

## State Riparian Forest Buffer Action Strategies: Report Out Guidance

Following the 2022 Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Leadership Workshop, each state<sup>1</sup> developed a Riparian Forest Buffer (RFB) Action Strategy, outlining how they intend to accelerate RFB implementation over the next 5-10 years and meet buffer goals established in Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs). The Strategies and other materials from the Leadership Workshop are available on the [Forestry Workgroup](#) webpage.

At the Quarterly Progress Review Meeting for the RFB Outcome on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the Forestry Workgroup requested support from the Management Board in implementing the state RFB Action Strategies. The specific requests and decisions made by the Management Board are as follows:

- Request: 1. Commit to a tracking and accountability framework for the state Action Strategies:
  - a. Report on progress in 2-year programmatic milestones. b. Provide annual updates on plan implementation at MB meetings between now and 2025.
    - Decision: ACTION 1: Beginning February 2023, Jurisdictions will provide annual updates to the Management Board on the implementation of their respective Forest Buffer and Wetlands action plans<sup>2</sup>. The Jurisdictions will begin reporting on RFB implementation in their milestones where applicable beginning this year or next year if possible. Logistics will be confirmed by CBPO staff who will issue reminders to the Management Board.
- Request: 2.a Support investments in effective standalone flexible buffer programs (existing and new programs). 2.b Improve grant and Funding Provisions to better support building capacity in staff, contractors and outreach.
  - Decision: ACTION 2.a/2.b: Where possible, each jurisdiction (and appropriate federal agencies) will work to support actions 2.a and 2.b and will report progress at our annual Riparian Forest Buffer / Wetland Action Plan report out to the MB each February (along with whatever other actions from State plans they want to highlight). The Management Board's subsequent discussion as part of this annual agenda item will be to identify ways that MB members or the partnership can help support these actions and any specific items that we would like to elevate to the PSC for action in order to improve progress.

The first annual update on the implementation of RFB Action Plans will take place at the July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Management Board meeting. The Forestry Workgroup is requesting that jurisdictional Management Board representatives (or their delegates) present updates from their state, drawing on input and information provided by their respective Forestry Workgroup members. These presentations should be brief (~5 minutes in total) and cover the following recommended topics:

- Review overarching strategies identified to help meet buffer goals
- Summarize key accomplishments using performance indicators identified in the Action Strategies. Where appropriate, these accomplishments could also include any investments made in effective standalone flexible buffer programs (per Request 2.a.) and any changes made

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<sup>1</sup> Virginia is seeking contractor support to develop their strategy and anticipates having one in place no later than June 2023

<sup>2</sup> Wetland action plan report outs will be scheduled for a later date, details forthcoming

to grant and funding provisions to better support building capacity in staff, contractors, and outreach (per Request 2.b).

- Identify any challenges encountered in implementing the Action Strategies
- Discuss potential opportunities for State or Bay Program leadership to further support implementation of the Action Strategies

As outlined in Action 2.a & 2.b, following the state presentations, the Management Board will discuss ways that MB members or the Partnership can help support these actions and any specific items that we would like to elevate to the PSC for action to improve progress.