



Maryland's Draft Phase III WIP FAQ

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This document compiles a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) regarding the development of Maryland's Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) for achieving its share of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup goal by 2025.

What is the Phase III WIP, and why is Maryland doing it?

There are three phases of WIPs developed by each Bay jurisdiction (Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia). Phase I and Phase II WIPs were developed and submitted to EPA in 2010 and 2012, respectively. Both Phase I and Phase II WIPs describe actions and controls to be implemented by 2017 and 2025 to achieve applicable water quality standards. The Phase II WIPs built on the initial Phase I WIPs by providing more specific local actions. Phase III WIPs are based on a midpoint assessment of progress and scientific analyses completed in 2017. Phase III WIPs provide information on actions Bay jurisdictions intend to implement between 2018 and 2025 to meet the Bay restoration goals. Maryland's Phase III WIP is the State's plan to meet nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment targets established by the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) by 2025.

What are Maryland's 2025 Bay TMDL Targets?

Nitrogen – 45.8 million lbs

Phosphorus – 3.7 million lbs

Sediment – assigned phosphorus reductions are projected to achieve sediment targets

Why are we focusing on nitrogen and not phosphorus or sediment for this Phase of the WIP?

Nitrogen is the focus because modeling results indicate that the State is on track to meet its phosphorus and sediment goals for 2025, but that there is still a gap in achieving the nitrogen goal.

How is Maryland's Phase III WIP different from the Phase II WIP?

The Phase II WIP prescribed equal percent load reductions across pollution source sectors, but this was before Maryland had a longer-term record of each sector's pace of implementation progress. In developing the Phase III WIP, Maryland worked closely with local partners to document planned restoration actions while also having a better understanding of historical progress that more realistically informed both local and sector pollution targets. The final aspect of this plan that sets it apart is that it lays the framework for looking beyond meeting our 2025 goals and maintaining these reductions over a longer period of time.

What are the implications for our local jurisdictions in this WIP?

The Phase III WIP was built with local input and aligns with anticipated agriculture, stormwater, septic, and wastewater goals, as well as all permit requirements. These local goals set achievable expectations for local partners that can help guide related budget planning and capital projects.

What are the key strategies to meet Maryland's goals?

The Phase III WIP includes two key strategies: enhanced capacity from our wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) and additional agricultural implementation beyond the Phase II WIP expectations.

Will the Phase III WIP meet our 2025 Bay TMDL targets?



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Yes. The WIP also recognizes local implementation challenges, such as restoration practices maintenance and verification, technical assistance and restoration capacity, as well as increased loads anticipated from climate change.

Does the plan meet our goals at the State level and the river basin level?

Pollution controls in some watershed areas will be more effective and have a greater impact than those same controls might have in other areas. The plan meets State-level goals and uses inter-basin exchanges.

Is this WIP more cost-effective than previous WIPs?

By leveraging WWTP capacity and agricultural practices, which are the most cost-effective solutions, Maryland is allowing time to develop plans for additional cost-effective restoration plans in the stormwater and septic sectors. This allows for sustained restoration in those sectors to optimize the most cost-effective practices and leverage innovations.

What about the Conowingo Dam?

Maryland has a three-part strategy to address pollution impacts from Conowingo Dam:

- 1) Maryland leads the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership's Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan (CWIP). The CWIP pools funding from across Bay jurisdictions, as well as other public and private funding sources, to put pollution reduction practices in the most effective areas and to hire a third party to assist with implementation and financing.
- 2) Maryland issued a comprehensive set of environmental protection requirements to Exelon Corporation as conditions for dam relicensing.
- 3) Maryland oversees the carrying out of a pilot project for dredging, beneficial reuse, and characterization of sediments behind the dam.

Is climate change addressed in the PIII WIP?

Yes. The WIP provides a comprehensive list of strategies Maryland is using to address anticipated climate change impacts to the Chesapeake Bay. The EPA is also improving scientific understanding of climate change on the nutrient and sediment loads to the Chesapeake Bay. The new science will inform 2021 climate targets that Maryland will address in later milestones.

Is Maryland receiving credit for land preservation and development restrictions in the Phase III WIP?

Yes, Maryland is receiving credit in the Phase III WIP for land preservation and development requirements that will protect farmland and forest land through 2025.

Will there be a Phase IV WIP?

This has not been determined yet. However, through adaptive management, two-year milestones, and progress evaluation Maryland will make sure we stay under the pollution cap into the future.