



Key Findings and Recommendations from Leadership Council Interviews:

Opportunities for Re- Energizing the Partnership

January 14-15 2020 APNEP Strategic Planning Meeting

Objectives of the Strategic Planning Session

- Better understand the variety of roles NEPs play in their watersheds and opportunities for meeting the challenges posed by a large watershed
- Agreement to renew commitment to shared goals
- Reaching agreement on shared goals, mission, roles & responsibilities
- Narrowing the focus areas and the corresponding geographic areas of the Partnership

Objectives of the Strategic Planning Session

- Re-shaping the Partnership's management structure and governance procedures to reflect focus areas/corresponding geographic areas
- Reaching agreement on the appropriate priorities, roles and responsibilities for the Director and staff, ensuring both support and accountability
- Making a collective decision on the best home entity for the Partnership Office, its staff and funding

Objectives of the Strategic Planning Session

- Recognize and take needed actions to make the Partnership more resilient to changes in North Carolina's state administrations
- Commit to adopting indicators with numerical targets to be regularly reported to the public as measure of progress towards the Partnership's goals
- Agreement to pursuing all possible avenues for raising funds for supporting expanded implementation of management, restoration and protection actions

Desired Outcomes from the Strategic Planning Meeting

- Agreement on unprecedented opportunity to re-energize the Partnership and taking the steps needed to make this happen
- Input from all participants on all the findings and recommendations
- A clear game plan for the next steps with due dates and deadlines
- A record all suggestions and ideas raised throughout the meeting along with all decisions and follow-through actions shared with all participants within a week following adjournment

CoastWise PARTNERS

Holly Greening & Rich Batiuk

We'll work for (good) food!



Who We Are



Rich Batiuk, retired from U.S. EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office. Instrumental in designing Chesapeake Bay's extensive cooperative approach to meeting Bay targets.

Holly Greening, retired from Tampa Bay Estuary Program. Facilitated Tampa Bay's successful nutrient management and seagrass recovery strategy.



OFFERING VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE WITH...



GOAL-SETTING



ESTABLISHING CRITERIA



TECHNICAL ADVICE



MONITORING DESIGN

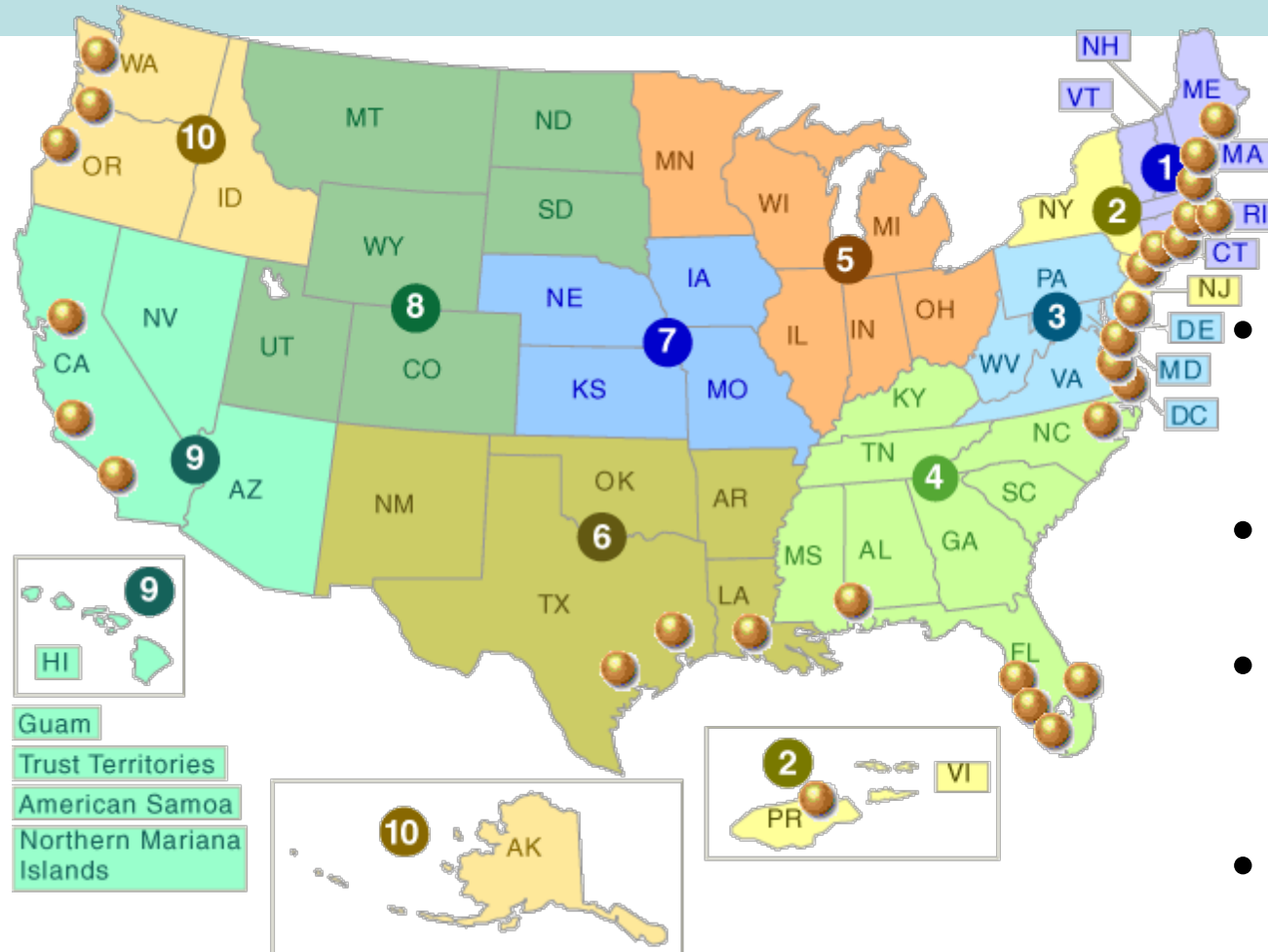


WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION



PEER REVIEWS

National Estuary Program: Local watershed programs making a difference



- Focus on the watershed or ecosystem
- Collaborative problem solving
- Integrate strong science with sound decision making
- Public participation

Unique Qualities of NEPs

- ✓ Non-regulatory, place-based, regional watershed partnerships
- ✓ Long history of partnership (20+ years)
- ✓ Strong and broad community partnerships comprised of citizens, local and state governments, regulators, NGOs, academics, Federal agencies
- ✓ Common vision/ measurable goals for restoration and protection
- ✓ Collaborative watershed approach
- ✓ NEPs viewed as 'honest brokers'



UNIQUE PROBLEMS, UNIQUE SOLUTIONS

Common NEP Challenges

Documented improvements are hampered by:

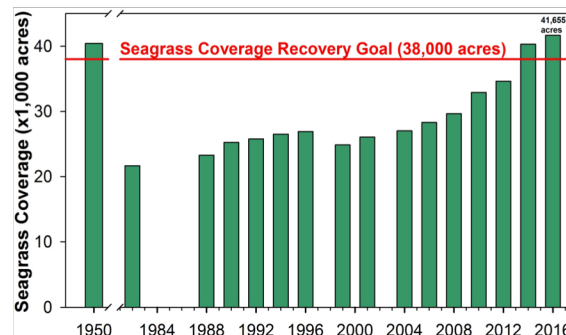
- Inadequate monitoring to detect changes (46% of estuaries do not have adequate monitoring to detect change)
- Lag time between action (pollutant reduction) and response
- Increased population pressures which may overwhelm advances
- NEPs are small fish in a big sea- focus on those issues where we can make a difference, e.g., smaller areas of the bays/watersheds or a limited number of issues
- Coordination/facilitation actions are critical, but often not recognized as contributing to improvements
- Resources, resources, resources (staff, time, funds)

Small fish in a big sea: Focus on small number of integrated issues

Example: Restoring Seagrass in Tampa Bay

Seagrass is considered a **'worthy target'** by public and scientists

- **Integrates science:** water quality, sediment quality, watershed management, fisheries and wildlife, air quality issues
- **Integrates partners actions:** nutrient or sediment reductions
- **Integrates education:** watershed connections, residential fertilizer and landscaping practices; boating and fishing practices
- **Integrates regulations:** nutrient criteria, TMDLs, local ordinances
- **Integrates value:** economic importance, ecosystem services, resiliency
- **Easy to communicate to the public:** annual water quality report; seagrass extent every two years is eagerly anticipated.



