Pennsylvania's Phase 3 WIP Local Area Goals Workgroup

Pilot County Planning Process and Community Clean Water Toolbox Updates and Recommendations

February 14, 2019

Introduction
As part of the Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Planning (WIP) planning process, Pennsylvania invited four counties to participate in a pilot project to develop local Countywide Action Plans (CAPs). Lancaster and York counties began in spring 2018, with Adams and Franklin counties beginning in fall 2018.

These pilot efforts are intended primarily to improve local water quality and to provide related benefits for those localities. The CAPs developed by the counties include priority goals and initiatives, action steps, the identification of responsible parties, and available and needed technical and financial resources.

In addition, the four pilot counties are sharing lessons learned throughout the process to make the development of CAPs in other counties across Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay watershed more efficient and effective.

On September 21, 2018, midway through the pilot projects, the pilot counties gathered to share updates. Pilot counties were asked to share their local planning process and to identify challenges, lessons learned and recommendations for a more effective process.

The lessons and recommendations from the county pilots have been invaluable. Relevant lessons have been incorporated into a revised Community Clean Water Toolbox that will be provided to other counties.

In November and December 2018, joint planning meetings were held with each of the four pilot counties and the WIP Steering Committee workgroup chairs, DEP Bay Program office staff and the WIP technical team. The purpose of these meetings was to share both county planning team and state WIP workgroup draft recommendations for nutrient reduction; identify overlaps and resulting nutrient reductions; explore areas for further reductions; and recommend and decide next steps for moving forward together

Pilot County Planning Processes to Date

York County's Planning Process
York County began with an existing coalition of clean water groups, lead by the York County Planning Commission, that included agriculture, stormwater, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, the County Conservation District and other interests. They hosted bi-weekly meetings beginning June 29, 2018, and developed a mailing list for all stakeholders who might be involved. The planning process was transparent and the public was invited to all meetings.

They followed the planning process listed in the WIP Community Clean Water Toolbox, which they reported to be very helpful.

Throughout the process, they stressed that the plan would call for voluntary actions. They began with big strategies and broke these strategies into action plans for projects. Urban and agricultural BMPs are the two main focus areas, with meetings centered around both.

They have decided on a three-fold strategy:
- Collect efforts already on the ground and not credited
- Determine how to reach compliance with their local area goals
- Develop actions to meet the gap, and go above and beyond compliance

Lancaster County's Planning Process

Lancaster County's Clean Water Partners (CWP) serves as the coordinator of the plan, and conducts outreach as needed. The small planning team called "Lancaster Clean and Clear Water" includes 8-10 members (County Conservation District, farmer, academic experts, private sector, and municipalities). They have also conducted bi-weekly meetings since July 3, 2018. They use Google drive for easy sharing. Their outreach has included interviews, public meetings and conversations with stakeholder groups including the local Ag Council, municipal officials, engineers and county planners.

They have identified six main areas of focus:
- Data Management
- Agriculture
- Stormwater
- Stream Restoration
- Land Use and Preservation
- Buffers

Franklin County Planning Process

Franklin County's Planning Commission is taking the lead, in partnership with the Franklin County Conservation District. There is no formal organization focused on clean water. They have spent their time focusing on education. They have identified needs for data and improved communication and awareness across all agencies. The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) and Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB) are assisting with supporting planning efforts.

Adams County Planning Process

At the time of the September 21, 2018, gathering to share lessons, Adams County was preparing for their first stakeholder meeting. They invited 34 municipalities to the kickoff meeting. They have a good tracking of BMPs already on the ground. The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) and Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB) are assisting with supporting planning efforts.

Lessons Learned – Key Considerations to Address

York and Lancaster Counties had existing water quality coalitions that they were able to adapt to the planning purpose. Adams and Franklin Counties had to create stakeholder planning teams.

Lessons learned from these observations assisted with revisions to the Community Clean Water Toolbox to assist future counties with these coalition-building and planning process efforts. The Community Clean Water Toolbox contains valuable information for how a county can conduct its planning process.

