



## COG WATER RESOURCES PROGRAM UPDATES

### CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

(AS OF 11/10/16)

Summary of key CBP activities that COG staff are monitoring or actively involved in that have critical impacts or potential implications for COG's members & the RWQM Work Program.

Bay TMDL – Overall Program	COG Contact
<p><b><u>Chesapeake Bay Program Mid-Point Assessment</u></b></p> <p>The year 2016 will be the final year of preparation of the tools the Bay Program will use in its mid-point assessment of progress under the Bay TMDL and the development of the third iteration of watershed implementation plans (Phase 3 WIPs) by the Bay states and the District of Columbia. The plans are expected to provide more detail on how the Bay partner jurisdictions will achieve by 2025 the nutrient and sediment reductions deemed necessary to eventually meet water quality standards in the Bay.</p> <p>Currently the focus is on summarizing all of the changes to the various models as well as changes to the input data, and developing an overall timeline for the review process of the Phase 6 Watershed Model. COG staff is a member of the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) and the WQGIT Phase 6 Model Review Strategy Team to help ensure that the review process includes adequate time for local reviews and input.</p> <p><b>An abbreviated list of key decisions and timing include:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Susquehanna Watershed/Conowingo Dam Load Allocations</li> <li>2. Climate Change Implications</li> <li>3. Phase III WIP Planning Targets &amp; Local Area Planning Goals</li> </ol> <p>All of which will be coming before the Principals' Staff Committee on December 13, 2016.</p> <p><b>A more complete description of these issues and their implications for the COG region will be provided as part of the Nov. 18 CBPC meeting.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Overall Program Effort</u></b></p> <p>Tanya Spano (202) 962-3776 <a href="mailto:tspano@mwkog.org">tspano@mwkog.org</a></p> <p>Heidi Bonnaffon (202) 962-3216 <a href="mailto:hbonnaffon@mwkog.org">hbonnaffon@mwkog.org</a></p>
<p><b style="background-color: #f4a460;">Watershed Model – Activities and Issues</b></p> <p><b><u>Land Use</u></b></p> <p>The Bay Program is incorporating both local land use information and data from high resolution imagery into its updated land use data layer for the Phase 6 watershed model currently under development. Local governments will have the opportunity to review and comment on the updated land use starting in November 2016. However, delays in processing data from high resolution imagery have posed challenges for the Bay Program to maintain its schedule for completing the Phase 6 Watershed Model. COG staff is working with its local government members to ensure the accuracy of local land use data, and to advocate for adequate time for local government staff to review land use data for the model.</p> <p><b><u>Model Inputs</u></b></p> <p>COG and NVRC staff are continuing to monitor the data that the states supply to the Bay Program on wastewater discharges, nutrient pollution from septic systems, biosolids and fertilizer application, and stormwater BMP implementation. This data, which the Bay Program estimates back in time (1985) as well as in the present, is the key component of measuring progress toward</p>	<p><b style="background-color: #f4a460;">COG Contact</b></p> <p><b><u>Overall Program Effort</u></b></p> <p>Tanya Spano (202) 962-3776 <a href="mailto:tspano@mwkog.org">tspano@mwkog.org</a></p> <p><b><u>Modeling/Landuse Issues</u></b></p> <p>Karl Berger (202) 962-3350 <a href="mailto:kberger@mwkog.org">kberger@mwkog.org</a></p>

meeting the TMDL goals. COG staff will continue to work with COG’s members to ensure that this data is accurate and assumptions are scientifically sound.

**COG staff are also leading efforts to ensure that the data and technical model assumptions related to land application of biosolids are accurate Bay-wide; and coordinating efforts to ensure that CSO, septic, and wastewater data is accurate for the COG region.** COG staff have helped to organize a task force of biosolids experts to help inform these issues.

**Load Estimates / Target Loads**

The Bay Program has established a Local Area Targets Task Force – which will address the extent to which Bay Program model output can/should be used for establishing Local Area Targets under the Phase 3 WIPs. **COG staff endorsed Norm Goulet of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission as a local representative on the Task Force, on which he now serves.**

**Water Quality Sediment Transport Model & Others - Activities & Issues**

**Conowingo Dam Updates**

The Bay Program and other parties are updating the scientific understanding of the changing dynamics of nutrient and sediment flows through the three reservoirs on the lower Susquehanna River and the impact of those changes on the attainment of the TMDL’s water quality goals. The update is likely to result in a major policy decision regarding who has the responsibility for additional nutrient and sediment reductions beyond those currently required by the TMDL – which could have clear policy implications for COG’s members. COG staff will continue to monitor this issue and seek CBPC input on any regional policy positions to be taken. This issue is being determined now and it is likely a final decision will be made at the Bay Program’s Principals Staff Committee meeting in December.

**Conowingo Dam News**

An agreement reached between Exelon and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Exelon has agreed to improve two passages for shad, herring and migratory species. To read the full article:

[http://www.bayjournal.com/article/deal\\_reached\\_on\\_fish\\_eel\\_passage\\_at\\_conowingo\\_dam](http://www.bayjournal.com/article/deal_reached_on_fish_eel_passage_at_conowingo_dam)

On July 7<sup>th</sup> Governor Hogan announced he is going to form a multi-agency work group and release a Request for Information to solicit private sector solutions, including dredging, to address the nutrients and sediment influx from the Conowingo Dam and Susquehanna River, See the press release and MACo link below for more information.

<http://governor.maryland.gov/2016/07/07/governor-larry-hogan-holds-first-conowingo-dam-summit/>

<https://conduitstreet.mdcounties.org/2016/07/08/conowingo-work-group-to-weigh-options-ahead/>

Numerous CBPC members and staff toured the Conowingo Dam during two tour opportunities on September 21 and November 2. An Excelon PowerPoint is available here.

**Attainment Assessment**

The Bay Program uses a complex combination of monitoring and modeling information to determine what constitutes attainment of water quality goals under the TMDL. COG staff continues to track changes in the attainment methodology to ensure that it maintains equity among all the parties involved in the restoration effort. COG staff will evaluate options for conducting an independent scientific evaluation of this attainment approach.

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**Air Model**

Deposition of various forms of airborne nitrogen emitted by vehicles, power plants and other sources onto the land and water surfaces of the Bay watershed is one of the major sources of nitrogen to the Bay. The Bay Program is updating its models for estimating these inputs, which COG water program staff will continue to track in conjunction with COG's air program staff.

**Climate Change**

The Bay Program has begun to incorporate estimates of future changes in temperature, rainfall and other factors likely to result from climate change into its modeling framework. COG staff will continue to track how these changes could affect the attainment of water quality goals under the TMDL. This issue is being determined now and it is likely a final decision on how to handle climate change impacts under the Bay TMDL will be made at the Bay Program's Principals Staff Committee meeting in December.

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