

Conowingo WIP Update
Principals Staff Committee Meeting
January 24, 2020

The Conowingo WIP (CWIP) has been divided into three activities, as follows:

- Activity 1: Conowingo WIP Development and Implementation was awarded to the Center for Watershed Protection.
- Activity 2: Financing Strategy Development was awarded to the Chesapeake Bay Trust.
- Activity 3: Conowingo WIP Tracking, Verifying, and Reporting was awarded to the Chesapeake Conservancy.

Work has been ongoing for each activity. The status of each activity is as follows:

Activity 1:

Identified core, priority BMPs based upon interviews with each jurisdiction on their Phase 3 WIPs, primarily focusing on “land based” practices. These include, but are not limited to: cover crops, forest buffers, wetlands/living shorelines, and urban BMPs on unregulated developed land. Other, more management oriented and interjurisdictional practices were identified such as manure transport and the transfer of other nutrients across jurisdictional boundaries.

Developed focal geographies as follows, based on the Susquehanna Basin + Most Effective Basins as agreed upon by the PSC. Further refinement of priority watersheds included effectiveness and possible Best Management Practice (BMP) opportunity analysis supported by input from the CWIP Steering Committee and MDE and PA DEP staff.

- Pennsylvania
 - Portions of Luzerne County
 - Confluence (portions of Lycoming, Northumberland, Montour, Union, Snyder Counties)
 - Central (portions of Clinton, Centre, Mifflin Counties)
 - Western (Blair, Bedford Counties)
 - Portions of Cumberland County
 - Portions of Lebanon County
- Maryland
 - Top of the Bay (portions of Harford, Cecil)
 - Mid-Eastern Shore (Portions of Kent, Queen Anne’s)
 - Lower Eastern Shore (portions of Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico and Somerset)

Developed and has begun outreach to stakeholders in the focal geographies.

- Pennsylvania
 - Integrating into Pennsylvania’s Countywide Action Planning process
 - Phase I/Tier 2 Counties (part of the first set of CWIP two-year milestones)
 - Cumberland, Lebanon, Bedford, Centre
 - Phase II/ Tier 3 & 4 Counties (part of future CWIP two-year milestones).

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- Luzerne, Lycoming, Northumberland, Montour, Union, Snyder, Clinton, Mifflin, Blair
- Maryland
 - Working through a similar process MDE used for WIP III outreach, Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro Ecology provides continuity across both CWIP and Chesapeake Bay WIP outreach.

Developing CAST scenarios in conjunction with the CBPO on different combinations of BMPs and focal areas integrating existing WIP III and E3 CAST scenarios.

Activity 2:

Inventoried Maryland and Pennsylvania's current funding programs for nonpoint source BMPs.

Meeting with the Chesapeake Bay Trust's financing advisory committee on different financing strategies/approaches.

Additional financing strategy details are dependent upon the final WIP orientation (e.g., programmatic and numeric implementation goals and commitments).

Activity 3:

Updating the FieldDoc web-based platform to have greater functionality for Conowingo projects tracking. Data tracking and reporting would be the responsibility of the state, not the responsibility of the local jurisdiction to differentiate between reporting toward their County WIP/CAP goals, State WIP goals, or Conowingo WIP goals. Standardized processes and procedures will need to be laid out and discussed.

Outstanding Issues for Principals Staff Committee Awareness:

Conowingo WIP should have a strong emphasis on adaptive management and climate co-benefits.

Outreach and engagement with all of the local entities need to be aligned with the states' prioritization strategies. It would be beneficial, for instance, for the Conowingo WIP outreach to be included in and as a part of Pennsylvania's phased Countywide Action Planning strategy.

Next Steps:

- PSC Review of CWIP – February 21, 2020
- Draft CWIP Posted to CBPO Web Site – March 13, 2020
- Final Draft CWIP to for PSC Review – June 5
- Final CWIP – June 19, 2020
- Final Financing Strategy – March 2021
- Launch of CWIP financing authority (implement business plan, executing institutional structure, governance systems, staffing) – Spring 2022
- Financing activities begin – Winter 2022-2023