



EPA Assessment of Federal Agencies' 2012-2013 Water Quality Progress and WIP Support and 2014-2015 Milestone Commitments to Reduce Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment



Overview

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is providing an assessment of the progress made by federal agencies toward meeting 2012-2013 water quality milestones set forth under the *Chesapeake Bay Executive Order 13508 (EO) Strategy*, as well as activities to help jurisdictions meet their milestones and Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) commitments. This assessment also provides an overview of 2014-2015 federal milestone commitments and ideas for future improvements to federal agency coordination with the jurisdictions.

Federal Facilities in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

The Clean Water Act Section 117(f), directs federal agencies that own or operate a facility within the Chesapeake Bay watershed to participate in restoration programs. Additionally, the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (Bay TMDL) and the EO Strategy direct federal agencies to participate in pollution reduction programs to achieve the goal of a restored Chesapeake Bay. In 2011, EPA issued the *Guide for Federal Lands and Facilities' Role in Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictions' Phase II Watershed Implementation Plans*, describing expectations for coordination with jurisdictions and participation in WIP implementation and the *Guide for Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Two-year Milestones*, describing expectations for development of water quality milestones and coordination with jurisdictions on milestones for individual federal facilities.

Progress made during the Phase II WIP development process to engage the Bay jurisdictions and federal agencies continues; however more interaction and coordination is needed.

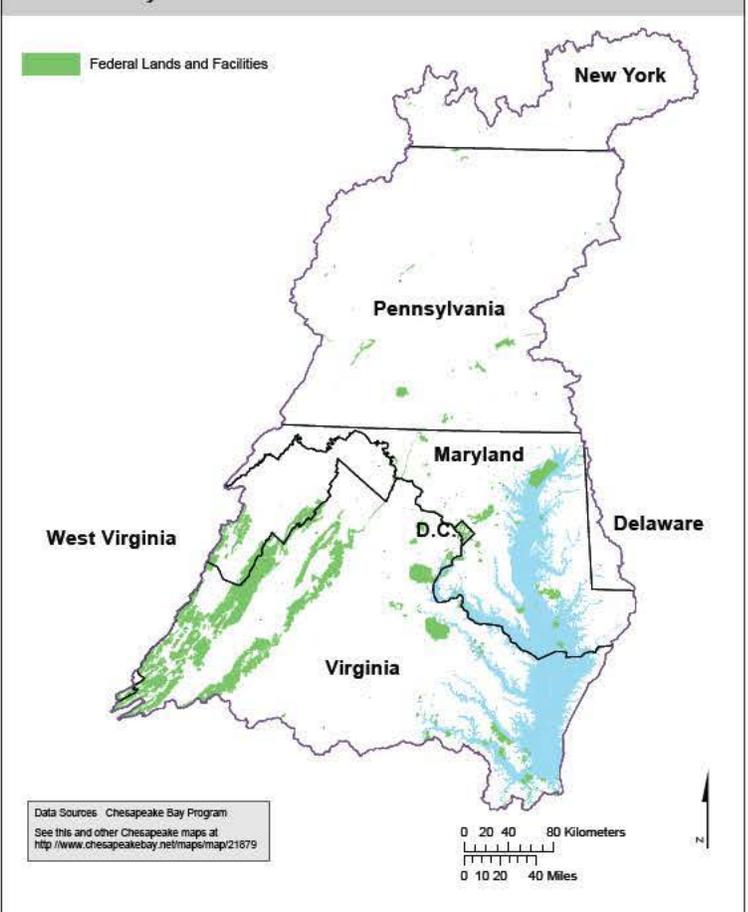
2012-2013 Water Quality Progress and WIP Support and 2014-2015 Milestone Review

The EPA review of federal agencies' 2012-2013 Water Quality Progress, support of Bay jurisdictions Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) and 2014-2015 Milestone commitments outlines active federal agency participation in the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and the advancement of shared goals and outcomes. Federal agencies remain committed to working with Bay jurisdictions, but recognize improvements can be made in coordination and on the ground implementation.

Strengths

- EPA manages the Chesapeake Bay TMDL accountability framework, including working with the Bay jurisdictions on progress reports related to 2012-2013 milestones and plans for the 2014-2015 milestone period
- EPA worked with federal agencies to develop the planning tool Bay Facility Assessment Scenario Tool (BayFAST) to allow federal agencies to estimate current loads from individual facilities and pollutant reductions from various BMP scenarios

Federal Lands and Facilities in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed



Strengths (continued)

- Integrated some federal facility progress data into Bay jurisdictions' 2013 progress submissions (NPS, GSA, DoD)
- DoD continued work with Bay jurisdictions as they revise and implement revisions to stormwater permits
- DoD conducted stormwater assessments at many installations in the Bay watershed to identify appropriate BMPs to reduce pollutant loadings
- NPS, FWS, NASA, GSA, and DoD considered the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) standard across a total of approximately 174 construction projects in the watershed
- EPA completed an analysis of wastewater data for the 9 municipal and 2 industrial significant federal agency wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) in the Bay watershed
- Through the Clean Air Act, EPA further reduced atmospheric nitrogen deposition by 2.5 million pounds between 2009-2013
- USDA completed stream restoration at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center expected to reduce sediment inflow by 11 million pounds over the life of the three biofiltration areas built near dairy and swine facilities
- USDA National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) released report showing voluntary conservation efforts on cultivated croplands is working in the Chesapeake Bay watershed
- USGS will assess progress made in the showcase watersheds including information on water quality conditions and changes
- EPA will conduct animal feeding operation (AFO) reviews in 2 jurisdictions, 6 AFO/CAFO program assessments, and 2 assessments of CAFO permits and associated Nutrient Management Plans
- EPA will provide funding to support expert BMP panels to develop and/or update effectiveness estimates for agricultural practices
- FWS, USGS and EPA issued a joint toxics report on the extent and severity of toxic contaminants in the watershed

Shortfalls

- EPA deferred revisions to the national stormwater rule; an alternative course of action to develop proposals to strengthen the stormwater program in 2014-2015 was determined
- The DoD BMP Operations and Maintenance Policy was deferred to 2014-2015 to ensure the policy is focused on the results of the BMP assessments being completed

Issues to Address

- Develop pollution reduction plans (PRPs) based on results of the DoD stormwater opportunity assessments and stormwater improvement plans to support Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland permits and WIPs
- Continue upgrades to two significant WWTPs operated by DoD to achieve target effluent concentrations
- EPA proactively work with Bay jurisdictions to improve communication with federal facilities and their data collection methods for 2014 progress and beyond
- While there was some BMP progress reporting by federal facilities in 2012-2013, EPA expects this to improve, particularly with the availability of BayFAST in 2014

Federal Actions and Assistance

Federal activities have the potential to have significant environmental outcomes, require significant resources, or directly support the jurisdictions in meeting Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) commitments. Federal agencies have a responsibility to ensure BMPs are properly installed, maintained, tracked and reported, which the new BayFAST tool will help facilitate.

The Chesapeake Bay Program's Federal Facilities Team will continue to provide a forum for federal agency environmental coordinators to communicate with EPA, each other and the Bay jurisdictions to achieve clarity of TMDL-related expectations and find the most efficient way to manage the collection and provision of needed information.

For full details of EPA's assessment of Federal Agencies' 2012-2013 water quality progress and WIP support and 2014-2015 milestone commitments, please see the [Federal Full Evaluation Report](#).