

Greetings, Chesapeake Bay Program

My name is Dwayne Ford and I am writing to share my thoughts, suggestions and opinions on the proposed Diversity workplan actions. I am a resident of Brandywine MD and I am concerned about the lack of diverse people and issues that have been left out mainstream environmentalism. After reviewing the Diversity workplan, I am pleased to have the opportunity to share what is important to me in the following bullets:

- Supporting minority-owned contractors and businesses should be a high priority. I want to see environmental groups making a concerted effort to support diverse businesses for not just landscaping or green infrastructure contracts but consulting as well.
- There needs to more emphasis and commitment to making sure that all internships are paid or at least offer some other benefit like transportation and/or free lunch. It is the responsibility of the organization to not sustain an exploitative system. Un-paid internships make it so that only people who can afford to work for free get these opportunities. This is one way to ensure your applicant pool is expanded and will include more underserved and underrepresented candidates.
- In reviewing the list of partners, there is not enough representation from the environmental justice community. Given the history of mainstream environmentalists excluding the concerns and the people of the environmental justice movement, there needs to be intentional effort to include them every step of the way. Because of this history, I would like to see them as well as their concerns represented as it relates to restoring the Chesapeake Bay.

Thank you for the opportunity share my perspectives

Sincerely

Dwayne Ford, a resident of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed