovative Target BMP implementation programs.

Recent reports and publications from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee have highlighted limitations of current voluntary BMP adoption programs. The reports recommend innovations in these programs including Current BMP implementation patterns across the landscape are effective but may not be the most cost-effective or efficient strategy. Identifying high-load areas in the watershed, and then targeting resources/prioritizing implementation in those areas, could be a valuable strategy to pursue. That is an exercise that could be explored further by the AgWG. Other recommendations encourage assessing the water quality impacts of systemic and historical changes in agriculture, including shifts in commodity production systems and practices related to organic and synthetic fertilizers in the region.

Commented [KC31]: Member 2: Makes sense from a broad perspective to engage in strategies that have the best proposed scenarios for seamless implementation.

Commented [KC32]: Member 3: It could be my lack of familiarity with CESR, but Priority 5 seems vague to me.

Commented [HE33R32]: We have reworded the objective and supplemental text that explains its purpose and what it might entail.

Learning	Actions	
	Leading	Improving
Coordinate with CESR authors to further understand impact of mass imbalance on efforts to achieve pollution reduction targets	Explore tiered approach to implementation, an opportunity of interest to the partnership (and one flagged in CESR report) spearhead partnership-wide effort to explore strategies to address mass (im)balance in the watershed	Advise on how to potentially reconsider allocating resources and implementation efforts

Commented [KC34]: Member 3: Spell out acronym

Commented [HE35R34]: The acronym has been removed.

Explore impacts of tiered approaches to BMP implementation used in CBW and elsewhere	In collaboration with STAG, Pioneer and assess tiered approaches to BMP implementation programs spearhead partnership effort to assess state of mass (im)balance in the watershed	
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6) Understand and evaluate ag-sector WIP progress.

The AgWG is responsible for assisting the jurisdictions in progressing toward their ag-sector WIP targets. There are several ways in which ~~this the AgWG can support jurisdictions, including: can be done. Fundamentally, the workgroup must understand~~ a) ~~understanding what the~~ ag-sector WIP targets ~~exist~~ across the jurisdictions, ~~and~~ b) ~~supporting the steps~~ the jurisdictions' ~~efforts plan to take~~ to meet those targets, c) ~~sharing information and resources across~~ jurisdictions about successes and challenges, and d) ~~tracking progress toward those targets. Focusing on these steps will - This may help the AgWG leadership group further refine where how to most effectively it chooses to~~ allocate time.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Annual Regular (?) updates from representatives of the jurisdictions on progress made toward ag-sector targets, highlighting priority BMPs and strategies for expanding implementation in the coming year	Serve as model for collaboration between CBP workgroup and partners involved in WIP implementation	Develop stronger support frame network for jurisdictions in meeting ag-sector WIP targets and specific projects

Commented [KC36]: Member 3: I like this concept. Instead of annual, consider using the agwork group meeting time to invite jurisdictions to individually to present their goals, progress, and challenges to our group. Framed that we want to learn from them, and use their recommendations to formulate our actions to better assist with WIP progress.

Commented [HE37R36]: Thank you for this suggestion - under actions, we have changed "annual updates" to "regular updates" so as to avoid placing a restrictive timeline on this important information sharing.

Commented [KC38]: Member 2: One of the most notable objectives, clarifying capacities and supporting the work of other jurisdictions in the watershed.

Commented [KC39]: Leadership Team: this should probably come first in the list of goals. it's the most fundamental of WG roles.

Commented [HE40R39]: Moved to the top of draft 2 of the document.

Commented [KC41]: Leadership Team: Consider clarifying what is meant by "framework"

Commented [KC42R41]: Replaced "framework" with "network". Hopefully this is more clear. Poor word choice.

Pillar 2: Crediting and Verification of Agricultural Practices

The main mechanism for achieving progress toward pollution reduction targets is made by implementing agricultural Best Management Practices, but that impact is tracked, and our progress is ultimately measured, by the calculated “credit” that is assigned to each of those practices in the Bay Program’s suite of modeling tools. What practices receive credit and how much credit is assigned are both significant variables in the progress equation and help us determine how much work has been done, and how much remains. Tracking and verifying the implementation and impact of these practices across the Watershed is also essential for assessing progress. It is also essential that scientific and technical advancements that can assist in the development of new, refined, and innovative practices, verification, modeling, and monitoring be assessed by CBP partners. The Ag Workgroup AgWG can address these questions – what receives credit and how much credit is assigned – for ag-sector BMPs to complement the work being done on the ground to put more beneficial practices in place.

