

Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) Programmatic Recommendations Template

Action #	Description	Performance Target(s)	Expected Timeline	Potential Implementation Challenges	Potential Recommendations on Improvement	Resources Needed			
						Technical	Suggested Source	Financial	Suggested Source
Programmatic Recommendation: Programmatic Initiative: Recommendations for State Programmatic Changes									
1.1*	Creation of simple universal prediction model for BMP installations	The creation of a universal statewide model that predicts pollution reductions for BMP installation within small watershed boundaries *See Priority Initiative 2.1, 2.2*	2025+	Initial calibration of source, BMP, and long-term weather patterns will be challenging to the creation of a “standard” model. Consistent IT support	The creation of this prediction model would guide the implementation of all BMPs including ag, stormwater, AMD, and landscape/stream restorations based on Bay needs and priority watersheds	Unknown	DEP, Penn State, Ches. Conservancy	Unknown	DEP, EPA
1.2*	Provide data transparency for Practice Keeper users, and centralize BMP data, including historical BMPs	Be able to see credited BMPs or other BMPs that are already planned/mapped/credited in model. This will create a baseline for future reverifications and reduce duplications of efforts *See priority initiative 2.1, 2.2*	2025+	Gathering of data from all agencies and organizations, accurate input of the collected data, data access/privacy	The initial time and effort spent will reduce time and effort later in the location and recertification of practices by multiple agencies. Create a notification system of BMP expirations	IT	DEP	Unknown	DEP
1.3*	Institute a bi-annual remote sensing program for BMP verification	Creation of bi-annual remote sensing program for BMP reverification for entire bay watershed. *See priority initiative 3.4, 3.5*	2025+	Financial Resources and database creation to be referenced by sensing technologies	This will eliminate staff resources needed to reverify BMPs, and increase reporting of annual practices such as no-till and cover crops	Unknown	DEP, Ches. Conservancy	Unknown	DEP, EPA
1.4*	Develop a method/model/template to capture and report non-manure nutrient management BMPs	Creation of fertilizer reporting *See priority initiative 3.1, 3.23*	2025+	Agricultural Community will be resistant to increased reporting.	Development of a simple, non-invasive reporting system will accelerate the implementation rates of already occurring practices	Statewide Workgroups	DEP	Unknown	DEP
1.5*	Financially support and Enforce Act 167	The final support will lead to increased adoption of 167 plans in bay watershed which can be enforced by municipalities with DEP support. *See priority initiative 1.12*	2025+	Financial Resources and flexible model ordinances to be used by a variety of municipalities (urban/rural)	This will lead to the reduction of stormwater impacts. Create flexible model ordinances to be used by a variety of municipalities (urban/rural) DEP enforcement support	Engineering/ Planning Tech Assistance	DEP	Unknown	DEP
1.6*	Improve permitting processes at state level	Regulatory burdens are slowing the process and adding unnecessary requirements to environmental projects *See priority initiative 3.26, 3.27, 3.31 – 3.63*	ASAP	Consistency across state	Minimize and limit changes to permitting. New forms, formats, and procedures create delays and confusion amongst applicants and engineers.	Staff	DEP	N/A	DEP
1.7*	Improve and evaluate current available funding program requirements	1. Evaluate current prevailing wage rules for environmental grant programs	ASAP	The current timeline for this evaluation will not be completed in time to have an impact on BMP installations by 2025.	1. Prevailing wage is inhibiting the installation of time critical BMPs, by wasting money on labor that could be used for additional BMP installations. It also increases the match needed based on the	Staff	DEP, DCNR, DCED, SCC, Department	N/A	N/A

