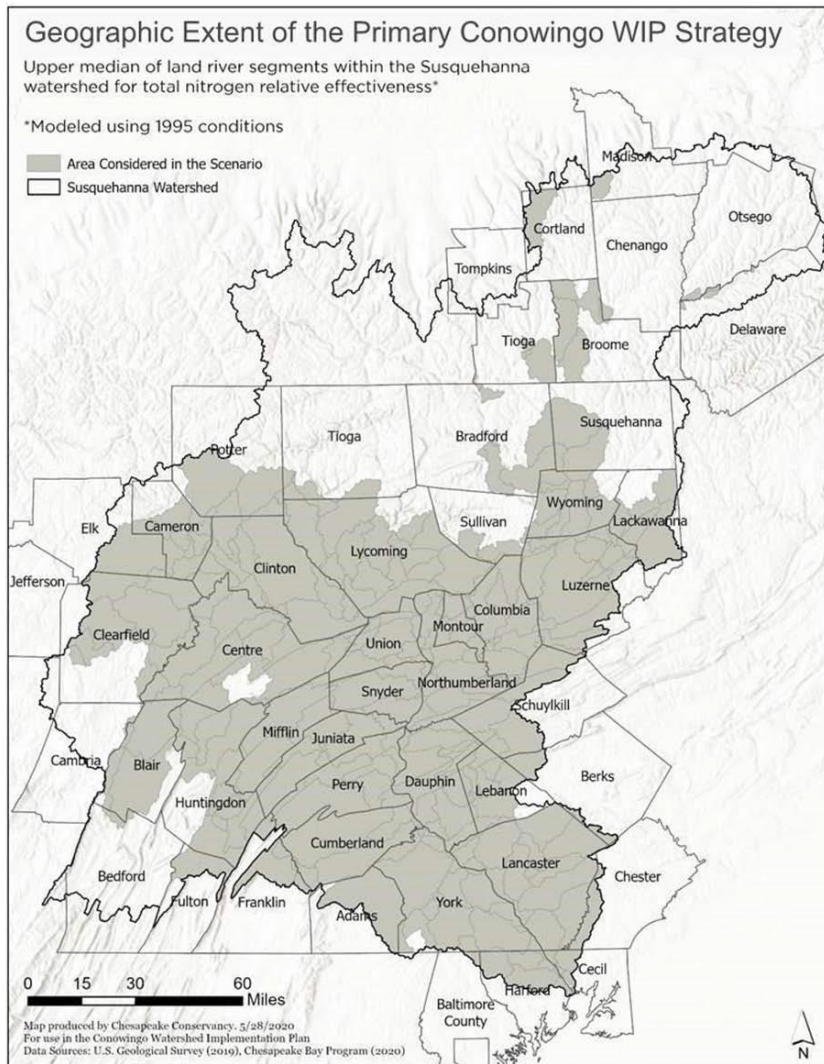


**Summary of DRAFT Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan**  
COG staff update Nov. 20, 2020

On Oct. 14, 2020, the Chesapeake Bay Program released for public comment its draft Conowingo watershed implementation plan for addressing the unaccounted nutrients and sediment coming from the Conowingo and two other dams along the lower Susquehanna River.

The plan addresses the additional nutrient loadings, primarily nitrogen, from dynamic equilibrium conditions in the dam system on the lower portion of the Susquehanna River. The effect of this dynamic equilibrium was not taken into account in the original reduction targets set by the 2010 TMDL nor during the Bay Program’s mid-point assessment process in 2017-18 that established new nutrient and sediment reduction targets to be accomplished by the updated Phase 3 watershed

implementation plans of each Bay partner jurisdiction.



The goal of the Conowingo WIP is to achieve a 6.7-million-pound reduction in total nitrogen by 2025. By comparison, the total Phase 3 WIP reduction goals for nitrogen were estimated at about 48.8 million pounds in 2017, including 8.2 million pounds in Maryland, 2.4 million pounds in Virginia and 34 million pounds in Pennsylvania. Including further reductions to address the negative impact of climate change by 2025, as the Bay Program plans to do in 2022, would add another five and a half million pounds to the nitrogen reduction goal.

According to the Bay Program, the draft plan outlines the geographic areas in which these additional reductions beyond what the Phase III WIPs seek to accomplish could be achieved. It also identifies BMPs on which to

focus, suggests a contracting method by which to pay for BMP implementation, and provides a preliminary estimate of the cost of doing so.

**Map showing the geographical area to which the Conowingo WIP would apply**

The draft WIP estimates implementation costs at \$53.3 million/year based on total annualized costs from CAST, the Bay Program’s modeling system for tracking watershed loads and average costs. The plan does not yet include a financing strategy, which is supposed to be issued by the end of 2020. The same parties that oversaw development of the WIP, which includes representatives of each of the Bay Program’s partner jurisdictions, are developing the financing plan in conjunction with the Center for Global Sustainability at the University of Maryland.

<b>Annualized Costs (in Millions of \$) by State and Sector for Primary CWIP Scenario</b>			
	<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Developed</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>MD</b>	1.28	0.00	1.28
<b>NY</b>	1.43	0.08	1.50
<b>PA</b>	45.44	5.08	50.52
<b>Total</b>	48.15	5.16	53.30

**COG considerations:**

- Geography – The Potomac and Patuxent basins are not included in the area in which reductions for Conowingo WIP will be sought, so COG jurisdictions would not be directly affected by efforts to implement BMPs to meet its 6.7-million-pound total nitrogen reduction target. However, the draft WIP provides a set of alternate expanded geographic areas in which BMP implementation could occur if efforts in the Susquehanna basin lag and several of these do include small portions of the COG region. These alternative geographic scopes are detailed in Appendix F.
- Funding – Until a funding plan is released, it is not clear if funding the Conowingo WIP will reduce funds that otherwise could be used to meet WIP III reduction efforts in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

**To comment**

The comment period is open until Dec. 21, 2020. Interested parties can offer input by submitting comments to the Center for Watershed Protection at CWIP@chesapeakebay.net. Any questions related to the draft WIP may also be directed to this email address. A webinar that provides additional information about the draft Conowingo WIP may be accessed at: [https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/group/conowingo\\_watershed\\_implementation\\_plan\\_steering\\_committee](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/group/conowingo_watershed_implementation_plan_steering_committee).