



Chesapeake Bay Program
A Watershed Partnership

Backgrounder

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CHAMPION ROLES

Accountability - Maryland

Impact: Through the BayStat program, Maryland has secured and will award annual funding to address nonpoint source pollution; appointed a scientific advisory panel; strengthened its Critical Area Program, including provisions to significantly change how coastal shorelines are stabilized; doubled annual cover crop enrollment to 400,000 acres; and targeted Program Open Space to priority conservation areas.

Next Steps: Representatives from Virginia and the U.S. EPA are assessing the transferability of BayStat to Virginia. Maryland is also set to launch iMap and distribute a white paper entitled, "What All Mayors Would Like to Know About Baltimore's CitiStat Performance Strategy."

Agriculture Conservation Practices - Virginia

Impact: Virginia has allocated \$20 million for agricultural best management practices in the commonwealth, the largest amount ever appropriated in the history of Virginia's agricultural best management practice cost-share program.

Next Steps: Virginia will strive for consistent or increased agricultural best management practice funding in 2009 and beyond. To further accelerate on-the-ground implementation and pollution reductions from agricultural lands, the commonwealth is finalizing a package of new and revised conservation practices while exploring new partnerships with commodity groups and others.

Blue Plains - Chesapeake Bay Commission

Impact: The Chesapeake Bay Commission met with members of Congress to advocate for more federal support to upgrade the Blue Plains wastewater facility and helped arrange congressional tours and briefings on Blue Plains. These efforts resulted in congressional hearings in May, and the House and Senate appropriated \$14 to \$16 million, respectively, for combined sewer overflow (CSO) upgrades.

Next Steps: The Commission will continue their focus on garnering federal support for upgrading Blue Plains by meeting with members of Congress and regional partners. The Commission will continue to encourage the timely design and construction of enhanced nutrient removal and CSO upgrades to achieve an annual reduction of nearly 4 million pounds of nitrogen.

Blue Crab Restoration - Maryland, Virginia

Impact: To rebuild the blue crab population, Maryland and Virginia both agreed to implement new bi-state regulations to reduce the harvest of female crabs in the Chesapeake Bay by at least 34 percent. The two states have agreed to keep crab exploitation at a target level of 46 percent to provide a buffer against overfishing in the future.

Next Steps: The Virginia Marine Resources Commission, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Assessment Committee will continue to monitor blue crab abundance and exploitation through an annual assessment process that uses the results of the bi-state winter dredge survey.

Biofuels - Pennsylvania, Chesapeake Bay Commission

Impact: Together, Pennsylvania and the Chesapeake Bay Commission convened a 22-member Biofuels Advisory Panel that met throughout the year, culminating with the release of the *Next-Generation Biofuels* report at the Chesapeake Bay Biofuels Summit in Harrisburg, Pa., in September. Each state has developed a State Action Plan.

Next Steps: The Executive Council has adopted the findings of the *Next-Generation Biofuels* report and committed to lead the nation in next-generation biofuels policy by implementing the state and regional recommendations contained in the report. The Biofuels Advisory Panel will provide expert advice to help implement the recommendations.

Carbon Sequestration - Delaware

Impact: Delaware hosted a symposium entitled, "Carbon Sequestration on Farm and Forest Lands: How to Make Trading/Offset Programs Work in the Chesapeake Bay Region." The symposium educated agency staff about carbon sequestration opportunities; identified necessary elements of offset and trading programs; and analyzed the water quality benefits of agriculturally based carbon offset projects.

Next Steps: Delaware will continue to research policies needed to advance best management practices that reduce carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus, especially those that also encourage the development of second generation biofuels and markets for ecosystem services.

Chesapeake Action Plan - EPA and Partners

Impact: The Chesapeake Action Plan (CAP), described in a Report to Congress submitted by EPA on behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Program in July, will strengthen and expand partnerships in the watershed, enhance coordination of restoration activities and improve accountability and transparency in protecting the Bay. The tools contained in the CAP – the strategic framework, dashboards, detailed activity database and adaptive management system – will help the Bay Program become more efficient, strategic, effective and accountable in meeting its goals.

Next Steps: A new organizational structure approved by the Principals' Staff Committee will help align program resources with goal strategies outlined in the CAP. The CAP will be implemented through the adaptive management system and continue to be improved and expanded to include more partners.

Conowingo Dam/Reservoir - Pennsylvania

Impact: To better understand the movement of sediments trapped behind Conowingo Dam on the Susquehanna River, Pennsylvania executed a 14-month contract with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for \$95,000. USGS will provide a \$35,000 match for the study.

Next Steps: A final report on the USGS sediment study will be issued in September 2009. Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection will continue to address sources of upland sediments, including researching and developing best management practices for legacy sediments and floodplain restoration.

