

ANNUAL REPORT

Chesapeake Bay & Water Resources Policy Committee

A Look Back on Policy, Partnership, Promotion, and Outreach

2020



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

CBPC ANNUAL REPORT

November 2020

ABOUT COG

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

CREDITS

Editor: Heidi Bonnaffon

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CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

CBPC Background & Vision

Clean, safe water is fundamental to life, to public health, and the economy. Few services are more important than reliable delivery of high-quality drinking water; collecting wastewater from homes and businesses and transforming it into clean water; and managing stormwater runoff to mitigate flooding and reduce pollution.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (COG) Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) is comprised of elected officials, and area government and water utility management. The CBPC was established in 1998 to improve water quality in regional streams, the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay. The CBPC tracks federal and state legislation and decisions that affect local governments and makes water policy recommendations to the COG Board.

The CBPC committee addresses regional water quality issues in these focus areas:

- Representing the region's technical and policy interests to the Chesapeake Bay Program and providing a voice for local perspectives.
- Taking policy positions and actions that align with the COG Board's Legislative Priorities.
- Tracking emerging issues, evolving science, and regulations related to water quality, wastewater, stormwater, and drinking water; and collaborating on best management practices.
- Public outreach and advocacy about Bay restoration progress and local/regional water quality issues. An example is Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week.



CBPC 2020 Accomplishments:

- Wrote letters of support for Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act and Virginia General Assembly Bills
- CBPC's Academic Paper Competition Inaugural year
- CBPC Agriculture Task Force focused on food supply resiliency and fostered creation of COG's Food and Agricultural Regional Member (FARM) Ad-Hoc Committee
- Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week Outreach
- Held a successful Annual Forum with States

Accomplishments

CBPC celebrated many accomplishments in the areas of Policy, Partnership, and Promotion & Outreach.

POLICY

The CBPC wrote letters of support for the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization Act and Virginia General Assembly Bills.

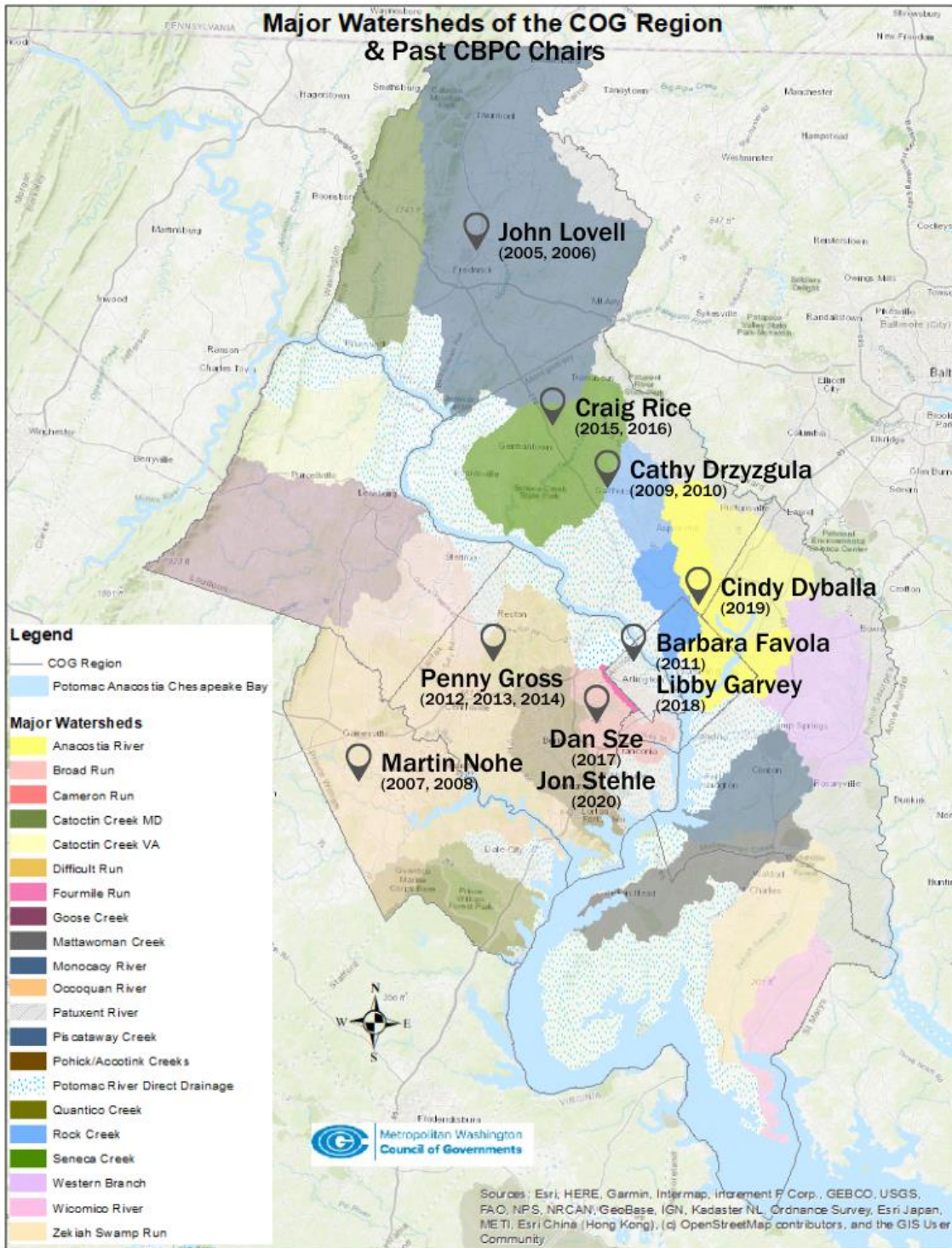
- The CBPC wrote Congress to reauthorize and fund the Chesapeake Bay Program (HR 1620 and SB 701) at a base budget of \$90.5 Million. The Chesapeake Bay Program was fully funded for FY '21.
- The CBPC wrote letters to the Virginia General Assembly in support of the Clean Energy and Flood Preparedness Act (SB 1027 and HB 981) and the Bag Tax (SB 11) on plastic bags. Both bills were passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Northam.

