

# **CBP Partnership Approach for Ensuring Full Accountability of Best Practices and Technologies Implemented**

## **Attachment D**

Briefing for CBP Partnership  
BMP Verification Review Panel

# BMP Verification

The CBP Partnership has defined verification as “the process through which agency partners ensure practices, treatments, and technologies resulting in reductions of nitrogen, phosphorus, and/or sediment pollutant loads are implemented and operating correctly.”

# Verification Requests

- Citizen Advisory Committee
  - Repeated requests for BMP verification
- Chesapeake Executive Order Strategy
  - USDA and EPA commitment to develop/implement mechanism for tracking/reporting 'voluntary conservation practices' by July 2012
- NRC's Ches Bay Independent Evaluation Report
  - Five science-based conclusions focused on 'accurate tracking of BMPs'
- Chesapeake Bay TMDL's Appendix S
  - EPA expectations for offset credit verification

# President's Chesapeake Bay Executive Order

- Develop a system of accountability for tracking and reporting conservation practices
  - Full accounting of conservation practices applied to the land
  - Ensuring practices are properly credited in the Bay model
  - USDA will uphold all Section 1619 privacy requirements
- By December 2011, USDA and EPA will work with state and local partners to expand existing tracking and reporting systems
  - Addressing conservation practices, BMPs and treatment technologies
  - Focus on local scales of implementation—counties, conservation districts and/or small watersheds.
- By July 2012, mechanisms for tracking and reporting of voluntary conservation practices and other best management practices installed on agricultural lands will be developed and implemented

# NRC Chesapeake Bay Evaluation

- Accurate tracking of BMPs is of paramount importance given reliance on data to estimate current and future nutrient and sediment loads to the Bay
- BMP accounting is inconsistent across the Bay jurisdictions—current accounting cannot on the whole be viewed as accurate
- Unable to determine the reliability and accuracy of the BMP data reported by the Bay jurisdictions
- A consolidated regional BMP program to account for voluntary practices and increase geo-referencing of BMPs needed to improve the accounting process
- Additional guidance on optimal extent of field verification of practices in relation to expected benefits would improve tracking and accounting of both cost-shared and voluntary practices

# Partnership Approach

- Build a Partnership-wide BMP Verification Program working up through CBP Partnership
  - Technical Workgroups → Goal Implementation Teams → Management Board → Principals' Staff Committee
- Address full array of practices across all sources
  - Agricultural lands, forest lands, wetlands, developed lands, on-site treatment systems, abandoned mine lands, wastewater dischargers, stream corridors, tidal shorelines
- Factor in innovative approaches taken by jurisdictions, local municipalities, districts

# Verification Framework

- BMP verification **principles**
  - Critical for approving jurisdictions' verification programs
- Source sector-specific verification **protocols**
  - Developed by workgroups, tailored to jurisdictions
  - Ag, forestry, stormwater, on-sites, WWTPs, streams, wetlands
- BMP verification **panel**
  - Recognized experts providing bigger picture perspective

# Other Key Elements

- Fully account for federal cost shared practices
- Accounting for non-cost shared practices
- Prevent double counting
- Commitment to clean-up of historic data
- Build in practice life spans