



CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM AND WATER RESOURCES UPDATES September 2021

Chesapeake Bay Program

EPA Picking up the Pace of Bay Restoration

https://www.bayjournal.com/opinion/forum/epa-picking-up-pace-of-bay-restoration/article_12f7e0ba-042c-11ec-9bd8-936d20627b8e.html

Climate Change Trends for the Bay

https://www.bayjournal.com/news/climate_change/trends-in-u-n-climate-report-point-to-an-altered-chesapeake-bay/article_c433853c-0990-11ec-accc-1f2338081b3f.html

Chesapeake Bay Partnership Seeks Input on Diversity and Inclusion

https://www.bayjournal.com/news/people/chesapeake-cleanup-partners-look-for-input-on-diversity-inclusion/article_c2747f6c-0cb5-11ec-9b42-9bcbcb69cb0a2.html

Chesapeake Bay Program's Local Leadership Work Group's Water Educational Modules for Local Officials are accessible here:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/group/local_leadership_workgroup

The Alliance for the Bay [Chesapeake Watershed Forum](#) is November 1-5.

Conowingo WIP Pilot Project Proposed

A watershed implementation plan (WIP) to address nutrients and sediment from dynamic equilibrium conditions in the dam system of the lower Susquehanna River is expected to get underway this fall with a \$50 million pilot project. This WIP (see https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/group/conowingo_watershed_implementation_plan_steering_committee) is separate from all the Phase 3 WIPs developed by the Chesapeake Bay Program's state partners and is intended to address additional pollutant loadings from the Susquehanna River that result from the build-up of sediment behind all 3 of the dams, including the Conowingo dam in Maryland, which is the lowest on the river. Models used by the Bay Program to assess pollutant loads estimate these dam conditions annually contribute about 6 million pounds of nitrogen and a quarter of a million pounds of phosphorus to the Bay. A steering committee with representatives from all the Bay Program partner jurisdictions was formed with the intent of addressing the issue through Bay-wide actions. Although the steering committee has agreed that the areas in which nutrient and sediment reduction measures would be implemented are all in the Susquehanna River watershed, there is an expectation that the cost of implementation would be shared among the parties involved. Current estimates of the cost of addressing this issue are about \$50 million/year over many years. Developers of the Conowingo WIP have proposed an initial pilot project under the management of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission to begin the effort. However, steering committee members from some of the Bay partner jurisdictions are expressing concern about the use of their

funds primarily in Pennsylvania and it remains to be seen whether the Bay-wide development and funding effort envisioned by the steering committee will succeed.

Bay Model Developments

The Chesapeake Bay Program is pursuing updates to the suite of models it uses to estimate the amount of nutrients and sediment that reach the Bay and the impact of management actions on attaining water quality standards in the Bay. Both of the main components of this modeling suite – a watershed model that estimates pollutant loads to tidal waters and a tidal water quality model that estimates the impact of these pollutant loads on water quality parameters in the Bay – would be updated with newer versions by 2025. The updates are expected to provide both a more accurate estimate of how well the combined management actions of the Bay partner jurisdictions are doing to achieve water quality standards and a more accurate prediction of what the Bay’s water quality will be in 2035 under climate change.

Climate Resiliency Resources

The Chesapeake Stormwater Network presented these [climate resiliency research resources](#) to the Water Resources Technical Committee at their September 10th meeting.

FEMA has a guide for considering equity when thinking about climate resiliency: [Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience](#).

Drinking Water, Water Supply and Drought

The latest U.S. Drought monitor released on September 9 indicates that the COG region is free of drought. Conditions during August were abnormally dry and Potomac River flows dropped significantly, but that changed rapidly once Tropical storm Fred and remnants of Hurricane Ida brought heavy rainfall and areas of flooding to the COG region. For additional information please visit COG’s Water Supply and Drought website: <https://www.mwcog.org/drought>

Food and Agriculture

Vast Expansion in Aid Kept Food Insecurity From Growing Last Year: Despite the economic downturn, government figures for 2020 show no overall rise in hunger of the sort typical in past recessions. But some groups still suffered. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/08/us/politics/vast-expansion-aid-food-insecurity.html>

Upcoming Food and Ag events:

- September is Hunger Action Month. COG has learned that several Northern Virginia member jurisdictions will be making proclamations to mark this.
- September 20th to 22nd: Food Policy Networks’ [The Power of Food Online Conference](#).
- September 23rd: (Virtual) [UN Food Systems Summit](#).
- Early October: DMV Food Recovery Week returns. More details soon.
- October 12th - 14th: [Mid-Atlantic Urban Agriculture Summit 2021](#) (abstracts due mid-September)

- November 17th - 18th: University of Maryland Agriculture Law Education Initiative [2021 Annual Agricultural and Environmental Law Conference](#)

Upcoming COG Meetings and Events

- The FARM/CBPC BIPOC Farmers and Land Access Webinar scheduled for September 20 has been postponed (the new date will be forthcoming)
- October 8 FARM committee meeting
- November 19 CBPC meeting

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