



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION  
*Saving a National Treasure*

# Pennsylvania Milestones

## 2012-13 INTERIM PROGRESS



Choose  
Clean  
Water  
COALITION

### AT A GLANCE



#### Agriculture

- 👎 Forest Buffers
- 👎 Conservation Tillage
- 👎 Nutrient Application Management
- 👍 Conservation Plans
- 👍 Barnyard Runoff Control



#### Urban/Suburban

- 👎 Urban Tree Canopy
- 👍 Modern Stormwater Infiltration Practices



#### Wastewater/Septic

- 👎 Wastewater Treatment Plants

See the chart on the back of this sheet for more information.

For more detailed information on all of Pennsylvania's milestone goals, go to: [www.epa.gov/reg3wqpdt/mtdl/ChesapeakeBay/EnsuringResults.html](http://www.epa.gov/reg3wqpdt/mtdl/ChesapeakeBay/EnsuringResults.html).

### Pennsylvania's Plan for Clean Water: Are They Making Progress?

There are signs that the Chesapeake Bay and our local rivers and streams are starting to recover. Underwater grasses and oysters have expanded in some areas, and there are reproducing trout populations in Lititz Run and other Pennsylvania streams—due, in part, to pollution-reduction efforts. But, the system is still dangerously out of balance. We must continue our efforts to address the causes: nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution from a variety of sources including animal waste and fertilizer, runoff from urban and suburban development, wastewater treatment plants, and septic systems. In 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Bay jurisdictions established science-based limits for these pollutants and state-specific plans to achieve them, together known as the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint. EPA and the states also committed to implement actions to achieve 60 percent of the needed pollution reductions by 2017 and 100 percent by 2025.

To ensure that restoration efforts remain on track to achieve these longer-term goals, the states and the District of Columbia have adopted two-year milestones that describe the practices and programs they commit to implement. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Choose Clean Water Coalition are collaborating to evaluate and publicize milestone progress because accountability is critical to success. Our first report, issued last year, evaluated progress toward achieving the first set of milestones that expired in 2011. This year we are evaluating the interim progress toward achieving the 2012-13 milestone commitments. Progress will be deemed satisfactory if, for the chosen practices, implementation relative to the goal is at least 50 percent.

### Milestone Selection

We selected a subset of implemented practices within three pollution source categories—agricultural runoff, urban/suburban sources, and wastewater treatment—based on their potential to provide substantial nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution reductions and offer important lessons for implementation moving forward. Data were provided by EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program Office.

### Verification and Transparency

The Bay restoration partners currently are developing tools for verifying implemented practices reported as part of progress toward Blueprint goals. This effort absolutely is needed. Our organizations continue to find evidence that calls into question the quality of the reported data. The public must have greater transparency of data sources, assurance that expired practices are no longer counted, and evidence that on-the-ground practices are actually verified. Verification of existing practices and a continued commitment to implementation are keys to success.

### Local Level Accountability

To date, milestone commitments have been tracked only at the state level. Our organizations strongly believe that the 2014-15 milestones must be established at least at the basin level and ideally reported at the local (e.g., county) level. The states requested input from local partners on their clean-up plans so that they would better understand their role in the restoration process. Success will not happen without the knowledge of what is needed and what is being accomplished in our local communities to address both restoration of the Bay and our streams and rivers.

## Assessment of Pennsylvania's Progress on Selected Pollution-Reduction Targets for the 2012-13 Interim

| <b>AGRICULTURE</b>  |                   |                              |                                 |   |
|---|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
|   | 2013 TOTAL TARGET | 1 YEAR PROGRESS/ 2 YEAR GOAL | % OF GOAL ACHIEVED <sup>1</sup> | LESSONS LEARNED   |
| <b>Forest Buffers</b><br>acres  | 74,683            | 948/<br>5,503                | 17%                             | Pennsylvania exceeded their 2011 milestone goal, but must increase the pace to meet the 2013 goal.  |
| <b>Conservation Tillage</b><br>acres  | 694,546           | -111,546/<br>60,936          | -183%                           | A reported reduction from 2011 indicates the need for better tracking and verification of this practice.  |
| <b>Nutrient Application Management</b> acres  | 1,450,720         | 13,103/<br>62,574            | 21%                             | Because this is a regulatory requirement for many farms, failure to be on track for this goal is of special concern.  |
| <b>Conservation Plans</b><br>acres  | 1,306,620         | -14,890/<br>-256,359         | 100%                            | Conservation plans are a key component of Pennsylvania's clean-up plan, and are required on all farms. Currently there is no way to accurately determine rates of implementation.                       |
| <b>Barnyard Runoff Control</b><br>acres   | 664               | 363/<br>256                  | 142%                            | Success reflects significant efforts made to promote this practice.   |
| <b>URBAN/SUBURBAN</b>   |                   |                              |                                 |   |
|   | 2013 TOTAL TARGET | 1 YEAR PROGRESS/ 2 YEAR GOAL | % OF GOAL ACHIEVED <sup>1</sup> | LESSONS LEARNED   |
| <b>Urban Tree Canopy</b><br>acres   | 100               | 0/<br>100                    | 0%                              | Anecdotal information and activities imply higher rates of tree planting and potentially inadequate reporting. Net change, however, cannot be determined because urban tree canopy loss is not tracked. |
| <b>Modern Stormwater Infiltration Practices</b><br>acres                              | 86,975            | 5,279/<br>3,822              | 138%                            | We have concerns about the consistency of the tracking process.   |
| <b>WASTEWATER/SEPTIC</b>  |                   |                              |                                 |   |
|   | 2013 TOTAL TARGET | 1 YEAR PROGRESS/ 2 YEAR GOAL | % OF GOAL ACHIEVED <sup>1</sup> | LESSONS LEARNED   |
| <b>Wastewater Treatment Plants</b> # of permits issued meeting Blueprint requirements | 146 <sup>2</sup>  | 42/<br>96                    | 44%                             | Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection needs to accelerate the issuance of permits.  |

1: Assessed by dividing the incremental progress from 2011 to 2012 by the incremental progress they committed to achieve between 2011 and 2013. If the number is negative, it means that implementation in 2012 was less than in 2011.

2: Based on EPA's recent assessment of progress. Pennsylvania's original goal was 135. [www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/pdf/pdf\\_chesbay/InterimAssessments/PA%20Interim%20Assessment%202012%202013%20Milestones%20and%20WIP%20progress.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/pdf/pdf_chesbay/InterimAssessments/PA%20Interim%20Assessment%202012%202013%20Milestones%20and%20WIP%20progress.pdf)



On track



Not on track

### Conclusion

Pennsylvania is on track to achieve three of the eight practices we evaluated. However, we have concerns regarding the reported level of implementation. Pennsylvania exceeded its 2011 milestone goal for forested buffers; however, they are not on track to meet their 2013 goal and will have a significant challenge to meet their 2025 goal of 154,160 acres. Novel approaches, such as linking forested buffer implementation to cost-share for other conservation programs, will be needed to reach this goal. Conservation and manure management plans are the cornerstone of the agricultural strategy that Pennsylvania included in its Watershed Implementation Plan. And, although Pennsylvania adopted a stronger compliance policy in 2012 and added a few additional staff, more resources are needed to ensure that the approximately 40,000 farms across the watershed have, and are implementing, these plans.



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