



**CHESAPEAKE BAY
FOUNDATION**
Saving a National Treasure

District of Columbia Milestones

2014-15 INTERIM PROGRESS



**Choose
Clean
Water**
COALITION

In 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), using its authority under the Clean Water Act, established science-based limits for nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment for the Chesapeake Bay watershed at levels needed to restore the Bay and its tidal rivers to health. To achieve these limits, the six Bay watershed states and the District of Columbia developed, and are implementing, state-specific clean-up plans, with the goal of having practices and programs in place to achieve 60 percent of the needed pollution reductions by 2017, and 100 percent by 2025. In addition, the Bay jurisdictions have adopted milestones that describe the practices and programs they commit to implement every two years on the path to achieve the pollution limits. These two-year milestones are critical components to restoration efforts because they provide the mechanism to hold government accountable for short-term progress toward long-term pollution-reduction goals. This year is the halfway point for the 2014-2015 milestones.

For this report, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) and the Choose Clean Water Coalition (CCWC) have taken a closer look at some of the most important pollution-reduction practices to determine whether the District of Columbia's progress with regard to these practices is sufficient to allow the District to achieve its 2014-2015 milestone commitments and, more importantly, to achieve 60 percent implementation by 2017. Specifically, we have evaluated implementation progress for four practices: **impervious surface reduction**, **urban tree planting**, **urban stream restoration**, and **stormwater infiltration practices**. Practices were deemed "on track", "slightly off track", or "off track" to meet 2017 goals.

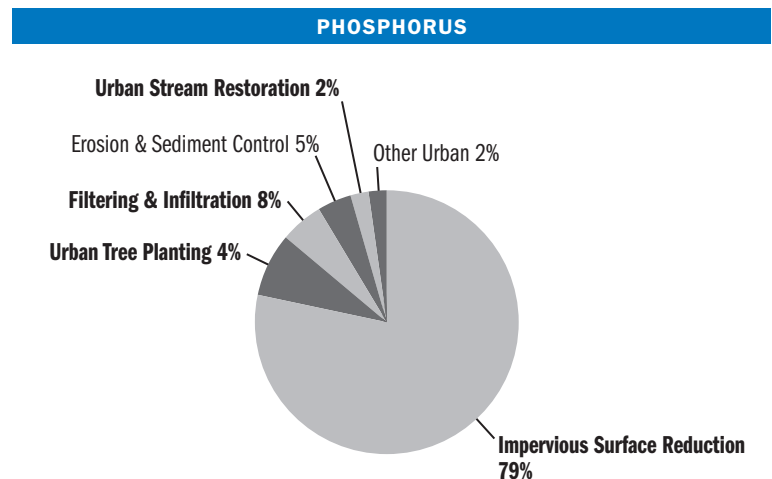
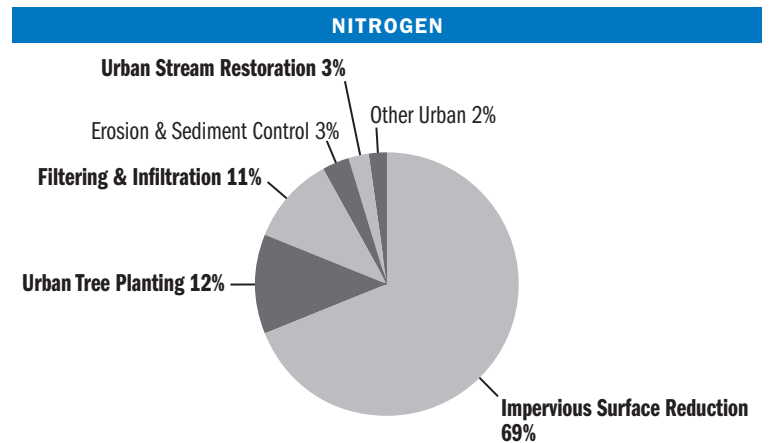
EPA recently evaluated the District of Columbia's progress to date, their findings are summarized below. While EPA's report indicates the District is mostly on track, our analysis of some of the most important practices suggests more will need to be done to meet 2017 goals.

SOURCE	NITROGEN	PHOSPHORUS	SEDIMENT
URBAN RUNOFF	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET
WASTEWATER & CSO	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET
ALL SOURCES	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET	ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET

- ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET
- WITHIN 10% OF BEING ON TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET
- MORE THAN 10% OFF TRACK FOR 2017 TARGET

The District of Columbia's Relative Nutrient Load Reduction

The pie charts below show the relative importance of the various best management practices in terms of pollution reductions needed by 2025. That is, the bigger the slice of pie, the more important the practice is in terms of achieving the District of Columbia's pollution-reduction goals for nitrogen and phosphorus.



BOLD = EVALUATED PRACTICES

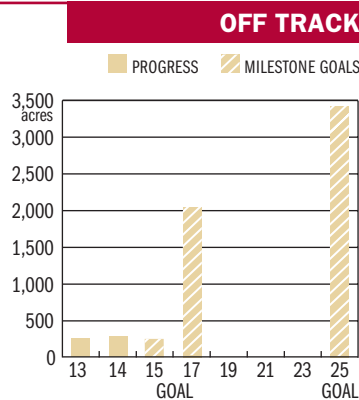
Source: www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/tmdl/ChesapeakeBay/RestorationUnderway.html
 Chart based on data from the Chesapeake Bay Program's 2014 Reducing Pollution Indicator:
www.chesapeakebay.net/indicators/indicator/reducing_nitrogen_pollution

