

## COG Backgrounder for CBPC Paper Competition

### COG is the hub for regional partnership

COG is an independent, nonprofit association, with a membership of 300 elected officials from [24 local governments](#), the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress. Every month, more than 1,500 officials and experts connect through COG to share information and develop solutions to the region's major challenges. The [Board of Directors](#) is COG's governing body and is responsible for its overall policies. In addition, a wide network of city and county managers, police and fire chiefs, housing and planning directors, environmental experts, public health officials, transportation planners, and more coordinate through [COG's committees](#).

### The future of the region is our business

COG staff members support these officials in addressing [the region's top priorities](#). They ensure COG serves as a forum for regional discussion, trusted source of data and analysis for decision makers, and provider of valuable services to area residents. COG is also home to the region's metropolitan planning organization, the [National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board](#) (TPB), which prepares programs and plans the federal government must approve for the region to receive federal funds.

### Region Forward is our vision

Together, area officials and COG staff are helping advance the [Region Forward Vision](#), which maps out ambitious goals and targets for a more prosperous, accessible, livable, and sustainable future. COG has also affirmed [racial equity](#) as a fundamental value, which will be woven into the vision and throughout COG's work.

### Environmental Programs

Through its environmental work, the Council of Governments is advancing *Region Forward* goals for clean water, air, and land, and a more sustainable region. COG and its member governments play key roles in planning and outreach to [reduce air pollution](#). COG supports ongoing efforts to ensure a [safe water supply and to revitalize local waterways](#) through wastewater and stormwater planning. It promotes energy conservation, alternative energy sources, and green building and fleet policies to help [reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions](#). COG also promotes [recycling](#) and supports efforts to enhance and preserve [forestry resources and agriculture](#).

### Water Resources

The Chesapeake Bay, Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, and local waterways are critical to metropolitan Washington's environment and economy as well as the health and safety of the region's residents. COG's Water Resources Program assists local government members, and affiliated wastewater treatment and drinking water utilities, with protecting, restoring, and conserving these resources. The

program also helps them address the policy and technical implications of various state and federal initiatives that have water quality and water resource implications for the region.

COG's Regional Water Quality Management Program (RWQM) addresses a wide range of technical and policy issues that affect the tidal estuary portion of the Upper Potomac River and its tributaries, and that may have implications for the region's water quality and water resources. COG supports the Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) and the Water Resources Technical Committee (WRTC), by providing up-to-date information, analysis, and forums to address key topics such as:

- [Potomac, Chesapeake Bay and Local Water Resources](#);
- [Wastewater and Biosolids Management](#);
- [Stormwater Management](#);
- [Outreach and Education](#); and
- Various multi-sector activities that have implications for water quality and water resources - such as water infrastructure, source water protection, air pollution and land use, water-energy connections, toxics, and climate change.

COG's Urban Watershed Programs includes regional stormwater support, and the Anacostia Restoration Program (ARP) that supports the [Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership](#) and Steering Committee. COG's Drinking Water and Drought Monitoring Program supports issues of importance and impact to local drinking water and wastewater utilities including [water supply and drought response](#) and [water security monitoring](#).

COG works closely with the region's water and wastewater utilities on a variety of communications, monitoring and security issues. COG also provides [technical and policy support and coordination among the Parties to the 2012 Blue Plains Intermunicipal Agreement \(IMA\)](#) through the Blue Plains Regional Committee. Blue Plains is the largest wastewater treatment plant in the region.

## **CHESAPEAKE BAY, POTOMAC & LOCAL WATER RESOURCES**

The scope of water resource issues addressed in the metropolitan Washington region encompasses drinking water, wastewater and stormwater, and the associated need to protect and promote those valuable programs and the region's multi-decade, multi-billion-dollar investments in water infrastructure resources.

COG's [Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee](#) (CBPC) works to improve water quality in area streams, the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay. It tracks developments under the federal-state Chesapeake Bay Program for implications to local governments and recommends Bay-related policies to the COG Board in addition to addressing a range of water resource issues.

More information about COG's regional members and vision may be found at [www.mwccog.org](http://www.mwccog.org)