

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM AND WATER RESOURCES UPDATES

July 2024

Chesapeake Bay Program

[Chesapeake Bay receives highest health grade in over 20 years](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

Bay receives a C+ in annual University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science annual Chesapeake Bay Report Card—the highest grade the Bay has received since 2002. The report card reflects the status of the Bay in 2023, marking a 4% increase from the previous year's assessment and an overall significantly improving trend from 1986-2023.

[Help the Chesapeake Bay Program chart the next phase of Bay restoration](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

Draft recommendations on the future of the Watershed Agreement now available for feedback. Over the last year-and-a-half, a steering committee consisting of representatives from each of the six watershed states (Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia), District of Columbia, federal agencies participating in the Chesapeake Bay Program, Goal Implementation Teams, advisory committees and non-profit organizations worked along with subject matter experts in a variety of disciplines to chart a course forward for the partnership and Bay restoration.

Water Quality, Wastewater and Stormwater

[Bridging the gap between modeling and monitoring](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

While the Chesapeake Bay Program has several different types of models to replicate everything from land use changes to the amount of nitrogen deposited over the land from the air, it is the Watershed Model—the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST)—that estimates the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment that is reaching the Bay from around the watershed. CAST estimates the amount of pollution that can be reduced by installing certain types of best management practices (BMPs).

[Baltimoreans swim again at Harbor Splash 2024](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

A historic milestone was reached on June 23, when the first swimming event since the 1980s took place in Baltimore Harbor. Harbor Splash allowed 150 participants to safely swim at Bond Street Wharf in Fells Point during a timely summer heatwave.

[Size of the Chesapeake Bay dead zone predicted to be about average despite heavy rainfall](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

This summer, the size of the Chesapeake Bay's dead zone is predicted to be about the same as the average measured between 1985 and 2023, according to a forecast from a team of researchers. An average dead zone is not exactly positive news. But what is good news is that even though the stream and river flows recorded from January to May in 2024 were 23% higher than the long-term average, the amount of nitrogen measured and used in the forecast was 131 million pounds, which is about the same as the average taken between 1985 and 2023.

[Second attempt at inaugural Anacostia River swim called off](#)

Washington Examiner

For the second time this year, the inaugural Anacostia River Splash in Washington, D.C., has been postponed. This marks the fourth time in two years the event has been postponed, with the first two instances occurring in 2023 due to heavy rain. Originally scheduled for late June, organizers canceled the event due to high levels of E. coli in the river, prompting a rescheduling for this Saturday. This time, Tropical Storm Beryl disrupted the weather forecasts, prompting organizers to once again postpone the swim, according to Anacostia Riverkeeper Trey Sherard.

[Drinking Water, Water Supply and Drought](#)

[COG's Water Supply and Drought Report for June](#)

As part of the Metropolitan Washington Water Supply and Drought Awareness Response Plan, COG issues monthly drought reports from May- October. Precipitation, groundwater, and streamflow levels are reviewed as well as recent forecasts for the region.

[ICPRB's Water Supply Outlook for July](#)

The probability of releases from backup water supply reservoirs in the Washington metropolitan area during the summer and fall seasons of 2024 is currently above normal. The use of Jennings Randolph and Little Seneca reservoirs is generally triggered by low flows brought about by a combination of low summer precipitation and low groundwater levels.

[Arlington, DC are 'most vulnerable cities in the US': Boil water advisory points out lack of backup supply](#)

WTOP News

This week's extensive boil water advisory for all of D.C. and most of Arlington, Virginia, demonstrated a major vulnerability in the national capital region's drinking water supply. "They're 100% dependent on one source," said Michael Nardolilli, executive director of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin. And there's only a one-day backup supply if something goes wrong.

[Podcast: Protecting our water on all shores](#)

MWCOG

In this episode of Think Regionally, host Robert McCartney speaks with Montgomery County Councilmember Natali Fani-González, WSSC Water General Manager Kishia Powell, and manager of COG's Anacostia Restoration Program Phong Trieu on the roles each of us play in the multi-pronged effort to protect the region's waterways and drinking water.

PFAS

[Lithium ion batteries a growing source of PFAS pollution, study finds](#)

Phys.org

Texas Tech University's Jennifer Guelfo was part of a research team that found the use of a novel sub-class of per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) in lithium ion batteries is a growing source of pollution in air and water.

['Everyone is drinking it': Why this type of 'forever chemical' seems to be everywhere](#)

The Washington Post

For years, scientists have worried about "forever chemicals," substances used to make hundreds of household items that have been linked by research to a wide range of health problems. In response, a growing number of companies have pledged not to use the chemicals, and regulators have increasingly taken aim at them.

Climate and Energy

California advances first-in-nation plan to set water budgets for cities statewide

The Hill

California officials have approved a first-of-its-kind regulation that will set long-term limits on the amounts of water the state's urban utilities can use on an annual basis. The State Water Resources Control Board granted unanimous support Wednesday to sweeping conservation measures that are expected to generate about 500,000 acre-feet in water savings each year by 2040.

Food, Forestry and Agriculture

Visa workers are helping reach critical tree planting goals here in Maryland, thousands of miles from where they were born

Chesapeake Bay Program

The Healthy Forests Healthy Waters program enlists help from Central American workers in its tree planting efforts. As the most expansive tree-planting effort in Maryland, the Healthy Forests Healthy Waters program has a lot of work on its hands. Between 2014–2020, the collaborative effort between the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland Forest Service and Maryland Forestry Foundation planted a total of 555 acres of forest on the property of participating landowners.

Why conserving existing forest buffers is just as important as planting new ones

Chesapeake Bay Program

In 2023, Chesapeake Bay Program partners restored 640.5 miles of forest buffers, which is the highest number of new forest buffers restored since 2016. Each jurisdiction of the watershed chipped in, including 298 miles of forest buffers restored in Virginia, 268 miles restored in Pennsylvania, 40 miles restored in Maryland, 21 miles restored in New York, 13 miles restored in West Virginia, and less than one mile restored in Delaware.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

FARM: August 9th

WRTC: September 13th

CBPC Forum: September 20th

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