

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM AND WATER RESOURCES UPDATES November 2020

Chesapeake Bay Program

The Chesapeake Bay Program has released a draft Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), open for public comment through December 21, 2020. A synopsis of the draft Conowingo WIP process is in the CBP's blog:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/feedback_welcomed_on_draft_conowingo_plan
and will be discussed at the November WRTC and CBPC meetings.

Bay Dead Zone Smaller This Year than Recent Years

Experts credit a cooler spring and less nutrient-rich runoff with helping to keep oxygen levels from plummeting,

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/pressrelease/chesapeake_bay_dead_zone_smaller_than_in_recent_years

ACE Act Passage a Win for the Chesapeake Bay

America's Conservation Enhancement Act signed the end of the October reauthorized \$90 M in funding for the Chesapeake Bay Program for 2021 and half a million dollar increase per year through 2025. In addition, the Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense (WILD) Act was included in this bill passage. WILD authorizes a \$15 million annual grant and technical assistance program for state and local governments to protect fish and wildlife via ecosystem protection and community resilience. Further details:

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/environment/bs-md-ace-chesapeake-bay-conservation-enhancement-act-20201031-fvaqpbixfngheeah6gnndmukse-story.html>

The CBP Diversity Work Group will be sharing the finalized Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) Strategy, implementation tools and resources now available for CBP partners, and how you can get involved with advancing watershed restoration through DEIJ, via a webinar November 17, 1:00-2:00. Save to your calendar via this link:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/webinar_advancing_watershed_restoration_through_diversity_equity_inclusion

The Potomac Conservancy's 2020 Potomac River Report Card

The Potomac River's health grade has declined slightly from a B to a B-. This score is determined by several factors, including nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment levels, fish populations, habitat, and land management. The report noted that nutrient and sediment pollution continue to decrease over the long term, but short-term trends show mixed results. For additional information, download the report card at: <https://potomacreportcard.org/?emci=97a73477-4812-eb11-96f5-00155d03affc&emdi=bbfa3a11-bb12-eb11-96f5-00155d03affc&ceid=7703988>

Local Water Quality, Wastewater and Stormwater

The Maryland Department of the Environment has issued tentative determination drafts for **renewals of four of the 10 municipal Phase I MS4 permits in Maryland**, including the one for Montgomery County. To access the draft permits and the accompanying fact sheets, see: <https://mde.maryland.gov/MS4>.

DOEE has released an interim plan to dredge eleven PCB “hot spots” in the Anacostia River.
<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/anacostia-pollution-hot-spots/>

Mining wastewater data to refine COVID-19 case estimation

Biobot Analytics has been working with hundreds of communities across the nation and has generated [the world’s largest COVID-19 wastewater dataset](#). Since successfully [quantifying SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater in March 2020](#), Biobot has analyzed nearly 3,000 wastewater samples from over 400 locations in the US, with over 60% testing positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Water Utilities Asked Residents to “Imagine a Day Without Water”

October 21st was national “Imagine a Day Without Water” day. In this short video, COG’s [Community Engagement Campaign](#) asked community partners how they value water: <https://vimeo.com/469913326>

Food and Agriculture

Virginia Tech’s Center for Food Systems is offering a December webinar series on food production that includes soil health, equity, and other timely topics. Visit <https://foodsystems.centers.vt.edu/events-and-speakers/UpcomingEvents/SCP.html> for more information and to register.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

WRTC January 8, 2021

CBPC January 15, 2021

COG Staff Contacts

Karl Berber, kberger@mwccog.org,
Heidi Bonnaffon, hbonnaffon@mwccog.org
Christine Howard, cdhoward@mwccog.org