



**INTERSTATE COMMISSION  
ON THE  
POTOMAC RIVER BASIN  
STRATEGIC PLAN**

September 2014

Authorized by an Act of Congress in 1940, the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin is an advisory, non-regulatory interstate compact agency of the Potomac basin states of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The federal government also is a member. The ICPRB was formed in response to extreme pollution levels that required a regional, cooperative response by all the jurisdictions. In 1970, amendments to the compact empowered ICPRB to address not just pollution issues, but water resources and related land issues by two or more jurisdictions.

The river's water quality has in many ways vastly improved, but threats to the river (population increases, land use change and the growth of impervious surface, chemical contaminants, and nutrient and sediment enrichment) require regional attention. The regional efforts needed to address these challenges help to inform the ICPRB Strategic Plan.

This ICPRB Strategic Plan sets out our mission and shapes our activities to support our goals and objectives, to responsibly manage the things we do, to secure and sustain funding, to commit resources, and measure our performance. This Strategic Plan also serves as the basis for operational planning for the Commission. It will be continually updated to guide ICPRB operations.

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## **MISSION**

Protect and enhance the waters and related resources of the Potomac River basin through science, regional cooperation, and education.

## **VISION**

The Potomac River basin is a showcase for our great nation fulfilling both human and ecological needs.

## **VALUES**

- Commitment to the welfare of the basin
- Integrity in our work
- Rigorous and unbiased analysis
- Open communication in all our relationships

## **GOALS**

- To be recognized as a leader in the coordination of interstate and regional efforts by governments and other partners
- To be a provider of services to better meet the needs of our stakeholders
- A more informed and active public
- Decision making and actions supported by science

## **Key areas of emphasis**

To accomplish these Goals, while considering ICPRB's responsibilities assigned by its Compact and the resources available to it, ICPRB will focus on the four key areas described on the following pages. How these key areas can contribute to the Chesapeake Bay restoration is addressed in the last section of this plan.

## Communications and Education

### Focus:

- Inform and educate the public, using electronic and print media tools, on Potomac basin water quality and resources issues and the efforts of ICPRB and the basin states to address them;
- Foster active stewardship in the use and protection of the basin's waters through outreach and education programs for teachers, students, watershed groups, homeowners, and other stakeholders.

### Desired outcomes

- All stakeholders in a healthy Potomac watershed are informed and actively involved in its protection and, where necessary, restoration.

### Work Plan

#### FY2015

- Complete development of new website, which will integrate many facets of our public outreach efforts, making them more effective and simpler to produce.
  - Clearer access to information about Potomac watershed issues and about ICPRB activities
  - Start implementation of a Potomac Guide (for recreation and river use information)
  - Addition of video articles
  - Expand inventory of maps
- Expand teacher and stakeholder workshops and align them with Chesapeake Bay education initiatives as much as possible.
- Provide BMP assistance for green schools
- Explore potential for organizing on-the-river events targeted toward specific objectives or specific groups
- Continue to pursue grants and partnerships that will help fund education/outreach programs

#### FY 2016 - 2020

- Teacher workshops evolve to turnkey operation in selected school districts (teachers giving workshops rather than ICPRB staff)
- Self-sustaining BMPs for schools program
- Expanded recreational use section on website
- Website is ICPRB's primary education and information tool, recognized as a major site for information related to recreational use, current water use issues, and history

## Water Quality Improvement

### Focus:

- Conduct studies and write reports to assist resource decision-making by our member jurisdictions and to stimulate federal and state actions to improve water quality.

