



2017

ANNUAL REPORT



ChooseCleanWater
COALITION

20 Ridgely Ave, Suite 203
Annapolis, MD 21401
www.choosecleanwater.org



Dear Friends of the Coalition:

It is safe to say that at this time last year, no one knew what 2017 would hold for our Chesapeake Bay watershed. At times, the threats seemed almost insurmountable, generating fear and uncertainty among the restoration community. However, I am proud to say that we did not resign ourselves to defeat, but instead rose above these challenges - together.

In 2017, the Choose Clean Water Coalition made incredible strides toward achieving restoration and policy goals for our waterways. Through the dedication of our

232 members, the Coalition played a significant role in generating bipartisan support for clean water at the state and federal level. Thanks to the power of our members, the Chesapeake Bay congressional delegation's commitment to the restoration effort is stronger than ever, with support for steady and increased funding for the Chesapeake Bay clean-up emerging from both sides of the aisle. While direct attacks on our restoration goals are alarming, they are an important reminder that we must keep advocating for clean water and healthy communities. Our strength is demonstrated by the unified and collective voice of advocates across the region, and I have never felt the power of that voice stronger than I did this year.

Looking to 2018, we will have more battles to fight. The good news is the Choose Clean Water Coalition is prepared to confront these threats directly. We continue to be a powerful, coordinated, watershed-wide movement that will push for clean water and healthy communities. As we build new and stronger partnerships and engage more activists around the Chesapeake Bay region, we will continue to work through our motto, #BayStrong.

Yours in collaboration,

Chanté Coleman
Director



Kristin Reilly
Senior Communications
Manager



Mariah Davis
Field Manager



Peter Marx
Federal Affairs, Contractor



Kim Snell-Zarcone
Agriculture, Contractor

STEERING COMMITTEE

National Wildlife Federation*

Maryland League of
Conservation Voters**

West Virginia Rivers Coalition**

Anacostia Watershed Society

Audubon Naturalist Society

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Conservation Voters
of Pennsylvania

PennFuture*

Delaware Nature Society*

James River Association

National Aquarium

National Parks
Conservation Association

Natural Resources Defense Council

Piedmont Environmental Council

Potomac Conservancy

Shenandoah Valley Network

Virginia Conservation Network*

Waterkeepers Chesapeake

* Co-chair

+ State or Outreach Lead

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR STATE AND OUTREACH LEADS

Angela Hotaling (NY)

Ben Alexandro (MD)

Chris Klarich (DE)

David Lillard (WV)

Ezra Thrush (PA)

