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***Planning
NMFS Strategic Plan***

FEDERAL AGENCIES' CHESAPEAKE ECOSYSTEM UNIFIED PLAN

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Chesapeake Bay Program

FEDERAL AGENCIES' CHESAPEAKE ECOSYSTEM UNIFIED PLAN



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WHEREAS, the *Clean Water Action Plan* charts a course toward fulfilling the original goals of the *Clean Water Act* and calls upon Federal agencies to develop a unified policy to enhance watershed management in which Federal, state, and local governments and the public work together to identify critical problems, focus resources, recognize waters of exceptional value, include watershed goals in Federal planning, and implement effective strategies to solve problems; and

WHEREAS, as reported in the April 1997 *Second Biennial Progress Report of the 1994 Agreement of Federal Agencies on Ecosystem Management in the Chesapeake Bay*, the Federal agency partners of the Chesapeake Bay Program have accomplished, and are committed to accomplish, the numerous goals of that 1994 Agreement; and

Now, therefore, we the undersigned representatives of the participating Federal agencies, establish the following unified plan to meet the goals of the 1987 *Chesapeake Bay Agreement* and subsequent amendments and directives, and to build on the achievements of the 1994 *Agreement of Federal Agencies on Ecosystem Management in the Chesapeake Bay*, consistent with our missions and our success in securing the necessary resources. Specifically, we further agree to be:

PARTNERS FOR THE CHESAPEAKE

creating new opportunities for Federal agencies to work with states to carry out the commitments of the Clean Water Action Plan. We commit to:

1. target Conservation Reserve Enhancement funds to Bay watershed states in support of efforts to protect farmland and forests and reduce nutrient inputs to the Chesapeake Bay (USDA lead);
2. work to integrate opportunities to benefit the Bay through existing Federal initiatives such as USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wetlands Reserve program (USDA lead);
3. support the development of state Unified Watershed Assessments and Action Plans for Priority Watersheds;
4. encourage the development of permanent teams within each Bay watershed state, comprised of Federal and state officials with responsibilities for implementing the Clean Water Action Plan;
5. promote the addition of new Federal partners, including agencies that deal with transportation and other infrastructure; establish or update memoranda of understanding with all Federal partners; and strengthen relationships among existing partners through resource sharing and unified program planning and implementation; and
6. develop and adopt a Bay Partner Facility program by March 1, 1999, and seek the designation of at least 30 Federal facilities as partners by December 31, 2000, and 60 Federal facilities by December 31, 2005.

WHEREAS, the community of Federal agencies with signed formal Chesapeake Bay partnership agreements has expanded to include 15 agencies dedicated to enhancing stewardship on Federally-managed public lands, supporting cooperative state and community implementation, and contributing expertise in resource management, science and planning to achieve ecosystem-based management; and

WHEREAS, the Chesapeake Bay Program's directives on Nutrient Reduction, Habitat Restoration, Wetlands, and Riparian Forest Buffers, and its Local Government Participation Action Plan and Community Watershed Initiative continue to advance the Program as a national leader in the use of partnerships and sound science for targeting, developing and implementing restoration and protection programs.

PROTECTORS OF PRIORITY WATERSHEDS

targeting various Federal programs and resources to meet the needs of priority watersheds, particularly those designated by states under the Clean Water Action Plan. We commit to:

1. support geographically-specific programs, such as the Chesapeake Bay Program's Regions of Concern for toxics and Nutrient Areas of Concern;
2. develop, by June 30, 1999, a mechanism to implement wet weather pollution prevention on Federal facilities in the Anacostia River and Rock Creek watersheds and transfer these technologies to other appropriate Federal facilities and urban areas (EPA lead);
3. implement the Biennial Federal Workplan for the Anacostia River Watershed and provide biennial updates beginning in June 30, 1999 (COE lead);
4. support the 18-point restoration plan for the Elizabeth River through active participation in the programs and projects of the Elizabeth River Coalition (COE lead); and
5. participate fully in the American Heritage Rivers Program for the Potomac and Upper Susquehanna/Lackawanna Rivers by: a) identifying relevant Federal landholdings by December 31, 1998; b) establishing partnership agreements with community-based efforts in the Heritage Rivers watersheds by April 30, 1999; c) and supporting directed application of technical and funding resources to aid revitalization efforts (EPA lead).

STEWARDS OF THE BAY'S LIVING RESOURCES AND HABITATS

supporting the restoration of Chesapeake Bay living resources and their habitats by fully implementing fish and wildlife conservation efforts and all habitat restoration authorities on all lands, including Federal lands, in the Bay watershed.