Year	Old Tampa Bay	Hillsborough Bay	Middle Tampa Bay	Lower Tampa Bay
1975	Red	Red	Red	Green
1976	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
1977	Red	Red	Red	Red
1978	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
1979	Red	Red	Red	Red
1980	Red	Red	Red	Red
1981	Red	Red	Red	Red
1982	Red	Red	Red	Red
1983	Red	Yellow	Red	Red
1984	Red	Green	Red	Yellow
1985	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
1986	Red	Yellow	Red	Green
1987	Red	Yellow	Red	Green
1988	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green
1989	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow
1990	Red	Green	Red	Yellow
1991	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
1992	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
1993	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
1994	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red
1995	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow
1996	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green
1997	Yellow	Green	Red	Yellow
1998	Red	Red	Red	Red
1999	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
2000	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
2001	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
2002	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
2003	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow
2004	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
2005	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
2006	Green	Green	Green	Green
2007	Green	Green	Green	Green
2008	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow
2009	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green
2010	Green	Green	Green	Green
2011	Red	Green	Yellow	Green
2012	Green	Green	Green	Green
2013	Green	Green	Green	Green
2014	Green	Green	Green	Green
2015	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green
2016	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
2017	Yellow	Green	Green	Green

Data source: EPCHC

Potential Integrating Issues that resonate with the public in the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuary System

SAV restoration and protection

Restoring and Supporting Fisheries Habitat

- Half of the **juvenile fish habitat** from Maine to Florida is represented by the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuary.
- Recreational fisheries in 2008 had a \$1.6 billion impact on North Carolina's **economy**. Saltwater fishing in 2010 created over 17,000 NC jobs. Commercial fisheries in 2012 had a \$116 million impact on North Carolina's economy. The estimated economic impact of seafood dealers on North Carolina's economy in 2009 was \$255 million.

A focus on fisheries habitat restoration and protection could integrate science, management, policy, living shorelines, economy and education both in the Sounds and throughout the watershed.



Small fish in a big sea, cont.

Successful roles that NEPs play in their study areas

Small budget, big impact, unique roles

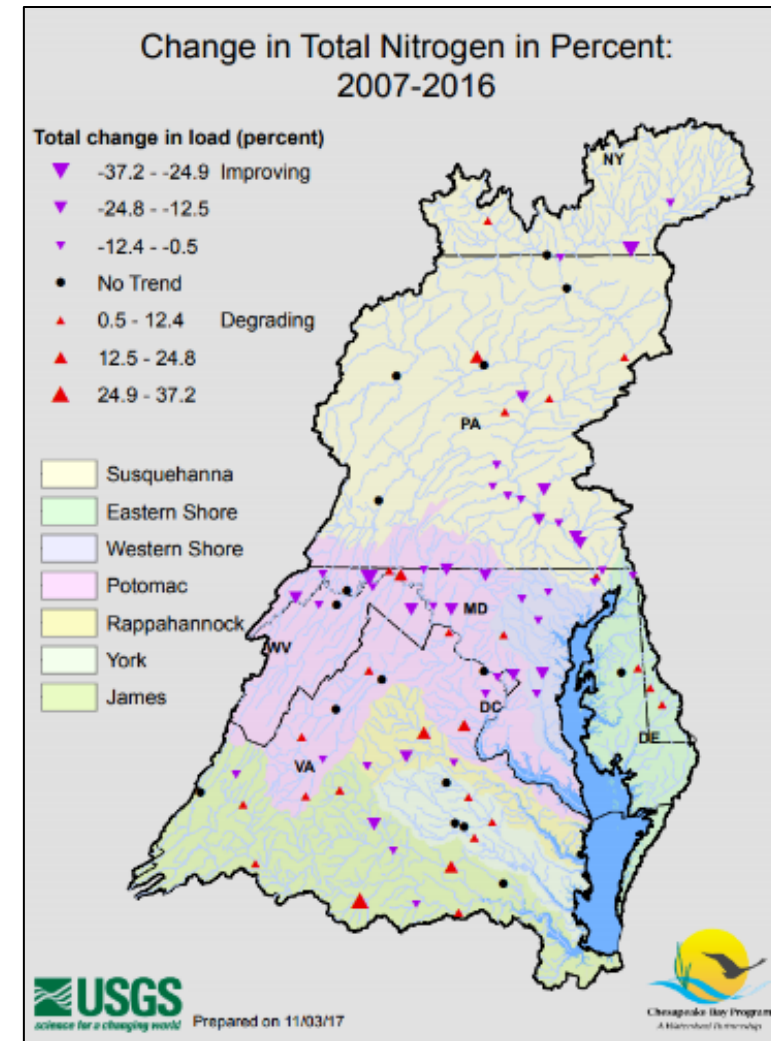
- **Facilitate:** defining community-based, scientifically-sound measurable goals and objectives
- **Convene:** partners, agencies, communities, general public
- **Synthesize:** monitoring data, projects conducted in the watershed, progress towards goals
- **'Honest broker':** unbiased source of scientific information, non-partisan
- **Community engagement:** links science, management and policy with the public
- **Education and outreach:** partners and the community



**How to be
Successful in
Restoring an
Estuary with a
Large Watershed**

Key Elements of Managing a Large Watershed Through a Partnership

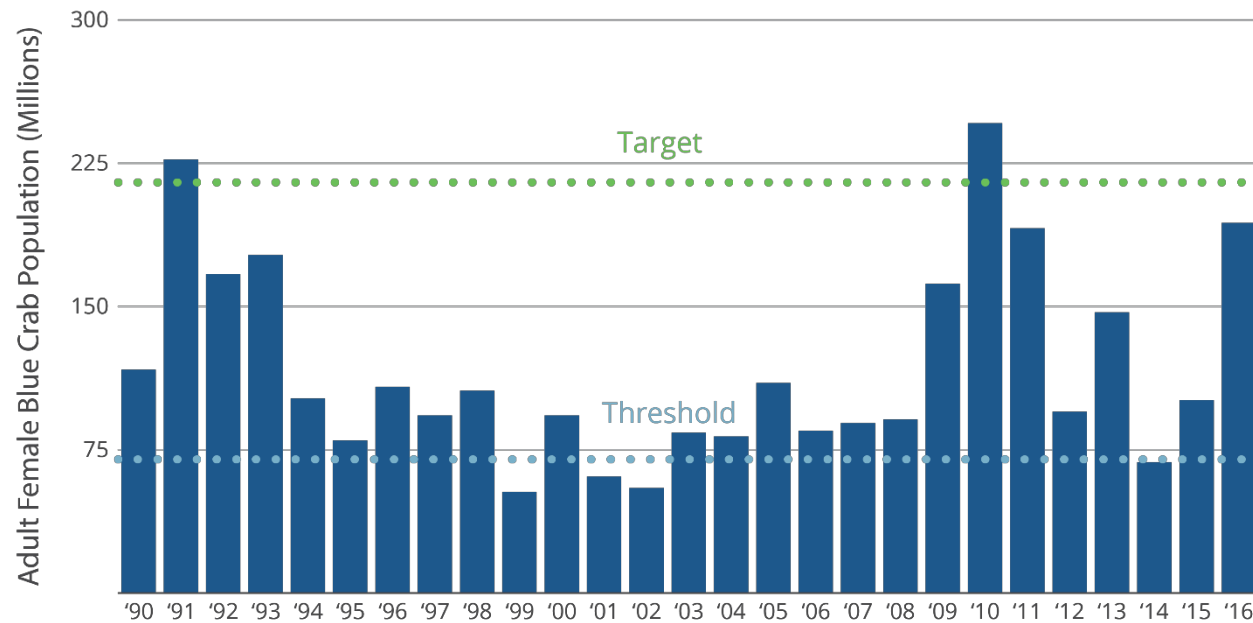
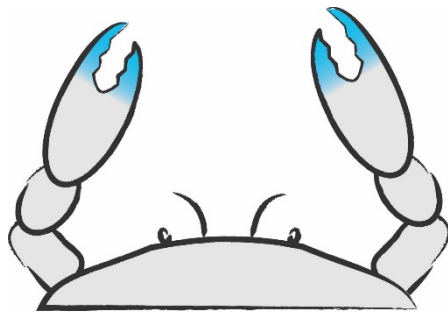
- Support inclusive management structure for consensus decision making
- Ensure the management structure directly reflects the Partnership's Goals, Objectives and Mission
- Institutionalize an independent retroactive and proactive Advisory Role for the Scientific Community