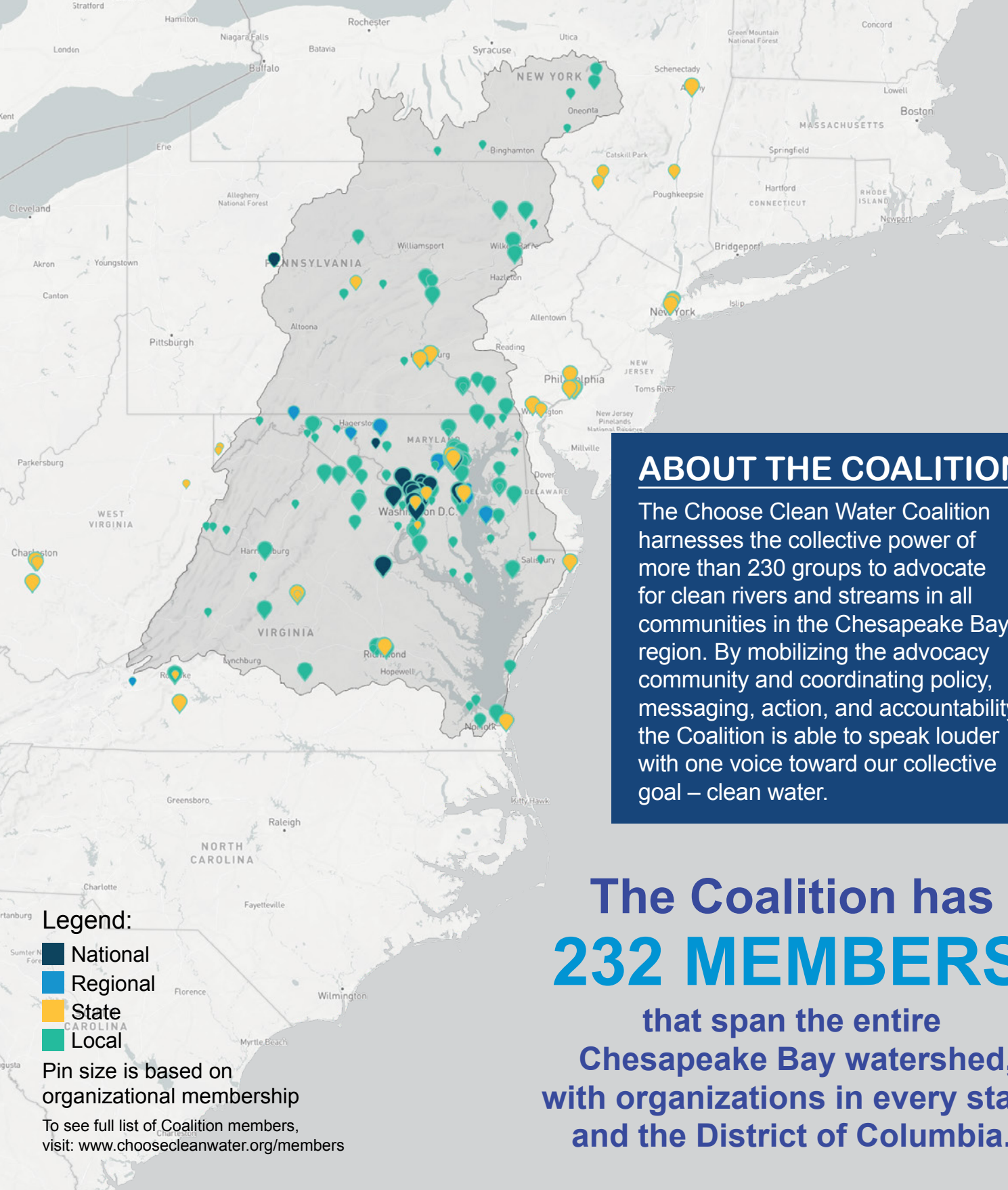
Pat Calvert (VA)

SIX
POLICY
PRIORITIES

MEMBERS IN ALL
SEVEN
BAY JURISDICTIONS

8 WATERSHED
WIDE
CONFERENCES

FOUNDED IN
2009



ABOUT THE COALITION

The Choose Clean Water Coalition harnesses the collective power of more than 230 groups to advocate for clean rivers and streams in all communities in the Chesapeake Bay region. By mobilizing the advocacy community and coordinating policy, messaging, action, and accountability, the Coalition is able to speak louder with one voice toward our collective goal – clean water.

The Coalition has
232 MEMBERS

that span the entire
Chesapeake Bay watershed,
with organizations in every state
and the District of Columbia.

Legend:

- National
- Regional
- State
- Local

Pin size is based on
organizational membership

To see full list of Coalition members,
visit: www.choosecleanwater.org/members

IN 2017...

15 POLICY
SIGN-ON
LETTERS

747
SIGNATURES
ON SIGN ON LETTERS

12 INFORMATIONAL
WEBINARS
CONDUCTED

37 MEETINGS
WITH CONGRESSIONAL
OFFICES ON LOBBY DAY

OUR PRIORITIES

The Coalition focuses on seven different priority areas that are critical to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Each of these priorities have a dedicated workgroup, which gives Coalition members a space to engage, strategize, and collaborate on a variety of issues. Here are some of the highlights from these workgroups in 2017.



AGRICULTURE

Ensure the agricultural sector achieves pollution reductions necessary to reach the 2017 and 2025 water quality goals.