We commit to:

1. develop an inventory of habitat restoration needs on Federal lands in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to aid in the creation of an annual list of restoration priority areas, from which two projects will be completed each year beginning in 2000 (NOAA lead);
2. support the Chesapeake Bay Program's Wetlands Directive by assisting states in implementation of their strategies for net gain of wetlands and establishing a restoration goal for Federal facilities of 100 acres per year beginning in 2000 (EPA lead);
3. support conservation and restoration of stream corridors on Federal lands by: a) establishing demonstration sites and implementing restoration technology on three Federal facilities by December 31, 1999 (USFWS lead); b) adopting riparian area conservation policies for Federal lands by September 30, 2000 (USFS lead); c) adopting a stream assessment and inventory protocol for Federal lands by May 31, 2000 and an inventory of stream systems on Federal lands by January 1, 2005 (USFWS lead); and d) restoring 200 miles of riparian forest buffers on Federal lands by January 1, 2010 (USFS lead);
4. identify additional blockages to anadromous fish on Federal lands by December 31, 1999, and open priority blockages to 50 miles of streams by December 31, 2003 (NOAA lead);
5. identify 4 areas for aquatic reef siting at near shore areas adjacent to Federal facilities, in accordance with the Chesapeake Bay Program's Framework for Habitat Restoration and the Aquatic Reef Habitat Plan, by December 31, 1999 (NOAA lead);
6. target priority areas for terrestrial and aquatic invasive species control on Federal facilities by January 1, 2000 and implement controls on priority sites (USFWS lead);
7. expand conservation landscaping on Federal facilities, in keeping with the Presidential directive on beneficial landscaping, by: a) completing a Conservation Landscaping and BayScapes Guide for Federal Land Managers by January 1, 2000; and b) integrating conservation landscaping into Federal agency specifications and design criteria by July 31, 2001 (USFWS lead);
8. develop model lease provisions by September 30, 1999 for facilities, outleases, rights-of-way, and other Federal actions to provide a means for Chesapeake Bay stewardship goals to be considered in the issuance of leases by or to Federal agencies within the watershed (GSA lead); and
9. work with state conservation agencies to determine the effects of nutria on tidal wetland loss and to evaluate methods of controlling this exotic species (USGS lead).

LEADERS IN NUTRIENT AND TOXICS PREVENTION AND REDUCTION ON FEDERAL LANDS AND FACILITIES

working to meet and maintain the nutrient and toxics prevention and reduction goals of the Chesapeake Bay Program, with an emphasis on non-point source controls, and extending our efforts beyond year 2000. We commit to:

1. provide technical assistance and training for Federal landholders for development of nutrient management plans by December 31, 1999 (NRCS lead), and develop nutrient management plans for Federal lands within the watershed by December 31, 2000, emphasizing agricultural, construction, turf, golf course and recreation, and developed lands;
2. assess the performance of Federal on-site septic systems and adopt management plans for priority improvements by December 31, 2000 (USPS lead);
3. expand our existing Chesapeake Bay Program Federal facility site assessment protocol beyond nutrients to include toxics reduction and habitat restoration opportunities, and continue to complete at least five such assessments annually within the Bay watershed (NRCS lead);
4. ensure, by December 31, 2000, that personnel are trained to strengthen and implement comprehensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) on 75% of all Federally-owned lands in the watershed, and establish a peer review panel to evaluate at least five Federal IPM plans annually (USDA lead);
5. implement pollution prevention and related technologies to achieve, by January 1, 2000, a 75% voluntary reduction from a 1994 baseline in releases of Chesapeake Bay Toxics of Concern and chemicals required for reporting under section 313(c) of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act for Federal facilities in the Chesapeake Bay basin (EPA lead);
6. establish, by January 1, 2000, participation of 30 Federal facilities as mentors in the Chesapeake Bay Program's Businesses for the Bay to implement pollution prevention initiatives (DoD lead); and
7. compile and provide information on the reported occurrence of toxics in wildlife in the Bay ecosystem by January 1, 2003 (USGS lead).

GUARDIANS OF HUMAN HEALTH

focusing renewed efforts on the protection of human health through actions we take to control the effects of harmful pollutants in the Bay watershed. We commit to:

1. coordinate Federal funding and response systems in support of state and local efforts in the Chesapeake Bay watershed for major events, including Pfiesteria-type outbreaks and other harmful algal blooms (NOAA lead);
2. support and target research and monitoring efforts on the relation of harmful microorganisms such as Pfiesteria to aquatic resources and human health (NOAA lead) and the effects of other physical and biological stressors on fin fish and shellfish (USGS lead);

3. provide preliminary identification of nitrate levels over the maximum drinking water contaminant level in shallow aquifers throughout the watershed by January 1, 2001 (USGS lead);
4. identify closed shellfish beds adjacent to Federal lands in the Chesapeake Bay watershed by December 31, 1998 and participate in re-opening priority areas by January 1, 2005 (NOAA lead);
5. locate releases of toxics from Federal facilities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, with priority on drainage areas where fish consumption advisories exist, and work cooperatively to address these releases by December 31, 2000 (EPA lead); and
6. work with local governments to address pollution from storm drain outfalls on Federal lands that pose a human health risk through exposure by inhalation, ingestion, or body contact such as swimming (EPA lead).
7. develop an index that demonstrates the changes in climate affecting the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, as needed to refine restoration strategies by January 1, 2003 (NOAA lead);
8. conduct research and provide information needed to identify species and habitats on Federal lands in need of special management efforts to maintain biodiversity and the integrity of the Chesapeake ecosystem by January 1, 2003 (USGS lead); and
9. complete an analysis of forest distribution and condition in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and host a regional conference to discuss issues related to fragmentation of forest landscape by January 1, 2000 (USFS lead).