Set Numeric Restoration Goals and Measure Progress Towards Achievement

Blue Crabs

(abundance of adult spawning age females)

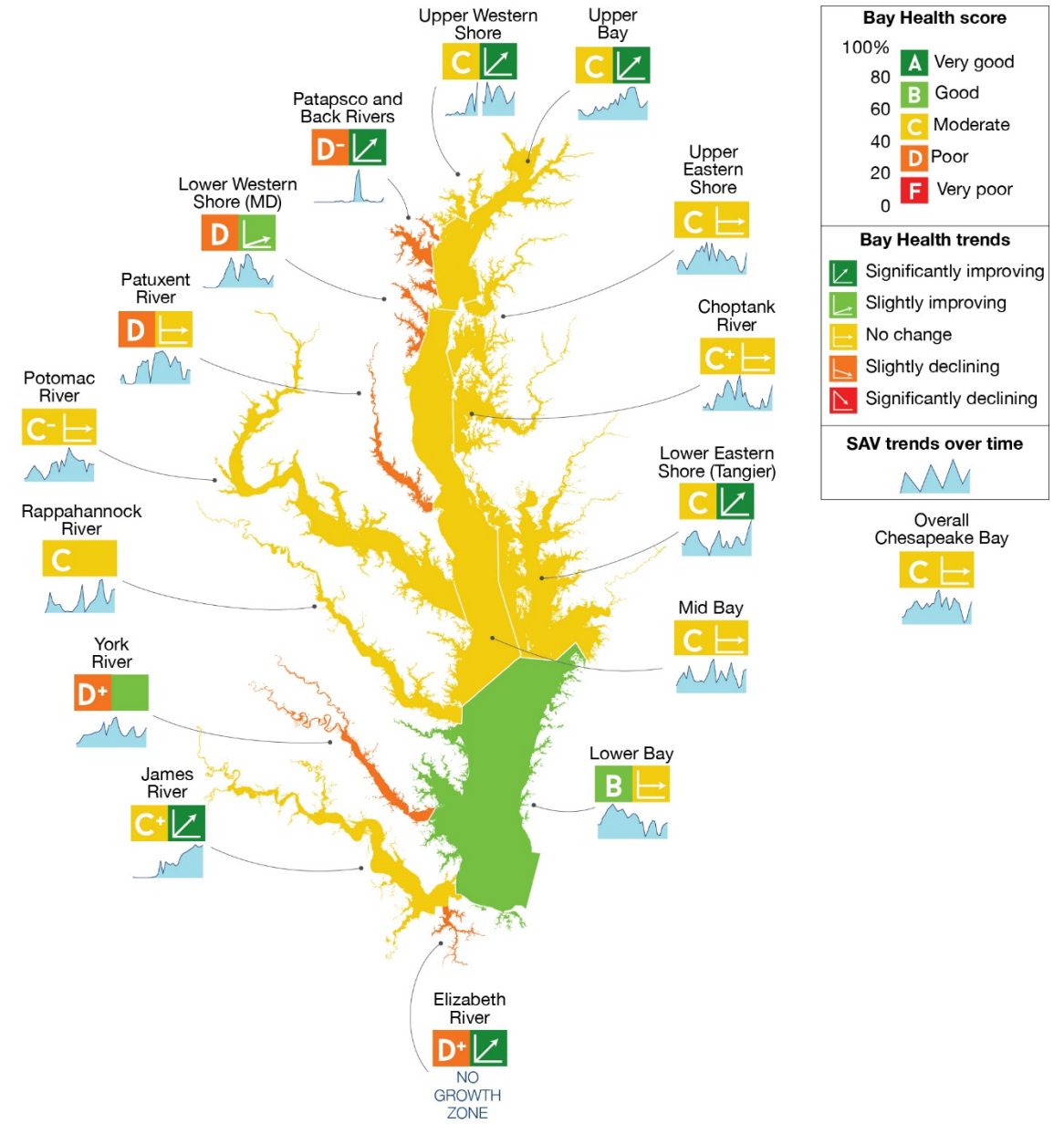
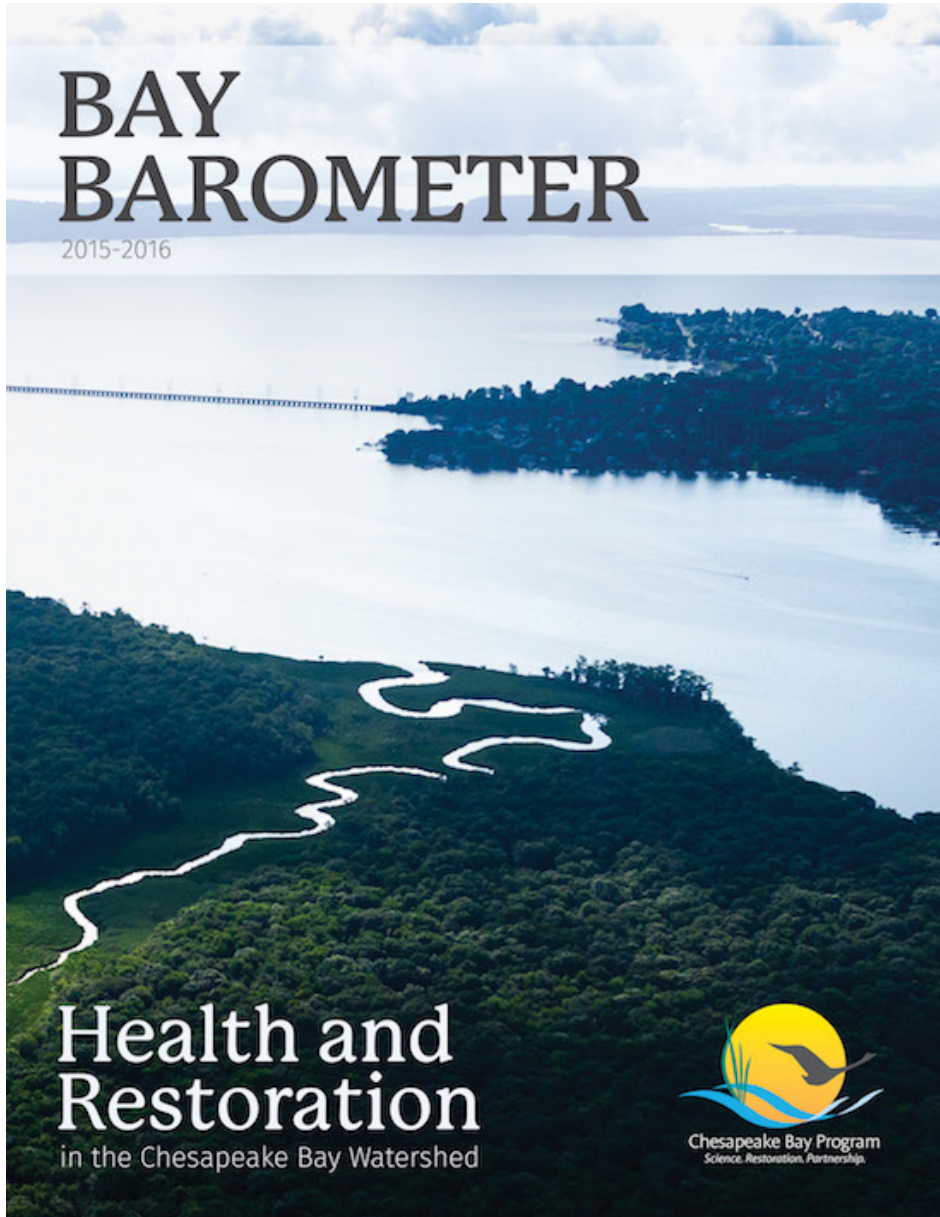


