

Howard County, Maryland Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan 2012-2013 Programmatic Milestones Progress Status Report

Howard County, MD originally submitted its Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) for the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) on November 18, 2011. A revised Phase II WIP was submitted on July 2, 2012 in order to provide a more detailed description of the reductions to be obtained; the best management strategies to be used; the resources and funding to be applied; and the tracking, reporting, and verification that will occur. Within the updated Phase II WIP, time periods were outlined for MDE's 2-year milestone process to ensure that progress is being made toward meeting the pollutant reduction targets of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. The first milestone periods are as follows:

- 2013 BMP Milestones: State Fiscal Year: July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013
- 2013 Programmatic Milestones: Calendar Year: January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2013

The following specific actions were outlined in the Phase II WIP as Howard County's 2-year milestones:

- Complete study to structure stormwater remediation fee and implement fee once approved by County Council
- Hire additional project restoration staff
- Complete a preliminary Countywide implementation strategy for meeting all aspects of the MS4 permit and Chesapeake Bay TMDL, using existing information
- Complete evaluation of ESD stormwater opportunities on County-owned properties and begin implementation of identified retrofit projects
- Complete evaluation of dry ponds Countywide and begin implementation of identified retrofit projects
- Construct stormwater pond retrofits treating 120 acres
- Construct stream restoration projects for 10,000 feet of stream
- Establish Watershed Stewards Academy and hold first round of classes
- Develop and begin implementing an enhanced public education and outreach program based on social marketing for stormwater management, septic system pump outs, and urban nutrient management
- Seek increased funding to expand the County-sponsored watershed enhancement grant program
- Seek additional funding for providing economic incentives to septic system owners to encourage retrofit of BAT systems
- Continue street sweeping and reforestation programs at current levels

This document provides a status report on the progress made toward achieving the programmatic milestones outlined in Howard County's Phase II WIP. Implementation of BMP milestone progress continues to be reported through the County's MS4 Annual Reporting.

2013 Programmatic Milestones

The nine 2013 programmatic milestones listed in Howard County's Phase II WIP are as follows:

1. Complete study to structure stormwater remediation fee and implement fee once approved by County Council
2. Hire additional project restoration staff
3. Complete a preliminary Countywide implementation strategy for meeting all aspects of the MS4 permit and Chesapeake Bay TMDL, using existing information
4. Complete evaluation of ESD stormwater opportunities on County-owned properties and begin implementation of identified retrofit projects
5. Complete evaluation of dry ponds Countywide and begin implementation of identified retrofit projects
6. Establish Watershed Stewards Academy and hold first round of classes
7. Develop and begin implementing an enhanced public education and outreach program based on social marketing for stormwater management, septic system pump outs, and urban nutrient management
8. Seek increased funding to expand the County-sponsored watershed enhancement grant program
9. Seek additional funding for providing economic incentives to septic system owners to encourage retrofit of BAT systems

Progress made towards reaching each programmatic milestone is described in detail below.

1. Complete study to structure stormwater remediation fee and implement fee once approved by County Council

The County completed its feasibility study and adopted the Watershed Protection and Restoration Fund (WPRF) in 2013. The original legislation was amended in July 2013 in order to reduce the input to the fund from churches, certain non-profits, properties outside the County's planned service area, and agricultural properties. The WPRF is intended to provide funding for the following:

- Stormdrain infrastructure operation, repairs, and upgrades.
- BMP controls to manage stormwater flow and reduce pollutants in our waterways.
- MS4 permit compliance, including monitoring and enforcement.
- Stormwater education, outreach, and incentive programs

The fee will be assessed with the December 2013 tax bill, and the amount to be assessed varies based on land use, property size, type of residence, and impervious acreage as follows:

- Residential properties will be charged \$15 for townhouses and condominium units, \$45 for single family homes on lots .25 acres or less, and \$90 for single family homes on lots over .25 acres.
- Commercial apartments will be charged \$15 per apartment unit.

