

## CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM AND WATER RESOURCES UPDATES MARCH 2020

### Chesapeake Bay Program

#### Draft Conowingo WIP

The Center for Watershed Protection, one of three EPA contractors working on this project, has released a draft Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan ([https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel\\_files/40475/draft\\_cwip\\_with\\_appendices\\_3-3-2019\\_v.2.pdf](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/channel_files/40475/draft_cwip_with_appendices_3-3-2019_v.2.pdf)). The draft plan is expected to be finalized in June 2020.

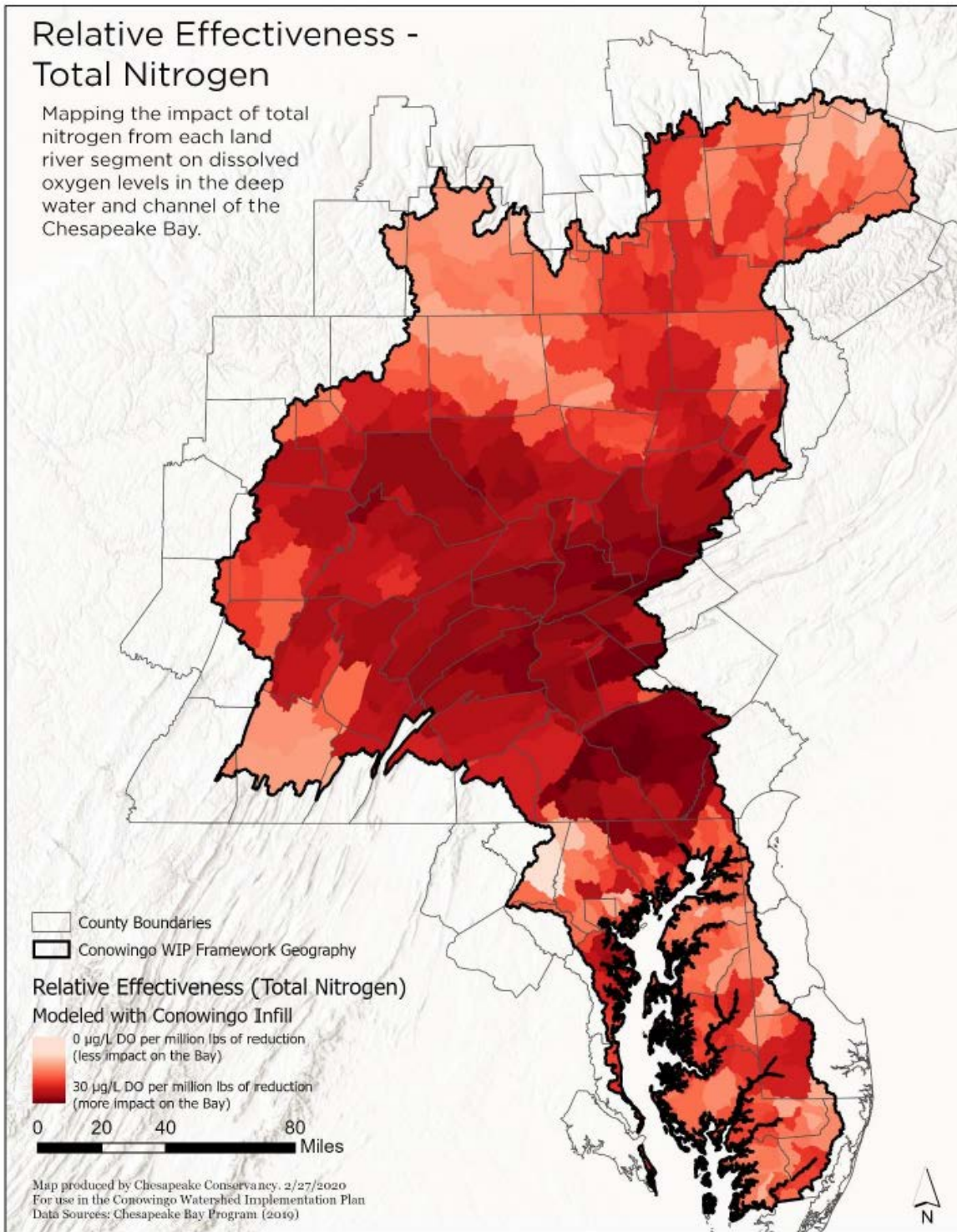
The plan addresses the additional loadings, primarily nitrogen, from dynamic equilibrium conditions in the dam system on the lower portion of the Susquehanna River. The effect of this dynamic equilibrium was not taken into account in the original reduction targets set by the 2010 TMDL nor during the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

The goal of the Conowingo WIP is to achieve a 6-million-pound reduction in total nitrogen by 2025. By comparison, the total 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 a 2025 climate change impact reduction, as the Bay Program proposes to include in 2022, would add about 8 million pounds to the nitrogen reduction goal.

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.

The plan uses the same geographic focus that the Chesapeake Bay Program's Principals Staff Committee identified in its December 2017 decision to create a Conowingo WIP separate from the Phase 3 WIPs of the partner jurisdictions. That geography is based on the Bay Program's concept of the "most effective basins" in which nutrient reductions have the greatest impact on increasing dissolved oxygen levels in the deep waters of the mid-Bay, the same criteria that drives the overall Bay TMDL target-setting process. The Conowingo WIP focus includes the entire Susquehanna basin as well as the Western Shore basin of Maryland and the Eastern Shore basin of Maryland and Delaware.

Map showing the geographical area in which a Conowingo WIP would operate



The Potomac basin is not included in the Conowingo WIP geography, so COG jurisdictions would not be directly affected by efforts to implement BMPs to meet its 6-million pound total nitrogen reduction target. The draft WIP does not describe from whence the funds to implement BMPs will come, so it is not clear whether such efforts will reduce funds that otherwise could be used to meet WIP III reduction efforts in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

The plan's preliminary estimate of costs for achieving these reductions is \$2.65 billion in capital costs with additional costs for operations and maintenance and "opportunity." A plan to identify funds for this effort has not yet been released.

## **Watershed Models and Water Quality Results**

There have been no new developments since the last update in January.

## **Local Water Quality**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with EPA and the federal-state Chesapeake Bay Program partnership, is soliciting proposals under the Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants (SWG) program for projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that promote community-based efforts to protect and restore the diverse natural resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams.

SWG proposals are due by midnight, Tuesday, April 14, 2020 and must be submitted through NFWF's online application at [www.nfwf.org/easygrants](http://www.nfwf.org/easygrants). For more information contact Jake Reilly, [jake.reilly@nfwf.org](mailto:jake.reilly@nfwf.org)

## **Drinking Water and Storm Water**

On February 27, 2020, EPA released the [National Water Reuse Action Plan: Collaborative Implementation \(Version 1\)](#) to advance consideration of water reuse to ensure the security, sustainability, and resilience of our nation's water resources.

### **COVID 19 - Water Sector Talking Points**

The WHO [Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for COVID-19](#) was used to develop the attached COVID-19 talking points for the water sector (as of March 9<sup>th</sup>):



Coronavirus\_water  
sector talking points\_

## **Food and Agriculture**

Many farmers in and around our region are preparing for spring and summer production. Some are offering Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares again this year to the public. COG has developed a regional list of farm CSAs for interested residents, workplaces, etc. interested in building direct relationships with local farmers. Please [check out this link](#) and help us spread the word.

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

CBPC Meeting March 20, 2020 (as a webinar only)

CBPC Forum with EPA and states has been postponed until fall

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