

Chesapeake Bay Program's BMP Verification Program Update

April 11, 2013 CBP Management Board Meeting

Progress Through the Partnership in the Past 419 Days

Since the February 16, 2012 Principals' Staff Committee meeting and their decision to proceed forward with development of a basinwide verification framework, the Partnership has accomplished a lot.

- ✓ Verification principles approved by PSC
- ✓ Verification protocols drafted and under review by the technical workgroups
 - Agriculture
 - Forestry
 - Stormwater
 - Wastewater
 - Stream restoration
 - Wetlands restoration
- ✓ Independent Verification Review Panel convened and actively providing feedback to the partnership
- ✓ Enhanced and new data sharing agreements to ensure full access to federal cost shared practice data being actively discussed with USDA and the states
- ✓ Dialogue underway on the states' call for expanded USDA data collection/reporting
- ✓ Discussions underway through the Watershed Technical Workgroup on how to best accomplish clean-ups of historical BMP data bases
- ✓ Solid draft jurisdiction-specific procedures for eliminating double counting
- ✓ Draft expectations for jurisdictional BMP verification documentation in existing QA plans

More Time Needed Prior to Final Decision-making on Framework

At its February 21 and March 13 meetings, after reviewing all the elements of the basinwide BMP verification framework, the BMP Verification Committee determined the Partnership needed more time to complete its work prior to actively seeking final approval of the framework. Specifically, the jurisdictions need more time to review the draft verification protocols once all six workgroups have complete their work on their respective sets of protocols.

The below proposed revised schedule does not include specific dates at this time to ensure there is time built in for the Verification Committee to respond to each round of review as the Committee moves its proposed verification framework up through the Partnership. The Committee requests a built-in buffer of "two or three months between receiving the Review Panel's feedback and presenting the recommendations to the PSC for final approval."

Proposed Revised Verification Framework Schedule

Late Spring: workgroups complete their work on their respective set of verification protocols

Summer: jurisdictions review of the workgroup's draft verification protocols

Early fall: Verification Review Panel meets to review all the elements of the basinwide verification framework, including the verification protocols

Fall: Goal Implementation Teams (Water Quality, Habitat) and then Management Board review all the elements of the basinwide verification framework and approve for final decisions by the Principals Staff Committee

Fall: briefings for all three advisory Committees on how the specific issues and concerns they have been raising over the past year have been resolved—Citizens (increased transparency), Local Government (barriers to verification), and Scientific and Technical (future evaluation process).

Early Winter: Principals' Staff Committee reviews and approves the basinwide verification framework

Chesapeake Bay Basinwide BMP Verification Framework

Here's the ten components of the basinwide framework:

- BMP Verification Principles
- BMP Verification Review Panel
- BMP Verification Protocols
- Ensuring full access to federal conservation practice data
- USDA agreement to enhance data collection and reporting of cost shared practices
- Jurisdiction-specific procedures for eliminating double counting
- Procedures for the clean-up of historical BMP databases
- Partnership process for evaluating and adopting future BMP verification protocols and procedures
- Jurisdictional BMP verification documentation expectations for their existing quality assurance plans
- Communications strategy

Verification Committee's Upcoming Priorities

To complete its work on all ten components, here's where the BMP Verification Committee will be focused in the coming months:

- Ensuring the Agricultural Workgroup has the guidance and input it needs to complete work on its verification protocols.
- Continuing the ongoing dialogue with USDA on ensuring full access to federal conservation practice data (e.g., 1619 data sharing agreements) and enhanced data collection and reporting.
- Ensuring the remaining workgroups complete work on development of their verification protocols, placing emphasis on verification of practices where there is no cost-share (agriculture, forestry) or regulatory (stormwater) framework present.
- Preparing for a two-day Review Panel meeting in early fall time frame.
- Continuing to actively engage the Partnership's three advisory committees.
- Ensuring the workgroups' recommended draft verification protocols are equitable across source sectors.
- Ensuring more robust jurisdictional review and buy-in over the course of the summer.
- Framing out the process and options for ramping up enhanced verification program implementation over time.
- Developing a process and procedures for partnership review, approval of verification protocols for future practices, treatments, and technologies.

DECISION REQUESTED: CBP Management Board's approval of the BMP Verification Committee proposed revised schedule leading up to presentation of the draft BMP verification framework to the Principals' Staff Committee for final review and approval.