



Chesapeake Bay Program
A Watershed Partnership



Press Release

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\$2.75 million provided to local organizations to help restore Chesapeake Bay

Chesapeake Bay Program Announces 2003 Small Watershed Grant Recipients

Baltimore, Md. (June 27, 2003) – On the banks of the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River in Baltimore, U.S. Senator Paul S. Sarbanes (D-Md.), U.S. Representative Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.), U.S. Representative C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.), EPA Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Executive Director John Berry today announced more than \$2.75 million in Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants to 75 community-based organizations and local governments from across the region.

The program improves the Bay and its rivers by providing the necessary funding for local communities to restore their part of the Bay watershed. In its first six years, the grants program has infused Bay restoration efforts with nearly \$9 million for 292 projects throughout the Bay watershed.

Selected projects range from creating rain gardens that reduce polluted runoff to planting streamside forest buffers that prevent erosion to restoring underwater grasses that provide critical habitat for the Bay's fish and animals. Programs will take place across the Bay's 64,000 square-mile watershed in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

In addition to building the capacity of local organizations, today's grants will restore nearly 2,000 acres of critical fish and wildlife habitat including wetlands, oyster reefs and underwater grasses. In addition, grant recipients will plant 25 miles of forest buffers and enhance an additional 70 miles of forest buffers along rivers and streams that drain into the Bay.

Several Baltimore-based organizations were recognized in today's ceremony, including the Parks and People Foundation which received \$100,000 for its work to develop model urban watershed management plans for six Baltimore neighborhoods. The plans will focus on making urban areas as Bay-friendly as possible through innovative storm water management plans and informing local residents about their role in improving the quality of their local waters and the Bay.

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For more information contact Christopher Conner, 410-267-5758



\$2.75 million awarded to restore Chesapeake Bay 2-2-2-2

Proposed projects are reviewed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and are selected based on set criteria paralleling commitments set forth in the *Chesapeake 2000* Bay restoration agreement. The agreement calls on Bay states and the District of Columbia to combine efforts with watershed organizations to restore local water quality. Small Watershed projects assist local groups in gaining experience and technical expertise needed to improve watershed protection in their communities.

Major funding for the Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Additional funding for this year's program is provided by the Office of Surface Mining and the Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment.

For a complete listing and map of the 2003 Small Watershed Grants recipients in your area or state, please visit the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation homepage at <http://www.nfwf.org> or the Chesapeake Bay Program at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/press.htm>.

Statements from Regional Leaders on the Announcement of the 2003 Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants

Statement from Senator Paul S. Sarbanes

"These small grants are making a big difference in promoting citizen-based stewardship and helping to repair degraded watersheds throughout the Chesapeake Bay basin. And who better to do this work than local community groups - the river organizations, schools, scouts, homeowner associations, land trusts - who have the local knowledge, energy and passion to care for their streams and natural resources - or the local governments which are responsible for local land use and other important decisions."

Statement from Congressman Benjamin L. Cardin

"The Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program is a critical tool to preserve the Chesapeake Bay for future generations. Congress provides the funding for the program, but it's the communities and individuals closest to the Bay that do the actual work of restoring and protecting the Bay and its many tributaries."

Statement from EPA Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh

"The Small Watershed Grants Program capitalizes on locally-based and supported projects that will bring back Chesapeake Bay one watershed at a time. By providing the seed money to jump-start local watershed restoration projects today, we are laying the foundation for new, expanded Baywide restoration programs tomorrow."

Statement from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Executive Director John Berry

“By partnering with the communities in the watershed, the Program is investing in and engaging those people who are most concerned about the health and future of the Chesapeake Bay. These projects have a direct impact at the local level on improving water quality in our streams and rivers and conserving critical habitat for our region's diverse fish and wildlife species.”

Statement from National Marine Fisheries Service Assistant Administrator Bill Hogarth

“NOAA is committed to aid Chesapeake communities in the restoration of Bay coastal habitats. Locally conceived projects like those announced today produce on-the-ground results and help foster an appreciation for the Chesapeake Bay watershed.”

Statement from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Chief Bruce I. Knight

“The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is proud to be an active sponsor of the Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant Program. The selected projects exemplify the strong conservation efforts regularly put forth by local landowner organizations with assistance from the NRCS and our partner organizations.”

Statement from U.S. Forest Service Northeastern Director of State and Private Forestry Kathryn Maloney

“I am pleased to lend Forest Service support to eighteen local projects that will enhance watershed health through the conservation, restoration and stewardship of trees and forests. This grant program is an excellent example of working with our partners to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay.”

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