



WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS COALITION

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March 17, 2014

Via e-mail to agreement@chesapeakebay.net

Mr. Nicholas DiPasquale

Chair, Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board

410 Severn Avenue, Suite 109

Annapolis, MD 21403

Dear Mr. DiPasquale and Management Board Members:

The West Virginia Rivers Coalition supports Choose Clean Water Coalition's submitted comments that provide thorough feedback on various aspects of the draft Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. As the statewide river advocacy group in West Virginia, we are also compelled to submit this letter based on our ongoing experience dealing with a devastating chemical leak that not only contaminated the Elk River, but also the drinking water of 300,000 people across a nine county area.

The Elk River chemical leak and ensuing water crisis brings in sharp focus the threat of toxic chemicals to our region's waterways, our health and our economy. A meaningful Bay Watershed Agreement must address the reduction of loadings of toxic pollutants. It must also prioritize research of toxic contaminants on aquatic and human health.

Our state is learning from this experience the incalculable value of clean water. It will take a long time to restore the public trust in government to adequately protect us and the water we drink and enjoy from harm. We have an immense hole to dig out of to redeem our state's image as a safe place to live and visit. We do not wish these consequences on any of the Bay watershed states.

We urge the Board to address the threat of toxic contaminants in the Agreement. We advise the Board to take every step possible to respond to citizens' insistence, as represented loudly and strongly in West Virginia, that accountability measures are in place to produce real improvement and results that ensure our right to clean water now and in the future.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read 'Angela Rosser' in a cursive, flowing script. The first letter 'A' is large and prominent, and the last letter 'r' has a long, sweeping tail.

Angela Rosser
Executive Director