

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM AND WATER RESOURCES UPDATES

May 2024

Chesapeake Bay Program

[Inaugural State of the Streams report card shows the health of five waterways around Washington, D.C.](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

Rock Creek, along with the four other monitored creeks all were all rated “fair” in this report, scoring between 65-75 on a scale of 0-100. The streams were graded based on water quality, biodiversity and habitats, climate resilience and access to the water.

[Bay jurisdictions continue to chip away at pollution](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

With only a few months to go before our calendars turn to 2025, the Chesapeake Bay watershed jurisdictions continue to progress in meeting their pollutant reduction goals under the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (Bay TMDL).

[The Bay Program revamps the Chesapeake Healthy Watershed Assessment](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

The Chesapeake Bay watershed spans over 64,00 square miles, but within that watershed are thousands of smaller sub-watersheds where rainfall and snowmelt drain from the land into rivers, streams and lakes. Last year, Chesapeake Bay Program partners released an update of the Chesapeake Healthy Watersheds Assessment (CHWA 2.0), an interactive tool containing over 100 environmental metrics related to 83,628 of these sub-watersheds.

[EPA Chesapeake Bay Program awards historic amount of funding to grant programs guiding Bay restoration](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

Thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the single largest investment specifically earmarked for Chesapeake Bay restoration was announced today. An additional \$35 million awarded to watershed organizations through Chesapeake Stewardship Fund for on-the-ground projects.

[Seven land conservation success stories from around the Chesapeake region](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

Since 2010, the Chesapeake Bay Program has protected nearly 1.64 million acres of land, with the goal of reaching two million by 2025. Carried out by a variety of partners, this work is fundamental to Bay restoration. By protecting lands from development, we can help keep rivers and streams clean, improve habitat for plants and animals on land and in the water, reduce the impacts of flooding and boost the region’s outdoor recreation economy.

Water Quality, Wastewater and Stormwater

[Across Farm Country, Fertilizer Pollution Impacts Not Just Health, but Water Costs, Too](#)

Civil Eats

Overuse of fertilizer means nitrates are on the rise in water supplies, and rural areas bear the brunt. Access to clean water, as defined by the United Nations, is a human right. And yet many currently don’t have that right, even in a country where potable water is taken for granted. What’s more, the

cost of clean water falls more heavily on less populated areas, where fewer residents shoulder the bill.

[Our River, The Anacostia](#)

Hill Rag

There are many places along the Anacostia that are easy to overlook but are very special if you decide to explore them. Here I suggest five places with a wide range of experiences among them. Let's start downriver and work our way to the top through visits to these very special places.

[Anacostia Riverkeeper says proposed budget shift could leave free boat tours high and dry](#)

WTOP News

From Friday Night Fishing to free boat tours, the Anacostia Riverkeeper program is designed to acquaint D.C. residents with the river and continue cleanup efforts. But Anacostia Riverkeeper Trey Sherard told WTOP he's concerned about a potential move of \$1.8 million from river cleanup funding, which is part of the "Budget Support Act" that could allow for legal authority to make specific revenue changes.

[Drinking Water, Water Supply and Drought](#)

[One Water Art Contest](#)

MWCOG

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is joining with the Community Engagement Campaign's regional water utilities to hold its third annual Source Water Protection Art Contest. Local student artists, grades 9 – 12, can submit their art or short video which captures the importance of protecting our local water sources for a chance to win a prize.

[Why the U.S. struggles to replace millions of lead pipes. 'We're just stuck.'](#)

The Washington Post

Joshua Perkins, the president of his neighborhood association, learned from a group chat what was happening: The utility had sent letters saying it would soon be replacing some lead pipes in the neighborhood, though Perkins said he never received one. Three years ago, Perkins's water test from the company came back "safe," he said, but the recent flurry of activity reawakened his concerns about lead contamination.

[The Newly Published Water Supply Outlook for May, 2024](#)

ICPRB

So far for 2024, the water supply outlook is good. April ended with 0.4 inches of rain above average. The extra rain has helped us close the deep gap from the 12-month cumulative average developed from last year's dry weather. Streamflow is currently near normal, and groundwater levels are mostly normal.

[CFPUA could be a guide for how utilities can meet the EPA's new drinking water standards](#)

WFAE 90.7

With the EPA's new regulations, hundreds of utilities in North Carolina may need to install stronger filters to remove PFAS. WHQR's Kelly Kenoyer toured one of the most advanced facilities in the state to see what might be needed at other utilities.

PFAS

[Are 'Forever Chemicals' a Forever Problem?](#)

The New York Times

The Environmental Protection Agency has begun for the first time to regulate a class of synthetic chemicals known as “forever chemicals” in America’s drinking water. Kim Tingley, a contributing writer for The New York Times Magazine, explains how these chemicals, which have been linked to liver disease and other serious health problems, came to be in the water supply — and in many more places.

[Removing PFAS from public water systems will cost billions and take time – here are ways you can filter out harmful 'forever chemicals' at home](#)

The Conversation

Chemists invented PFAS in the 1930s to make life easier: Nonstick pans, waterproof clothing, grease-resistant food packaging and stain-resistant carpet were all made possible by PFAS. But in recent years, the growing number of health risks found to be connected to these chemicals has become increasingly alarming.

[E.P.A. Will Make Polluters Pay to Clean Up Two 'Forever Chemicals'](#)

The New York Times

The Biden administration is designating two “forever chemicals,” man-made compounds that are linked to serious health risks, as hazardous substances under the Superfund law, shifting responsibility for their cleanup to polluters from taxpayers.