- Sent a letter in support of legislation aimed to reduce water pollution from the use of fertilizer on lawns, golf courses, athletic fields, and other uses of turf.
- Worked to strategically help land trust partners share information about their conservation efforts, including buffers, as a prerequisite for taking an easement on a property.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Promote environmental justice to ensure underserved and overburdened communities share equitably in the benefits of clean water.

- Hosted a diversity, equity, and inclusion training to expand knowledge around culture and cultural humility and identify opportunities and barriers within our work.
- The workgroup changed its name to the Equity workgroup in order to include include both environmental justice and the broader work of the Coalition on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

SHALE

Protect public health, communities and regional water resources from the impacts of natural gas development.

- Sent a letter to Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and several Maryland state senators and delegates, urging them to support the ban on hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking”. The ban was passed in April 2017.
- Endorsed the Safe Energy Future Plan federal legislation which would eliminate loopholes that exempt oil and gas industry activities from our nation’s bedrock environmental laws.



STORMWATER

Strengthen policies and permits to stop polluted runoff in urbanized areas.

- Met with Environmental Protection Agency Region 3 officials at the beginning of the year to discuss specific requests regarding MS4 permits in the region, enforcement, and related issues.

- Led by Natural Resources Defense Council, the workgroup finalized a report on stormwater utilities across the watershed called, “Paying for Stormwater Management in Chesapeake Bay Communities: Policy Recommendations.”



©Chesapeake Bay Program

POLLUTION LIMITS

Ensure Chesapeake Bay pollution limits continue to make progress toward returning clean water to the region.

- Sent a letter to the Chesapeake Bay Program’s Principals’ Staff Committee urging them to adopt both numeric and programmatic proposals for addressing climate change impacts during the development and implementation of the Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans.
- Sent a letter to the Maryland Department of the Environment in response to the agency’s proposed regulations to establish a nutrient and sediment trading and offset program.

FEDERAL

Promote and defend federal policies and investment that support Chesapeake Bay watershed restoration and protection efforts.

- Worked to ensure that federal funding for the Environmental Protection Agency’s Chesapeake Bay Program, and other federal

programs, were fully funded in the final FY 2017 Omnibus Appropriations bill that was passed in May. In November, the Senate released language from their FY 2018 appropriations bill that included the full \$73 million for the Program, plus specific language for the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship grants.

- The Coalition worked with members of Congress to help write the Chesapeake Bay Farm Bill Enhancements Act of 2017. The bill was introduced in November with nine cosponsors in the Senate and 13 in the House. It is intended to increase funding for farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.



Photo: EPA/ National Archives

COMMUNICATIONS

Ensure strong communications strategies are developed and implemented to support and promote the work of the Coalition and its members.

- Created a communications toolkit in celebration of the 45th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. Members used the materials to demonstrate the impact of the Act on the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers and streams.
- Launched a new website, designed to better highlight the work of Coalition members, important news, and upcoming trainings and events.

COALITION HIGHLIGHTS



FRACKING IS BANNED IN MARYLAND!

For years, Coalition members, especially those in Western Maryland, have been working to pass a state-wide ban on hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking”. The Western Maryland counties of Washington, Allegany, and Garrett make up the majority of the areas where fracking could occur, and are home to the headwaters of the Potomac River. The District of Columbia receives 100 percent of its drinking water from the Potomac, and if it was ever contaminated by fracking wastewater or other sources, the nation’s capital would be limited to a two-day water supply.

Coalition members worked tirelessly to attend hearings, gather signatures, and hold rallies in order to influence state legislators to support the ban. 37 members of the Coalition signed a letter to governor Hogan and key state legislators asking for support for the ban. In March, the good news came: the state legislature passed the ban and the governor switched his position and signed the bill. This is a monumental success for our members in Maryland, and demonstrated the power of grassroots efforts to affect change.



