Conowingo Dam Social Media

In order to account for the increased pollution as a result of the Conowingo Dam reaching full capacity, the Chesapeake Bay Program agreed to develop a separate planning target for the dam, with its own Watershed Implementation Plan and to pool resources to improve water quality.

The Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load was based on the assumption that the Conowingo Dam’s ability to trap and hold sediment would remain steady, but new models, monitoring and research have indicated that has changed.

The Chesapeake Bay pollution diet was based on the assumption that the Conowingo Dam’s reservoir would continue trapping nutrients, but new models, monitoring data and research show just that is not the case.

The added sediments and nutrients to the #ChesBay would increase algae blooms and turbidity, clog navigation channels and destroy underwater grasses, which are a vital habitat for marine life.

In a 2015, USGS reported that #Conowingo had reached 92 percent capacity. When the storage capacity is met, the sediments and nutrients being trapped will eventually flow into the #ChesBay.

Extreme weather events like Tropical Storm Lee in 2011 can be catastrophic, allowing built-up sediment and nutrients to flow in the Bay, decimating underwater grass beds and marine life.

Over the years, the phosphorus and sediment trapped by the #Conowingo Dam have built up to the point where the storage capacity of the reservoir behind the dam is almost full.

The nutrient reductions called for the Susquehanna watershed in the Bay pollution diet are no longer enough to meet water quality goals for the upper #ChesBay.

Recently, @chesbayprogram came to agreement to address increased pollution from the #Conowingo by creating a separate pollution-reduction plan for the dam.

Since the #ChesBay pollution diet was established in 2010, new models, monitoring data and research have indicated that reservoir conditions have changed.