Wastewater Treatment Workgroup (WWTWG)

Thursday, June 25th, 2026
10:00 AM – 10:55 AM

Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.

Purpose: This is the monthly meeting of the Wastewater Treatment Workgroup (WWTWG). The focus of this meeting was a discussion on draft wastewater input assumptions for the Phase 7 E3 (Everything, by Everyone, Everywhere) Scenario and an update on Management Strategy development.

Minutes

I. Welcome and Announcements

Lead: Justin Carl, WWTWG Co-Chair
Justin welcomed WWTWG members and gave an overview of the meeting's agenda.

Decisions:

1. The WWTWG approved the May 2026 WWTWG Meeting Minutes

II. E3 Scenario Discussion

Lead: Justin Carl, WWTWG Co-Chair
Justin walked through a draft of wastewater input assumptions for the Phase 7 E3 Scenario based on workgroup discussion and feedback from the May WWTWG meeting. The group shared additional feedback and thoughts on a recommendation for a scenario base year.

Materials: Draft Phase 7 Wastewater E3 Inputs

Actions:

1. The draft E3 scenario wastewater inputs for Phase 7 will be updated to add additional rationale for some of the assumptions.
2. Approval of the E3 scenario wastewater inputs for Phase 7 will be sought at the July WWTWG meeting in order to present our recommendations to the Clean Water Goal Team at their August meeting.
3. If you have any additional comments on scenario base year choice, please share them with WWTWG leadership to compile a summary of our group's varied considerations and recommendations.

Discussion:

- Wastewater Inputs

- Auston Smith, EPA CBPO shared insights from other workgroup discussions. AgWG is trying to put together a robust expectation for what is "theoretically possible", and the 3 mg/L would fit their idea of that from the ag perspective.
- Petra Baldwin, WWTWG Staffer, shared comments submitted by email from Bel Martinez da Matta, MDE: For Septic E3 Input, we agree on updating the TN reduction to 75% based on the latest expert panel report. Incorporating this updated efficiency rate ensures the model reflects the most current scientific consensus for the E3 scenario projections. For Non-significant E3 Inputs, we believe the current inputs for non-significant facilities remain appropriate. Even assuming no cost limitations, expectations for those facilities should not be at the same level as those for significant facilities.
    - Dylan Burgevin, MDE (in chat): As Petra mentioned, Bel provided Maryland's comments by email.
- Petra shared comments submitted by email from Ivy Ozmon, HRPDC: I do not have recommendations for changing the E3 inputs. I would like to hear more from those operating non-significant facilities about whether the updated nutrient limits are attainable for that stakeholder group. Jamie raised some great points about the ENR/BNR process resilience of non-significant facilities during our last call, and I think that topic merits further discussion.
- Clifton Bell, Brown & Caldwell shared support for the 3 mg/L value for total nitrogen and 0.1 mg/L for total phosphorus. From a review they conducted, they found that what is reliably and widely achievable has not changed. There is always some room for some improvement in some facilities, but a lot of those facilities have special circumstances.
- Clifton also shared support for the values for non-significant facilities given the level of process control and staffing and susceptibility to perturbations that those plants experience. There's no reason to change those numbers.
- Dave Montali, WVDEP/TetraTech shared support for not changing the values for non-significant facilities. Those are not all publicly owned treatment plants, and they can go down to the individual home level. While some non-significant facilities may be able to have higher efficiencies, some can't even get to this number, so if we look at them all as an average this is a reasonable assumption.
- Clifton recommended expanding on the justification for why WWTWG is not recommending including exfiltration for the Phase 7 E3 scenario.

- Scenario Base Year
    - Auston summarized discussion on this topic from the June 22nd Clean Water Goal Team meeting. CWGT members were very mixed between preferences of 2010 vs. 2022. He highlighted that one concern from many jurisdictions was how growth is accounted for. In the current method, growth is spread out where maybe some jurisdictions that grew more would have less allocations from that added growth than some other jurisdictions that grew less. One suggestion proposed was to consider the growth in the "illogical results" during the Phase 7 model review, then that could be adjusted in some way afterwards. This could be a good compromise to the concerns with 2022.
        - Dave Montali shared that by using 2022, it violates the second principles of planning targets that those who contribute more have to do more. We could implement another process to adjust the growth, but it was unclear how it would happen. Why change the base year in the first place? Don't see an issue keeping it with 2010. Dave heard mixed opinions at the CWGT meeting – there was no clear winner.

