

Example Framework for PSC Priority Setting

[Proposed by EPA and shared with Implementation Team]

Identifying new PSC priorities – Through its role coordinating with Goal Team Chairs, the Program Support team [tentative org name] is responsible for working with Goal Team Chairs to identify new potential priorities for PSC direction. While Goal Team Chairs will be responsible for identifying specific priorities, the Program Support team is responsible for reviewing and vetting the content of the identified priorities to ensure they are structured in terms of quality and consistency for PSC review. Priority setting benefits the Partnership because it:

- **Aligns partners around shared strategic direction/initiatives**- Annual priority setting ensures federal agencies, states, and other partners are working toward the same highest-impact outcomes.
- **Focuses limited resources on the most needed outcomes**- By identifying a small set of top priorities, the PSC helps direct funding, staff time, and policy attention toward actions most likely to advance restoration goals.
- **Enables adaptive management** - Yearly priorities allow the partnership to respond to new science, emerging risks, and implementation challenges.
- **Clarifies expectations and accountability** - Clear priorities provide a reference point for workgroups, goal teams, and leadership to measure progress and report results.
- **Drives cross goal integration** - Overarching priorities encourage coordination across outcomes rather than siloed work.
- **Signals leadership intent internally and externally** - PSC priorities communicate what matters most to implementing partners, funders, Congress, and the public.

Priority criteria – To be elevated and accepted as a partnership priority, initiatives should generally be scoped with the following in mind.

1. Impact on Watershed Agreement outcome: The initiative will have a direct impact on the results of an outcome or target from the revised Watershed Agreement
2. Time-sensitive or emergent in nature: The priority initiative represents a significant barrier to Outcome attainment for multiple jurisdictions and requires focused collaborative effort.
3. Directed collaboration: Initiative requires enhanced collaboration amongst technical and implementation bodies and/or explicit agency from program leadership to take on the work.
4. Beyond annual deliverables: Unique from existing deliverables (e.g., annual monitoring or technical reports, such as the Chesapeake Bay Blue Crab Advisory Report)

Partnership mechanics – Priority setting will be conducted on an annual schedule and will invest in the following vertical and horizontal collaboration, within and between, Signatory partners and the Chesapeake Bay Program structure. Implementation of priorities are not required to be completed within an annual cycle, but should generally avoid implementation periods longer than 3 years.

1. Priority Introduction: PSC members introduce motions to identify a defined partnership priority for approval in November. Motions must be seconded and would generate an action for priority development [September PSC “Summer” Meeting]
2. Priority Development: Priorities are detailed with relevant workgroups, coordinated amongst Goal Team chairs and Support groups, and tracked by relevant PSC interests [September-October]
3. Priority Acceptance: PSC members seek consensus on a nominated a set of priorities for the forthcoming year. [November “Fall” PSC Meeting]

4. Priority Consent Directive - EC members seek consensus on the package of priorities for implementation by the Chesapeake Bay Program [December EC]
5. Priority Implementation - Implementation begins by Goal Team and Workgroups.
 - a. PSC receives an initial priority plan update at the first PSC meeting following the annual EC meeting. [January “Winter” PSC Meeting]
 - b. PSC receives priority updates at each PSC meeting (Spring, Summer, Fall).

Tracking existing PSC priorities – EPA’s CBPO is responsible for tracking PSC-identified priorities and coordinating with Partnership leads to track progress and oversee reporting to the PSC. EPA-CBPO is also responsible for managing a system or platform that enables full transparency to the Partnership so PSC reps and their designees can monitor on-going and completed priority actions in real time.

EXAMPLE