



# Chesapeake Bay Program

*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

1750 Forest Drive, Suite 130, Annapolis, MD 21401

October 17, 2022

Dr. Kandis Boyd  
Director, Chesapeake Bay Program  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III  
1750 Forest Drive, Suite 130  
Annapolis, MD 21401

CC: Lee McDonnell, Branch Chief, EPA, Lucinda Power, Team Leader, EPA.

Re: Chesapeake Bay Conowingo WIP

Dear Dr. Boyd,

At the Principals' Staff Committee meeting held on July 19, 2022, the partnership agreed to give jurisdictions a choice in how to address their assigned Conowingo WIP nutrient loads. Given this decision, the jurisdictions located within the Conowingo WIP geographic area (Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York) have agreed to continue Conowingo work with a phased approach that extends beyond 2025. This decision was formalized in letters submitted by Dr. Kandis Boyd, Director of the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office, to the Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York agency cabinet secretaries. In 2026, we will have sufficient information to reassess overall CWIP implementation progress and determine any adaptive management strategies needed.

As stated in our March 21, 2022, letter (attached) in response to EPA's Conowingo WIP (CWIP) evaluation, the CWIP Steering Committee jurisdictions remain committed to reducing their base allocation from annual Chesapeake Bay Regulatory Accountability Program (CBRAP) or Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG) funds through 2025 to support successful implementation of the CWIP (see Table 1 for state specific funding allocations). We are again requesting that through 2025, EPA continue to withhold those set amounts identified in Table 1 to support the current and/or new grantees, with any remaining balances used at the direction of the Steering Committee to fill CWIP implementation gaps. Some gaps for implementation support that have been identified to date include grant writing, technical assistance and ongoing data management and quality assurance, and overall project management, as these pursuits are crucial to the success of the WIP.

*Table 1. Current annual Chesapeake Bay Regulatory Accountability Program (CBRAP) or Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG) contributions for Conowingo WIP implementation.*

Jurisdiction	Current Annual CBRAP or CBIG Contribution
District of Columbia	\$0*
Maryland	\$87,033
New York	\$14,309
Pennsylvania	\$163,681

Virginia	\$68,242
West Virginia	\$9,396

*\*The District of Columbia does not contribute CBRAP dollars based on the Conowingo WIP Framework allocation formula.*

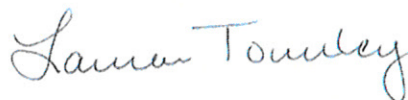
The Steering Committee values EPA's role in pooling jurisdictional funding to provide the critical technical support necessary to accelerate CWIP implementation. Now that there are numeric nutrient reduction targets, as specified in the 2022-23 milestones, it is even more critical that EPA continue allocating CWIP implementation funds. Although there is currently robust jurisdictional funding going into CWIP implementation, more substantial federal support will be needed over the longer-term in order to achieve the annual estimated implementation price tag of more than \$53.3 million. As we build increasing capacity for CWIP implementation, the Steering Committee requests that EPA consider reprogramming some of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding used for competitive grants to specifically support CWIP implementation projects.

The CWIP identifies a suite of nutrient and sediment reducing best management practices (BMPs) that are currently accepted by the Chesapeake Bay Watershed model. Accelerating these practices will be critical to the CWIP's success. The CWIP also promotes innovative nutrient and sediment reducing solutions that currently do not have a partnership approved nutrient reduction efficiency. This includes practices such as acid mine drainage (AMD) treatment, Conowingo dredging, and natural filters like freshwater mussels. Developing CBP-approved nutrient reduction efficiencies for new and innovative BMPs can accelerate shared restoration goals across all jurisdictions as well as the Conowingo, while also providing additional restoration tools in the tool kit to sustain progress past 2025. The Steering Committee applauds EPA for putting money into your budget for expert panels and is eagerly awaiting federal guidance on the funding amount and uses.

The Steering Committee appreciates the Chesapeake Bay Program's continued partnership and commitment to this innovative and collaborative WIP. With our 2025 restoration goals in sight, we need to not only assure implementation of our jurisdictional WIPs but also explore the new innovations and partnerships that can accelerate overall progress, achieve multiple co-benefits, including but not limited to climate resiliency, and modernize the tools for our collective restoration efforts.


Sincerely and on behalf of our Principals' Staff Committee Members:

New York:



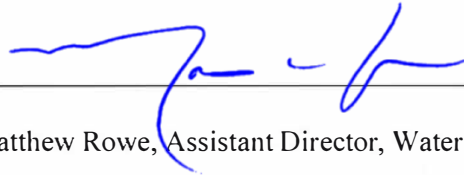
Lauren Townley, Chief, Watershed Section A, NYSDEC

Pennsylvania:



Jill Whitcomb, Director, Bureau of Watershed Restoration  
and Nonpoint Source Management, PADEP

Maryland:



Matthew Rowe, Assistant Director, Water and Science  
Administration, MDE

District of Columbia:



Jeffrey Seltzer, Deputy Director, DOEE

West Virginia:



Teresa Koon, Assistant Director, Division of Water and  
Waste Management, WVDEP

Virginia:



Jutta Schneider, Director, Water Planning Division,  
VADEQ