	(Growing Greener, NFWF, 319, etc..)	<p>2. Evaluate Match requirements</p> <p>3. Create strict timeline for awarding grants – that compliments implementation schedules.</p> <p>4. Increase speed of reimbursements</p> <p>5. Enforcement of BMP use and maintenance</p> <p>*See Section 3: Achieving Pollution Reduction Goals*</p>		Legislative support of prevailing wage modifications.	<p>total project costs. Prevailing wage is increasing projects costs by 150%. The exclusion of prevailing wage requirements for state environmental grant programs will increase, accelerate, and simplify BMP installations before 2025.</p> <p>2. The 15% match component of Growing Greener program is acceptable. Higher match amounts is unattainable based on the financial requirement of BMP installations. Current NFWF and DNCR match of greater than 30% is unattainable to most Conservation Districts and other organizations in relation to the cost of projects that need completed.</p> <p>3. State and Federal grant rounds are unpredictable and often do not align with BMP implementation schedules. The unpredictability makes planning projects arduous and currently does not lead to efficient/timely BMP installations.</p> <p>4. Currently grant and program reimbursements take up to or longer than 90 days. It is difficult for contractor and Conservation Districts to front money for long periods of time, leading to hesitation of contractor bid on projects.</p> <p>5. After agricultural projects are completed, landowners may not use BMPs as intended. Landowners sometimes do not maintain BMPs in working order. The lack of use and maintenance renders BMPs useless. Enforcement is needed to ensure environmental benefits</p>		of Labor, NFWF		
1.8*	Creation of long term annual dedicated CAP implementation and coordination funding for Tier 3&4 Counties	<p>Financial resources to cover all BMP grant writing/verifications project management, new/updating plan writing</p> <p>*See all of Section 2: Reporting and Tracking and all of Section 3: Achieving Pollution Reduction Goals*</p>	ASAP	Legislative support of funding allocations	Creation of dedicated funding will lead to increased/accelerated BMP adoptions and pollution reductions ad identified in CAPs.	N/A	DEP	\$100,000 annually minimum	DEP, EPA
1.9*	Enhance local water quality monitoring	<p>Create more local water quality monitoring stations to guide real world loading predictions that will increase BMP placement and efficiency **See priority initiative 2.0 and 2.4*</p>	ASAP	Funding and staff for long term monitoring	<p>Utilize local knowledge of CD's to guide placement of monitoring sites and equipment.</p> <p>Rely more on water quality data rather than the model and allow local data collection efforts to be recognized.</p>	Staff	DEP, SRBC, USGS Conservation Districts	\$\$/ Site	DEP, SRBC, USGS
2.0*	Provide dedicate funding for water quality monitoring and	The creation of a dedicated funding source will lead to efficient placement and monitoring of BMP functions	ASAP	Legislative support of funding allocations	If not able to monitor water quality changes there is no way to know if BMP is still functioning properly or needs maintenance.	Staff	DEP, SRBC, USGS	\$\$/ Site	DEP, SRBC, USGS

