



FEDERAL AGENCY BUDGET REQUEST FISCAL YEAR 2020

THE RESTORATION OF THE CHESAPEAKE Bay watershed is at a critical juncture. Positive signs of recovery have emerged across the watershed, proving that the collaborative effort is working. After three decades, we are more than half way to achieving the shared goal of clean water by 2025. But to complete the job, more resources must be brought to bear.

The Bay's Congressional delegation has been steadfast in its commitment to restore the watershed and its resources. Continued success depends on maintaining, and in some cases enhancing, the Federal funding that provides the catalyst for the restoration efforts. Each Federal dollar spent leverages three more from state, local and private partners. Between now and 2025, we all need to “double-down” on our commitment and capacity.

As Congress begins deliberations on the FY 2020 Federal budget, the Chesapeake Bay Commission offers this report to pinpoint the Federal funding required. We have highlighted three opportunities where targeted increases will strategically advance our work (see box at right).

Who We Are and What We Do

The Chesapeake Bay Commission is a tri-state legislative Commission with bipartisan membership from Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. We work to advance policy, at all levels of government, to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Federal-state partnership is producing real results in cleaner water, healthier fisheries and greater economic and environmental resilience. It is a model worthy of global recognition.

Commission Priority Increases

★ **Environmental Protection Agency: Geographic Programs — Chesapeake Bay: \$90,000K**
(FY 2019 level \$73,000K)

These monies maintain the nucleus of the Federal-state partnership to restore the Bay. Program funds are used to coordinate the complex science and monitoring efforts that drive restoration.

As we near the 2025 deadline, both the challenge and urgency of our work grows. New research on the nutrient flows through the Conowingo Dam amplify the need for pollution reductions, but we lack funding for implementation at the scale required. Priority areas are: 1) small watershed and innovative practices grants; 2) local government implementation; and 3) state-based targeted and cost-effective solutions. Current programs are significantly over-subscribed and highly leveraged. We are in the final phase and within sight of delivering clean water.

★ **National Park Service: Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails Program: \$3,000K**
(FY 2019 level \$2,000K)

This program provides assistance for connecting people with the heritage of the watershed. The increase will: 1) develop a core set of “visitor hubs” to expand Chesapeake tourism; 2) increase programming and projects that get children and visitors outside; and 3) advance Chesapeake conservation and access goals.

★ **US Army Corps of Engineers: Construction — Chesapeake Bay Environmental Restoration and Protection (Sec. 510): \$5,000K**
(FY 2019 level \$0K)

The Chesapeake Bay Comprehensive Plan provides a strategic roadmap for investments in aquatic ecosystem restoration. Under Section 510, USACE is provided an enhanced opportunity to partner with non-Federal sponsors to design and construct aquatic ecosystem restoration projects. All watershed jurisdictions have contributed to the Plan and would match federal funding.

FY 2020 REQUEST SUMMARY

Interior, Environment and Related Agencies

- EPA — Geographic Programs — Chesapeake Bay: \$90,000K
- EPA — Nonpoint Source (Sec. 319) Grants: \$170,915K
- EPA — Pollution Control (Sec. 106) Grants: \$230,806K
- EPA — Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund: \$1,394,000K
- DOI-USGS — Chesapeake Ecosystem Science and Monitoring: \$12,850K
- NPS — Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails Program: \$3,000K
- DOI-USFWS — Cooperative Landscape Conservation: \$12,500K
- DOI-USFWS — Habitat Conservation — Coastal Programs: \$13,375K
- USDA-Forest Service — Forest Stewardship Program: \$20,500K
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (all agencies): \$435,000K

Energy and Water Development

- USACE-Construction — Chesapeake Bay Oyster Recovery, MD & VA (Sec. 704(b)): \$5,000K
- USACE-Construction — Chesapeake Bay Environmental Restoration and Protection (Sec. 510): \$5,000K
- USACE-Construction — Poplar Island: \$8,100K
- USACE-Construction — Continuing Authorities Program — Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (Sec. 206) \$12,000K and Emergency Streambank and Shoreline Protection (Sec. 14): \$8,000K

Commerce and Justice, Science and Related Agencies

- NOAA-NMFS — Habitat Conservation and Restoration: \$61,384K
- NOAA-NMFS — Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions: \$40,175K
- NOAA-Office of Education — B-WET Regional Programs: \$7,500K
- NOAA-Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research — National Sea Grant College Program: \$93,500K

Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration and Related Agencies

- USDA-NRCS — Conservation Operations: \$875,000K
- USDA-NRCS/FSA — 2018 Farm Bill Programs: Full Funding of Mandatory Programs

Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

✓ **Geographic Programs – Chesapeake Bay: \$90,000K** (FY 2019 level \$73,000K)

See first page for program narrative.

