

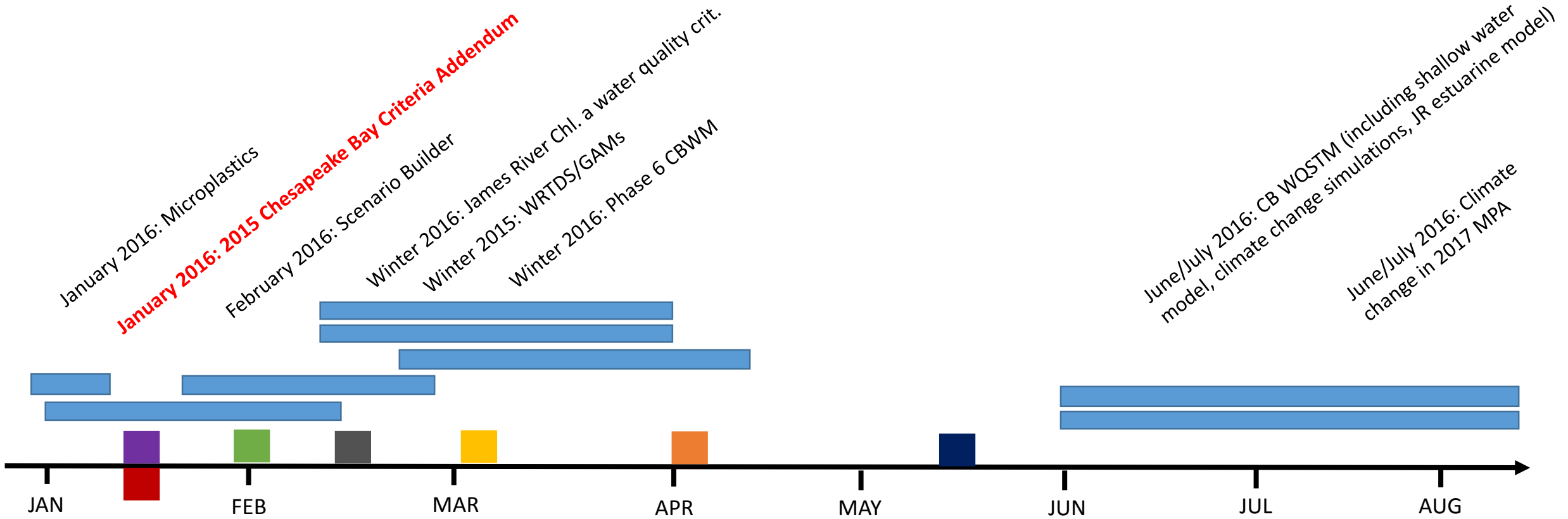


Update on STAC Reviews








STAC Executive Secretary, Bill Ball (CRC)

STAC Coordinator, Natalie Gardner (CRC)

STAC Review and Workshop Tentative Timeline (January 2016 – August 2016)



Workshop Key:

 Enhancing Capacity	 Climate Change
 Conowingo	 Integrating Monitoring Networks
 Assessing Uncertainty	 Shallow Water
 Optimization	

STAC Staff estimates 3 months for the completion of a review activity. These time frames are therefore approximate and are subject to change. Final timing of workshops during the fiscal year is also subject to change.

Process for STAC Review

(Panel Review of CBP Effort or Panel-Based Technical Synthesis Activity)

- **Request for review(s) is received** by STAC Project Office (“**STAC staff**”)
 - Responsive (received from CBP)
 - Proactive (received from STAC member(s))
- **Review is approved for funding**
 - involves cooperative discussions between STAC Project Office (CRC) and CBP
- **Review is approved by STAC Membership**
(at a Quarterly Meeting or through e-mail discussions and voting)
- **CBP (or others) provide the “charge” for the review**
 - Documents or description of materials to be reviewed
 - Questions for the review panel to consider
- **STAC Ad-Hoc Committee reviews/approves the charge questions**
- **STAC Executive Secretary identifies an appropriate review chair and STAC liaison**
STAC staff work with that chair and liaison to engage an appropriate review team
- **Review Panel conducts the review**
 - Information gathering and fact finding phase (may involve working meeting, webinar, or other correspondence with CBP personnel)
 - Review effort (individual and collaborative; TBD by panel with chair)
 - STAC staff assistance to edit and produce draft reports
- **STAC members review and approve the draft report** (with interim information sharing and exchange with CBPO)
- **STAC Executive Secretary (with help from other STAC staff) approves, edits, and produces the final report**
- **CBP provides response to review comments**

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STAC Review of 2015 Water Quality Criteria Addendum: Test Case for “Responsive” Reviews

- July 31, 2015. Request for review (from CBP’s STAR team Criteria Assessment Protocol workgroup) with the technical document and an initial set of questions
- Sept. 9, 2015. Review request was briefly discussed at the STAC retreat
- Oct. 9-14, 2015. STAC Ad Hoc Committee provided feedback to CBP on initial “Questions”.
STAC Ad Hoc Committee and CBP worked collaboratively to develop a template involving 3 types (or “tiers”) of questions.
- Dec. 2015. CBP provided a set of revised questions which have been approved by the review panel chair and the STAC Executive Secretary.