        - Auston responded that given the CWGT mixed opinions and conversations at other workgroups, he doesn't expect any workgroup to be able to reach consensus on this. If that's the case for WWTWG, just having a summary of the varied considerations discussed at the workgroup would be helpful for the August presentation to the CWGT.
        - Clifton Bell asked for clarification on what Auston referred to as "illogical results".
        - Auston responded that "illogical results" is a term that was used in previous versions of the model to flag a flaw in the model that needed to be fixed. What was raised at the CWGT meeting was that if 2022 is chosen as base year and if when we run the model it shows more growth in some jurisdictions where that did not occur, then it could be flagged as a flaw in the 2027 Model Review to correct that.
        - Dave responded that he doesn't see this as a model thing – it's a way to do scenarios and targets. It is unclear how an adjustment could work. He noted that WV and NY have had special allocations in previous WIPs, so something similar could happen to adjust for this. But, again, he doesn't see a strong reason to change the base year.
        - Auston responded that the main reason he has heard for changing the base year to 2022 is to incorporate the latest land use categories and updated ag census figures.
        - Dave responded there's no doubt that the information that we have about everything is better now than it was in 2010, but that doesn't change the fact that that's the base year where we started.
        - George Onyullo, DC DOEE shared support for Dave's comments. He is supportive of the fact that we need to use new data, but if the new data that we keep talking about is creating problems that we don't know how to solve then there is no need to incorporate new data. We really need to look at the added value that the new data is giving us. If it is giving us more problems than solutions, then we better maintain status quo. We should summarize what those problematic areas are.
    - Petra shared comments submitted by email from Bel Martinez da Matta, MDE: We prefer to keep the scenario base year at 2010. Shifting the baseline forward risks losing the historical calibration and benchmark data established in previous model iterations. By maintaining 2010 as our anchor point, we ensure long-term trend consistency and allow for an accurate, apples-to-apples comparison when evaluating how newer scenarios diverge from older model runs.
    - Petra shared comments submitted by email from Ivy Ozmon, HRPDC: For the base year, the HRPDC supports using the most updated datasets to best reflect current conditions.

III. Management Strategy Update and Discussion

Lead: Petra Baldwin, WWTWG Staffer; Jeremy Hanson, WWTWG Coordinator

Petra shared a brief update on the process for developing the Clean Water Goal Team Management Strategy, which includes a section on the Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment Outcome. Jeremy shared initial thoughts on wastewater considerations for this, including challenges and opportunities for the WWTWG outlined for the CWGT via a worksheet.

Materials: Presentation, Management Strategy Worksheet

Actions:

1. Please share feedback on wastewater considerations for the Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment Outcome part of the CWGT Management Strategy to Jeremy (hansonj@chesapeake.org) and Petra (Baldwin.Petra@epa.gov).

Discussion:

- Dave Montali, WVDEP/TetraTech noted that the wastewater sector is in a much different position than other sectors, because our main goal is the wastewater treatment plants and they are regulated facilities. The comment about maintenance in the worksheet is fair, but there's not much for the WWTWG or the wastewater sector to do other than maintain compliance over the long term with established loads.
- George Onyullo, DC DOEE asked if comments on this can be shared by email. He noted DC has a vastly changing CSO space and they would like to get many views regarding what people would perceive as a challenge and to what degree those challenges could impact the management strategy.
    - Jeremy confirmed feedback can be shared in whatever form is easiest.

IV. Recap of Actions and Decisions

Lead: Petra Baldwin, WWTWG Staffer

V. Adjourn

Next Meeting: July 23rd, 2026 from 10am-12pm

Attendees:

- Justin Carl, AlexRenew (WWTWG Co-Chair)
- Petra Baldwin (WWTWG Staffer)
- Jeremy Hanson (WWTWG Coordinator)
- Dave Montali, WVDEP/Tetra Tech
- Dylan Burgevin, MDE
- George Onyullo, DC DOEE
- Kevin Bronson, DNREC
- George Mwangi, DNREC
- Cass Klingaman, NYS DEC
- Zach Steckler, PADEP
- Dana Hales, EPA
- Ed Cronin, Brown & Caldwell
- Clifton Bell, Brown & Caldwell
- Bob Buglass, WSSC
- Melissa Kret, VDH
- Auston Smith, EPA CBPO
- Joseph Delesantro, CBPO Contractor
- Jess Rigelman, CBPO Contractor
- Sarah Brzezinski, EPA CBPO
- Rebecca Ransom, USGS