Objectives:

- 1) Establish Evaluate credits for credit for BMPs not currently incorporated into the CBP’s suite of modeling tools:

Not all ag BMPs are currently creditable in the Bay Program’s suite of modeling tools, yet may have beneficial impacts on water quality outcomes. To evaluate credit new BMPs, the AgWG must initiate the process of determining nutrient and sediment reduction efficiencies, among other metrics, for the practices. The AgWG can create appropriate sub-groups (e.g., expert panels, teams) to conduct these reviews and make recommendations. This has traditionally been done through the expert panel process.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Remain Understand aware of implementation trends (particular BMPs growing in popularity, etc.)	Solicit priority BMPs to credit from partners and develop procedures (such as expert panels) to assess their impacts and credits Develop Expert Panels & Expert Panel Establishment Groups. Priority BMPs currently identified include Agroforestry (alley cropping/silvopasture) and - Biochar.	Assess the NRCS/CBP BMP crosswalk to determine BMPs not currently receiving credit Solicit priority BMPs to credit from partners
		Better a Account for practices on the ground and not incorporated into CBP modeling tools by pursuing 1619 data sharing agreements

Commented [KC43]: Member 1: In the Credit and Verification area the discussions, input, and reporting must focus on real world results, with full transparency. (ie.. Clarify credits and accurate bmp life cycle results which should be reported -and not extinguished after artificial dates are reached -ie.. livestock stream exclusion fencing, nutrient management, others) Currently the credit model is flawed and not accurate especially as it relates to practice duration and land use. Failure here seriously undermines the entire program as major results - are currently excluded or discounted.

Commented [HE44R43]: Noted - and see proposed action for assessing credit duration under objective 2.

Commented [KC45]: Leadership Team: for the Bay model?

Commented [HE46R45]: Added text to clarify.

Commented [KC47]: Member 2: This idea has potential to help improve standards and may not require all members to initiate. Those who have more expertise can lead the panel and remaining members can vote on proposed methods, etc.

Commented [HE48R47]: Yes - I envision several small, ad hoc groups of interested members forming to take various actions outlined in this document, reporting their findings back to the full group to support a consensus decision.

Commented [KC49]: Leadership Team: I know there are several different types, and wanted to leave the door open to the right ones for the specific job.

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2) **Regularly** Evaluate BMPs currently receiving credit in the CBP's suite of modeling tools.

The partnership strives to model real-world processes and outcomes as accurately as possible. The AgWG is responsible for evaluating agricultural BMPs that currently receive credit in our modeling tools to ensure that their impacts are modeled "correctly" in accordance with the best available science. All ag BMPs should be periodically evaluated for this reason.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Discuss latest research on CBP-credited BMPs	Develop standardized protocol for BMP revision	Revisit definitions and credit durations Specific BMPs to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stream exclusion/pasture fence - Liquid manure incorporation - Dairy precision feeding - Ag drainage management

Commented [KC50]: Member 2: Great for spreading awareness and maintaining best practices across jurisdictions.

3) Develop methods for verifying BMPs not implemented through traditional channels (traditional channels being cost-share, etc.).

BMPs can be implemented without being counted for progress toward CBP goals. Some BMPs are implemented without the involvement of external parties. Partners have expressed interest in determining methods for locating and crediting these practices.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Hear from ag stakeholders, including producers and TA providers, about BMPs that may be implemented but not tracked	Compile assessment of BMPs implemented through unconventional means	Propose revisions to CBP reporting and verification protocols to expand creditable BMPs

Commented [KC51]: Member 2: Sounds imperative, as we grow in our fields, that the work being implemented is monitored with accuracy so that others can utilize recommendations without missing any steps.

Commented [KC52]: Member 1: We must continue to explore all modern methods to capture the data and verify practices. We measure what we value.

4) Leverage technology to enhance BMP verification.

There are many possible ways to verify the presence of BMPs on the landscape. The partnership is interested in taking advantage of cutting-edge technology to make BMP verification as efficient, comprehensive, and accurate as possible.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Host presentations on novel technologies that could be applied to BMP verification	Outline novel methods to enhance CBP verification efforts	Update existing verification guidance to reflect latest science
	List-Identify BMPs suitable for remote sensing (and other technology)- based verification	

Commented [KC53]: Member 3: Is "ag stakeholders" inclusive of producers? If so - good. If not - we need to hear from the producers themselves in some fashion. What would incentive them to self report, etc.

Commented [HE54R53]: Yes, ag stakeholders is inclusive of producers. We have edited this proposed action item to reflect that.

Commented [KC55]: Member 2: Relevant to the work of multiple jurisdictions and can help support our human errors and enhance processes.

- 5) Enhance understanding of, and explore crediting options for, BMP co-benefits (benefits beyond N, P, S reduction).

