



## Final Advocacy Guidelines

The Program Director of the Barnegat Bay Partnership (BBP) has the duty, responsibility and authority to state, write, and/or publish BBP positions, consistent with the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) and Strategic Plan (SP), with regard to priority issues within the watershed. The Director and BBP staff is charged to cooperate and collaborate on programs, initiatives, policies, and guidelines as approved by the Policy Committee (PC) with various partners, groups, and the public. This includes approving another staff person to present these views in the absence of the Program Director.

As a general rule, the BBP Policy Committee has confidence that the Program Director and staff are qualified to respond to questions and requests regarding priority issues of the Barnegat Bay Partnership's CCMP/SP, in accordance with the following guidelines:

- In recognition of the BBP's status as a National Estuary Program and its charge to work cooperatively and collaboratively with diverse partners, the BBP shall provide an open, neutral forum for debate, discussion, and problem-solving of priority issues within the watershed. The BBP shall refrain from taking any legal or regulatory action (such as a permit appeal or legal challenge to regulation) against a regulatory agency or other entity represented within any standing committees.
- The BBP shall refrain from participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.
- The BBP may provide technical and scientific briefings on BBP activities and issues to elected representatives in support of CCMP/SP implementation, but shall refrain from any substantial activity influencing local, state, or federal legislation which is not supported by the consensus of the Advisory Committee (AC).
- Any letter/statement/comments in direct support of or in opposition to specific legislative, regulatory, and/or political action or decision must be approved in advance by the Advisory and Policy Committees. In the event of the need for a more timely decision or uncertainty as to whether AC/PC approval is warranted, the Program Director should consult with the Advisory Committee Co-Chair and the Policy Committee.
- All BBP-issued letters/statements/comments should be based on the best available science and, whenever possible, follow a template format referencing the CCMP/SP and any other approved BBP papers or documents, with copies provided electronically to all AC and PC representatives.

The BBP AC and PC understand that BBP statements or written correspondence consistent with the CCMP/SP regarding priority issues could result in some disagreement with the policies adopted by specific organizations as they carry out their primary functions. In these specific cases, every effort will be made to coordinate, with all affected organizations, public releases of information prior to such release.

The BBP may distribute materials developed and produced by partners relevant to CCMP/SP priorities, and will not censor such statements; such statements do not constitute the position of the BBP unless acknowledged as such.