The pilot counties were integral to improving and expanding the planning process to make it more effective and efficient for future counties. The following list of key elements were provided throughout the process by county pilot members to the state WIP planning team to consider when beginning to develop a Countywide Action Plan.

Challenges to Address
It will be useful for counties to know some of the challenges they will face. These likely will include:

- Preparing to conduct the planning process
    - Determining who are the right people to draft the Action Plan
        - Involving a diverse stakeholder group
    - Developing a realistic timeframe, to not compromise quality
    - Arranging for customized data, including existing credit activities
    - Connecting with Pennsylvania-wide efforts and messaging
    - The need for knowledge and education
    - Ensuring good record keeping, tracking
    - Coordinating with agencies
- Engaging other stakeholders
    - Bridging the communication gap with those who don't "live" this, including homeowners
    - Agricultural community buy-in
    - Addressing local cultural barriers
- Ensuring the CAP is doable
    - Securing funding for costs associated with WIP process
    - Incentivizing willing private landowners to participate in using bmps
    - Determining how to achieve compliance
    - Meeting the gap – ensuring that existing practices are credited, and then getting additional practices on the ground
    - Plan for implementation – who provides oversight? How to track?

Lessons Learned -- Key Advice for Other Counties

Based on the experience to date, a number of lessons can be offered for other counties as they begin their planning. These include:

- The Pennsylvania Community Clean Water Toolbox is working and helpful.
- The WIP provides an opportunity to meet local priorities voluntarily and avoid further regulation.
- The planning process works well when done with transparency, inclusion and good data and information.
- Begin by getting information out – educate stakeholders. Compliance isn't a given.
- There is value in asking lots of questions – interviewing diverse stakeholders to get a wide range of input/recommendations.
- It can be helpful to break down planning by content areas and determine the length of the planning process ahead of time, e.g., 8 meetings in the next 3 months, so that expectations for members of any planning group are clear.
- Celebrate small wins along the way and acknowledge good work already accomplished.
- You may need to create tools specific to your county.
- Ongoing coordination and communication between the county and the state WIP workgroups is key to a real partnership.

PA Community Clean Water Toolbox Recommendations:
- Recommend splitting the Toolbox into two separate documents:
  - A high-level overview of the planning process, a document that pairs with the overview of the WIP presentation
  - A technical Toolbox that pairs with the technical county data presentation
- Recommend reviewing the overview in the beginning and trying to condense information
  - There is information in the overview and Appendix 2 that is repeated, and can be taken out for purposes of shortening the toolbox
- 90 pages is too long, and counties do not have time to review the information ahead of initial meetings
- Provide an initial document(s) for building stakeholder group(s).
  - Identify key potential stakeholders and begin building the coalition before DEP/SRBC and other key leaders begin the process
    - This can be very time-consuming for support staff when counties do not have key leaders identified to review materials ahead of time. It can create confusion for counties
  - Plan for this document to be handed out two months before initial kickoff meeting
    - Can be paired with the planning and overview Toolboxes
  - Incorporate a lead contact(s) for each county or regional plan

Pennsylvania's Overview and Planning Process Toolbox:
- Overall, counties need more direction on what is expected throughout the WIP process
    - This includes a clearly defined planning process, with the dedicated time expected from each county and the roles of county and state partners
    - More clearly defined directions for filling out the templates, narratives and other required documents
    - More direction as to the types of recommendations that the state is asking for
- Shorten this version by removing duplicate information
    - Remove duplicate information regarding template instructions and planning process between the introduction and the appendices
    - Remove the long list contact information at the end of the toolbox and keep the primary state contacts who can direct questions to particular resources needed
- Redevelop or remove the hypothetical journey graphic
    - Workgroup recommendations will already be established for the counties, so no longer needed
- Redevelop the planning process
    - Redevelop the planning process to include a two-month window for stakeholder and coalition building
    - Three working months for WIP development and finalization of county WIPs
    - Build in the importance of pre-establishing weekly or biweekly meetings of key stakeholders
- Update all graphics and templates with the newest versions
    - Includes updating the templates