When we think about which BMPs we prioritize and incentivize, we often (understandably) do so focusing on those with the greatest potential to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution. Partners have expressed an interest in considering, in addition to the water quality benefits of practices, other benefits of BMPs. The 'co-benefits' that we consider can be **discussed assessed** by the AgWG **to identify more holistic approaches to describing the impacts of BMPs**. AgWG members have also stressed the importance of considering **a broader framework of sustainability to influence** in the work that we do. Our group can enhance our focus on sustainability, particularly in considering strategies for expanding the adoption of conservation practices among producers.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Explore the ways in which BMPs provide value to the environment and to those implementing them beyond reducing nutrient and sediment pollution	Develop list of criteria to use to more comprehensively quantify the value of CBP BMPs	Determine BMPs to incentivize using more holistic evaluation criteria
Review existing or conduct new BMP ROI assessment Invite farmers to share insights into the intersection between profitability and environmental stewardship	Establish-Evaluate soil health as a partnership priority	Weave elements of sustainability – particularly as applicable to the viability of agricultural operations – into AgWG discussions.

- 6) **Emphasize-Enhance** focus on water quality monitoring data.

The Bay Program's suite of modeling tools helps us track progress toward meeting our pollution reduction targets and serve as a critical planning tool. Several partners have recognized that in addition to considering modeling data, the partnership should more closely consider monitoring data in our evaluations of progress toward achieving our goals. The extent to which monitoring data is considered for accountability is a broader discussion not appropriate for the AgWG, but there are several approaches this group can take to assess ag-sector loads and BMP impact through enhanced focus on monitoring data.

Actions		
Learning	Leading	Improving
Review results of monitoring studies to better understand impact of BMPs	Explore cost-effective monitoring tools/systems	Develop support mechanism for existing local/small ag watershed monitoring network

Commented [KC56]: Member 2: This exploration of "co-benefits" and enhancing our focus on sustainability, particularly around "expanding the adoption of conservation practices among producers" has potential to help improve overlapping objectives in other areas of work being done to improve the watershed in ways that haven't been previously discussed.

Commented [KC57]: Member 1: We should focus on N, P, and sediment—our main goals—nutrient pollution prevention. Adding to many objectives adds variables and complicates our efforts in implementation, funding, and verification of progress at regional levels.

Commented [HE58R57]: Yes - it is important for this group's focus to remain on N, P, and S: the pollutants that we are collectively working to mitigate. While this is presented as being additive, we will not broaden the discussion so much that it detracts from our ability to address N, P, and S reduction. If workgroup members feel that we are consistently having unproductive discussions that fail to support partnership goals and objectives, they should raise that concern to the AgWG leadership and staff team.

Commented [KC59]: Member 2: Focusing on monitoring vs only modeling data definitely opens the door for more accountability and quality assurance.

Additional Comments:

Member 1:

- Recent input- has asked for simplification and focus. We should make special efforts to not overcomplicate all of the efforts of the committee.
- As I have mentioned I believe it is very important to facilitate input- from the appointed, etc.. state members when the group requests input. The meetings do not always reflect this practice.

Member 4:

- I think this list is a great start. My main thought when reading it though is that this is a lot of objectives for a group that meets 12 times a year. I don't think we could conceivably meet all the objectives, so maybe it would behoove us to think about some sort of prioritization structure?

Member 5:

- Pillar: Implementation, #6 "Understand and evaluate ag-sector WIP progress" and Pillar: "Crediting and Verification." There are several objectives related to crediting BMPs. In my mind, a key issue that needs to be addressed is old BMP data being submitted for progress as if it were new implementation. One of the easiest ways to reach loading goals is to investigate and submit data sources from the past that have not yet been captured by NRCS or FSA or by state means or conservation districts. Each state has their own way of collecting this data.
 - If there is a significant reported increase in implementation in a single year (compared to the history), it all gets credited and there can be a significant reduction in loads for this implementation that 1) occurred over a long period (but there are no historic records) and 2) could be multiple counted with BMPs that have been submitted in the past. This is often explained as being a result of newly acquired data, not associated with additional recent spending for on-the-ground implementation because a particular program received additional funding that year. One resolution is, in part, "Leverage technology to enhance BMP verification", but this does not apply to many non-visual BMPs.

Interested Party 1:

- I encourage you to consider incorporating a vision for the group to help lead the Bay Program toward more place-based, participatory, stakeholder-engaged research and co-learning. One opportunity to advance this approach is by directly integrating crediting and verification with implementation, rather than treating them as separate pillars. This framing could better support practice adoption and environmental outcomes while aligning with producers' operational realities and goals.

- A growing body of socio-economic and decision-science research shows that approving or disapproving practices and relying on traditional education-based outreach have limited effectiveness in accelerating adoption or achieving restoration goals. In contrast, a more authentic, collaborative approach to adaptive management—one that centers relationships, local context, and shared learning—offers a more promising pathway towards increasing practice adoption while building ecological and social knowledge.

DRAFT