



EPA Evaluation of Pennsylvania's 2014-2015 Milestone Progress and 2016-2017 Milestone Commitments to Reduce Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment

Overview

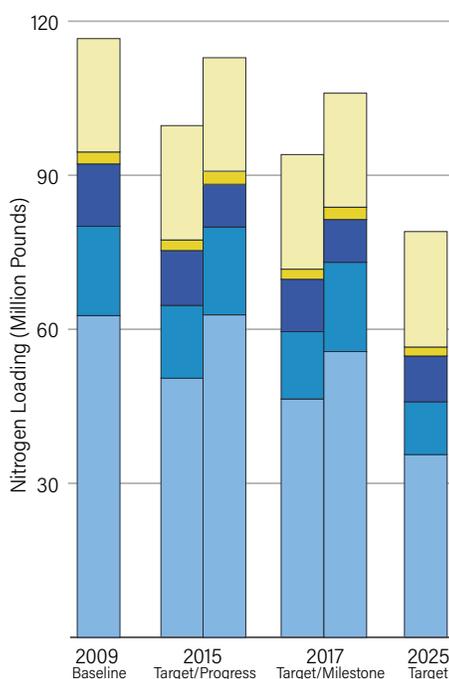
Two-year milestones are short-term objectives under the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (Bay TMDL) accountability framework used to assess progress toward restoration goals while allowing the Bay jurisdictions to flexibly adapt their Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) to meet those goals. The Chesapeake Bay Program partnership set restoration goals of having all practices necessary to meet applicable Chesapeake Bay water quality standards in place by 2025 and practices in place by 2017 that would achieve 60 percent of the necessary pollutant reductions compared to 2009.

Pollutant Reduction Progress and Future Targets by Source Sector

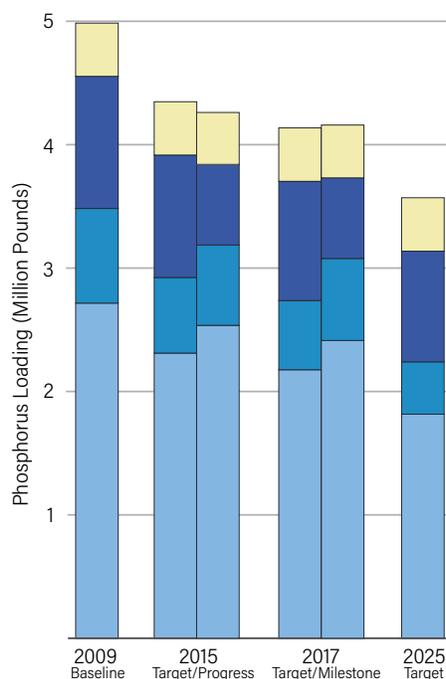
According to the data provided by Pennsylvania, the state achieved its state-wide 2015 target for phosphorus, but did not meet its 2015 state-wide targets for nitrogen or sediment. Based on its 2015 progress, Pennsylvania achieved its target for the Wastewater sector but is off target for the Agriculture and Urban/Suburban Stormwater sectors for all pollutants.

Based on Pennsylvania's anticipated reductions for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment during the 2016-2017 milestone period, Pennsylvania is anticipated to be on track to meet its state-wide 2017 sediment target but not on track to meet its state-wide nitrogen and phosphorus targets.