In the future, we hope that this process of question discussion and refinement (4-months here!) can be accomplished in less than two weeks.

STAC's Feedback

on some initially proposed review questions

Overall, the questions should be more general and open-ended, with more focus on the validity of the science used and conclusions drawn, and with less focus on approval of the methods used and approaches taken.

Rationale for a Tiered Approach

1. Reviewers often have concerns about clarity of the documentation.

- e.g., for the Water Quality Criteria Addendum, it is critical for the document to be clear for all who use it.
- Communication issues should be addressed early in the process, so that the technical review can proceed effectively.

2. There are often specific issues that the CBP would like to see addressed.

- Moreover, it may also sometimes be in a panel's best interest to proceed efficiently on review of these items without getting "bogged down" in too many broader discussions.

3. Reviewers need opportunity to raise broader conceptual concerns.

- The CBP appreciates that broader recommendations are in the long-term best interest of the partnership.
- One useful approach is to explicitly clarify Type 2 and Type 3 questions in the CBP request document. If this can be properly done, review panels could then be asked to think separately about Type 3 questions.
- Type 3 recommendations can perhaps have a separate timeline (and reporting section) to help avoid delay in getting "Type 2" recommendations to the CBP. ier

Three Types of Questions

Type 1: Clarity of the Charge and Documentation

How well does the document explain the approaches, procedures, protocols, and /or science issues that are to be reviewed? Is the documentation appropriate and clear?

Type 2: Review of Approach Within the Given Context

Within the context of a given overall conceptual approach (based on past decisions that are not subject to review here), how well do the proposed procedures and protocols reflect best practices in regard to available scientific understanding and the given constraints?

Type 3: Review of Conceptual Approach and Longer-Term Recommendations

For the longer term consideration of the CBP, what major shortcomings do you find in the overall approaches and procedures used and what alternative approaches and data gathering might you recommend?

STAC Review of 2015 Water Quality Criteria Addendum: Test Case for “Responsive” Reviews

Initial Questions

1. Do we accept the scientific bases for applying the Conditional Attainment approach as a method of stating cross-scale habitat protection using a single scale measurement (e.g., Does meeting a decision threshold value for a 30-day mean dissolved oxygen concentration provide protection for meeting the 7-day mean criterion when we do not have direct measurements sufficient to compute a 7-day mean?)
2. Do we accept the scientific basis for recommending an option for subdividing (subsegmenting) 3 habitat zones in the open water designated use of Chesapeake Bay that supports dissolved oxygen criteria attainment assessments?
3. Do we accept the options for assessing instantaneous minimum criteria to state habitat protection in the open water designated use?
4. Is the remaining documentation sufficiently supportive of communicating:
 - a. alignment of Bay grass goals?
 - b. interim decision rules on application of the BIBI?
 - c. guidance to nontraditional partners for collecting regulatory compliant dissolved oxygen data?
 - d. basis of measuring and reporting progress towards water quality standards attainment using the multi-metric water quality standards attainment indicator?

Final Questions

1. Please comment on the overall appropriateness of the approach taken and the level of documentation provided given the document’s objective (as an addendum) of filling in the gaps (when used in combination with the original criteria documentation) of providing the three states and the District with a complete set of guidance for assessing attainment of all their adopted previously published Chesapeake Bay dissolved oxygen, water clarity/underwater bay grasses, and chlorophyll a criteria.
2. How justified are the recommended criteria assessment procedures, given the approach used and data available?
3. Please comment on the scientific rigor of the methods used and whether application of the criteria assessment procedures will lead to assessment of attainment in regard to achieving conditions protective of aquatic life.
4. Are there any additional technical data or types of scientific information that should be included in the document and, if so, what are they and how would they help improve the scientific rigor of the methods?
5. Given anticipated continued advances in estuarine monitoring techniques and capabilities as well as continued evolution of statistical science, what future alternative or enhanced criteria assessment procedures should the Chesapeake Bay Program partners consider developing and adopting into the future?

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5. Given anticipated continued advances in estuarine monitoring techniques and capabilities as well as continued evolution of statistical science, what future alternative or enhanced criteria assessment procedures should the Chesapeake Bay Program partners consider developing and adopting into the future?

Additional “Informal Guidance”

Below is an informal listing of *some specific elements of the technical document on which the CBP is especially interested in feedback*. These are:

1. The scientific bases for applying the Conditional Attainment approach as a method of stating cross-scale habitat protection using a single scale measurement (e.g., Does meeting a decision threshold value for a 30-day mean dissolved oxygen concentration provide protection for meeting the 7-day mean criterion when we do not have direct measurements sufficient to compute a 7-day mean?)
2. The scientific basis for recommending an option for subdividing (sub-segmenting) 3 habitat zones in the open water designated use of Chesapeake Bay that supports dissolved oxygen criteria attainment assessments.
3. The options laid out for assessing instantaneous minimum criteria to state habitat protection in the open water designated use.
4. The clarity of the document’s communications with regard to:
 - a. the alignment of the criteria with Bay grass goals;
 - b. the interim decision rules on application of the BIBI;
 - c. the guidance provided to nontraditional partners for collecting regulatory compliant dissolved oxygen data; and
 - d. the basis of measuring and reporting progress towards water quality standards attainment using the multi-metric water quality standards attainment indicator.

Questions?