



## **News for Immediate Release**

**March 24, 2014**

### **Pennsylvania Continues to Reduce Water Pollution in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed**

**Harrisburg** – The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that efforts to reduce pollution in Pennsylvania’s Chesapeake Bay Watershed continue to yield progress. The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) today released its annual Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model progress run results for 2013. These numbers represent the estimated amounts of phosphorous, nitrogen and sediment conveyed to the Chesapeake Bay.

“Pennsylvania’s hard work in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed has continued to decrease water pollution,” DEP Secretary Chris Abruzzo said. “I believe we can achieve even greater results by partnering with stakeholders, helping them develop plans unique to their watershed needs, and engaging local property owners to do their part. The bay watershed is a vital resource, not only to Pennsylvania, but to all watershed states, and it is our job to protect it for generations to come.”

Pennsylvania has continued to successfully reduce nutrient and sediment loading into the bay watershed. DEP efforts include updating nitrogen and phosphorous limits in permits for wastewater treatment plants, issuing municipal stormwater system permits with nutrient planning requirements, fostering a successful nutrient credit trading program that incentivizes best management practices (BMPs) and conducting 10,842 farm visits in the bay watershed from July 2011 through December 2013.

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model analyzes three main pollutants: phosphorous, nitrogen and sediment. According to the model results released today, Pennsylvania has exceeded the Watershed Model Milestone for phosphorous reductions by approximately 5.1 percent. Although continued reductions have been achieved, the results also indicate that the state narrowly missed 2013 milestones for nitrogen by 1.8 percent and sediment by 4.8 percent.

Also according to the results, Pennsylvania has continued to see a downward trend for all three pollutants. Since 1985, the watershed model indicates that Pennsylvania has reduced phosphorous loadings by 25 percent, nitrogen by 10 percent and sediment by 15 percent, while experiencing significant growth in the Chesapeake Basin.

This trend is supported by data like the long-term monitoring conducted by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, which indicates positive, downward trends in

phosphorous, nitrogen and sediment at Pennsylvania monitoring stations in the bay watershed.

Pennsylvania's 40,000 farmers and 1,200 municipalities in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed have continued to voluntarily install BMPs such as riparian buffers, green infrastructure and cover crops. However, many of these voluntary BMPs can be difficult to track and are sometimes not taken into account when examining Pennsylvania's efforts to reduce pollution in the bay watershed. DEP continues to work to improve data collection for BMPs, particularly in the rural and urban sectors, so that these important voluntary efforts are accounted for when submitting progress data to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Local initiatives, like the York County Coalition for Clean Waters and the Conewago Creek Initiative in Lancaster County, have also played a big role in pollution reduction in the bay watershed. For example, the York County Coalition for Clean Waters prepared a watershed implementation plan that targets pollutant-reducing BMPs to help municipalities and other stakeholders determine how to efficiently reduce pollutants. The Conewago Creek Initiative has helped create 21 residential stormwater management plans and install 60 acres of forested riparian buffers, 183 acres of cover crops and 4,700 feet of stream bank restoration.

Similar local watershed projects have been made possible by funding from the Marcellus Legacy Fund and Growing Greener Grants. Signed by Governor Tom Corbett, Act 13 of 2012 provided a natural gas impact fee which funds the Marcellus Legacy Fund and provided the first infusion of new money into the Growing Greener Grant Program in over a decade.

Milestones are pollution reduction goals based on EPA-mandated 2017 and 2025 targets for the Chesapeake Bay. Every two years, states in the bay watershed reevaluate to meet their milestones to help ensure continued progress in reducing pollution in the Chesapeake Bay.

For more information, or to view the milestones visit [www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us), keyword "Chesapeake Bay Program," or call 717-772-4785.

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