

## Chesapeake Bay Program

DEP's Chesapeake Bay Program Office is tasked with coordination of activities to implement the Chesapeake Bay TMDL to restore water quality. Working with several partners and stakeholders, the program office has developed a Bay restoration strategy comprised of several short, mid and long-term recommendations, aimed at augmenting the approach to water quality improvements in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This strategy is a collaborative effort between DEP, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, along with other stakeholders in the design, development and implementation of restoration strategies.

There are six essential recommendations laid out in this strategy:

- Put high-impact, low-cost Best Management Practices (BMPs) on the ground, and quantify undocumented BMPs in watersheds impaired by agriculture or stormwater.
- Improve reporting, record keeping, and data systems to provide better and more accessible documentation.
- Address nutrient reduction by meeting EPA's goal of inspecting 10 percent of farms in the watershed, ensuring development and use of manure management and agricultural erosion and sediment control plans, and enforcement for non-compliance.
- Identify legislative, programmatic or regulatory changes to provide the additional tools and resources necessary to meet federal pollution reduction goals by 2025.
- Obtain additional resources for water quality improvement.
- Establish a Chesapeake Bay Office to coordinate the development, implementation and funding of the commonwealth's Chesapeake Bay efforts.

The strategy relies on a mix of technical and financial assistance for farmers, technology, expanded data gathering, improved program coordination and capacity, and – only when necessary – stronger enforcement and compliance measures.

In 2010, EPA established the [Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\)](#) to restore clean water in the Chesapeake Bay. The TMDL requires Pennsylvania to make specific reductions in nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment and reach those goals by 2025. Pennsylvania is also required to develop a series of three “Watershed Implementation Plans” (WIPs). These plans specify how Pennsylvania will accomplish these pollution reduction goals. Pennsylvania developed its [Phase 1 WIP](#) in 2010, its [Phase 2 WIP](#) in 2012 and in August 2019, submitted its [Phase 3 WIP](#) to EPA. For more detailed information on EPA's TMDL, click [here](#).

Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Office was established within DEP in early 2016 to assure the proper development, implementation and coordination of the Commonwealth's efforts for restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and administering DEP's Chesapeake Bay Program grants.

### Phase 3 WIP Efforts

Pennsylvania's Phase 3 WIP is the product of successful collaboration and engagement between government agencies, state legislators, county and local government officials, industry associations, NGOs, and citizens. This comprehensive effort also resulted in county-based Action Plans for clean water that are realistic and implementable to local communities.

As part of the Phase 3 WIP planning process, Pennsylvania invited four of the 43 counties in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to participate in a pilot project to develop local CAPs. Lancaster and York counties began in spring 2018, and Adams and Franklin counties began in fall 2018. The pilot counties have concluded plan development and are currently focusing efforts on implementation. There are four remaining Tier 2 counties to be completed. These counties will be completed first, as the eight Pilot and Tier 2 counties collectively account for 54% of Pennsylvania's nitrogen and 42% of Pennsylvania's phosphorus loads. The remaining 35 Tier 3 and Tier 4 counties will complete their plans after the Tier 2 counties complete plan development. These 35 counties collectively account for the remaining 46% of Pennsylvania's nitrogen and 58% of Pennsylvania's phosphorus goals.

To more fully account for all local water quality activities, benefits, improvements, and planned activities, EPA and its state partners added a new component to the Phase 3 WIP process - a local, bottom-up approach focusing on local partnerships. Local engagement throughout the planning and implementation phases is a critical component of a successful Phase 3 WIP. Pennsylvania's nitrogen and phosphorus reduction targets are broken down into local planning goals for each county. Added together (reductions from all 43 counties), these local pollution reductions will help Pennsylvania reach its Chesapeake Bay clean water targets.

Pennsylvania is making progress toward its clean water goals:

- Twenty-five years before the TMDL, in 1985, the Susquehanna River delivered nearly 123 million pounds of nitrogen and just over six million pounds of phosphorus to the Bay – annually!
- By 2017, seven years into the TMDL commitment, Pennsylvania's efforts have resulted in the annual reduction of over 15 million pounds of nitrogen and nearly 2.3 million pounds of phosphorus.

Please refer to Pennsylvania's [Phase 3 WIP](#) for more information on coordination efforts, action steps and resources Pennsylvania is counting on to achieve its pollution reduction goals by 2025.