THE COALITION BECOMES #BAYSTRONG

In March, the Coalition was alerted that the president’s proposed fiscal year 2018 budget would include eliminating funding for the Environmental Protection Agency’s Chesapeake Bay Program. In response, the Coalition worked quickly to develop the tools necessary for members to respond in a swift and coordinated manner. This response included the creation of a communications toolkit, which was developed to include an array of Chesapeake watershed images from each state, suggested text, and encouraged all members participating to use the hashtag #BayStrong in their communications materials.



The power of the Coalition was hard to miss the morning the budget was officially announced, with #BayStrong appearing throughout the day on social media. This hashtag has since become the rallying cry for our members related to federal attacks on the Chesapeake Bay.



©Carper Delaware Nature Society

CHESAPEAKE BAY DAY ON CAPITOL HILL

Every year, the Coalition organizes Chesapeake Bay Day on Capitol Hill, an opportunity for environmental advocates to meet with members of Congress and staff to discuss the importance of fighting for clean water and a healthy Chesapeake Bay. This year's event was more important than ever, after the president's proposed fiscal year 2018 budget eliminated funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program and would have effectively halted the cleanup.

107 Coalition groups signed this year's letter, requesting that Congress support \$73 million in funding for the Program, including \$12 million for their Stewardship Grant Programs. Then, on Hill Day, more than 90 members of the Coalition participated in a total of 37 visits to congressional offices, urging their legislators to support full funding for the Bay. At the lunch briefing, 12 members of Congress, from both sides of the aisle, spoke about their support for the Chesapeake Bay cleanup. The event drew 13 members of the press and generated over 30 news stories around the region.



©Nate Lotza/Pennsylvania Land Trust Association

A RALLY ON THE RIVER

The Coalition, PennFuture, and National Parks Conservation Association collaborated with the Growing Greener Coalition to host a rally on City Island in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania around the importance of investing in clean water at the state level. More than 70 community members attended the inaugural event where citizen advocates paddled in kayaks and canoes on the river in front of the Capitol building.

Each attendee also filled out two postcards to deliver to their state legislators at a critical time during the state budget negotiations when environmental funding was in jeopardy. State Rep. Sue Helm, and representatives from the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation spoke on the importance of clean water and healthy communities. This event received considerable press and media coverage; a great testament to the larger environmental and conservation community coming together at a critical time in Pennsylvania.

2017 MEMBER SUCCESSES



THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

In an effort to increase awareness about the connection between runoff and the Anacostia River, the Anacostia Watershed Society enlisted a group of local artists to design vibrant and eye catching murals on stormdrains across the District of Columbia. Local students helped complete the murals and more are planned in 2018.



VIRGINIA

The Piedmont Environmental Council completed a long term restoration project at Sprucepine Branch in Rappahannock County, Virginia. The project reconnected two miles of stream habitat, by removing a set of culverts from a private driveway and replacing them with a bridge. It included natural channel design and construction, and was completed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Shenandoah Streamworks.



DELAWARE

On October 20, the Delaware Nature Society hosted U.S. Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester at Coverdale Farm Preserve in Greenville. Attendees spoke with the congresswoman about an array of issues in Delaware and the greater Chesapeake Bay watershed, including the upcoming reauthorization of the Farm Bill.



NEW YORK

Otsego Land Trust celebrated the re-opening of Brookwood Point Conservation Area on Otsego Lake, the headwaters of the Susquehanna River. The 22-acre property is a starting point for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, which extends from Otsego Lake to the Chesapeake Bay. Community members, including the Akwesasne Women Singers, joined in the celebration.



PENNSYLVANIA

10 Coalition members partnered with the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed to provide ideas to U.S. Sen. Bob Casey's staff on ways to increase funding for forest buffers and ensure the federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program is more efficient and effective in the 2018 Farm Bill.



MARYLAND

Coalition members Upper Potomac Riverkeeper, Waterkeepers Chesapeake, Sierra Club – Maryland Chapter, and Chesapeake Climate Action Network, organized an event called Hands Across the Potomac. Residents stood hand in hand in solidarity across the James Rumsey Bridge that connects Maryland and West Virginia to show their opposition to a proposed pipeline under the Potomac River.



