



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Governor's Press Office ♦ Room 308 North Office Building ♦ Harrisburg, PA 17120 ♦ 717-783-1116 (Phone) ♦ 717-772-8462 (Fax)

EDWARD G. RENDELL, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 10, 2005

CONTACT: Kate Philips
717-783-1116

**GOV. RENDELL UNVEILS PENNSYLVANIA'S
CHESAPEAKE BAY TRIBUTARY STRATEGY**

*Pennsylvania Also Awards \$1 Million to Chesapeake Bay Foundation for Restoration of
Streamside Buffers, Wetlands*

MOUNT VERNON, VIRGINIA: Governor Edward G. Rendell today unveiled a wide-ranging water quality initiative designed to clean up the state's rivers and streams, enhance the health of families and preserve the rural character and farming economy of Pennsylvania. The initiative is the state's official plan to meet the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement goals for nutrient and sediment reduction in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Governor Rendell unveiled "Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy" at the annual meeting of the Chesapeake Executive Council at George Washington's Historic Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens on the banks of the Potomac River, where the Governor became the state's first chief executive to be named chairman since the council's inception some 20 years ago.

"It truly is an honor to help steer a group that has been such an important voice in efforts to improve the health of the Bay and protect a way of life for millions of residents who rely on and appreciate this national treasure," Governor Rendell said. "Pennsylvania is ready for the next phase of this historic challenge. Our strategy brings new vigor to usher in the next generation of watershed protection and build on the gains we have achieved to provide cleaner water resources at home and deliver cleaner water downstream to restore the world's most productive estuary."

The Governor also awarded a \$1 million Growing Greener grant to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to continue efforts to improve the quality of Pennsylvania's waterways through significant and targeted restoration of riparian forest buffers and wetlands. CBF will work to maximize farmers' participation in the expanded Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and pilot a new Stream Stewardship Program for the permanent protection of forested buffers.

More than half of Pennsylvania is within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The state's tributary strategy will improve water quality in the 13 sub-basins that make up the Susquehanna and Potomac river watersheds. The strategy embraces a suite of best management practices for nonpoint and point sources—agriculture, wastewater treatment plants, urban stormwater and septic systems—to meet Pennsylvania's nutrient and sediment reduction goals. Among the initiatives:

- **Limiting Wastewater & Industrial Discharges:** Stringent new regulations will require some 150 significant sewage and industrial dischargers in Pennsylvania to reduce significantly their nutrient loads. The new regulations are among the toughest in the Bay watershed because they use actual flows rather than design flows to determine loads and ensure real results. Specifically, Pennsylvania's 8 mg/L requirement for 2010 flows for nitrogen compares favorably to a 4.5 mg/L requirement at design flows as calculated by other Bay states. These requirements will be implemented and enforced through permitting.
- **Upgrading Sewer & Water Infrastructure:** Governor Rendell has worked with the Legislature successfully to secure \$250 million in new grants and loans to upgrade, rehabilitate and expand wastewater and water supply systems. Up to \$150 million of these funds support nutrient reduction upgrades at wastewater treatment facilities.
- **Enhancing Stormwater Management:** Pennsylvania is requiring enhanced stormwater management efforts, and in particular infiltration of stormwater, by municipalities, developers and design professionals to reduce pollutant loadings to streams. These new requirements are being implemented and enforced through the permitting process.
- **Preserving Agriculture, Communities and Rural Environments:** This initiative, ACRE, puts in place extensive new farm management regulations and puts in place some of the most comprehensive farm-based water quality protections in the nation. In addition to new regulatory requirements that will be effective in April 2005, the plan includes a new effort to analyze and take action on water quality problems in all "agriculturally impaired" waterways—the first time any such effort has been undertaken. The initiative is backed by as much as \$13 million in new and existing resources to achieve real results.
- **Accelerating Dam Removals & Building Fish Passageways:** Pennsylvania has removed more dams than any other state, eliminating 50 structures and supporting construction of nearly a dozen fish passages in the Susquehanna River Basin since 1994. The work has restored 384 miles of free-flowing rivers and streams. An additional 270 miles will open in 2006, enabling Pennsylvania to meet its first fish passage goal and restoring habitat critical for the spawning of American shad.
- **Expanding the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP):** In the last year Pennsylvania has become the leading participant in the nation in the important CREP program. With 265,000 acres in 59 of the state's 67 counties enrolled, CREP will be among the state's most effective tools for preventing polluted farm runoff from fouling streams.
- **Increasing Forested Buffers & Wetlands:** Pennsylvania is increasing substantially its commitment to forested buffers and wetlands restoration. Specifically, the Commonwealth will dedicate the state's CREP investments to these investments, since they deliver the greatest water quality benefits.
- **Promoting Manure-to-Energy Programs:** Pennsylvania has launched several major new programs to help finance projects that use manure as a clean energy resource and thereby

