

# Memo for Improved Collaboration with USDA



STAC Quarterly Meeting  
June 18, 2014

# The Problem



Restoring the Chesapeake Bay through TMDL implementation and other activities depends on cooperation and collaboration of all agencies, organizations, and partners in the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership.

However, a lack of coordination across federal agencies has provided opportunities for restoration efforts to be undermined or misinterpreted.

# Overall Goal



STAC urges closer collaboration among USDA, EPA, and other Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partners, particularly in the development, analysis, and communication of modeling results to ensure that activities are mutually reinforcing and contribute to cooperative problem-solving.

# Main Talking Points



1. Cooperation across federal agencies has already been agreed to or mandated through formal participation by both USDA and EPA in the CBP partnership, the mandates of the President's Exec Order of 2010, and the 2011 "work plan" agreement between EPA and USDA.
2. Despite these mandates and agreements and current cooperative efforts, modeling efforts have not been effectively coordinated.
3. Greater coordination among USDA, EPA, USGS, and other modeling partners could help better meet existing agreements and restoration objectives.

# STAC Recommendations

STAC recommends the following means for further improving communication and coordination between USDA, CBP, and other CBP partners.

- ❧ *Recommendation 1:* That USDA provide regular informal updates at the quarterly Modeling Workgroup meetings about relevant agency modeling issues related to the Chesapeake Bay, similar to the format currently followed by USGS and the partnership, and parallel to USDA's participation in the Agriculture Workgroup.
- ❧ *Recommendation 2:* That USDA become a more active participant of the Federal Advisory Committee and use this venue as a regular interagency communication forum on Bay modeling issues.
- ❧ *Recommendation 3:* That USDA provide ample opportunities and sufficient lead times for inter-agency review of USDA modeling reports related to the Chesapeake Bay prior to release to the general public.
- ❧ *Recommendation 4:* That USDA establish specific agency contacts for each of the above activities and provide them to the Bay partnership

# Closing



Should STAC should offer anything additional to help facilitate these recommendations?