



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
A Watershed Partnership

# Background

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In the most recent Bay restoration agreement, *Chesapeake 2000*, the Chesapeake Executive Council committed their jurisdictions to greatly reduce the amount nutrient and sediment pollution flowing into the Bay.

To meet this bold commitment, the Bay Program turned upstream to enroll the assistance of the Bay watershed's headwaters states – Delaware, New York and West Virginia. These "headwaters partners" are now working with traditional Bay Program partners to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution flowing into rivers throughout their part of the Bay watershed.

With recent estimates to improve Bay water quality placed at more than \$11 billion, the Executive Council has established a Chesapeake Bay Watershed Blue Ribbon Panel to seek new and innovative ways to finance and secure the Bay's future.



## **Chesapeake Bay Watershed Blue Ribbon Finance Panel: Seeking Solutions to Secure the Bay's Future**

On December 9, 2003, the Chesapeake Executive Council – comprised of the governors of Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Administrator of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission – called for the establishment of a Chesapeake Bay Watershed Blue Ribbon Finance Panel to seek new and innovative ways to finance and secure the Bay's future.

The Blue Ribbon Panel has been asked "to consider funding sources to implement the tributary strategies basin-wide and to make recommendations regarding other actions at the federal, state and local level to the Executive Council."

This panel will evaluate possible funding sources and financing mechanisms to efficiently reduce nutrient and sediment pollution throughout the Bay watershed. The panel will assess and explore all financing opportunities including federal, state, local and private sources, as well as investigate opportunities to improve the overall financial efficiency of nutrient and sediment reduction efforts. Additional emphasis will be placed on financing pollution reductions from storm water, air emissions, agriculture and sewage treatment plants.

The panel will be comprised of 15 individuals and include high-level business leaders of major companies, financial and economic experts, and other stakeholders with experience in storm water, agriculture, air emission and wastewater treatment plant funding and pollution control. The panel will also include current and former local, state, and federal officials with financing expertise.

The panel will be announced in March 2004 and will meet three to four times prior to the development of its final recommendations which will be issued in October 2004.

The Chesapeake Bay Program is restoring the Bay through a partnership among the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency representing the federal government, the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the District of Columbia, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and participating citizen advisory groups.