substantially reduce runoff into streams. The new Pennsylvania Energy Harvest Grant Program, Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard and First Industries Farm Investment Fund have enabled a doubling of the number of methane biodigesters in the state in the last year and a half, with many similar investments planned.

- **Leading the Way in Nutrient Trading:** Pennsylvania recently concluded the first-ever successful nutrient trade. The state is investing in a unique partnership between Wall Street and Pennsylvania farm and conservation groups to build a market-based program that will accelerate nutrient reduction and reduce compliance costs.
- **Securing Conservation Easements for Riparian Buffers:** Pennsylvania has invested millions of dollars into fencing livestock out of streams, planting riparian buffers and installing livestock crossings to improve water quality. These initiatives are of varying duration, however, usually no more than 15 years. To protect these investments and increase their effectiveness, Pennsylvania is launching a new initiative to provide the resources and tools to preserve permanently these buffers with conservation easements.
- **Supporting Growing Greener II:** Building on the state's award-winning watershed work, the Governor has proposed a substantial expansion of the Growing Greener program. To date, \$52 million has been invested in 467 projects in Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, an investment that substantially will be increased with this new initiative.

Governor Rendell also announced Pennsylvania's participation in an innovative public-private partnership with PennAg Industries and Wenger Feeds to demonstrate the use of poultry litter to generate clean, renewable energy. The project will retrofit and operate an industrial power plant in Amelia Court House, Va., to provide a pilot demonstration of poultry litter gasification system for industrial power production.

Governor Rendell said these innovations will contribute further to the state's already successful Bay restoration efforts. From 1985 through 2002, the Chesapeake Bay Program's Watershed Model estimated that Pennsylvania implemented measures to reduce phosphorus going to the Bay by 858,000 pounds per year, cut nitrogen by more than 10.9 million pounds per year and reduced sediment by 130,000 tons per year. Today, all six water quality monitoring stations measuring nutrients in the Susquehanna River show declining trends in loadings.

Pennsylvania was the first state to enact nutrient management laws for farms, initiate phosphorus limits on major wastewater dischargers and achieve a net gain of wetland resources. Since 1982, the state has gained more than 6,000 acres. The state has restored 1,297 miles of riparian forest buffers—substantially more than the 600 miles that the Commonwealth initially committed to restoring by 2010. Pennsylvania also is the first among the states involved in the 2000 agreement to meet the goal to preserve permanently from development 20 percent of the land area in our Bay watershed. More than 2.9 million acres have been set aside

The Chesapeake Executive Council was established by the Chesapeake Bay Agreement of 1983 to coordinate the work of restoring and protecting Chesapeake Bay. In accordance with the 1987

Chesapeake Bay Agreement, the council is the governing body for restoration efforts undertaken by Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, the District of Columbia, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Chesapeake Bay Commission.

For more information on the Chesapeake Bay, visit DEP's Web site at www.dep.state.pa.us,
Keyword: "DEP Chesapeake Bay."

#