Additions to Pennsylvania's Overview and Planning Process Toolbox:
- Better layout of the aggressive timeline for the WIP process
    - Stress the importance of pre-set weekly/biweekly meetings
- Clearly define the materials needed from each county and what is to be expected
    - Narrative Template
    - Planning and Progress Template
    - Programmatic Recommendations Template
- Give real-world examples from the pilot counties of how to fill out the Toolbox templates
    - Include a hyperlink to the four pilot county recommendations
- Redesign the Hypothetical Journey graphic
    - The redesign is based on workgroup recommendations being readily available for counties to use
    - Newly designed hypothetical journey graphic will move to the Technical toolbox

Technical Toolbox:
- Keep county-specific recommendations in Technical toolbox, remove the state target
    - The state target is identified in the Planning Process & Overview Document
- High Level Summary
    - Further development of the summary to provide more direction up front
- Addition to the monitoring section, High level narrative
    - Narrative that highlights the types of monitoring
- Impaired Stream and Local TMDL Maps

- County Land Use Maps
- County Land Use Breakdown
  - Addition to the technical toolbox to show the acreage defined in the model for different land use breakdowns
- Urbanized Area Map
  - Stormwater recommendations may affect the UA map
- Nitrogen Delivered to Stream By Sector Pie Chart
- Estimated Share of Nitrogen Applied to Land Pie Charts
- Manure Pie Chart
- Urban Loads Pie Charts
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Map
- Nitrogen to Nitrate in Groundwater
- Karst Geology Map
- Ground Water Nitrate Concentrations Map
- Groundwater Age Map
- Sparrow Hot Spot Maps
- Cost Effectiveness
  - Updated the chart to be easier to understand
- Summary BMPs Chart
  - Built upon existing list to include more BMPs
- State Recommendations Appendix I
  - Incorporate the state scenarios in the technical toolbox
- Summary of workgroup recommendations
  - The 2-3 page fact sheets for each workgroup will go into the toolbox
- Results from the state recommendations and the remaining "GAP"
- Hypothetical Journey
  - Newly hypothetical journey to represent the state recommendations
- Next Steps
  - The addition of a page on the next steps for the county plan
- Contact information

Items Removed from Technical Toolbox:
- Water Quality Trends Maps (replacing with more detailed explanation of monitoring—see Additions section below)
  - Lack of Non-Tidal Network Stations in Northern Tier Counties
  - Adds confusion to the process
- Water Quality loads for specific monitored watershed graphs (replacing with more detailed explanation of monitoring—see Additions section below)
  - Only useful for higher loading watersheds in lower Susquehanna and Potomac
- Remove Monitoring Stations maps (replacing with more detailed explanation of monitoring—see Additions section below)
  - Adds distraction to the overall goal of the WIP
- Remove trend analysis graphs
  - Adds distraction to the overall goal

- Remove percent forested chart
    - This has not been useful to pilot counties
- Septic System Densities
    - This has not been useful to pilot counties

Additions to the Technical Toolbox:
- Development of more specific land use data
    - Counties have asked for model data to calculate the total opportunity
- High-level qualitative explanation of the types of monitoring
    - Narrative that captures the types of monitoring
    - To provide more detail around monitoring at local level
- WIP Steering Committee Workgroup recommendations
    - High level summaries of all workgroup recommendations have been included in the new technical toolbox
    - Workgroup recommendations will provide a starting point for the counties
- Provide an initial workgroup recommendations model run
    - Show the results from the model run for the state recommendations
    - Include narrative summaries of state recommendations
- Newly re-designed Hypothetical Journey
    - Hypothetical Journey re-designed to include the workgroup recommendations
- Next steps for the County
    - A page on potential next steps for the county added to give direction to county planning leaders