2016 – 194 million

2015 – 101 million

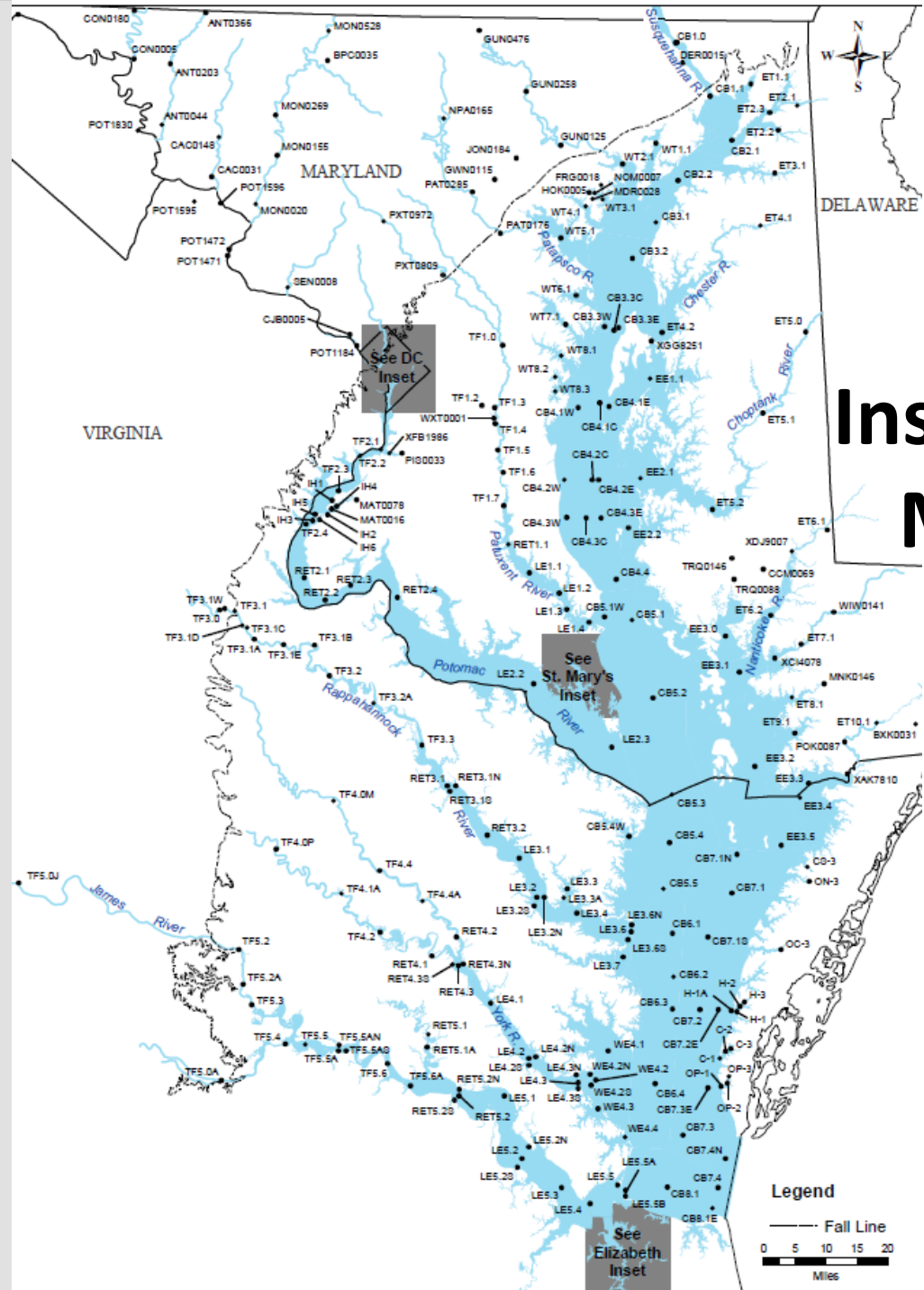
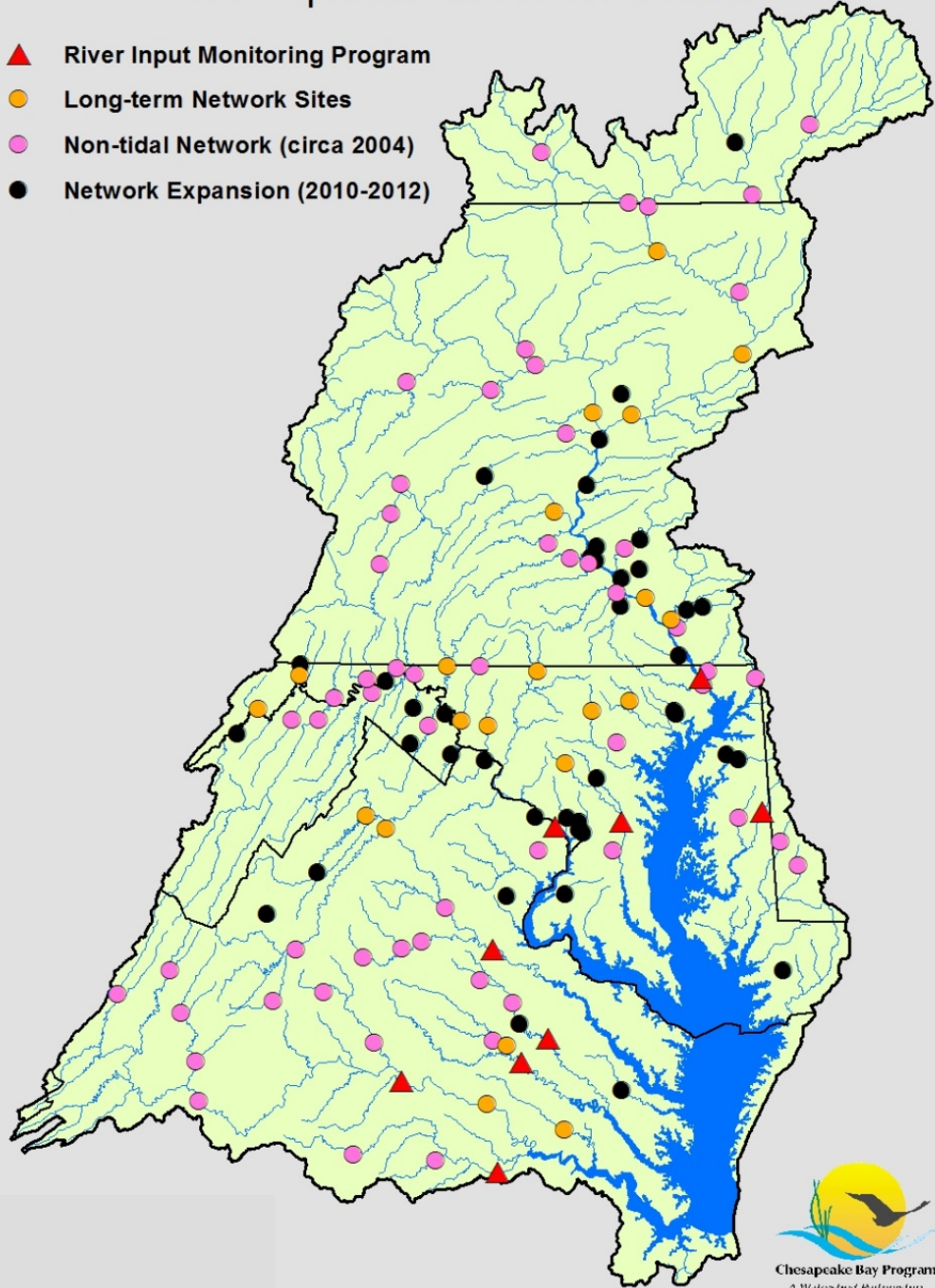
This number is above the 70 million overfishing threshold but below both the 215 million target abundance.