### Desired outcomes:

- Organized, accessible data and information
- Stakeholder confidence in watershed model
- Scientifically rigorous analytical tools and water quality assessments
- Strategies to resolve known water quality impairments
- Basin-wide comprehensive plan for water resources

### Work Plan

#### FY2015

- Providing leadership to Potomac basin water quality management
- Develop quantitative measures/indicators of reference conditions and communities in order to provide assessment endpoints or baselines
  - James River balanced phytoplankton
  - Chessie BIBI measure of stream health
- Water quality and stream biology data management for the Chesapeake Bay Program
- Assistance in development of the Phase 6 Watershed Model
- Assist in TMDL development
  - DC Potomac tributary TMDL development
  - Literature survey on BMP reduction efficiencies for pathogens and indicator bacteria
  - Accotink Creek TMDL
  - Additional analyses supporting TMDLs as requested by states or EPA
- Modeling impervious surface impacts on flow

#### FY2016-2020

- Data management
- WQ and watershed model testing and refinement
- TMDL development
- Ecosystem indicator development and testing
- Trend analysis

## Water Resources

### Focus:

- Study water resources problems and assist state, federal and local agencies' programs in the Potomac basin aimed toward their solution;
- Coordinate the use of water supply resources for the metro Washington area during drought;
- Assess the future reliability of water supply for the metro Washington area.
- Promote activities for source water protection

### Desired Outcomes Water Resources

- A plan for the sustainable use of water resources in the Potomac basin
- Public recognition of the benefits of reducing stormwater runoff

### Desired Outcomes Source Water Protection

- Coordination of source water protection
- Drinking water systems protected from toxic spills
- Protection of drinking water source areas by restoring and protecting water quality

### Desired Outcomes Drinking Water

- Adequate future drinking water resources for Metro. Washington Area
- Washington Metro. Area water supply needs met during times of drought
- Regional cooperation on Potomac river water use

## WorkPlan

### FY 2015

- 1) Continue development of a Potomac Basin Comprehensive Water Resources Plan
- 2) Source Water Source Protection Partnership
  - Provide staff support to Partnership and coordinate regional source water protection efforts
  - Maintain emergency spill alert capability and respond to alerts as they occur
- 3) CO-OP Management & Operations
  - CO-OP Operations, including annual drought exercise, monthly Water Supply Outlooks, and operations in the event of low flows
  - Evaluate the suitability of Travilah quarry as a raw water storage facility
  - Begin evaluation of future water supply alternatives
  - Complete 5-year Demand Study
  - Continue development of consumptive use database
  - Enhanced PRRISM model
- 4) Integration of Water Quality And Safe Drinking Water Programs
  - Conduct Spill drill
  - Support to Adams County WRAC
  - Participate in ICWP and ACWA

### FY2016-2020

Complete Comprehensive Water Resources Plan

Continue annual CO-OP operations

Continue improving CO-OP operational and planning tools

## Aquatic Life

### Focus:

- Conduct studies that assist management actions to achieve ecologically healthy aquatic communities

### Desired Outcomes

- Viable Atlantic sturgeon population in the Potomac
- Increased knowledge of key biological populations in the Potomac mainstem
- Enhanced assessments of aquatic ecosystem health
- Robust American shad population in the Potomac

### FY 2015 – FY2020

- Continue Atlantic sturgeon restoration
  - States are the lead parties. ICPRB will support their efforts
  - Will use existing resources
  - See Outcome 1 above
- Assistance to Potomac jurisdictions' monitoring strategies
  - Continue monitoring selected locations in the mainstem, non tidal, Potomac River
    - Annual reports with data analysis and comparison with state assessments
  - Requires consultation with state agencies to identify opportunities to provide assistance
  - Outcomes 2 and 3 above
- Support the Chesapeake Bay Program Sustainable Fisheries
  - Work through CBP Goal Implementation Teams to confirm CBP commitment to BIBI as tool for assessing watershed health and clarify ICPRB role
  - Outcomes 2 and 3 above, plus new Ches. Bay related outcome (refer to 2014 Agreement)
- Continue Shad restoration efforts
  - Discuss with MD DNR and USFWS to see if they are interested in ICPRB participation in their existing shad stocking programs
  - Possibly relate to new Ches. Bay Goals and Outcomes
  - Work toward opening a recreational harvest in the District of Columbia and a directed commercial fishery in the upper tidal Potomac
- Continue enhanced assessments of aquatic ecosystem health
  - Write a "State of the Potomac" ecological conditions report. This will be an integration of state 305(b) reports plus our BIBI analysis and our three mainstem sites. In addition to current status, report should identify threats and "at risk" areas and species. This could be an Aquatic Life component to the basinwide Comp Plan. Repeat every 5 years