Documented the History of the CBPC Serving as a Local Voice for Water

Penny Gross, founding member of the CBPC, explains in a video the evolution of the CBPC and its role as voice for COG's local governments in the Chesapeake Bay Program. Below that is a map of COG's watersheds overlaid with the CBPC chairs from the past 15 years.

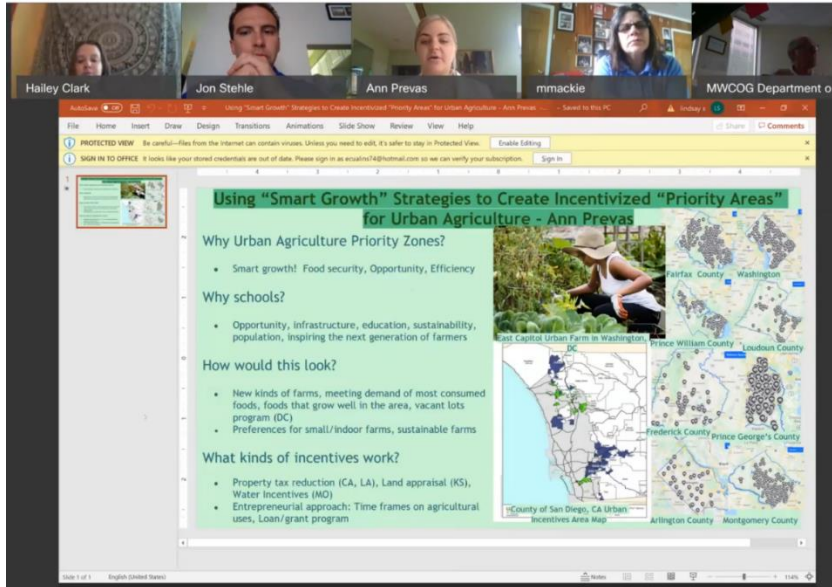


Watch the video: [Penny Gross on Local Governments and Bay Health](#)



PARTNERSHIPS

Fostered Academic Partners via its 1st Academic Paper Competition



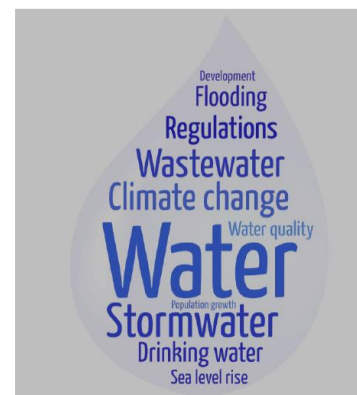
The CBPC invited area high school, college, and graduate students to provide their research and recommendations on real-world sustainability and water resources issues. For the 2020 term, the topics were focused on food and agricultural issues related to sustainability and resiliency within the region. The top two authors presented their recommendations to the Chesapeake Bay & Water Resources Policy Committee via webinar on May 15, 2020.