WEST VIRGINIA

In an effort to make native plants more accessible to local watershed groups, Region 9 and the City of Charles Town are piloting a native plant nursery using wastewater from the city's treatment facility. Once mature, the native stock will be available for tree plantings and riparian forest buffers. This project was supported by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency funds, through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON OUR MEMBER'S PROJECTS
AND SUCCESSES, VISIT
WWW.CHOOSCLEANWATER.ORG**

8TH ANNUAL COALITION CONFERENCE

The Coalition hosted the 8th Annual Choose Clean Water Conference in Charlottesville, Virginia, on May 23-24. This annual event is designed to bring together our member organizations and encourage attendees to learn from, share, and network with one another. This year's theme was, "Think local. Act together," a slogan developed by our members as a reminder of the importance of collaboration during these uncertain times.

More than 220 people attended the conference, which featured sessions on diversity, equity, and inclusion, agriculture, communications, and more, with remarks from Mustafa Ali of the Hip Hop Caucus, and Stephen Nash of the University of Richmond. There were also eight field trips that highlighted local clean water projects, including a green infrastructure walking tour, a macroinvertebrate study, and a hike through the Rivanna River Basin.



The Coalition is excited to announce that the 9th Annual Conference will be held on May 22-23 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Stay tuned for more information. To learn more about this year's conference, and to register, visit www.choosecleanwater.org.

THANK YOU TO THE AMAZING WORK OF OUR COALITION MEMBERS!

NATIONAL

American Canoe Association
American Rivers
Center for Progressive Reform
Civil War Trust
Clean Water Action
Defenders of Wildlife
Ducks Unlimited
Earth Force
Earthworks
Environment America
Environmental Working Group
Izaak Walton League of America
Land Trust Alliance
National Aquarium
National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Defense Council
NatureBridge
Nature Abounds
Pick Up America
Rachel Carson Council
Restore America's Estuaries
River Network
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited

REGIONAL

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Anacostia Riverkeeper
Anacostia Watershed Society
Audubon Maryland/DC
Audubon Naturalist Society
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Chesapeake Foodshed Network
Chesapeake Legal Alliance
Chesapeake Stormwater Network
Coalition for Smarter Growth
FracTracker
Green Muslims
Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake
Interfaith Power & Light (MD, DC, NoVA)
Mid-Atlantic Council Trout Unlimited
Mid-Atlantic Youth Anglers & Outdoors Program
Potomac Conservancy
Potomac Riverkeeper
Potomac Riverkeeper Network
Ridge and Valley Streamkeepers
Rock Creek Conservancy
Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project
Southern Environmental Law Center
SouthWings
Upper Potomac Riverkeeper
Upstream Alliance
Waterkeepers Chesapeake

DELAWARE

Delaware Center for Horticulture
Delaware Nature Society
Friends of the Nanticoke River

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DC Environmental Network
Earth Conservation Corps
Groundwork Anacostia River DC
Institute for Local Self Reliance
Surfider Foundation – DC Chapter

MARYLAND

1000 Friends of Maryland
Adkins Arboretum
Alice Ferguson Foundation
Alliance for Sustainable Communities
American Chestnut Land Trust
Annapolis Green
Back Creek Conservancy
Back River Restoration Committee
Baltimore Green Works
Bethesda Green
Blue Water Baltimore
Cecil Land Use Association
Chapman Forest Foundation
Chesapeake BaySavers
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council

Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage
Citizen Shale
Citizens to Conserve and Restore Indian Creek
Clean Bread and Cheese Creek
Conservation Montgomery
Corsica River Conservancy
Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth
Dundalk Renaissance Corporation
Earth Forum of Howard County
Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
EcoLatinos
Environment Maryland
Environmental Concern
Envision Frederick County
Friends of Cabin John Creek
Friends of Frederick County
Friends of Herring Run Parks
Friends of Lower Beavertown Creek
Friends of Quincy Run
Friends of Sligo Creek
Friends of the Bohemia
Growth Action Network of Anne Arundel County
Gunpowder Riverkeeper
Little Falls Watershed Alliance
Lower Shore Land Trust
Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, Inc.
Maryland Academy of Science at Maryland
Science Center

