



What's new with . . .

LAND, GROWTH AND STEWARDSHIP IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION IN 1999

The Chesapeake Bay Program's Land, Growth and Stewardship effort works to identify Baywide land use and growth issues and to forge alliances with other organizations working to preserve the health of the Bay system, including its natural landscapes. The Bay Program effort keys on three areas: sound land management decisions, the impacts of existing growth, and public and private actions to reduce the impact of growth on the Bay system. In 1996, the Bay Program adopted the *Priorities for Action for Land, Growth and Stewardship in the Chesapeake Bay Region* as a way to address population growth and land development. The goal is to encourage sustainable development patterns that integrate economic health, resource protection and community participation. The *Priorities for Action* represent the first step in meeting this challenge in a manner that is sensitive to local issues and autonomy and that emphasizes the desire to help communities in the Bay region help themselves. In 1999, the Bay Program continued to develop its crosscutting program to promote sustainable development in the Bay region. The following highlights touch on some of those efforts.

Workshops Help Local Communities Grow Responsibly

As part of the effort to encourage livable communities, the Bay Program continues to sponsor workshops for local officials that highlight effective ways to reduce the impacts of growth. One series of workshops—the Better Site Design and Watershed Planning Workshops—focuses on teaching municipal officials how to prepare small watershed plans and how to implement innovative land development principles, such as green parking lots, stream buffers, cluster development, narrow streets and pollution prevention programs. The workshops also help local officials identify ways to change existing codes and ordinances to reduce impervious cover, conserve natural areas and reduce storm water runoff. Participants get hands-on experience using real-world site plans. For example, officials from Frederick County, Maryland, participated in one of the first workshops. They are working to implement innovative practices by reviewing their local codes and ordinances to allow for better development patterns. The Bay Program is expanding this program to include a “train the trainers” program designed to instruct local planners to train others to review local codes and ordinances. A similar training program is under way in Pennsylvania through the Growing Greener initiative. Growing Greener focuses on how communities can conserve open space and natural resources while accommodating some growth. For more information on the Bay Program workshops or on Growing Greener, call 1-800-YOUR-BAY, ext 847.

Bay Program Issues New Report on Growth and Development

As part of its effort to inform and educate the public and specific stakeholder groups on the role they can play in improving the health of the Bay and its rivers, the Bay Program continued to develop a broad range of Environmental Indicators throughout 1999. Environmental Indicators use the most recent data and information to illustrate the status and trends for a variety of issues from water quality to human impacts on the Bay system. In June 1999, the Bay Program issued a new publication featuring Environmental Indicators and interpretive text related to population and growth issues in the Bay region. For a free copy of *Chesapeake Bay Watershed: Its Land and People*, go to the Bay Program website at www.chesapeakebay.net and click on publications or call 1-800-YOUR BAY.



Stay Tuned

- A handbook for local communities illustrating techniques for designing environmentally friendly residential, commercial and industrial sites will be available through the Bay Program in 2000. The techniques focus on reducing the impact of development on existing natural features and comparing conventional site design to environmentally friendly site design.
- The updated *Chesapeake Bay Public Access Guide* will be available in 2000. This popular map highlights specific locations in the Bay region where the public can access waters of the Bay and its tributaries from boat ramps, parks, fishing piers, hiking trails and recreational areas.
- The *Chesapeake Bay Area Public Access Technical Assistance Report* is being revised and reprinted. This report, designed for local governments, provides technical guidance on the acquisition and development of public access sites.
- A literature synthesis on the environmental and economic effects and costs of septic systems is being conducted by the Bay Program. The purpose of the study is to identify the hidden costs of septic systems and the relationship between growth patterns and septic systems.
- In addition to its other web-based activities, the Bay Program sponsored the development of a web-based database that offers references on alternative development practices. It includes nutrient removal information, economic and cost considerations, model ordinances or case studies, and other social and environmental considerations. The site provides summaries of each reference, plus information on how to obtain copies. The database will be available in early 2000.

For more information on Land, Growth and Stewardship, go to
www.chesapeakebay.net/landscape.htm
on the Bay Program website.

