



Delaware Milestones

2012-13 INTERIM PROGRESS



AT A GLANCE



Agriculture

- Nutrient Application Management
- Grass Buffers
- Wetland Restoration
- Cover Crops



Urban/Suburban

- Traditional Stormwater Ponds
- Modern Stormwater Infiltration Practices



Wastewater/Septic

- Septic System Hook Ups
- Wastewater Treatment Plants

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

For more detailed information on all of Delaware's milestone goals, go to: www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/tmdl/ChesapeakeBay/EnsuringResults.html.

Delaware'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 the 2012 oxygen-deprived deadzone was the smallest in decades—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 Delaware's Progress on Selected Pollution-Reduction Targets for the 2012-13 Interim

 AGRICULTURE	2013 TOTAL TARGET	1 YEAR PROGRESS/ 2 YEAR GOAL	% OF GOAL ACHIEVED ¹	LESSONS LEARNED
Nutrient Application Management acres	197,553	-1,122/ 1,398	-80% 	Data collecting, tracking, and reporting lack consistency. The state hopes to launch a centralized database by 2013.
Grass Buffers acres	1659	31/ 916	3.4% 	Although anecdotal information suggests higher rates of implementation, data either have not been reported or tracked in order to verify.
Wetland Restoration acres	1,145	2,106/ 557	378% 	Delaware exceeded the goal based on the Natural Resources Conservation Service's approved definition of restoration that includes phragmites spraying. Numbers may change if the definition is modified.
Cover Crops acres/year (includes both commodity and traditional)	36,809	49,830/ 36,809 (1 year goal)	135% ² 	Increased outreach efforts on the part of the state as well as increased cost-share funding has allowed Delaware to exceed goals before the 2013 milestone.
 URBAN/ SUBURBAN	2013 TOTAL TARGET	1 YEAR PROGRESS/ 2 YEAR GOAL	% OF GOAL ACHIEVED ¹	LESSONS LEARNED
Stormwater Traditional Ponds acres	7,805	1,070/ 37	2,890% 	The economy has increased the conversion of land to development, thus increasing the stormwater BMPs needed. Also, the state has invested resources and outreach efforts in green infrastructure projects.
Modern Stormwater Infiltration Practices acres	1,479	211/ 70	300% 	Additional construction and focus on green infrastructure has allowed Delaware to exceed its 2013 milestone goal.
 WASTEWATER/ SEPTIC	2013 TOTAL TARGET	1 YEAR PROGRESS/ 2 YEAR GOAL	% OF GOAL ACHIEVED ¹	LESSONS LEARNED
Septic System Hook Ups to Sewer # of systems	477	4/ 318	1% 	New statewide septic system regulations have been promulgated and will come into effect late 2013 and should increase progress.
Wastewater Treatment Plants # of permits meeting Blueprint requirements	2 (50% of plants)	0/ 2	0% 	Implementation of new wastewater and spray-irrigation regulations should allow the state to meet future milestone goals for the number of permits consistent with the Blueprint.

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.  On track  Not on track

2: Cover crop process assessed by dividing 2012 implementation by 2013 goal.

Conclusion

Delaware is on track to achieve four of the eight practices evaluated. They have made significant efforts to target both funding and outreach resources to stormwater and agricultural practices. However, there is still work to be done in order to address septic, wastewater, and overall nutrient-reduction milestones. Concerted efforts to create a centralized database will help Delaware increase their data-tracking capabilities and verification processes to meet or exceed 2017 goals. Additionally, implementation of new statewide on-site wastewater and stormwater regulations will address the state's current inability to meet 2013 goals. Overall, Delaware has made an effort to reach their milestones, and we will work to ensure they continue to identify and address deficiencies.



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