Keep the Public Regularly Informed on Progress Towards Goals



Chesapeake Non-tidal Network

- ▲ River Input Monitoring Program
- Long-term Network Sites
- Non-tidal Network (circa 2004)
- Network Expansion (2010-2012)



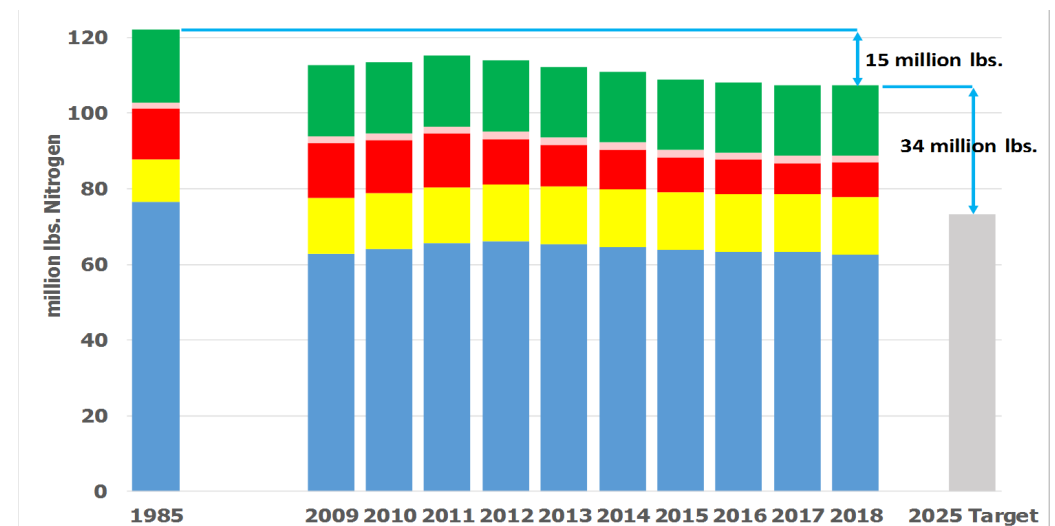
Build and Institutionalize Monitoring Networks

Key Elements of Managing a Large Watershed Through a Partnership

- Conduct regular re-assessments of goals and progress and make needed course adjustments
- Commit to a system of public accountability
- Hold partners accountable to their share of achieving goals

2018 Oversight Status

	Agriculture	Urban/Suburban	Wastewater	Trading/Offsets
Delaware	Enhanced Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight
District of Columbia	Not Applicable	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight
Maryland	Ongoing Oversight	Enhanced Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight
New York	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Enhanced Oversight	Ongoing Oversight
Pennsylvania	Backstop Action Levels	Backstop Action Levels	Ongoing Oversight	Enhanced Oversight
Virginia	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight
West Virginia	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight	Ongoing Oversight

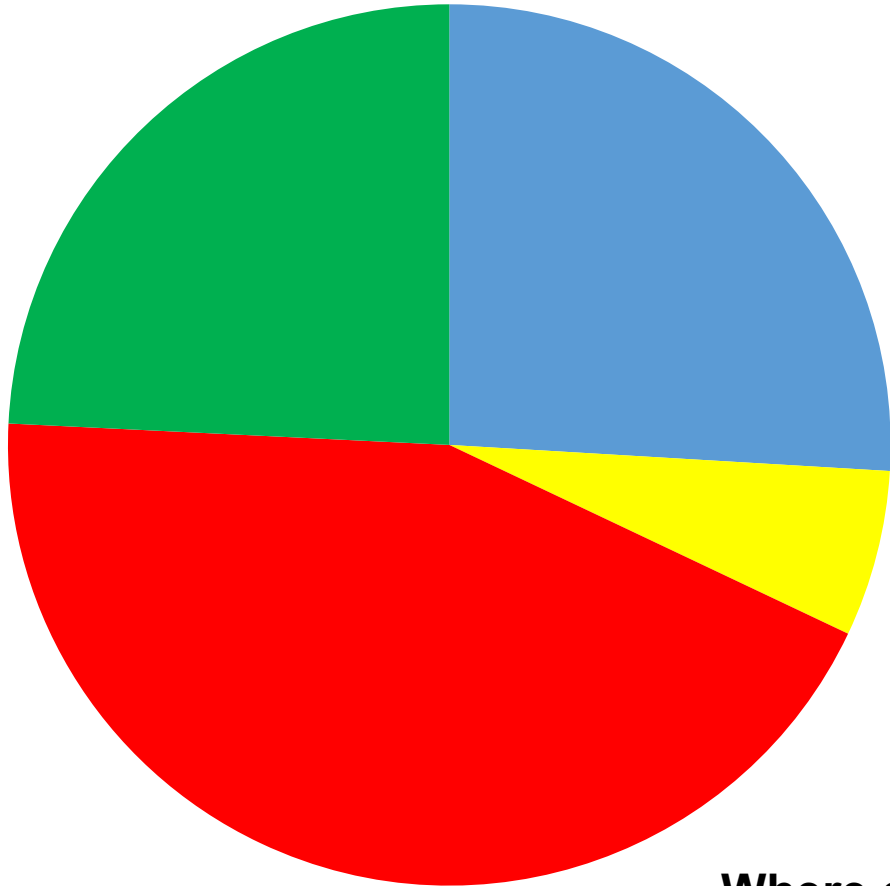


**A Partnership Can
Make Measurable
Progress in a
Large Watershed!**

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Phosphorus Loads from All Sources Reduced by 49 Percent from 1985-2018

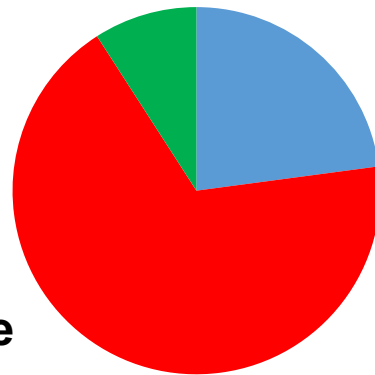
29.3 million lbs.

■ Agriculture ■ Developed ■ Wastewater ■ Natural

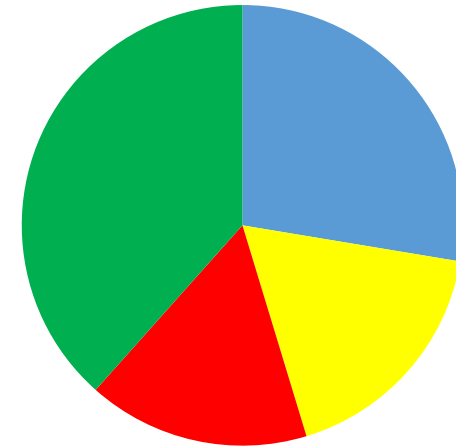


1985

Where did the phosphorus reductions come from?