Engaging Local Governments - Maryland

Impact: Through local implementation grants that are part of the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund, Maryland has provided restoration funding directly to local communities in the state. To support local implementation, Maryland developed a new service to connect local governments with resources that help them accomplish their restoration goals.

Next Steps: Maryland will continue to competitively award funding for restoration projects to local governments throughout the state. By continuing to take the lead on this champion role, Maryland will demonstrate an effective model for delivering resources and results at the local level.

Engaging Local Governments on Stormwater - West Virginia

Impact: To learn how to develop communication tools to engage local communities, two staff members and three stakeholders from West Virginia participated in a local government training session in July. West Virginia also organized a half-day stormwater workshop that was attended by 61 local stakeholders, planners and engineers.

Next Steps: West Virginia will organize a full-day workshop for local planners and other stakeholders to discuss stormwater best management practices that will work in the karst topography that dominates this fast-growing portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Green Infrastructure - District of Columbia

Impact: To help manage growth and reduce polluted runoff, the District of Columbia implemented one of the strongest, most innovative stormwater permits in the nation; launched the RiverSmart Homes program to better manage stormwater in residential areas; developed an aggressive Anacostia Restoration Plan; and spent more than \$1 million on low-impact development (LID) projects, such as green roofs.

Next Steps: D.C. is currently finalizing even stronger stormwater legislation that will create LID incentives, modify stormwater fees and improve coordination of stormwater management activities for all development and re-development. The District will share its LID methods with Bay states so that they may be used in urban settings throughout the watershed.

Farm Bill - Chesapeake Bay Commission

Impact: Through the passage of the 2008 Farm Bill, the Chesapeake Bay watershed was singled out to receive an additional \$188 million for conservation programs, more than double the current funding levels. Additionally, there is a potential \$250 million for the Chesapeake watershed through national programs in which Bay-region farmers already participate.

Next Steps: The Chesapeake Bay Commission will work to secure congressional appropriations for both the national conservation programs, which will be administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Chesapeake Bay-specific provision.

Forest Conservation - U.S. Forest Service

Impact: Most partners that signed the 2007 Forestry Conservation Initiative are on track to meet their 2012 forest protection goals. The Forest Service hosted a Forest Conservation Summit in May, bringing together Bay watershed foresters, land trusts and local governments for the first time. Progress is being made to develop ecosystem markets such as the Bay Bank and establish a revolving loan fund for forest land owners who do not want to sell to developers.

Next Steps: The Forest Service will work with its state partners to develop more workshops to advise federal agencies and local governments about the importance of their forested land base. A suite of new tools for local governments and watershed organizations will be available in 2009. Each jurisdiction's forest protection goals and maps will be externally reviewed for effectiveness.

Low-Impact Development - U.S. Navy

Impact: To help reduce polluted runoff to the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers, the U.S. Navy is evaluating the most effective low-impact development techniques to incorporate into all large development and re-development projects at Navy bases in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. U.S. Navy personnel are also fostering awareness about low-impact development on Navy bases.

Next Steps: The Navy will use its research to develop criteria and performance specifications for low-impact development designs on Navy bases and train designers, planners, construction managers and public works personnel about low-impact development.

Innovative Technology Fund - Maryland, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Impact: Maryland and the U.S. EPA have partnered with the University of Maryland to develop an innovative program that promotes investments in new research and technologies that address water quality problems and accelerate Bay restoration. The EPA has provided funding to the university's Maryland Industrial Partnerships Program, and Maryland has partnered with MTECH Ventures to create a seed capital fund.

Next Steps: Through targeted funding opportunities, Maryland intends to invest funds for at least two more years, anticipating that an "evergreen fund would be created by the end of the third year. The fund would provide a steady source of funding to continually support new innovations without new investments.

Restoration Funding - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Impact: The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) issued a request for pre-proposals for large-scale restoration projects that use innovative, sustainable and cost-effective approaches to accelerate the reduction of nutrients and sediments in targeted Chesapeake Bay sub-watersheds. Funding for these projects comes from the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office.

Next Steps: NFWF is in the process of screening and reviewing pre-proposals and anticipates inviting the best projects to submit full proposal applications by mid-December. Final awards are expected to be made to these multiple-year projects by March 2009.

Wetlands Restoration - New York

Impact: To expand a successful wetland restoration program in New York, the Upper Susquehanna Coalition established a 501(c)(3) wetland trust to supplement grants and leverage funds; restored 175 acres of non-tidal wetlands designed to maximize ecosystem functionality; and conducted hands-on training on successful wetland design criteria.

Next Steps: The Upper Susquehanna Coalition will spread their hands-on training to other Bay states and work with conservation districts around the watershed to foster county-based coalitions. The outcomes of wetlands restoration will be integrated into other goal areas of the Chesapeake Action Plan.