

## Lee McDonnell - Bio

Lee McDonnell is an environmental manager and licensed Professional Engineer with more than 30 years of state and federal experience advancing water quality, regulatory programs, and collaborative partnerships. He currently serves as Chief of the Science Analysis and Implementation Branch at EPA Region 3's Chesapeake Bay Program Office, leading a multidisciplinary team of 45+ scientists and technical staff from federal agencies, academia, and contractors. Lee provides strategic guidance on developing and applying water quality models and leveraging extensive monitoring data across the 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed. He engages all levels of the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership to translate complex science, build coalitions, and drive consensus decisions.

In 2025, Lee served as Acting Director of the Chesapeake Bay Program Office, guiding the Partnership through revisions to the Watershed Agreement. He designed and facilitated multiple Management Board retreats and oversaw all aspects of office operations, including budget, personnel, grant awards, partnership support, and facilities.

Previously, Lee was Director of Pennsylvania DEP's Bureau of Clean Water, where he led 96 professionals implementing the Clean Water Act (CWA) and Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law (CSL). In this role, he formulated regulation, policy and guidance which supported and directed an additional 175 staff in the six PADEP regional offices to carry out these CWA and CSL programs. He collaborated across agencies on strategic initiatives and regularly briefed technical and non-technical audiences on policy and regulatory updates.

Earlier at DEP, Lee managed the Southcentral Regional Clean Water Program, overseeing permitting, stream assessment, sewage planning, and compliance, and he frequently testified before the Environmental Hearing Board and Commonwealth Court. He held supervisory positions with statewide responsibility in NPDES Permitting, and TMDL development. He helped develop the point source strategy for Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Phase I Watershed Implementation Plan. He wrote the first non-point source TMDLs in PA for acid mine drainage and nutrient impairments. He began his career as a staff engineer developing water quality models, and training DEP staff on their use in developing NPDES permits.

A retired U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 2, Lee deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom, managing logistics for 1.5 million+ Class II items, producing daily situation reports for senior commands, and integrating the Prime Vendor Program in theater. He earned an MPA from Shippensburg University, a BS in Environmental Engineering Technology from Penn State, and an AAS in Civil Engineering Technology from Penn College. Colleagues know him as a skilled negotiator and problem solver—committed, organized, responsible, and detail-oriented.