* 'Other urban' includes practices such as wetlands, wet and dry ponds, and street sweeping.
 Source: www.chesapeakebay.net/.../sweeney_bmp-source_wiprelativeinfluence_041113.pdf

Assessment of the District of Columbia's Progress on Selected Pollution-Reduction Practices

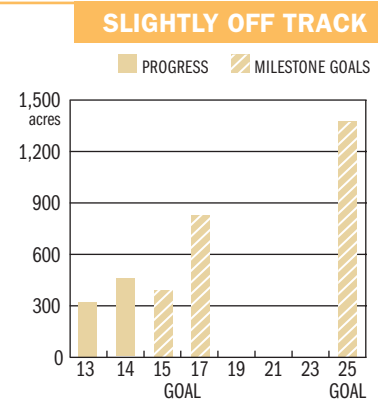
Impervious Surface Reduction

The District's Watershed Implementation Plan relies heavily on this practice to promote infiltration of stormwater runoff to curtail pollutant discharges. This practice is responsible for 79 percent, 69 percent, and 68 percent of the District's phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediment reductions respectively. With 290 acres treated through 2014, D.C. has surpassed its 2015 milestone, but is far off pace of its targets of 2,056 acres by 2017 and 3,427 acres by 2025. Incentive programs will help retrofit more impervious surface area, but larger scale projects will be required for the significant improvement needed to get D.C. where it needs to be for this practice.



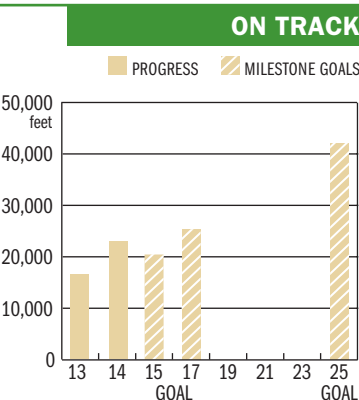
Urban Tree Planting

The 2015 milestone to plant 382 acres of trees has been met and surpassed. However, D.C.'s plans to begin accounting for tree removal and report a "net" increase in trees in the future, which may result in the District falling short of its 2017 targets. Still, with high planting rates set to continue and the fact that between 2017 and 2025 fewer acres of new trees are needed per year to reach the final target, D.C. is currently on track to meet the 2025 target. Sustaining the current pace of planting, however, will be a challenge as development accelerates to accommodate D.C.'s increasing population.



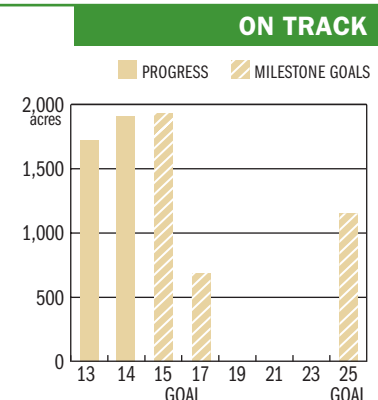
Urban Stream Restoration

Outstanding efforts by the District of Columbia have resulted in almost 23,000 linear feet of restored streams to date. D.C. has surpassed its 2015 milestone, achieved 88 percent of its 2017 target, and is nearly half way to its 2025 target. The restoration of Broad Branch and Linnean Park in 2014 in the Rock Creek watershed is of particular significance for the special methods used and its relationship to upstream runoff control practices. Broad Branch, a portion of which was piped and buried in 1937, is the first stream of its size to be daylighted (brought back above ground) in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.



Stormwater Infiltration Practices*

The District has already met the 2017 and 2025 targets (originally established in its 2011 Bay clean-up plan) for these popular and best known practices, highlighting that more aggressive goals are warranted. The District did set a new 2015 milestone goal that is higher than the original long-term targets and is now just 12 percent away from achieving it. With D.C. performing so well in meeting its goals for filtering and infiltration practices that capture, store, and treat polluted runoff in place, we urge it to raise its 2017 and 2025 targets and for other jurisdictions to learn from its performance strategies.



* This category includes infiltration and filtering practices, bioretention, and bioswale.

Conclusions

The District of Columbia is making good progress toward its 2017 goals, with targets for two of the four practices selected for evaluation on track and a third almost on track. The 2015 milestones for three of the four practices have already been met. Strong efforts by D.C. continue to result in improvements to its waterways and deserve recognition. The District had the most green roof installations in North America at 1.2 million square feet in 2014. Its stream restoration projects are also receiving attention for excellence. The daylighting of Broad Branch and stream restoration in Linnean Park won the Stream Restoration category for the 2015 Best Urban BMP in the Bay Award (BUBBA).

While solid progress is being made, more is needed to reach 2017 and 2025 targets. Substantial increases are needed in impervious surface reductions, and urban tree planting must be sustained. The additional planning, funding, and coordination anticipated in its newly proposed Consolidated TMDL (Total Maximum Daily

Load) Implementation Plan warrants scrutiny to ensure it does accelerate impervious surface reduction, the highest impact practice to decrease sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen loadings. DC Water is well on track to meet 2018 deadlines to substantially reduce sewage overflows to D.C. waterways as it is also petitioning the court to replace some planned underground storage capacity with surface green infrastructure, but is asking to delay system completion from 2025 to 2032.

First-year Mayor Muriel Bowser has committed to achieving the goals of the Sustainable DC Plan which complement Bay clean-up goals. These and other commitments from District Department of the Environment Director Tommy Wells are encouraging. The finish line is definitely in sight and the political will seems to be there, but further aggressive project implementation and action from D.C. officials is needed to fully achieve healthy waters.