- For other non-residential property, the fee will be \$15 per impervious unit; however, for any non-residential entity with a fee exceeding \$10,000 in 2014, the fee will be the greater of 50% of the actual charge or \$10,000; the fee rises to 100% of obligation after 2014. There are hardship provisions for residential and non-residential property owners that may reduce the total charge to no more than 20% of the annual property tax bill.

There also are opportunities for credits and grants for certain best management practices and investments that benefit the public stormwater management system.

For commercial properties, the amount of impervious area treated is subtracted from the total impervious area on a 50% credit for area treated, i.e., if the total impervious is 10,000 square feet and 2000 square feet are treated through an on-site base management practice, then the property would get credit for 1000 square feet, and the new fee is based on 9,000 square feet. For residential properties, a 20% credit would be available based on the amount of area treated in the three classes as follows:

Townhouses and Condominiums	250 sq ft treated
Single Family Homes on .25 acre or less	500 sq ft treated
Single Family Homes on greater than .25 acre	1,000 sq ft treated

Grants that would reduce the fee to zero are available to non-profit organizations if they agree to a partnership where the County defines and the non-profit organization implements the practices needed to reach the maximum extent practicable treatment on the property. Grants will be available to assist in the assessment and construction of on-site practices.

2. Hire additional project restoration staff

One additional project restoration engineer was hired to work within the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Environmental Services, Stormwater Management Division (SWMD) in February of 2013. The County is prepared to hire additional staff to expand various aspects of the water management program including remediation project management, fee and credit program management and outreach program development.

3. Complete a preliminary Countywide implementation strategy for meeting all aspects of the MS4 permit and Chesapeake Bay TMDL, using existing information

A draft *Countywide Implementation Strategy for Howard County* was completed July 11, 2013 and is currently under review by the County. The Countywide Implementation Strategy (CIS) was designed to:

- Demonstrate ways to meet the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Wasteload Allocations (WLA) approved by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA 2010)

- Provide additional stormwater runoff management on impervious acres equal to 20% of the impervious area for which runoff is not currently managed to the Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP)
- Educate and involve residents, businesses, and stakeholders in achieving measurable water quality improvements
- Establish a reporting framework for annual reporting under the County's new MS4 permit
- Provide an evaluation and adaptive management process for developing actions to be taken if permit requirements are not met, and
- Identify the organizational and funding changes needed to implement the CIS

4. Complete evaluation of ESD stormwater opportunities on County-owned properties and begin implementation of identified retrofit projects

The County completed its evaluation of ESD stormwater opportunities on County-owned properties and documented the study in the *Howard County Low Impact Development (LID) Retrofits and Tree Planting Summary Report* dated May 8, 2013. The study identified 34 potential LID retrofits and 32 tree planting sites on 22 different County facilities that would treat approximately 43 impervious acres. Implementation began in June 2013 on one of the larger proposed retrofit sites: The County Recreation and Park Headquarters. SWMD staff and their consultant are working with Department of Recreation and Park staff to create a site plan that will accommodate future growth and proper equipment and materials storage needs as well as provide stormwater management for, not just a small retrofit area, but potentially the majority of the site. An additional two projects are scheduled to begin design within fiscal year 2014. The County is also looking to move forward with tree planting on many of the proposed sites.

During the Summer of 2012 Howard County provided the funding for the first year of the READY (Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth) Rain Garden Program. Several groups including the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, People Acting Together in Howard (PATH), Parks and People Foundation, and the University of Maryland Extension Service ran the program which teaches young adults about environmental issues, trains them to build water quality projects, asks them to give presentations throughout the community, and has them install local projects, such as rain gardens and conservation landscapes on non-profit and County owned properties. In the first year of the READY program, 31 young adults were trained and they installed numerous rain gardens, which cumulatively treated 210,000 square feet of impervious area. The goal for the program for summer of 2013 is to treat 300,000 square feet of impervious area. More information about the READY Program can be found at:

<https://allianceforthebay.org/our-work/healing-the-land/ready-program/>

5. Complete evaluation of dry ponds Countywide and begin implementation of identified retrofit projects

The County is in the process of finalizing its March 2013 draft evaluation of dry ponds throughout the County. The report entitled *Howard County Dry Pond and Extended Detention Pond Retrofits Summary Report* identifies and includes concepts for 53 potential retrofits of over 300 impervious acres on 52 properties. Two projects are anticipated to begin design within fiscal year 2014.