✓ **Nonpoint Source (Sec. 319) Grants: \$170,915K** (level funding)

An overwhelming majority of Americans — 215 million (more than 70 percent) — live within 2 miles of a polluted lake, river, stream or coastal area. States have identified more than 600,000 miles of rivers and streams, more than 13 million acres of lakes and more than 500,000 acres of wetlands that do not meet state water quality goals. The Chesapeake region is no exception, with 21 percent of streams sampled ranked in poor or very poor condition. Pennsylvania alone has more impaired streams than any other state in the continental United States. The Sec. 319 grants are a key resource in the effort to improve and protect our nation's waters. In FY 2019, this program provided \$8.4 million for Bay watershed restoration.

✓ **Pollution Control (Sec. 106) Grants: \$230,806K** (level funding)

This national program helps states in the Bay watershed manage the Federal water pollution permit program, or NPDES. Under the Clean Water Act, it is unlawful to discharge any pollutant into U.S. waters without a NPDES permit. Without adequate funding, this permit process gets bogged down, resulting in business losses and reduced permit monitoring and enforcement. In FY 2019, this program provided \$11.3 million for Bay restoration.

✓ **Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund: \$1,394,000K** (level funding); **a Congressional infrastructure package should significantly increase financing**

This program provides low-cost financing to local communities to improve water-related infrastructure and local water quality. States have the flexibility to fund a range of projects that address their highest priority water quality needs. Using a combination of Federal and state funds, state programs provide loans to eligible recipients to: construct municipal wastewater facilities; control nonpoint sources of pollution; build decentralized wastewater treatment systems; create green infrastructure projects; protect estuaries; and fund other water quality projects.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

U.S. Geological Survey

✓ **Chesapeake Ecosystem Science and Monitoring: \$12,850K** (level funding)

Decision makers at all levels rely on USGS science to devise effective plans to reduce the impacts of nutrients, sediment and toxic contaminants, and improve habitat for freshwater fisheries and waterfowl, and focus land protection. Only with the monitoring and analysis provided by USGS do we know where to focus restoration efforts and determine their effectiveness. This funding is distributed across multiple USGS line-items.

National Park Service

✓ **National Park Service: Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails Program: \$3,000K** (FY 2019 level \$2,000K)

See front page for program narrative.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

✓ **Cooperative Landscape Conservation: \$12,500K** (level funding)

These 22 public-private landscape cooperatives are a recognition that successful conservation requires voluntary, non-regulatory partnerships that span jurisdictional boundaries. The North Atlantic cooperative develops the scientific information and tools needed to prioritize and guide regional conservation goals.

✓ **Habitat Conservation – Coastal Programs: \$13,375K** (level funding)

This is a voluntary habitat conservation program that provides technical and financial assistance, in collaboration with partners, for the benefit of protected species and resources. The Chesapeake Bay is one of 24 priority coastal ecosystems.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

✓ **Forest Stewardship: \$20,500K** (level funding)

This is the primary Forest Service program focused on private forestland management and conservation. Priority uses include restoring riparian forest buffers, adding urban tree canopy, and protecting high-value forest.

✓ **Land and Water Conservation Fund (all agencies): \$435,000K** (level funding)

The LWCF is the nation's premier land conservation program. Through locally-driven projects, it provides for the permanent protection of landscapes to safeguard the rivers and streams feeding into the Bay, while

supporting local economies through recreation and tourism. Each year, a handful of top-ranked projects within the Bay watershed are selected for funding. In FY 2020, we support specific Federal agency proposals by the Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service and National Park Service, totaling \$16,770K.

Energy and Water Development Subcommittee

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

✓ **Construction – Chesapeake Bay Environmental Restoration and Protection (Sec. 510): \$5,000K** (FY 2019 level \$0K)

See front page for program narrative.