Maryland Bass Federation Nation
Maryland Conservation Council
Maryland Environmental Health Network
Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Maryland Native Plant Society
Maryland Nonprofits
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Maryland Saltwater Sportsfishing Association
Maryland Stormwater Consortium
Mattawoman Watershed Society
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Muddy Branch Alliance
Neighbors of the Northwest Branch
NeighborSpace of Baltimore County
Parks and People Foundation
Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust
Port Tobacco River Conservancy
Queen Anne's Conservation Association
Savage River Watershed Association
Save Western Maryland
Severn River Association
Severn Riverkeeper
ShoreRivers
Sierra Club - Maryland Chapter
South River Federation
Southern Maryland Audubon Society
Sparks-Glencoe Community Planning Council
St. Mary's River Watershed Association
Talbot Preservation Alliance
Trash Free Maryland Alliance
Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore, Inc.
West/Rhode Riverkeeper
Wicomico Environmental Trust

NEW YORK

Butternut Valley Alliance
Catskill Mountainkeeper
Environment New York
Environmental Advocates of New York
Friends of the Chemung River Watershed
New York League of Conservation Voters
New York State Council of Trout Unlimited
Otsego County Conservation Association
Otsego Land Trust
Sidney Center Improvement Group
Upper Susquehanna Coalition
Water Defense

PENNSYLVANIA

10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania
Action Together North Eastern Pennsylvania
Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring (ALLARM)
Clean Air Council
ClearWater Conservancy
Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association
Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania
Countryside Conservancy

Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned
Mine Reclamation
Lackawanna River Conservation Association
Lancaster County Conservancy
Lancaster Farmland Trust
Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania
Mehoopany Creek Watershed Association
Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper
Paxton Creek Watershed & Education Association
Peach Bottom Concerned Citizens Group
PennEnvironment
PennFuture
Penns Valley Conservation Association
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited
Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds
and Rivers
Protecting Our Waters
Rivertown Coalition for Clean Air & Clean Water
Sierra Club - Pennsylvania Chapter
Susquehanna Greenway Partnership
Susquehanna Heritage
The Environmental Justice Center of Chestnut Hill
United Church

VIRGINIA

All From One
Appalachian Voices
Audubon Society of Northern Virginia
Capital Region Land Conservancy
Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore
Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park
Coastal Canoeists
Elizabeth River Project
Environment Virginia
Friends of Accotink Creek
Friends of Dyke Marsh
Friends of Shenandoah Mountain
Friends of the Middle River
Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River
Friends of the Rappahannock
Friends of the Rivers of Virginia
Friends of the Shenandoah River
Goose Creek Association
James River Association
Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
Lynnhaven River NOW
Partnership for Smarter Growth
Piedmont Environmental Council
Prince William Conservation Alliance
Richmond Audubon Society
Rivanna Conservation Alliance
Rockfish Valley Foundation
Scenic Virginia
Shenandoah Riverkeeper
Shenandoah Valley Network
Sierra Club - Virginia Chapter
Southeast CARE Coalition
Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center
Virginia Conservation Network
Virginia Eastern Shorekeeper
Virginia League of Conservation Voters
Virginia Organizing
Virginia Wilderness Committee
Wetlands Watch
Wild Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA

Allegheny Highlands Alliance
Blue Heron Environmental Network
Blue Ridge Watershed Coalition
Cacapon Institute
Friends of Beautiful Pendleton County
Friends of Cacapon
Laurel Mountain Preservation Association
Sleepy Creek Watershed Association
The Mountain Institute
Warm Springs Watershed Association
West Virginia Citizens Action Group
West Virginia Environmental Council
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
West Virginia Rivers Coalition



Choose Clean Water

COALITION

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@ChooseCleanH2O



@choosecleanwater



<https://www.facebook.com/choosecleanwater/>

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS



Virginia
Environmental
Endowment

