



## What the Congress Must Do to Address the President's FY 2018 Budget Shortfalls

*Like never before, real progress is being seen in Chesapeake Bay restoration. Record acres of submerged aquatic vegetation, reduced areas of oxygen-starved water, and a burgeoning aquaculture industry are signposts that the state-federal partnership to restore the Bay is working. We are gaining momentum.*

*But the President's FY 2018 budget puts this at risk. The critical federal support for the Bay would be slashed. Here is what Congress must add to the President's budget to sustain the success of Bay Restoration.*

### ☑ 1 Fund EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program at \$73 million.

*President's Budget: \$0*

These monies maintain the pulse of the state-federal partnership to restore the Chesapeake Bay. Program funds are used to coordinate the complex science, research, modeling and monitoring efforts that drive restoration. Of the \$73 million allocated for the Bay, \$31 million is pass-through money provided to support state restoration efforts. In addition, \$12 million in Stewardship Grants provide critical support for local restoration efforts and leverage, on average three times more non-federal money for each project. Nationwide, the geographic region programs that support aquatic systems of national significance have been zeroed out.

### ☑ 2 Fund EPA's Nonpoint Source (Section 319) Implementation Grants at \$170 million.

*President's Budget: \$0*

An overwhelming majority of Americans—215 million (>70%)—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. Many of these waters are considered unsafe for swimming or are unable to support healthy fish or other aquatic life. The \$319 grants are a key resource in the effort to improve and protect our nation's waters. In FY 2016, this program provided \$8 million for Bay restoration.

### ☑ 3 Fund EPA's Pollution Control (Section 106) Grants at \$230 million.

*President's Budget: \$161 million*

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 sufficient funding, this permit process gets bogged down, resulting in business losses and reduced permit monitoring and enforcement. In FY 2016, this program provided \$10 million for Bay restoration.

### ☑ 4 Fund USGS' Regional and Crosscutting Activities: Chesapeake Bay at \$12.6 million.

*President's Budget: \$6.8 million (est.)*

Decision makers in six states, along with federal partners, rely on USGS science to formulate effective plans for reducing the impacts of nutrient, sediment and toxic contaminants, and improve habitat for freshwater fisheries and waterfowl, in the Bay watershed. Without the monitoring and analysis provided by USGS, we won't know if what we are doing is working.

### ☑ 5 Fund USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program at \$93 million and retain program.

*President's Budget: Proposes to eliminate program, moving mandatory funding to other programs.*

This program encourages partners to join in efforts with producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales. Through the program, NRCS and its partners help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding in project areas and report on the benefits achieved. Under the 2014 Farm Bill, RCPP provides on average \$10.8 million to the Bay region, down from the average \$47.6 million annually provided under the 2008 Farm Bill. We believe the RCPP program should be maintained as a distinct program and enhanced for high-priority watersheds.

### ☑ 6 Fund USDA's Conservation Technical Assistance (NRCS) at \$751 million.

*President's Budget: \$668 million*

CTA is the foundation of NRCS's ability to deliver effective conservation. By working with agricultural producers to prepare and implement conservation plans, reductions in sediment and nutrient loads to the Bay are directly reduced. The proposed national reduction would mean an 11% staff reduction within the watershed for CTA at a time when capacity needs to be increased, not reduced.

### ☑ 7 Fund USFS' Forest Stewardship Program at \$23 million.

*President's Budget: \$20.5 million*

This is the primary Forest Service program focused on private forestland management

and conservation. Funding for the Chesapeake was reduced from \$800K to \$400K administratively in FY 17. Priority uses are: restoring riparian forest buffers; adding urban tree canopy and protecting high value forest.

### ☑ 8 Fund NOAA's National Sea Grant College Program at \$73 million.

*President's Budget: \$0*

The Sea Grant program serves to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal and marine resources in order to create a sustainable economy and environment. Within the Bay watershed, priorities include research to support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. In FY 2016, this program provided \$4 million towards Bay restoration.

### ☑ 9 Fund NOAA's Office of Education Bay-Watershed Education and Training Program at \$7.2 million.

*President's Budget: \$0*

This program provides locally relevant, experiential learning in the K-12 environment through competitive funding that promotes meaningful watershed educational experiences. The Chesapeake Bay is one of seven areas currently served by this program.

### ☑ 10 Fund USACE's Oyster Protection and Restoration at \$5 million.

*President's Budget: \$0*

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 less than 1% of historic levels, the Bay agreement targets oyster restoration as a key objective within 10 rivers. Restoration projects at Harris Creek and the Tred Avon River are succeeding.