✓ **Construction – Chesapeake Bay Oyster Recovery, MD & VA (Sec. 704(b)): \$5,000K** (FY 2019 level \$0K; historically \$2,000–5,000K)

Oysters are a cornerstone species of the Bay ecosystem, serving as a water filter. Their reefs provide habitat for many fish and other aquatic species. With current populations at less than 1 percent of historic levels, the Bay agreement targets oyster restoration as a key objective within 10 rivers. Restoration projects are succeeding in both states: in Maryland's Harris Creek, Tred Avon and the Little Choptank Rivers and in Virginia's Lafayette, Piankatank, and Lynnhaven Rivers. Both Harris Creek and the Lafayette River are fully constructed for restoration. Work remains to be completed in the other tributaries and four new areas have been identified for restoration by state partners. Funding is needed.

If Chesapeake-specific funding is not identified, we recommend this Committee narrative:

“Oyster Restoration. —The Committee supports the Chesapeake Bay Oyster Restoration Project and encourages the Corps to provide sufficient funding in future budget submissions for the fiscal year 2020 work plan.”

✓ **Construction – Poplar Island: \$8,100K**

This project will add valuable wetland habitat to the Chesapeake Bay, and at the same time ensure the economic viability of the Port of Baltimore.

✓ **Construction — Continuing Authorities Program — Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (Sec. 206) \$12,000K and Emergency Streambank and Shoreline Protection (Sec. 14) \$8,000K** (level funding)

These national programs provide funding for habitat restoration and the reduction of flood damage to public infrastructure in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

National Marine Fisheries Service

✓ **Habitat Conservation and Restoration:**
\$61,384K (FY 2019 level \$56,384K)

NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Office is budgeted within HCR. In FY 2018, this program provided \$6.4 million to support critical fisheries efforts, such as population assessment, restoration and habitat improvement. Critical species, such as oysters, blue crabs, striped bass and menhaden, have huge social and economic importance. The Commission supports Committee narrative to specifically fund enhanced oyster restoration efforts within the Chesapeake Bay.

✓ **Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions:**
\$40,175K (level funding)

Regional fishery coordination is critical to the stewardship and sustainable harvest of our migratory fisheries, both commercial and recreational. Working with state representatives from the executive and legislative branches, policy and management plans are crafted based on the best science and stakeholder engagement.

Office of Education

✓ **Bay-Watershed Education and Training (B-WET)**
Regional Programs: \$7,500K (level funding)

NOAA's B-WET program is an environmental education program that promotes locally based STEM learning for K-12 students and teachers. B-WET provides competitive grants to encourage capacity building and partnerships. In FY 2018, this program provided \$2.75 million towards Chesapeake stewardship and environmental literacy.

Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

✓ **National Sea Grant College Program: \$93,500K**
(includes Marine Aquaculture Program)
(FY 2019 level \$80,000K)

The Sea Grant program works to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal and marine resources to create a sustainable economy and environment. Within the Bay watershed, priorities include research to support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. In FY 2018, this program provided \$4.7 million towards Bay restoration. And between 2014 to 2017, \$250 million in statewide economic impacts were derived from Maryland and Virginia Sea Grant activities.

Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration and Related Agencies Subcommittee

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

✓ **Natural Resources Conservation Service**
Conservation Operations: \$875,000K
(FY 2019 level \$819,492K)

Conservation technical assistance (CTA) is the foundation of NRCS's ability to deliver effective conservation. By working with agricultural producers to prepare and implement conservation plans, sediment and nutrient loads to our waterways are directly reduced. Increases in CTA are needed to meet farmer demand.

✓ **NRCS and Farm Service Agency (FSA): Full Funding of Mandatory Programs Authorized in 2018 Farm Bill**

Farm Bill programs provide the financial backbone of the region's agricultural conservation efforts. In FY 2018, \$140.3 million was budgeted for cost-share assistance to Bay watershed farmers. These dollars are critical to achieving the pollution reductions necessary to achieve clean water throughout the watershed. Core programs include the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which have been further strengthened by the new Farm Bill.

In Conclusion

Chesapeake Bay restoration can be achieved through the collaborative will, strength and determination of Federal, state and local governments, their legislatures, and the public. The economic value of a clean Bay justifies these requests for funding in FY 2020. And for each Federal dollar spent, three dollars in non-Federal expenditures are made.



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Policy for the Bay

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