



# Chesapeake Bay Restoration

Criticisms, Recommendations  
and Legislation



**John Lovell, Chair**  
**Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee**  
**Presented to COG Board of Directors**  
**January 11, 2006**



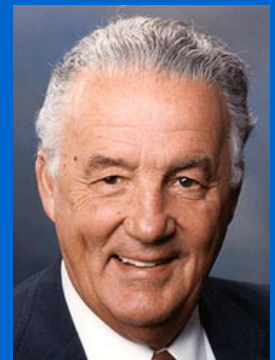
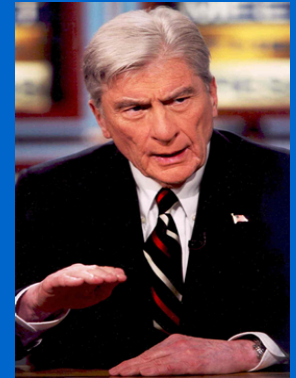
# Critical Commentary

- C2K – Meet Water Quality Standards by 2010
- Adverse Publicity and Critical Commentary, e.g.:
  - “Chesapeake Bay Blues”
  - Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s Health Index
- Two Senatorial Requests for Investigation
  - GAO (complete)
  - EPA’s Inspector General (ongoing)
- Legislation to Reauthorize the Bay Program
  - Strengthen implementation & reporting
  - Greater recognition of local government
  - Recommend COG endorsement



# Senatorial Request to GAO

- Request made in August 2004
- Examine how progress is measured
  - Appropriateness
  - Accuracy in depicting Bay's health
- Assess Bay Program effectiveness
  - Coordination
  - Management
- Report issued in October 2005



# GAO: Comments & Response

- GAO Recommendations
  - Restructure reporting and assessment
    - Overall progress
    - Ecological attributes
    - Separate Bay health from management actions
  - Overall, coordinated strategy
  - Better target limited resources
- Bay Program Response
  - Concurrence on all recommendations
  - Overhaul of reporting
  - A more coordinated strategy is challenging
- Recommendations Reflected in Proposed Legislation



# Inspector General's Investigation

- Letter from Sen. Mikulski in 2004
- Part 1 – Agriculture
  - Looking at effectiveness of agricultural BMPs
  - Report Pending
- Part 2 – Land Use/Development
  - Systematic examination of urban practices to limit nutrient and sediment loads
  - Focus on both BMPs and land use practices
  - First round of interviews completed
  - Report due later this year



# Proposed Bay Program Legislation

- Two bills to “improve & reauthorize” the Bay Program
  - S. 1490 introduced by Sen. Sarbanes
  - HR 4126 introduced by Rep. Gilchrest
- Although drafted prior to the GAO report, it appears that the bills were influenced by GAO’s findings
  - Mandates better restoration progress reporting
  - Mandates interagency budget reporting
  - Senate bill more prescriptive regarding implementation
- Other provisions include
  - Increasing the authorization from \$40M to \$50M/year
  - The House bill mandates greater focus on the needs of local government



# Bay legislation - continued

- CBPC comments on legislation
  - Overall support
    - Raise authorization to \$50M/year
    - Strengthen implementation planning & reporting
    - Endorse local government provisions of House bill
  - Increase authorization for small watershed grants from \$10M to \$16.5M per year
    - 1/3 of authorized limit
  - Increase funding cap for such grants from \$50K to \$1M reflecting the scale of projects in urban areas



# Recommendations / Future Options

- Recommendations
  - Adopt Resolution R3-06
  - Transmit comment letter to Senator Sarbanes and Representative Gilchrest
- A Couple of Observations & Future Options
  - This region has been a leader in nutrient reductions
    - Blue Plains & other wastewater plants
    - Maryland's Restoration Fund
  - Support Virginia water quality funding
  - Continue to explore Farm Bill options

