

PA Clean Water Gathering Summary and Next Steps

Progress Through Partnerships

On October 11, 2023, DEP's Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management (BWRNSM) hosted the first Clean Water Gathering of State Program Action Leaders and Countywide Action Planning (CAP) leaders. Over 80 partners, representing county, state and federal organizations, came together to celebrate successes and discuss high level needs, issues and challenges to continued progress. BWRNSM's Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division is using the recommendations from this meeting to build collaborative county/state partner Progress Teams that focus on "Strategies for Success" that address challenges and build on successes from Phase 3 WIP and CAP efforts.



In Their Own Words

"CAP planning brings additional funding to leverage for projects and helps build relationships with landowners and other county agencies." - Potter County

"The SCC provides funding, support and resources for County Conservation Districts."
- State Conservation Commission

"Consulting capacity keeps projects moving. Predictable funding helps farmers stay interested in doing projects."
- Perry County

Value of Implementing Countywide Action Planning

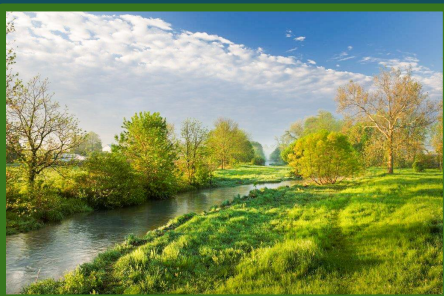
Countywide action planning and implementation adds tremendous value to county and local partners. As the CAP process matures and expands, BWRNSM and State Program Action Leaders are committed to continuing support and growth of this continually adaptive and evolving process. The Clean Water Gathering confirmed that Program Action Leaders and county partners are willing and ready to collaborate and further support this effort as it evolves.

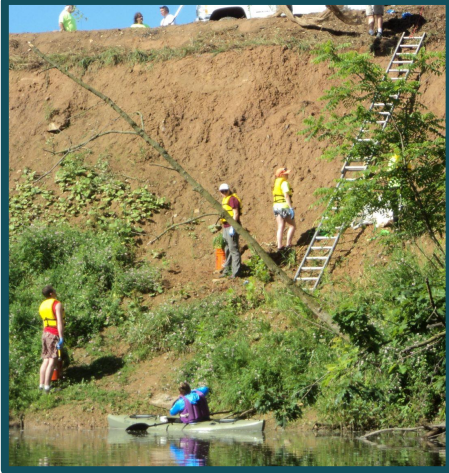
County Leaders' Perspectives

- Funding and resources
- Water quality improvements
- Local involvement
- Identity, organization
- Having a strong voice
- Collaboration and partnerships

Program Leaders' Perspectives

- Funding and resources
- Technical assistance
- Training
- Connections
- Program integration





Clean Water Gathering Outcomes

The meeting gave attendees the chance to celebrate partnership-facilitated clean water successes. Each partner reaffirmed that the foundations of success are: commitment, communication, and collaboration. The partners agree that by working together they can overcome the clean water challenges that still exist.

Together the partners:

- Agreed to a common list of five challenges that keeps PA from leveraging all available resources for implementation of the Phase 3 WIP and CAPs.
- Expressed interest and need to work together collaboratively to resolve these challenges and be able to continue expanding on PA's progress.
- Began conversations to identify strategies to overcome these challenges.

Progress Teams

The five agreed-upon challenges discussed at the Clean Water Gathering were condensed into three focused challenge areas that hinder or prevent Pennsylvania from being more successful. Three Progress Teams, composed of state and county partners, were created to develop "Strategies for Success" focused on addressing these issues that will lead to positive change and progress on these challenge areas. The three key challenge areas identified are:

1. **Technical & Administrative Assistance**
2. **Staff Building / Staff Retention**
3. **Funding / Multi-Grant Coordination**



*"Improving water quality and creating partnerships benefits our communities."
- Franklin County*

Next Steps

1. County, state and federal partners will continue the conversation in 2024, ensuring ongoing progress by:
 - Engaging, collaborating and building on the foundation of success
 - Participating with and/or supporting Progress Teams in developing "Strategies for Success" for positive, effective change and progress in challenge areas.
2. Three Progress Teams collaborate to address ongoing challenges:
 - What can be proposed to ensure effective change?
 - Who is needed to make change happen?
 - How do we go about getting the change that we want?
 - When is the best time to engage additional partners, propose change, etc.?
3. DEP's BWRNSM Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division staff will coordinate and facilitate Progress Team meetings, in support of county and state leader efforts.

*"We have more projects than funding and will do what it takes to finish these projects."
- Snyder County*