[US Military Says National Security Depends on 'Forever Chemicals'](#)

Military.com

The Department of Defense relies on hundreds, if not thousands, of weapons and products such as uniforms, batteries, and microelectronics that contain PFAS, a family of chemicals linked to serious health conditions. Now, as regulators propose restrictions on their use or manufacturing, Pentagon officials have told Congress that eliminating the chemicals would undermine military readiness.

[The Cost of Freeing Drinking Water from 'Forever Chemicals'](#)

UnDark

Situated in a former sand and gravel pit just a few hundred feet from the Kennebec River in central Maine, the Riverside Station pumps half a million gallons of fresh groundwater every day. The well station processes water from two of five wells on either side of the river operated by the Greater Augusta Utility District, or GAUD, which supplies drinking water to nearly 6,000 local households.

[EPA puts limits on 'forever chemicals' in drinking water](#)

NPR

The Environmental Protection Agency announced new drinking water standards Wednesday to limit exposure to a class of chemicals called PFAS. This is the first time the agency has set enforceable limits on PFAS in drinking water.

Climate and Energy

[Internet data centers are fueling drive to old power source: Coal](#)

The Washington Post

Massive data centers with computers processing nearly 70 percent of global digital traffic are gobbling up electricity at a rate officials overseeing the power grid say is unsustainable unless two things happen: Several hundred miles of new transmission lines must be built, slicing through

neighborhoods and farms in Virginia and three neighboring states. And antiquated coal-powered electricity plants that had been scheduled to go offline will need to keep running to fuel the increasing need for more power, undermining clean energy goals.

[How to Manage AI's Thirst for Water](#)

BCG

Right now, some US lawmakers introduced legislation that would require the Environmental Protection Agency to study the impact of AI on climate change. The lawmakers also want a voluntary reporting system for companies to disclose the potential climate impact of their AI models. The bill may not pass. But it highlights the growing concern over the environmental impact of the rapid rise of new technologies that require significantly greater computational power.

[New EPA rules will force fossil fuel power plants to cut pollution](#)

Maryland Matters

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday released a sweeping set of rules aimed at cutting air, water and land pollution from fossil fuel-fired power plants. Environmental and clean energy groups celebrated the announcement as long overdue, particularly for coal-burning power plants, which have saddled hundreds of communities across the country with dirty air and hundreds of millions of tons of toxic coal ash waste. The ash has leached a host of toxins — including arsenic, mercury, lead, cadmium, radium and other pollutants — into ground and surface water.

[Food, Forestry and Agriculture](#)

[Conserving Trees and Forests in the Metropolitan Washington](#)

MWCOG

Report on the state of the region's tree canopy and its benefits, the development of new regional goals, and strategies for action at the local level.

[FDA Provides Updates on PFAS in General Food Supply](#)

Quality Assurance & Food Safety

The update includes recent testing results, continuing efforts to supplement the FDA's per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances data and monitoring activities and an updated analytical method to measure PFAS.

[New School Meal Standards Could Put More Local Food on Students' Lunch Trays](#)

Civil Eats

Last week, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) finalized long-anticipated changes to the nutrition standards that regulate school meals. Among the changes that attracted the most attention were the first-ever limits on added sugar and a scaled-down plan to reduce salt.

[Tree equity in Maryland: Federal funds promote access to green space](#)

Maryland Matters

An urban forest is growing in Baltimore, one block at a time. On an early spring day, a work crew from Baltimore Tree Trust has fanned out along the grassy right of way in Westfield, a neighborhood in northeast Baltimore where ArcGIS field maps show low canopy cover. Clearly enjoying the weather, crew leader Camerio Graves carefully shovels, plants, stakes, and mulches 10-foot Swamp Red Oaks on both sides of Pinewood Avenue.

[Could the blue catfish “cattie” be the Bay’s next best recipe?](#)

Chesapeake Bay Program

Blue catfish is a non-native species that was brought over and dumped into the James River in the 1970’s for recreational fishing. Over time, the species has moved into the Chesapeake Bay where it is now notorious for eating blue crabs, striped bass and other smaller fish while procreating at high rates. The fewer blue catfish we have in the Bay the better, which means that eating the surprisingly tasty and nutritious fish is beneficial to the ecosystem.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

[Local Leadership Workgroup Survey](#)

Survey

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is helping the Chesapeake Bay Program distribute a survey of elected or appointed officials and senior staff involved in policy making. Will you please take 10 minutes to answer a few questions for us? You can access the survey online at:

https://erg.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6hFBiR60luOrcCG?EPA=7

[Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week](#)

June 1 – June 9, 2024

Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week is an annual event that celebrates the culture, history and natural beauty of the nation’s largest estuary. Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week is a time to celebrate the cultures, history and natural beauty of the nation's largest estuary. The week will include a wide variety of online and in-person events, volunteer opportunities and social media conversations so everyone can take part in celebrating the Chesapeake Bay.

[NatCap PRISM](#)

The National Capital Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (NatCap PRISM) is a newly formed committee under COG. The next steering committee will take place on June 14th. The NatCap PRISM was created to address the effects of invasive species on native plants, wildlife, and habitats throughout the National Capital Area. Core partners include DC DOEE, Fairfax County DPWES, Montgomery County, Fairfax County Park Authority, COG, Rock Creek Conservancy, Casey Trees, Nature Forward, and Ward 8 Woods.

FARM: June 14, 2024

CBPC: July 19, 2024

WRTC: September 13, 2024

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