The County also continues to look for opportunities to retrofit any ponds or other stormwater management facilities that are scheduled for maintenance. As a result of our routine triennial BMP inspection program, eight retrofit projects have been constructed between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2013 and an additional six retrofit projects were under design as of June 30, 2013.

6. Establish Watershed Stewards Academy and hold first round of classes

The Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA) is finishing up its first 15-week class, and the students are currently working on their capstone projects, consisting of in the ground rain gardens or outreach programs to neighborhoods. Plans for a second class to start Fall 2013 are underway.

7. Develop and begin implementing an enhanced public education and outreach program based on social marketing for stormwater management, septic system pump outs, and urban nutrient management

Stormwater Management

The County has made stormwater management information available through two websites:

1. www.cleanwaterhoward.com and
2. <http://howardcountymd.gov/SWM.htm>

The websites provide information on the WPRF, watershed studies, flood protection and insurance, illicit discharges, and community involvement, among other topics. The second website also includes a link to Howard County's most recent Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Annual Report, submitted in June of 2013 as the County's 18th Annual Report.

Stormwater management information and information on other ways to "Live Green" can be found by following Howard County on Facebook and Twitter.

In 2013, the County's Office of Environmental Sustainability also awarded the Center for Watershed Protection the first Howard County Sustainable HOA/Community Grant for \$34,023 which will be used to engage residents in the Tiber Hudson Watershed through outreach, education and small-scale implementation of stormwater management techniques and monitoring efforts.

Septic Systems

In 2011, the Howard County Health Department added information to its webpage noting that old prescriptions and medicines should not be poured down the drain or flushed since it may negatively affect the quality of streams, waterways, and the Bay. Information regarding the benefits to regular septic tank maintenance and managing what you place into the septic system are being developed for our website. The Health Department, through funding from the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF), continues to identify and inspect qualifying properties with failing septic systems, connect eligible homes on septic to the public sewerage system within the Metropolitan District, and upgrade septic systems meeting established criteria under the BRF program. Beginning in January 2013, all new septic system installations are required to install BAT. A grandfathering provision enabled some planned system installations to be installed during 2013 with conventional systems. This provision will expire on December 31, 2013.

Urban Nutrient Management

The SWMD continues to attend the Urban Nutrient Management Group meetings. The Fertilizer Use Act of 2011 was promoted through the group and was advertised in the County Stormwater newsletter.

8. Seek increased funding to expand the County-sponsored watershed enhancement grant program

Every year the Howard County Stormwater Management Division offers a Watershed Enhancement Grant to local non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations. The purpose of the grant is to encourage change in citizen and community behavior as they affect water quality in the Howard County's lakes, rivers and streams. Such changes can be attained through grass roots education and outreach activities. This grant is intended to:

1. increase citizen awareness and participation in water quality issues and projects,
2. provide education opportunities for Howard County residents, and/or
3. implement restoration projects.

Funding has increased in the Capital Budget between January 2012 and December 2013 to expand the funds available for the Watershed Enhancement Grant. The County will continue to look to increase this amount in future years.

9. Seek additional funding for providing economic incentives to septic system owners to encourage retrofit of BAT systems

The County continues to provide funding to encourage onsite sewage disposal system owners to retrofit their systems to best available technology (BAT) systems or, if in the Planned Service Area, assist with connections to the public system. For fiscal year 2014, Howard County has received \$155,000 in new funding from MDE (through the Bay Restoration Fund) to continue this process. This funding should enable 10-12 new upgrades and/or public sewerage system connections to occur. . The total number of BAT installations on existing septic systems between 2009 and 2013 is 57, of which seven were installed in fiscal year 2013. An additional three BAT installations for existing dwellings are currently under design.