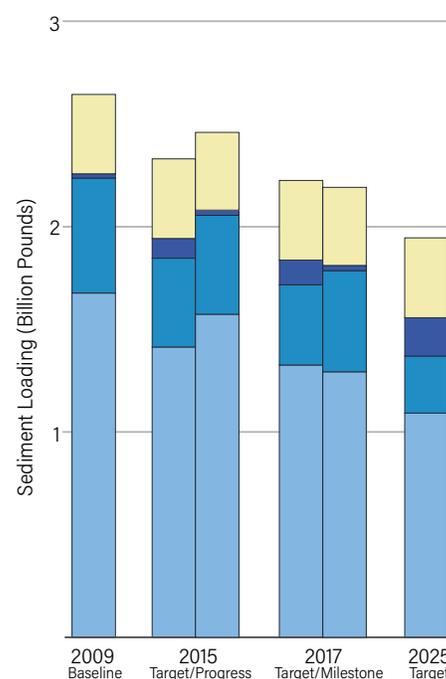
Nitrogen Loads and Goals



Phosphorus Loads and Goals



Sediment Loads and Goals



■ Agriculture
 ■ Urban Runoff
 ■ Wastewater
 ■ Septic
 ■ Forest*

*Forest includes other sources

For additional information on pollution reduction progress, commitments, and BMP see <http://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/clean-water/water-quality/watershed-implementation-plans>



Images by Chesapeake Bay Program

2016 Oversight Status

- Ongoing
- Enhanced
- Backstop

Agriculture

Backstop Actions Level

Urban/Suburban

Backstop Actions Level

Wastewater

Ongoing Oversight

Trading/Offsets

Enhanced Oversight

2014–2015 Milestone Progress and 2016–2017 Milestone Review

The EPA review of progress toward meeting 2014-2015 milestones shows Pennsylvania has made enough progress in the Wastewater sector to ensure implementation is occurring. However, the state will need to place considerably greater emphasis on increasing implementation in the Agriculture sector to address nitrogen and phosphorus, and in the Urban/Suburban Stormwater sector and for all three pollutants to meet its WIP and Bay TMDL commitments by 2025.

Pennsylvania released, in January 2016, its “Strategy to Enhance Pennsylvania’s Chesapeake Bay Restoration Effort” (“Reboot Strategy”) which describes Pennsylvania’s intent to ramp up efforts in compliance, data tracking and reporting, and target funding for Best Management Practices (BMP) implementation in an effort to be on track to meet its 2025 goals. Pennsylvania’s current draft 2016-2017 milestones include programmatic milestones to increase compliance with state regulations and improve data tracking, but do not include numeric milestones to increase implementation of agricultural conservation practices that would assist Pennsylvania in getting back on track to meeting its 2025 Bay TMDL targets.

Strengths

- Conducted cropland transect surveys to track and report cover crop and conservation tillage data and will be conducting these surveys in the future
- Funded the development of 433 nutrient management/manure management plans and 203 agriculture erosion and sediment (E&S) control plans as of June 2015
- Committed to increase compliance inspections to ensure farms have the required manure management plans and agriculture E&S control plans with a minimum of 50 inspections per year per each of the 42 Chesapeake Bay Technicians
- Committed to install stormwater BMPs with the numeric goal of 238 total acres treated
- Continued to make progress with issuing permits that are consistent with the assumptions and requirements of applicable Bay TMDL wasteload allocations

Shortfalls

- Did not complete the development and implementation of its tracking and reporting system for BMPs in 2015
- Did not increase implementation of priority practices to improve water quality such as grass buffers, animal waste management and nutrient management; also, did not increase implementation in urban areas to address the load reductions currently committed to

Issues to Address

- Revise milestones to include increased levels of priority BMP implementation
- Develop the list of geographic areas with the greatest nutrient pollutant load reduction potential
- Develop a plan for how to redistribute Urban/Suburban Stormwater loads and provide reasonable assurance for those reductions; consider all sectors when doing so

Potential Federal Actions and Assistance

EPA acknowledges Pennsylvania’s renewed commitment to the Chesapeake Bay and 2016-2017 milestones that support the “Reboot Strategy”. However, Pennsylvania will need to significantly increase its level of effort to reduce nutrients and sediment to meet its 2025 Bay TMDL goals, especially given that the gap continues to grow as a result of growth in various sectors. Therefore, EPA is notifying Pennsylvania that EPA may develop Pennsylvania-specific Phase III WIP expectations to help get the Commonwealth back on track to meeting its 2025 Bay TMDL commitments and goals. EPA will maintain “Ongoing Oversight” for the Wastewater sector, “Enhanced Oversight” for the Offsets and Trading sector and “Backstop Actions Level” for Agriculture and Urban/Suburban Stormwater sectors.