	monitoring of installed BMP.	within watersheds. **See priority initiative 2.0 and 2.4**					Conservation Districts		
2.1*	Provide dedicated funding for operation and maintenance of BMPs	The creation of a dedicated funding source will lead to better BMP maintenance and upkeep, ensuring long term function *See Section 3: Achieving Pollution Reduction Goals*	ASAP	Legislative support of funding allocations	Lack of funding for maintenance leads to failing BMPs with no way to complete repairs. Create an emergency request grant that is awarded quickly to ensure timely repairs. (Model after or further support WPCAMR quick response funding)	N/A	DEP	Annual allocation	DEP, SCC, EPA
2.2*	Improve statewide tracking	Add tracking module within PK to alert user to BMP lifespan expiration. This will ensure timely re-verification of BMP. *See all of Section 2: Reporting and Tracking*	ASAP	Time constraints of re-verification of annual practices	Create a quarterly notification of BMP lifespan expirations.	IT	DEP	N/A	DEP
2.3*	Create system of incentives/ implementation for agricultural and urban practices	Incentive program for BMPs will lead to accelerated BMP adoption. *See Section 3: Achieving Pollution Reduction Goals*	ASAP	Legislative support of funding allocations	Prioritize high impact BMPs in key watersheds.	N/A	SCC, Department of Ag, DEP	Annual allocation	State
2.4*	Improved data transparency for AMD treatment system locations	Create a way to catalog treatment systems built by state and private sector. The data would reduce duplication of efforts and allow more targeted installation of treatment systems in watersheds *See priority initiative 3.36-3.63*	ASAP	Spatial analysis will be difficult due to lack of centralized reference data	Locate and add private and state-built treatment systems to DataShed just like grant funded systems are tracked currently.	IT, GIS	DEP	Unknown	N/A
2.5*	Provide dedicated annual BMP funding for Conservation Districts	Create a funding program modeled around the DGLVR program for Districts to implement priority projects. The stable and predictable framework will accelerate BMP adoption and installation. *See Section 3: Achieving Pollution Reduction Goals*	ASAP	Legislative support of funding allocations	Block grant/ subgrant style with ranking based on water quality improvements. Model after DGLVR program Annual allocations spent within 2 years and allocations not spent will be redistributed to other counties.	N/A	SCC, DEP, EPA	Annual allowance	State
2.6*	Maintain grant funding for watershed restoration projects Growing Greener/319/SMCRA/Keystone Funding/Conservation District Program Allocations	The annual threat of redirecting the funding for these programs creates inconsistency in grant rounds, delaying BMP installations, and less funding = less BMPs *See Section 3: Achieving Pollution Reduction Goals*	ASAP	Legislative support of funding and maintain increase in funding.	Do not re-allocate funds. All funds are critical to pollution reduction progress.	N/A	N/A	Maintain and increase current balance	State
2.7*	Simplified permitting for restoration activities	Create a simplified permit specifically for conservation activities. Including AML reclamation. *See Section 3: Achieving Pollution Reduction Goals*	ASAP	Navigating Clean Streams Law language to create simplified permit.	Model permit after BAMR permit.	Staff	DEP	N/A	N/A

2.8*	Farmland Preservation Funding	Increase allocation for farmland preservation funding at the County, State, and Federal levels *See priority initiative 1.0, 3.32, 3.33, 3.34*	ASAP	Allocating funding fairly and long term funding	Model after DGLVR program	N/A	N/A	\$10,000/year for county input	County/State
2.9*	USDA Privacy Restrictions	Reduce privacy restrictions to at least provide HUC scale locations for installed BMPs *See all of Section 2: Reporting and Tracking*	ASAP	Farmer push back and non-cooperation at federal level	HUC scale data will greatly impact the efficiency of the BMP and guide other agencies to where work has been completed or is still needed	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
3.0*	Existing Employee Retention	Lack of state allocation increase from state for designated programs does not allow Conservation District to retain experienced employees. This turnover creates a minimum 2 year gap in project completion and effective program administration *See Priority Initiative 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 3.0*	ASAP	Conservation District acceptance of determined method. Fair allocations to counties based on need and employee experience	Creating allocation tiers for conservation districts who retain long term employees. A minimum increase of \$10,000/5 years of single employment to maintain competitive position to ensure long term employment	On going education	State	Minimum \$10,000/5 years of single employee retention for every Conservation District program	State and Federal Sources
3.1*	Better data sharing between State and Federal and University information	We need mapped/identified BMPs so we know the base inventory for our county *See Priority Initiative 1.14, 2.1, 2.2*	ASAP	License cost USDA privacy restrictions on sharing BMP	Create public restrictions on PK that satisfy the privacy restrictions so USDA and others so that we data can be mapped and merged so everyone has access to view BMP information. This would ensure future BMP verification and eliminate duplicated efforts.	Unknown	State and Federal	Unknown	State and Federal
3.2	Improve Source Data for Model	Need better more accurate source data representing agricultural land use that will affect loading rates to the bay.	ASAP	Ensuring accurate data and ground truthing. Conservation district will provide assistance and data of current ag land use areas that will lead to reclassification. Acceptance and inclusion of data by Ches. Conservancy and EPA	Better land use data and representation will lead to more accurate BMP implementation amounts. Remove areas of strip mine from ag classifications. Better data will also lead to a more efficiency allocating of resources and funds to high priority areas within the CAP	Continued ground verification of modeled land use data	State and non-profit organizations	Unknown	State and Federal
3.3*	Evaluate current Act 38 standards for volunteer animal operations	Improvement of Act 38 standards for VAO operation will lead to an increase in adoption of VAO Act 38 plans that will lead to pollution reduction *See Priority Initiative 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2*	ASAP	Opening regulations for interpretation could backfire and create a worse situation than is currently in place. Also Agreement between agencies and stakeholders is not likely	Inflexibility of Act 38 program makes it difficult for volunteers to transition MMPs to NMPs and maintain the plan. If the Act 38 program were to change and evaluate the standards for VAOs including. 1. More flexible soil sampling timeline to better match crop rotations that would be approved specifically for the VAO plan based on crop rotation and farmer needs. Instead of every 3 years, allow VAOs flexibility in determining soil sampling timeline (ex. waiting 4 years to sample on a 4 year corn 4 year hay rotation) 2. More relaxed manure sampling procedures over time. For example, when a VAO first starts a plan they will sample intensively for 3 years, then bi-annually to ensure average manure analysis is being updated.	Analysis of the environmental impact from soil sampling and manure sampling less frequently based on SCC records of current farms in the program Evaluate max timeline such as 6 years	State, Penn State	Increase funding opportunities / incentives for VAOs enrolled in the program	State and Federal

