

# CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM AND WATER RESOURCES UPDATES

## May 2025

### Chesapeake Bay Program

#### [Stakeholders' Advisory Committee member shares her thoughts on how to foster the next generation of environmental leaders](#)

*Chesapeake Bay Program*

An interview with Sara Ramotnik, who works for the Choose Clean Water Coalition as a policy specialist, Ramotnik is passionate about the restoration effort and sees many opportunities for the Stakeholders' Advisory Committee to influence the next iteration of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement as well as encourage more people to become involved in the work.

#### [Maryland oysters on the upswing](#)

*Bay Journal*

Maryland's oyster population remains in pretty good shape, according to the state Department of Natural Resources. Preliminary results from DNR's annual reef survey in fall 2024 found that the state's stock of Chesapeake Bay bivalves experienced above-average reproduction last summer, and the diseases that once devastated them remain at relatively low levels.

#### [Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act set to drive economic growth, protect Maryland's natural resources](#)

*CBS*

The Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act, a bill introduced by the Moore-Miller Administration in February that seeks to improve the Chesapeake Bay's water quality, is one step closer to becoming a reality. The bill was sent to Gov. Wes Moore's desk earlier this month after being passed by Maryland lawmakers. According to the Moore-Miller Administration, the act supports farmers in developing more efficient farming methods and improves oyster aquaculture. Overall, this will create new sources of income for farmers and uplift Maryland's most crucial industries.

### Water Quality, Wastewater and Stormwater

#### [Earth Day Anacostia River cleanup highlights restoration efforts](#)

*Fox 5 Washington*

Volunteers gathered near Kingman and Heritage Islands on Earth Day 2025 to continue efforts to restore the Anacostia River, once a heavily polluted and overlooked waterway. During the event, participants were thrilled to spot an otter swimming across the river – an encouraging sign of ecological recovery. Experts note otters are typically seen at night, making the sighting even more significant.

#### [Settlement to fund a trash wheel for Maryland's Back River](#)

*Bay Journal*

The family of googly-eyed trash wheels keeping Baltimore's harbor tidy is about to get a new relative next door – on Back River in Baltimore County. That litter interceptor stood out among 21 environmental restoration projects announced recently to honor settlement of a lawsuit over a string of pollution problems at Baltimore city's two wastewater treatment plants, one on Back River and one on the Patapsco River.

### Drinking Water, Water Supply and Drought

## [Overview of COG's Drought Plan and History](#)

*MWCOG*

This document, updated in April, provides an overview of COG's Water Supply and Drought Awareness Response Plan and the CAO's role during times of drought.

## [ICPRB's Water Supply Outlook for May](#)

August's average Potomac Basin precipitation was 0.8 inches below normal as of the 29th, with a long-term (12-month) cumulative deficit of about 7.1 inches (11 to 25 percent below normal).

## [Dangers of a Drought](#)

*Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

Like many others in Maryland, we've been enjoying what feels like clear blue skies and lush green trees each day this spring. In these pleasant conditions, it can be easy to overlook the fact that the majority of Maryland is actually in an extreme drought—nearly all of the state has been at least abnormally dry since fall of 2024, according to weather forecasting by University of Maryland Extension.

## [COG's Water Supply and Drought Report for May](#)

As part of the Metropolitan Washington Water Supply and Drought Awareness Response Plan, COG issues monthly drought reports from May- October. Precipitation, groundwater, and streamflow levels are reviewed as well as recent forecasts for the region.

## **PFAS**

### [Suspected source identified for PFAS contamination near Perdue plant](#)

*The Bay Journal*

Investigators believe they have identified a potential source of the groundwater contamination that has threatened dozens of household water systems near a Perdue Farms soybean plant in Salisbury, MD, with “forever chemicals.”

## [Climate and Energy](#)

### [Heavier Rainfall Rates in U.S. Cities](#)

*Climate Central*

DC has seen a 15% increase in rainfall intensity since 1970. Climate change is bringing heavier rainfall extremes and increased, inequitable flood risk to many parts of the U.S. For every 1°F of warming, the air can hold 4% more moisture, increasing the chances of heavier downpours that contribute to flash flooding hazards.

### [USDA shuts down 'climate smart' program with big impacts for conservation work in Chesapeake watershed](#)

*Bay Journal*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture in April announced the termination of its \$3 billion “climate smart” program, a grantmaking initiative that was supporting hundreds of millions of dollars in conservation work in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. An April 14 USDA press release called the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities, which promoted farm conservation measures with climate benefits, as a “slush fund” with high administrative costs and often low payouts to farmers.

### Maryland's Sustainability Chief Reflects on a 'Difficult' Year of Legislative Setbacks

*Inside Climate News*

When Meghan Conklin became Maryland's first-ever chief sustainability officer in 2024, the state seemed poised for rapid climate progress. With billions of dollars in federal funding available under the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law), decision makers were preparing to meet statutory mandates to cut emissions 60 percent by 2031 and reach net zero by 2045. But the political and economic terrain shifted fast. And implications have been dire.

### Food, Forestry and Agriculture

#### Estimating the Cost of Food Waste to American Consumers

*EPA*

EPA prepared the report, Estimating the Cost of Food Waste to American Consumers, to estimate the amount of savings available to Americans by reducing food waste. The report finds that the cost of food waste to each U.S. consumer to be \$728 per year. For a household of four, the annual cost is \$2,913, with an average weekly cost of \$56.

#### Farm conservation work in Chesapeake region hit hard by federal funding freeze

*Bay Journal*

The fate of billions of dollars in farm conservation funding that was to be spent over the next several years, including hundreds of millions of dollars in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, is in limbo as the USDA reviews its programs and grants. In February, newly installed USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins said the department would honor its commitments to farmers but would not support diversity and "far-left climate programs."

### Upcoming Meetings and Events

FARM: [FARM Policy Annual Forum](#) June 10<sup>th</sup>

CBPC: [July 18<sup>th</sup>](#)

[Hooffs Run Dedication Day](#) June 7<sup>th</sup>

Join AlexRenew as they celebrate the completion of the Hooffs Run Interceptor, the rejuvenation of Hooffs Run, and the reopening of the African American Heritage Park.

### COG Staff Contacts

Sushanth Gupta: [sgupta@mwkog.org](mailto:sgupta@mwkog.org)

Caitlin Bolton: [cbolton@mwkog.org](mailto:cbolton@mwkog.org)

Katie Dyer: [kdyer@mwkog.org](mailto:kdyer@mwkog.org)

Christine Howard, [cdhoward@mwkog.org](mailto:cdhoward@mwkog.org)

Lindsay Smith (Food and Agriculture), [lsmith@mwkog.org](mailto:lsmith@mwkog.org)