

Protocol for setting federal facility planning goals in the District of Columbia

September 14, 2018

At the District of Columbia's Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) Webinar and Workshop for Federal Facilities on May 24 and 31, 2018, the Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE) shared preliminary planning goals for federal agencies with land in the District. DOEE committed to distribute draft federal planning goals, noting the Chesapeake Bay Program was still finalizing jurisdiction-wide planning targets and any changes would affect federal goals. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) distributed final planning targets to the District and the six states within the watershed on July 20, and DOEE is now providing draft federal planning goals to federal agencies for a one-month review. In the spirit of transparency and collaboration, this document provides additional explanation beyond what was shared in May regarding DOEE's methodology for setting federal planning goals.

Background

Federal lands make up almost 30% of the land area within the District, and implementation of stormwater BMPs on federally held lands is a critical component toward meeting the District's Chesapeake Bay TMDL allocations and the Phase III WIP planning targets. *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Expectations for Federal Lands and Facilities in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Watershed Jurisdiction's Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans*, released August 16, 2018, states that EPA expects federal agencies to work with Bay watershed jurisdictions to have information necessary to prepare their Phase III WIPs and have all practices in place to achieve federal facility targets by 2025. Additionally, the new Phase 6 Chesapeake Bay Program modeling framework allows for the development of planning targets, scenarios, and progress reporting by agency for major federal landholding agencies in the Chesapeake watershed. In its *Expectations* document, EPA commits to conducting federal agency oversight and states, "EPA will not hold jurisdictions accountable for the pounds of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment reductions that are the responsibility of federal agencies."

Methodology

DOEE, with support from the Chesapeake Bay Program, developed draft federal planning goals by applying the same principles and method as utilized by the Chesapeake Bay Program for establishing the jurisdictions' Phase III WIP planning targets. This method distributes the load based on the effect of nitrogen and phosphorus on dissolved oxygen in the Bay and the difference between No Action (no practices in place to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus) and E3 (everything is being done to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus by everyone, everywhere). The E3 scenario represents the limit of technology for reducing nitrogen and phosphorus loads. This method ensures those who have done more to reduce pollution to date receive credit for those efforts and no one is asked to do more than is considered possible in E3.

DOEE developed draft federal planning targets through the following steps:

1. Start with the nitrogen and phosphorus planning targets distributed by EPA in July 2018;
2. Remove nitrogen and phosphorus load DOEE expects to assign to the wastewater sector;
3. Use the official 2010 No Action scenario to determine 2010 No Action loads by federal agency;

4. Modify official 2010 E3 scenario to move credit for stream restoration from National Park Service and Smithsonian Institution to nonfederal lands, given that DOEE intends to credit this work as nonfederal since it was led by DOEE (see attached protocol). This step ensures federal agencies are not responsible for restoration efforts that DOEE intends to lead;
5. Distribute the total load derived in step 2 among the major federal agencies based on their No Action and E3 scenarios so all agencies have a similar level of effort, or “percent E3,” to achieve their draft planning target compared to No Action. There are slight variations in percent E3 given that lands draining to the tidal reaches of the Potomac River below the fall line have a greater impact on dissolved oxygen in the Bay than lands draining to the non-tidal reaches of the Potomac above the fall line. The formula is:
$$\text{Draft Planning Goal} = [(2010 \text{ NA}) - (\%E3) * (2010\text{NA} - 2010E3)]$$
6. For federal lands that do not belong to a major land-holding agency (lumped together as Other Federal Land), maintain load at No Action, or 0% E3, because the Chesapeake Bay Program models do not support scenario planning or implementation progress reporting at such a fine scale;
7. For nonfederal lands, further reduce the planning goal by 6,000 pounds nitrogen and 1,000 pounds phosphorus to represent the additional pollutant reductions necessary to address climate change impacts by 2025. The District has committed to address these loads in its Phase III WIP, and the commitment does not affect federal or wastewater planning goals;
8. Note 2017 progress is provided as a reference but is not part of the formula to establish federal planning goals. The review period and Phase III WIP development process provide opportunity to understand issues with progress reporting and ensure implementation on federal and nonfederal lands is accounted for as accurately as possible within the Chesapeake Bay Program modeling framework.

Next steps

Federal agencies have 31 days, or until October 15, 2018, to provide feedback on their draft federal planning goals. DOEE will review comments and intends to finalize federal planning goals by November 15, 2018.