

The Trash Free Maryland Alliance is pleased to have the opportunity to provide comments on the draft of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. The Alliance is a network of more than 60 organizations and businesses working to reduce trash pollution through a common policy agenda. Its members engage in community and stream cleanups, anti-litter education and outreach campaigns, market-based initiatives, and advocacy for source reduction and anti-littering policies.

The draft of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, as published, does not address trash pollution, and it should.

- The EPA is making trash pollution a priority in the Mid-Atlantic through a new Trash Free Waters Program, located within Headquarters. In order to reach its full potential, the program should also be incorporated into the Chesapeake Bay Program.

- Since 2010, two tributaries in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been declared "impaired" by trash under the Clean Water Act. Maryland and the District of Columbia issued a Total Maximum Daily Load for trash in 2010, and similar regulations are pending for the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River and Baltimore's Inner Harbor. We can reasonably assume that the Anacostia and Patapsco Rivers are not the only Bay tributaries suffering from trash pollution.

Meanwhile, research on plastic pollution in the North Atlantic Gyre is increasing. The trash is not somehow bypassing the Bay on its way from our neighborhoods and waterways to the ocean, yet almost no data exists on trash pollution in the Chesapeake Bay.

- Trash pollution is an onramp for citizen engagement. Even citizens disconnected from local waterbodies recognize the blight caused by litter blowing down the street, or stuck in trees. In the water, it is the most visible pollutant. Talking about trash pollution, and the solutions to preventing and removing it, can engage residents watershed-wide, preparing them to become more engaged in other facets of the restoration plan.

Thank you for considering our comments, and we look forward to collaborating on a stronger Agreement and a cleaner, trash-free Chesapeake Bay.

Sincerely,

Julie Lawson  
Director, Trash Free Maryland Alliance  
[www.trashfreemaryland.org](http://www.trashfreemaryland.org)

MD: 410-861-0412  
DC: 202-347-0412  
[julie@trashfreemaryland.org](mailto:julie@trashfreemaryland.org)