					<p>3. Increased benefits for volunteers to be in the program. Such as accessibility to more funding, higher percentage of tax credit rates, increased liability protections.</p> <p>4. Exclusive funding for BMPs in approved VAO plan.</p>				
3.4*	Evaluate Buffer Sizing Criteria	Evaluating the buffer sizing criteria for state and federal programs in different regions and landscapes to in relation to the pollution potential of the site will lead to the increase adoption of buffers on small farms *See Priority Initiative 3.7*	ASAP	Changing the accepted standards will be challenging for multiple agencies. Also, the amount of time and research needed in different landscapes and soil types will be costly	More flexibility in qualifying criteria for installing buffers. Buffer size should be proportional of runoff potential and stream size/watershed area. Small farms are hesitant/resistant to buffer installation because they do not have that much land to work with. If a smaller buffer could be installed on the farm based on the pollution potential of the site, it creates a fair system for farmers and the State with pollution reduction. Creating a simple tier system based on the main factors of buffer size will ensure that smaller pollution potential situations get rewarded by having a smaller buffer.	Research into the buffer size requirements in different landscapes	Penn State/University	Unknown	State and Federal

Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) Planning and Progress Template

Each county-based local area will use this template to identify:

- Inputs** – The statewide and/or federal policies, regulations, initiatives, programs, funding and resources that will help your county meet its goal.
- Process** – What are the changes that need to occur for the county to be successful in the process? These are the action items listed under each priority recommendation.
- Outputs and outcomes** – Both short and long-term. These are the programmatic recommendations identified by each county. Performance targets identify your county’s needed change in order to meet your county goal.
- Implementation challenges** – Any potential issues or roadblocks to implementation that could impede outputs and outcomes.

Asterisk: Place an asterisk next to the action number(s) for action items that appear in both the County Planning and Progress Template and the Programmatic Recommendations Template.

For each Programmatic Recommendation: Use the fields, as defined below, to identify the inputs and the process that will be followed to achieve each priority initiative. This is the “what, when and how” of the plan:

Description = What. This may include programs that address prevention, education, or changes to the current policy and regulation. A programmatic or policy effort will allow for the completion of cation items listed in the Planning and Progress Template.

Performance Target = How. This is an extension of the Description above. The performance target details the programmatic change that will enable you to complete the action items identified in the Planning and Progress Template. This can be a further description of the challenge to implementation from the Planning and Progress Template.

Expected Timeline = When. Provide the needed completion date for the programmatic recommendation that will assist your county in meeting its goal. This should be a reasonable expectation, based on knowledge and experience, that will aid in tracking progress toward addressing the Priority Initiative.

Potential Implementation Challenges = This field will note challenges and issues that may delay program implementation (Description). Potential challenges may relate to your county Planning and Progress Template.

Potential Recommendations on Improvement = This field will note recommendations on how to change or improve the program (Description).

Resources Needed: Technical & Funding = This field will note technical and financial resources needed/outstanding to implement the program (Description).