68% Wastewater
23% Agriculture
9% Natural



2018

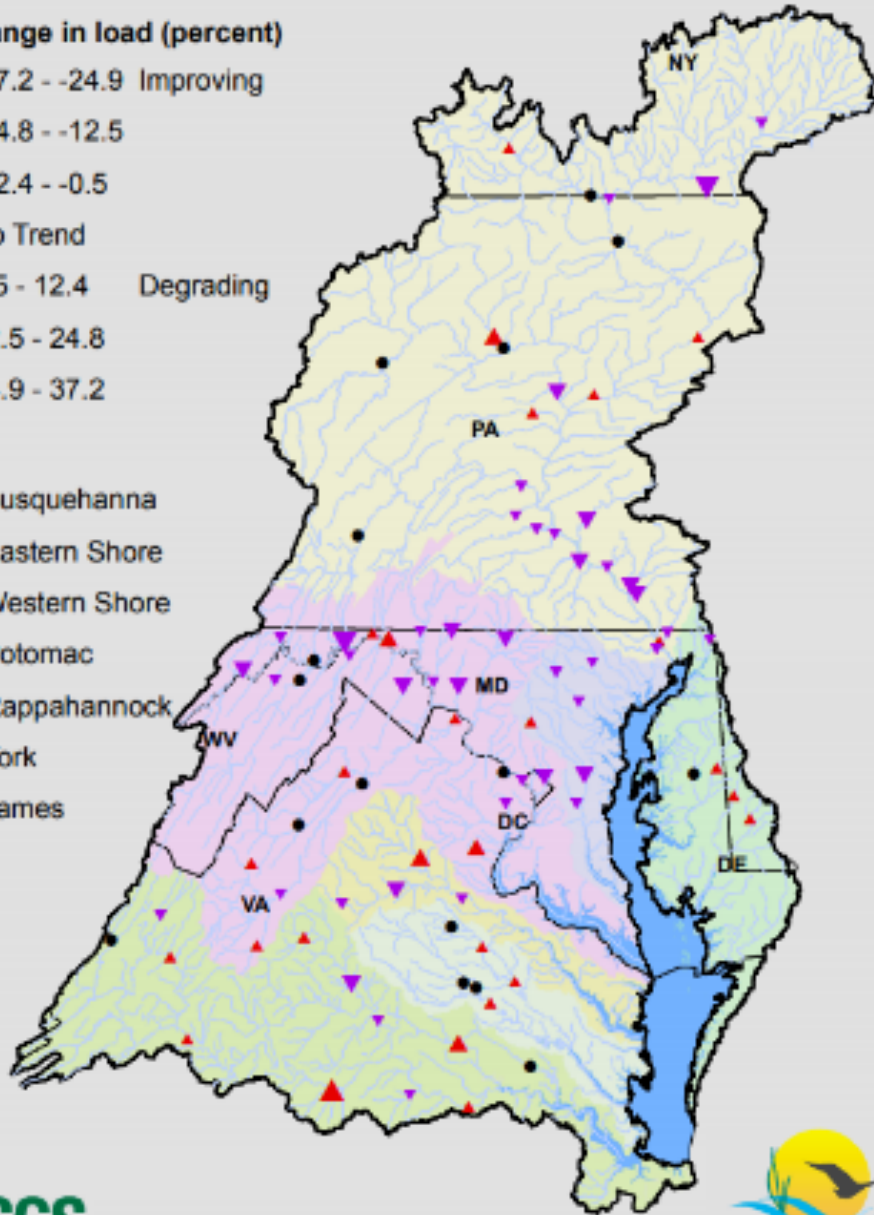
14.8 million lbs.

Change in Total Nitrogen in Percent: 2007-2016

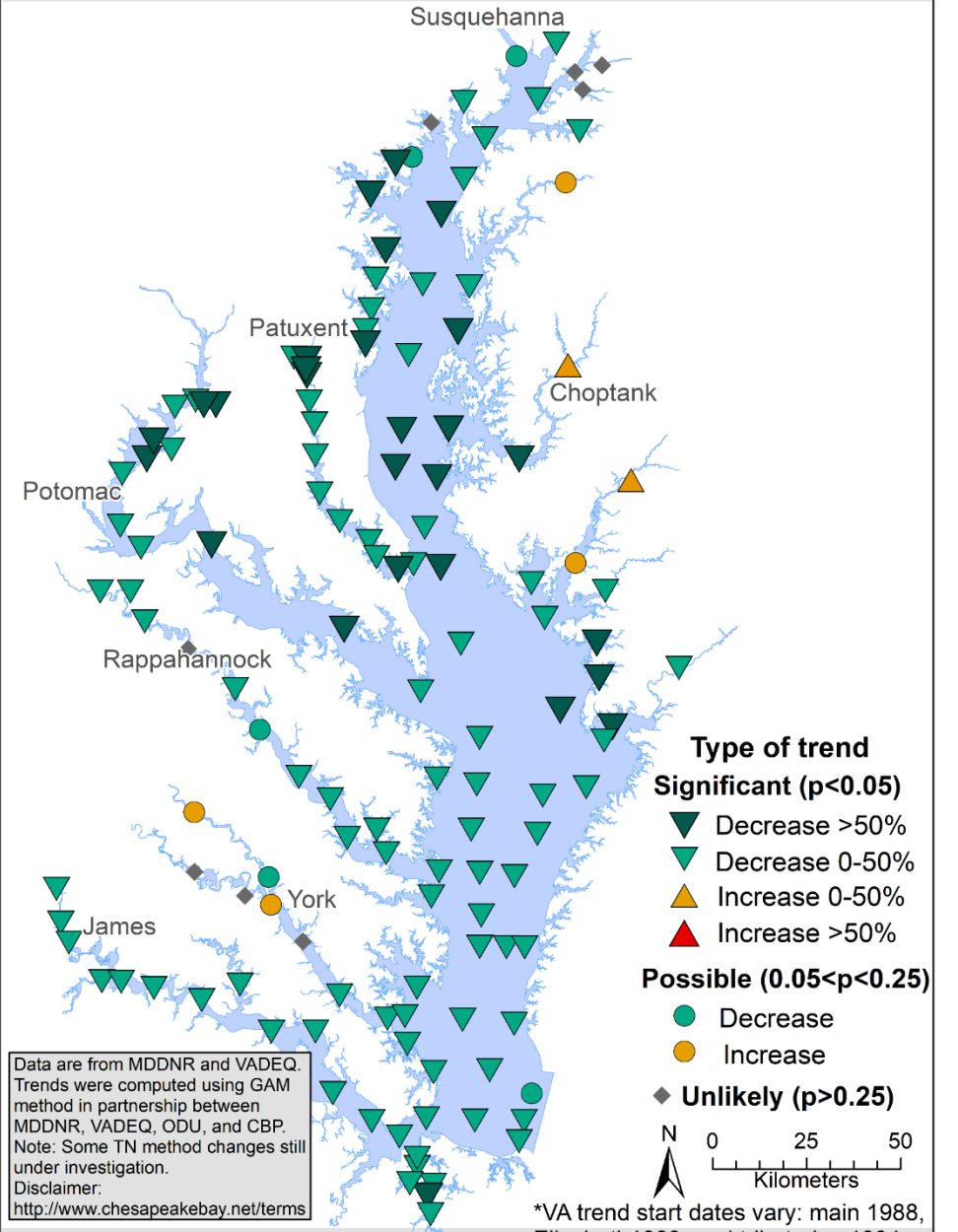
Total change in load (percent)

- ▼ -37.2 - -24.9 Improving
- ▼ -24.8 - -12.5
- ▼ -12.4 - -0.5
- No Trend
- ▲ 0.5 - 12.4 Degrading
- ▲ 12.5 - 24.8
- ▲ 24.9 - 37.2

- Susquehanna
- Eastern Shore
- Western Shore
- Potomac
- Rappahannock
- York
- James



