

## **Agriculture Workgroup Planning Template**

The Agriculture Workgroup Planning Template includes all Priority Items identified in the Preliminary Report.

The activities and goals outlined in the Agriculture Workgroup Planning Template (template) will build on the progress that Pennsylvania has made to date in order to restore local and regional water resources while supporting a sustainable agricultural industry in the Commonwealth. Implementation of the actions outlined in the template are expected to accomplish 63% of the Nitrogen and 106% of the Phosphorus TMDL load reduction goals for the Commonwealth.

There are various challenges and resource needs to address in order to allow for implementation of the activities outlined in the template. Those challenges and resource needs are outlined below.

### **Challenges**

#### **Communication, Staffing, Training, Cultural, and Economic**

- Consistency in the communication of compliance requirements across the numerous entities supporting this work in the agricultural community
- Department staffing cannot meet the demand for compliance assurance on small operations (see resource needs below)
- Public and private technical assistance staffing ramp up needed to support implementation goals (see resource needs below)
- Slow pace of farmer decision making due to:
  - Required changes in long-established farming practices
  - Implementation costs are difficult for the industry to cover and obtaining limited financial assistance can take significant time.
- Extensive time needed to implement farm practices (up to 3 years). Steps necessary to implement include:
  - Planning, permitting, funding application and awarding, contracting, and construction
- The need for additional agriculture support manpower also increases training needs
- Significant funding needed to support the implementation of the necessary ag BMPs (see resource needs below)
- There currently is no industry wide data recording or reporting process covering smaller scale farming operations to allow for tracking of progress in meeting ag goals outlined in the plan

### **Resource Needs**

#### **Agricultural Compliance – Permitting, Compliance Assurance, Inspection, Enforcement**

Background on Ag Compliance Breakdown:

- CAFO Program (~ 400 farms in CB Watershed)
- Nutrient Management Program (~ 815 farms in CB Watershed)
- Chesapeake Bay Ag Inspection Program, Phase 2 (~33,610 farms in CB Watershed)
- Need for additional staffing resource to oversee and support the expanded ag compliance program:
  - DEP – Continue Funding current staff; need 10.5 additional FTEs (\$1,161,492)
    - Ongoing need for compliance assurance
    - This estimate is predicated on continued staffing support at the conservation districts for compliance assurance and additional staffing support for technical assistance.

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- Includes DEP Inspectors and Compliance Specialists
- Conservation Districts – Continue Funding Nutrient Management (35 FTE) and Chesapeake Bay Technicians (39 FTE)
  - This is only for the inspection programs identified above. These staff also provide planning assistance. See below for additional staffing needs at the Conservation Districts for technical assistance.
  - Ongoing need for compliance assurance

### **Technical Assistance (TA) – BMP Design, Oversight, Implementation**

Background on Technical Assistance needs for non-CAFOs and non-CAOs –

- Structural - Animal Waste Management Systems and Barnyards:
  - 98 FTE (licensed engineers or engineering technicians) needed to design and implement 25 storages per year (17% of all expected operations annually)
- Structural – Grassed Waterways, Diversions, Terraces, Stream Crossings, etc:
  - 38 FTE (5% of all operations annually) needed to design and implement practices
- Non-structural/management – Contour strips, Fence, Prescribed Grazing Plans and paddocks, No-till/Cover Crop Assistance such as no-till drill rentals and cover crop payments
  - 11 FTE (5% of all operations annually) needed to design and implement practices
- Need for additional staffing resource to provide technical assistance to the ag community:
  - Conservation District staff –all time spent on TA (\$3,970,000);
    - 50 additional Chesapeake Bay Technicians
    - 10 additional Chesapeake Bay Engineers
  - Private Industry/NGO/NRCS—all time spent on TA, no inspections or planning
    - 87 additional private industry/NGO/NRCS staff
- Staffing needs will be ongoing in order to support long-term technical assistance support for the agricultural community.

### **Financial Assistance (FA) – BMP Design, Implementation**

Background on Financial Assistance needs for implementation of the WIP –

- Estimated need of \$327 million annually through 2025 to fund the agricultural BMPs called for in the plan
- Additional funding will be needed beyond 2025 but will need to be reevaluated at that time
- Significant funding is needed to support the implementation of the necessary ag BMPs
- A simplistic process for applying for and receiving public support funds is needed to allow for accelerated implementation of BMPs