

COG Comment Guidance Document
Chesapeake Bay Watershed Blue Ribbon Finance Panel Report

Please provide your jurisdiction's comments by March 11, 2005.

Please mail or FAX your comments to:

The Honorable J Davis
Chair, COG Board of Directors
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol St., NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002
FAX # 202-962-3203

Part I:

COG seeks your comments on endorsement of the primary recommendation of the Chesapeake Bay Blue Ribbon Finance Panel:

"The Blue Ribbon Finance Panel recommends the establishment of a new regional Financing Authority as soon as practicable. The Authority should be capitalized with a \$15 billion investment by Bay states and the federal government. It would be charged with prioritizing and distributing restoration funds throughout the Bay's entire 64,000-square-mile watershed.

- The proposed ratio of federal to matching funds would be 80/20, the same as that legislated by current State Revolving Loan Funds across the country. The total federal contribution would be \$12 billion over six years.
- The states' match should be \$3 billion, apportioned among the states and funded by whatever means the states choose, bringing the total capitalization to \$15 billion.
- Working together, the six Bay watershed states and the District of Columbia should first commit to establishing a Chesapeake Bay Financing Authority as soon as possible, but no later than January 1, 2007.
- The governors, mayor and other leaders should appoint experts as necessary to design both an interim strategy for the immediate future and a long-term strategy for the regional Financing Authority."

Issues to Consider:

1. How should local governments be represented on the authority?
2. What means should be used for distributing funds (e.g., cost share grants, low interest loans, etc.)?
3. Would your jurisdiction make use of low-interest loans to fund restoration measures such as wastewater treatment plant upgrades and stormwater infrastructure retrofits?

Part II:

COG seeks your comments on any or all of the 22 other recommendations of the Chesapeake Bay Blue Ribbon Finance Panel:

The Panel's report also presents a series of 22 supplemental recommendations organized by source of pollution, such as wastewater, urban stormwater and agriculture. Depending on the comments received, COG will develop a consensus regional position on one or more of those supplemental proposals, or may simply pass along member comment and feedback.

For further information:

More information about the Blue Ribbon Finance Panel is available on the Chesapeake Bay Program's web site: <http://chesapeakebay.net/blueribbon.htm>.

Please feel free to contact COG staff should you have questions:

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