SUPPORTERS OF SMART GROWTH

identifying and implementing new mechanisms to avoid development patterns that increase pollution problems, to encourage redevelopment of urban areas, and to raise the quality of life. We commit to:

- ### PROVIDERS OF RESEARCH, ASSESSMENT, AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES
- assuring "state-of-the-art" technical support for Chesapeake Bay Program partners, ranking research needs, and identifying requirements to develop new technologies. We commit to:*
1. sign Memoranda of Agreements to make Chesapeake Bay-related data and information Internet accessible by all Bay Program partners through the Chesapeake Information Management System by July 1, 1999 (EPA lead);
 2. complete, by March 1, 1999, a Bay watershed-wide assessment of potential levels of nutrient loadings (USDA lead) and water quality parameters (USGS lead) that support the identification of Nutrient Areas of Concern and serve as a basis for strengthening the ability of local and state jurisdictions to achieve their tributary basins' nutrient reduction goals;
 3. complete an inventory, by January 1, 2000, of current science-based technology available for implementation to achieve the agricultural component of Bay nutrient reduction goals (USDA lead), and identify the sources that restrict the production of submerged aquatic vegetation and associated habitat in the middle and upper Bay and tidal tributaries (USGS lead);
 4. define and assess, by January 1, 2003, the contribution and implications of nitrogen compound emissions (e.g., ammonia) from agricultural activities; and develop models that characterize the transport of emissions and deposition of these compounds (NOAA lead);
 5. provide an assessment, by July 1, 2000, of the amount of nutrients and associated lag times in ground water, and of implications for adjustments to tributary strategies' nutrient reduction goals, and identify follow-up research needs to further address management needs by January 1, 2002 (USGS lead);
 6. develop an index of river flow, by January 1, 2001, and other tools to document the long-term changes in water quality, living resources, and sea-level rise (USGS lead);
 1. evaluate and implement alternative work practices and other policies of Federal agencies in the watershed to reduce vehicle miles traveled (EPA lead);
 2. promote funding for research into the effects of road and highway construction on growth and development within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and on increasing storm water flow and inputs of nutrients and toxics to the Bay and its tributaries, including air pollution and land use changes (FHWA lead);
 3. give preference to re-use and recycling of Federal brownfield sites, and discourage development in greenfield sites (EPA lead);
 4. fully cooperate with local governments, states, and other Federal agencies in carrying out voluntary and mandatory actions to comply with the management of storm water (EPA lead);
 5. encourage construction design that: a) minimizes natural area loss on new and rehabilitated Federal facilities; b) adopts low impact development and best management technologies for storm water, sediment and erosion control, and reduces impervious surfaces; c) utilizes energy efficient technologies; and d) considers the Conservation Landscaping and Bay-Scapes Guide for Federal Land Managers (GSA lead);
 6. develop, by January 1, 2000, a protocol by which Federal facilities proposed for relocation or major expansion within the Chesapeake Bay watershed will assess the direct and secondary ecological, economic, and community effects (DoD lead);
 7. increase public access to the Chesapeake Bay, with at least 200 additional miles of Federally-owned shoreline and tidal waters opened or enhanced for public access by January 1, 2005, and participate in the development of water trails to improve access and appreciation of the Bay and its resources (NPS lead); and
 8. establish annual meetings, beginning in 1999, with the Office of Management and Budget to assess regional impacts associated with major Federally-funded actions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed (EPA lead).

Finally, we agree to supplement our biennial reporting on the 1994 Agreement of Federal Agencies on Ecosystem Management in the Chesapeake Bay with progress in the implementation of this new unified plan, beginning April 1, 1999 (EPA lead).

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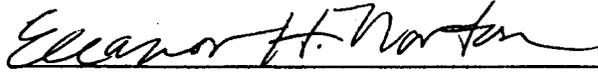


I. Michael Heyman
I. Michael Heyman, The Secretary

OBSERVERS:



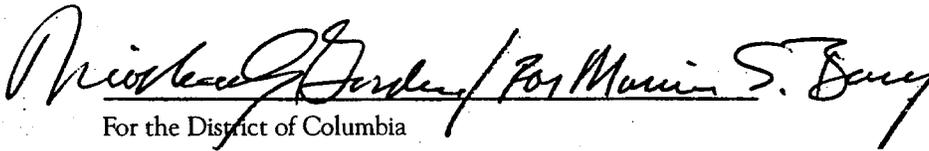
U.S. Senator Paul S. Sarbanes



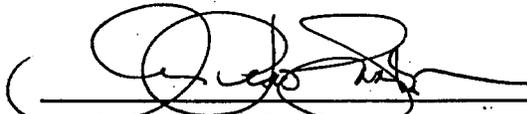
Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton



For the State of Maryland



For the District of Columbia



For the Chesapeake Bay Commission