Trends for Surface Total Nitrogen in the Chesapeake Bay: 1985-2017*

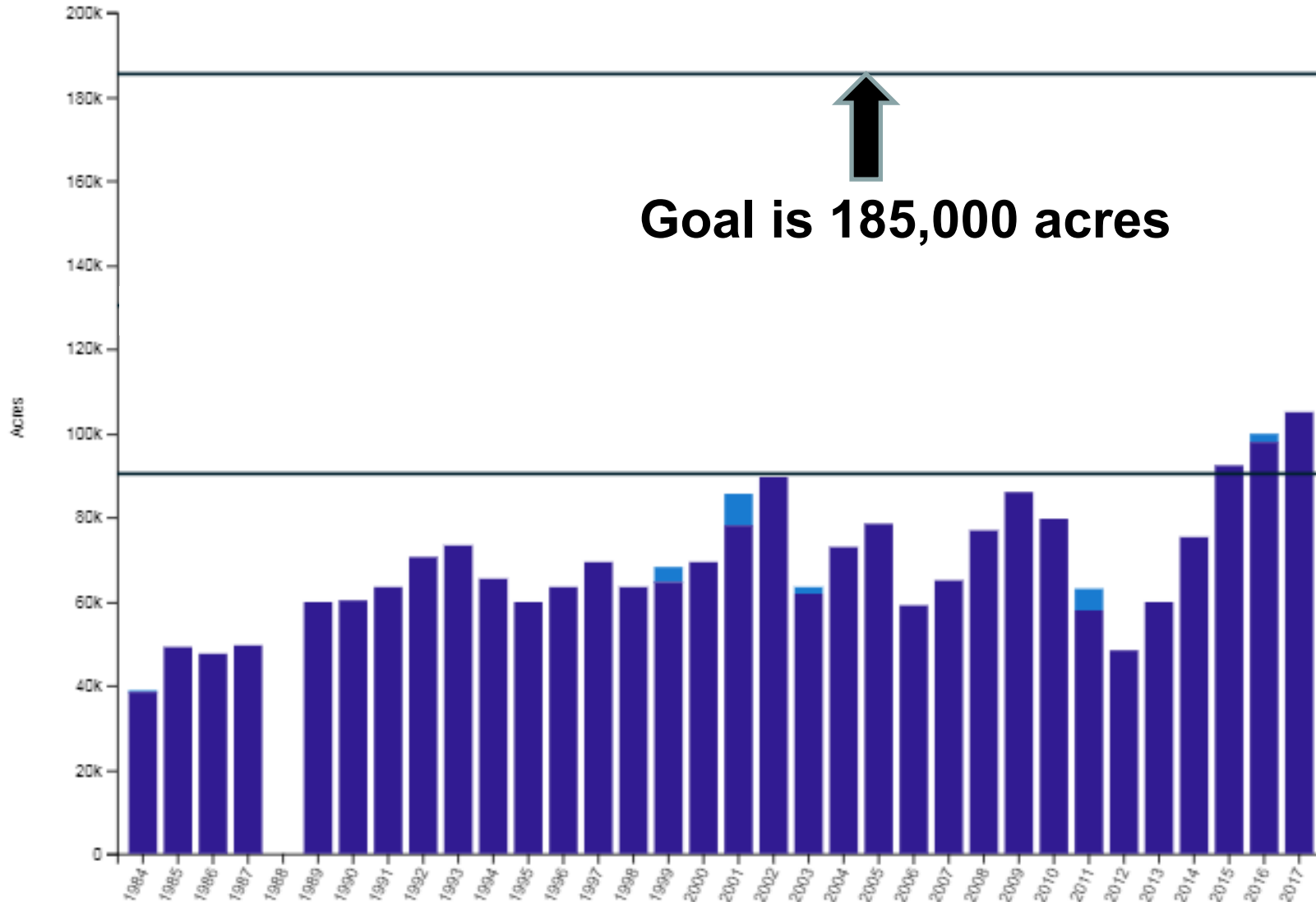


Data are from MDDNR and VADEQ. Trends were computed using GAM method in partnership between MDDNR, VADEQ, ODU, and CBP. Note: Some TN method changes still under investigation. Disclaimer: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/terms>

Map created by RM, 2/25/2019

*VA trend start dates vary: main 1988, Elizabeth 1989, and tributaries 1994.

Chesapeake Bay Underwater Grasses are More than Halfway to their Restoration Goal



Goal is 185,000 acres

More than
100,000 acres
in 2017!



**The Albemarle-Pamlico
National Estuary
Partnership is poised to
adopt and implement many
of these Key Elements**

**Your discussions and
decisions today can start
that process**

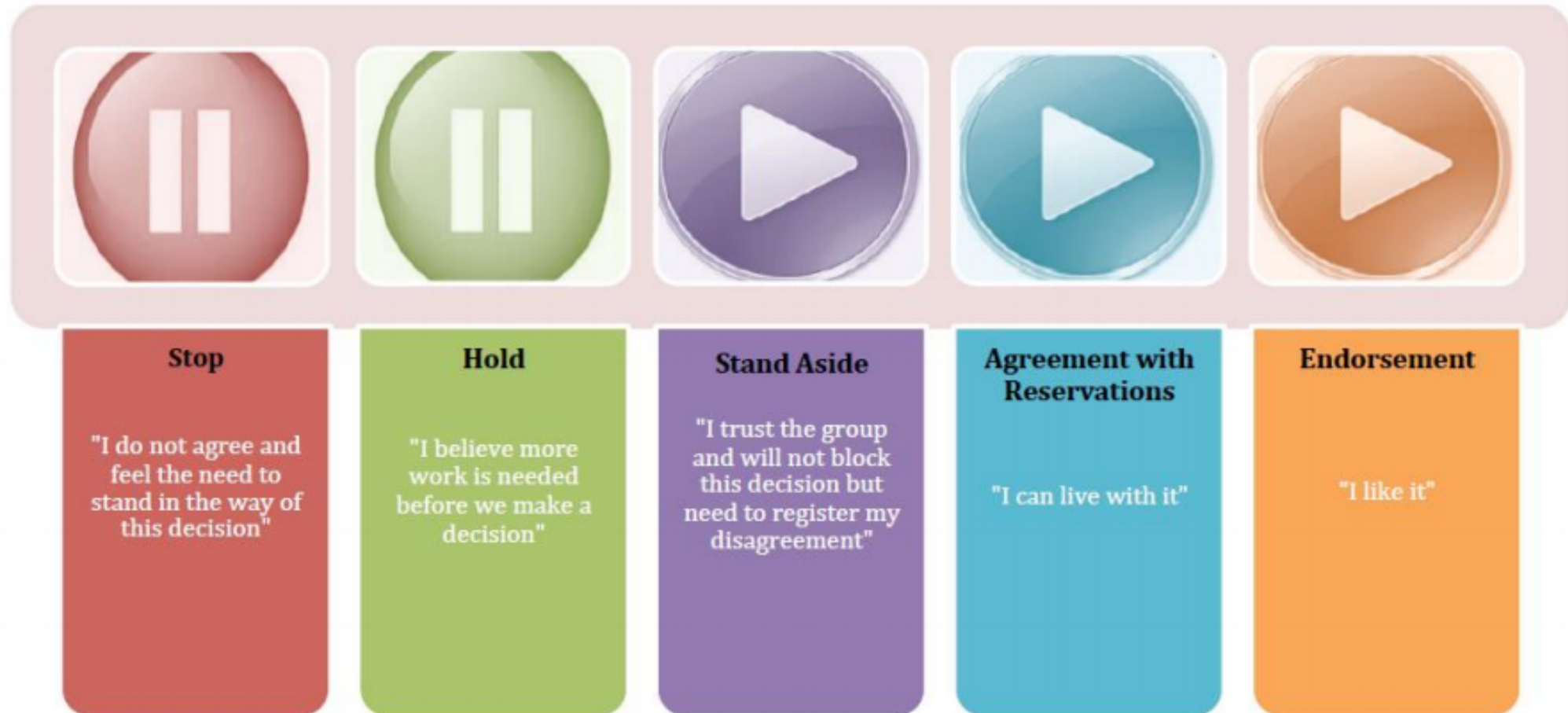
Key Findings and Recommendations from the Leadership Council/Staff Interviews

Opportunities for Re-Energizing the Partnership

- Key findings based on from the Leadership Council members, STAC chair and Partnership Office Director and staff interviews
 - Extracted from the compilation of all responses to each of the questions
- Recommendations from CoastWise Partners
 - Based on their experiences with the operation of numerous watershed-based partnership organizations across the country and around the world.

Working Towards Consensus

Consensus Continuum



1. Finding: The APNEP Leadership Council members recognize that serious challenges remain to becoming a successful Partnership. However, they also recognize the potential benefits and advantages of addressing the challenges and appear ready to tackle them.

Recommendations:

1.1 Agree to renew the partners' commitment to the goals of the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership through a formal agreement signed by the engaged partners. Consider staging a public ceremony for this signing, signaling a renewal of the Partnership to the public.

1.2 Agree to a date (month, year) at which time a formal agreement will be signed and the steps needed to prepare for the signing ceremony. Consider holding a Recommitment Ceremony in conjunction with the signing of the updated CCMP in 2022.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Agree to renew the partners' commitment to the goals of the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership. Agree to a date (month, year) at which time a formal agreement will be signed.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

2. Finding: APNEP still faces a number of very fundamental questions regarding its goals, its mission, its effectiveness, its roles, its public recognition and whether it is truly a partnership or strictly a federal grant program

Recommendations:

2.1 Reach agreement as to whether to continue to proceed forward strictly as a \$600,000 federal grant program supported by 8 staff persons or evolve into a true partnership with a common governance structure and shared policy, programmatic and technical decision-making.

