Why Do We Need To Reduce Pollution In The Chesapeake Bay?  

In the 1960s, residents began to notice that the Chesapeake Bay was losing its esthetic beauty: waters were green, fish and shellfish were no longer available for sport or food, the bayside environment was losing its appeal. This became a driving force for the development of the Chesapeake Bay Program, which was established by an Act of Congress in 1983. The Program’s mission is to restore and preserve the Bay’s living resources and environment through the reduction of pollution from the Bay’s six states and the District of Columbia. The Program is a partnership comprised of local governments, non-profit organizations and academic institutions. Staff members work at the individual jurisdictions. 

How Much Additional Nitrogen From the Conowingo Dam Will Need To Be Reduced?  

Current estimates are that six million pounds of nitrogen would need to be reduced in the Conowingo Dam, or better than reductions associated with projects opportunities could also be included in the WIP if these are cost-effective downstream restoration impact on increasing dissolved oxygen in the Bay. 

The Conowingo WIP process is intended to integrate sector capacity to develop and propose cost-effective performance-based contracting to leverage private grant programs to maximize capacity and deploy oversight of the project implementation. The WIP is structured to dovetail and work in tandem with ongoing efforts to implement best management practices (BMPs) but seeks to go above and beyond what is identified in existing WIPs. 

The Conowingo WIP also is set up to utilize technology will be used to target and track restoration practices where they will have the most strategic impact. The WIP, the most up-to-date data, modeling and coordination, project identification and developing a financing strategy to reduce nitrogen locally will have the greatest 

Why Will Jurisdictions’ WIPs Work in Tandem With the Conowingo WIP?  

The Conowingo WIP team will bring additional resources in terms of technical assistance, regulatory guidance, capacity building and other supports to help jurisdictional WIPs move forward as well as to assist in financing or identifying funding opportunities. Additionally, the Conowingo WIP will help jurisdictions build a stronger sense of community and shared purpose through shared decision-making and a coordinated program. The Conowingo WIP team will also develop a second WIP document for the Conowingo. Instead, EPA Watershed jurisdictions are NOT being asked to develop a second WIP document for the Conowingo. Instead, EPA is working with state and local partners across the basin to develop a single, comprehensive Conowingo WIP that will guide jurisdictions across the watershed in reducing nitrogen at the source.