



THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

April 30, 2015

Via e-mail to agreement@chesapeakebay.net

Mr. Nicholas DiPasquale
Chair, Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 109
Annapolis, MD 21403

RE: Environmental Literacy, Students, and Sustainable Schools Management Strategies Comments

Dear Mr. DiPasquale and Management Board Members:

The Izaak Walton League, a national conservation organization with a mission to conserve, restore, and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of our natural resources, including soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife, respectfully submits the following comments on the draft Environmental Literacy, Students, and Sustainable Schools management strategies.

The League has a long history of engaging young people in studying, monitoring, and restoring streams. Our Creek Freaks program, named by participating students, is a water-based environmental education program that empowers children to become experts on their local streams while combatting the growing problem of nature deficit disorder. Children learn about water quality, pollution, erosion, stream dynamics, plants, and soils through fun and engaging hands-on activities. Children become experts on local streams and then share that information with the community through presentations, videos, stories, data, and photos. Students conduct biological, chemical, and physical water quality monitoring and post results to www.creekfreaks.net. The League also engages pre-school children in outdoor exploration, including learning about waterways, pollution, and pollution prevention through our Tiny Ikes program.

In addition to these programs at the national level, the League's chapters, including more than 10,000 members in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, regularly conduct programs and events to engage children in outdoor education and hands-on conservation.

The Izaak Walton League supports the Environmental Literacy, Students, and Sustainable Schools management strategies. A focus on comprehensive educational opportunities through

the school system is important to provide every student in the Bay watershed with a solid base of understanding of the importance of healthy streams and a healthy Bay. However, we have seen through our work with students in afterschool programs, summer camps, and other nonformal settings that these out-of-school experiences with streams and the Bay have the flexibility to engage students in a truly comprehensive study of local waterways that can lead to lifelong stewardship of our natural resources. Therefore we ask that you consider including support for afterschool programs and other nonformal educational opportunities in the final strategy.

We are happy to discuss our comments on the draft Education Management Strategies further. Please feel free to contact me at 301-548-0150 x. 219 or leah@iwla.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Miller
Clean Water Program Director
Izaak Walton League of America, Inc.



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[Via e-mail to agreement@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:Via_e-mail_to_agreement@chesapeakebay.net)

Mr. Nicholas DiPasquale
Chair, Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 109
Annapolis, MD 21403

RE: Citizen Stewardship Management Strategy Comments

Dear Mr. DiPasquale and Management Board Members:

The Izaak Walton League is a national conservation organization with a mission to conserve, restore, and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of our natural resources, including soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife. As a member of the Choose Clean Water Coalition—a coalition of organizations from Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia with the common goal of restoring the thousands of streams and rivers flowing to the Chesapeake Bay—we are one of the organizations that signed the Coalition's letter on this management strategy. In addition to the comments in that letter, the League respectfully submits the following additional comments.

The League strongly agrees with the focus on increasing the number and diversity of trained and mobilized citizen volunteers with the knowledge and skills to enhance the health of their local watersheds. In fact, the League plays a significant role in engaging citizen volunteers in watershed stewardship in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

In Virginia alone, the League engages more than 500 volunteers in water quality monitoring at more than 150 sites through the Virginia Save Our Streams program. More than 50 additional volunteers monitor dozens of sites in the other Bay states through the League's Save Our Streams program. We also train hundreds of nonformal educators in our Creek Freaks program, which empowers students in grades 4-8 to become experts in their local streams and to share water quality monitoring data, photos, and stories about streams and pollution prevention with their communities. These educators work with thousands of children every year. We also are increasing the number of private homeowners who are installing stormwater management strategies, such as rain gardens and conservation landscaping, in their yards through our Lands Green, Waters Clean program.

In addition to these citizen stewardship programs on the national level, the League has more than 10,000 members in dozens of chapters across the Bay watershed. These volunteers routinely organize and participate in impactful stewardship activities for the benefit of the Bay, including tree planting, wetland conservation, rain barrel workshops, environmental education for children, and stream restoration. Members of the League in Maryland and Virginia have recently formed a Chesapeake Bay Committee and have identified increasing citizen stewardship as one of the group's top priorities.

NATIONAL OFFICE 707 Conservation Ln. | Gaithersburg, MD 20878-2983 | (301) 548-0150 | (301) 548-0146 FAX | general@iwla.org

MIDWEST OFFICE 1619 Dayton Ave., Suite 202 | St. Paul, MN 55104-6206 | (651) 649-1446 | (651) 649-1494 FAX | midwestoffice@iwla.org

WWW.IWLA.ORG

The Citizen Stewardship Management Strategy includes information about many important stewardship efforts across the Bay watershed. The Izaak Walton League respectfully requests to have our organization's significant contributions in this area included within the strategy.

We look forward to working with the Chesapeake Bay Program to continue to provide and enhance opportunities for volunteers to monitor and restore the Bay and its tributaries.

We would be happy to discuss these comments further. Please feel free to contact me at 301-548-0150 x. 219 or at leah@iwla.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Miller
Clean Water Program Director
Izaak Walton League of America