The 2020 Winning Paper was entitled “A New Approach to Preserving Land for Agriculture in the Metropolitan Washington Region” by Hailey Clark, University of Maryland Institute of Applied Agriculture.

More: [CBPC Paper Competition](#)

Members Held an Engaging Annual Forum with States

On September 25, the CBPC met with officials from Maryland and Virginia to discuss local government and utility accomplishments, challenges, and long-term planning horizons for Bay and local water quality.



(Arlington County)

Grew Awareness and Support for Food Resiliency via CBPC's Food and Ag Task Force

The Food and Ag Task Force furthered food chain resiliency during COVID-19 and supported the creation of Food and Agricultural Regional Member (FARM) Ad-Hoc Committee (via Resolution 37-2020 passed by the COG Board September 9, 2020).



(Chesapeake Bay Program)

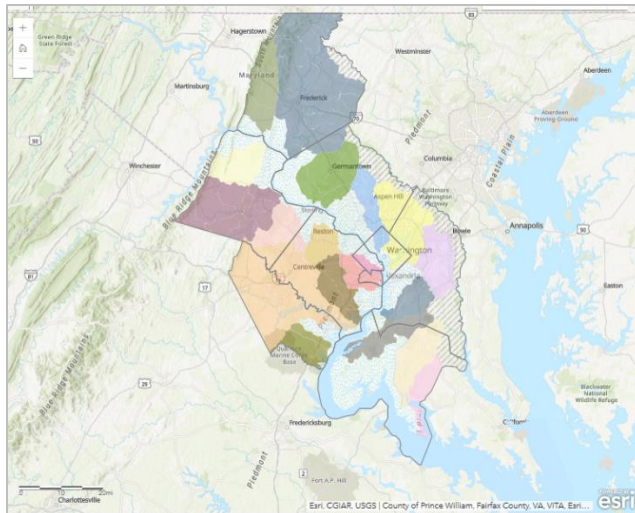
PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

The CBPC celebrated Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week virtually, via:

- Proclamations by Councils and utilities,
- The greatest breadth of social media posts in the Bay Watershed, and
- Chair Stehle’s Statement on Equity: [In our work for the Bay, let's strengthen our partnerships and sharpen our focus on equity](#)

Developed a New Interactive Map of the COG Watersheds

COG created an interactive map that shows the major watersheds of metropolitan Washington, all of which drain into either the Potomac or Patuxent rivers.



View the Map: [Major Watersheds of the Region](#)

Community Engagement Campaign’s Water and Wastewater Survey

This annual survey gives the region’s water and wastewater utilities important insights about the public’s understanding of their water and wastewater services and the findings help regional utilities shape the way they communicate with customers about the important work our regional utilities do to ensure these life-sustaining services.

Read the findings in this COG Press Release: [Local utilities urge residents to get to know their water](#)

COG Logo wear

The CBPC established a website for members to order COG logoed apparel for future committee field trips, such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s boat tour (scheduled for 2020 but postponed to a later date due to COVID-19).

CBPC 2021

In the year ahead, the CBPC will continue addressing water policies, strengthening partnerships, and promoting the region's work to improve the water quality of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. All areas of work will be viewed with an equity lens.

POLICY

- The CBPC will continue to track and take positions on Virginia and Maryland General Assembly bills per the 2021 Legislative Priorities.

PARTNERSHIPS

- With Academic institutions via its second year Paper Competition.
- Convene the CBPC Annual Forum to continue fostering relationships with federal and state water quality partners.

PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week

As in its five prior years, the CBPC will participate in Chesapeake Bay Awareness activities to shine a light on the Chesapeake Bay and the region's local water ways during Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week June 2021.



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