2.2 Charge the Partnership Office staff to develop a renewed set of draft goals, mission statement and descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of the Partnership, its partners and the Partnership Office staff based on input from the January Strategic Planning Meeting for final decisions by the Leadership Council at a spring 2020 meeting.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Reach agreement if APNEP is a true partnership or strictly of federal grant program. Charge the Partnership Office staff to develop a renewed set of goals, mission statement and roles and responsibilities of the Partnership, its partners and the Partnership Office staff
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

3. Finding: The Partnership is burdened with a CCMP containing 52 different actions, an office staff working under an ecosystem-based management, a multitude of Teams, and the lack of priorities focused on a select set of integrated topics and defined geographic area(s) for management application.

Recommendations:

3.1 Charge the staff to team up with the chairs of the Leadership Council, Management Board, and STAC to develop a limited set (2 or 3) of integrating focus areas and the corresponding geographic areas.

3.2 Reconstruct the existing suite of teams to focus on the adopted near-term integrating focus areas.

3.3 Charge the staff to develop options, with pros and cons, for stepping up engagement of Virginia within the Partnership.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Charge Office staff and chairs to develop limited set of focus areas/geographies. Reconstruct teams to reflect focus areas. Charge Office staff for stepping up Virginia engagement options, pros/cons.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

4. Finding: The current management structure not functioning effectively, missing critical components, not representative, not fully engaged, lacking communication and clear direction, no organizational procedures driving towards products and decisions, number of teams outstripping the ability of partners to lead and participate in and Partnership Office staff to support them.

Recommendations:

4.1 Charge the Partnership Office to develop a set of options/ recommendations for making changes to the management structure and governance procedures to reflect focus areas/geographic areas.

- Ensure the Leadership Council members are higher policy level representatives who can make commitments on behalf of their respective agencies and organizations;

Recommendations:

- 4.1** Charge the Partnership Office to develop a set of options/ recommendations for making changes to the management structure and governance procedures to reflect focus areas/geographic areas. (Con't)
- Increase the frequency of Leadership Council meetings to quarterly during the revisions to the management structure. Direct agendas towards policy-oriented decisions and setting of priorities for the rest of the partnership;
 - Incorporate a Management Board into the management structure charged with responsibility to integrate the work of the teams and advisory committees. Management Board members could include representatives of the organizations comprising the Leadership Council and other Partnership organizations. Members should have the ability to integrate information from the Science and Technical Advisory Committee, the Citizen Advisory Committee, the Actions Teams and other relevant information;

Recommendations:

- 4.1** Charge the Partnership Office to develop a set of options/ recommendations for making changes to the management structure and governance procedures to reflect focus areas/geographic areas. (Con't)
- Reinststate a Citizens Advisory Committee and charge them with bringing the perspectives from the larger public communities into the Partnership;
 - Re-build a more functional and effective Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee; and
 - Build the institutional mechanisms for staffing and supporting a more functional, multi-partner management structure charged with making consensus decisions directed towards increasing on-the-ground restoration and protection actions.

Recommendations:

4.2 Charge the Partnership Office to develop an updated organizational chart along with a supporting set of updated governance procedures, bylaws and roles and responsibilities for each of the committees (including a newly convened Management Committee and re-established Citizens Advisory Committee) and teams.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Charge the Partnership Office to develop options/recommendations for changes to management structure, updated organizational chart, governance procedures, bylaws and roles.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

5. Finding: Diverse perspectives on the roles of Partnership, partners and staff supplemented by a lack of understanding or misunderstanding of the existing roles by those in partnership and office leadership positions as well as staff.

Recommendations:

5.1 Charge Management Board to work with the Partnership Office Director and the staff on reaching agreement on the most appropriate priorities, roles and responsibilities for the Partnership Office Director and each of the staff positions which, collectively, will fully reflect the Partnership adopted focus areas and geographies.

5.2 Charge the Partnership Office to develop a recommended set of roles and responsibilities for the partners for incorporation into the Partnership's governance documentation.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Reach agreement on the most appropriate priorities, roles and responsibilities for the Partnership Office Director and each of the staff positions; roles/responsibilities for partners.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

6. Finding: The effectiveness and productivity of the Partnership's Office staff is hampered by a lack of internal leadership, clear priorities and follow-through, and a collaborative team-based perspective as well as an inability to break from the past/establish a clear vision for the future, and questions as to the scope and focus of their individual/collective day-to-day roles and responsibilities.

Recommendations:

6.1 Charge the Management Board with ensuring Strategic Planning meeting outcomes are being met, that the Partnership Office Director and staff are fully accountable to the priorities and focus areas/geographies approved by the Partnership, and reporting progress on a quarterly basis to the Leadership Council.

6.2 Agree that the Leadership Council will work to ensure that the Partnership Office Director and staff are receiving the required level of support from the partners themselves.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Charge the Management Board with ensuring Strategic Planning meeting outcomes are being met, Director and staff are fully accountable and reporting progress on a quarterly basis to the Leadership Council.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

7. Finding: Growing concerns about and a diversity of perspectives on the best home entity of the Partnership Office and its staff and funding which, perceived or real, are impacting the ability of Partnership Office and the Partnership itself to be seen as independent conveners and facilitators.

Recommendations:

7.1 Agree to continue the ongoing assessment of the need for and potential alternatives for an organizational home.

7.2 Finalize a decision on the need for changes, if any, to the organizational home by January 2021, to allow adequate time to implement the decision prior to the 2022 recommitment and CCMP signing ceremony.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Growing concerns about and a diversity of perspectives on the best home entity of the Partnership Office and its staff and funding.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

8. Finding: Multi-decadal scale and well-established history of dramatic swings in the physical number of staff persons, the organizational location of the office, as well as level of support for and visibility of the Partnership with changes in state administrations in North Carolina. These damaging dynamics, repeated throughout the Partnership's history, call into question the long-term viability of the Partnership and continued funding support from U.S. EPA.

Recommendations:

8.1 Agree that the Leadership Council recognizes that if the Partnership is to be successful and continued EPA funding assured, the Partnership needs to become more resilient to changes in North Carolina's state administrations.

8.2 Agree that the Leadership Council will identify and implement actions needed to prevent changes in staff, partnership visibility and priorities which are not based on decisions by the Partnership.

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Recognize the Partnership needs to become more resilient to changes in state administrations and take actions needed to prevent changes to staff, the Partnership not based on Partnership decisions.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

9. Finding: Partnership can't demonstrate success as it lacks agreement on indicators, environmental targets, monitoring networks generating management-relevant data, a system for shared assessment and interpretation and systems for tracking implementation actions and ensuring accountability to commitments toward shared goals.

Recommendations:

9.1 Charge the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to prepare a recommended set of indicators with numerical targets which will be regularly reported to the public as measure of progress towards the Partnership's goals.

9.2 Charge the reconstructed integrated Implementation Action Teams and Monitoring & Assessment Teams with responsibility for developing a monitoring network strategy responsive directly to the data and informational needs of the Partnership-approved integrated focus areas.

Discussion and Decisions

Summary of recommendations: Charge STAC to prepare a recommended indicators with numerical targets; charge reconstructed teams to develop a monitoring network strategy responsive to approved focus areas.

- **Discussion:**

- **Decision:**

- **Due Date(s):**

10. Finding: Not clear that the Partnership and its individual partners are pursuing all possible avenues for raising funds for supporting expanded implementation of management, restoration and protection actions prioritized by the Partnership.

Recommendations:

10.1 Charge the Management Board to invite a series of funding partners and financing experts share their recommendations on how to expand the current sources of funds available to the partners and the Partnership.

10.2 Charge the Partnership Office to evaluate the applicability to APNEP of sources of funding and financing opportunities being tapped into other National Estuary Programs and other similar watershed/large waterbody-based partnerships (e.g., Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes).

Discussion and Decisions

- **Summary of recommendations:** Agree to renew the partners' commitment to the goals of the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership. Agree to a date (month, year) at which time a formal agreement will be signed.
- **Discussion:**
- **Decision:**
- **Due Date(s):**

Review of Decisions on the Recommendations and Agreements on Next Steps

- Review approved actions and decisions on the recommendations
- Assign due dates for any follow-through actions still without deadlines
- Provide any further directions to the Partnership Office's Director and staff to follow-through on the decisions made during the meeting