



Chesapeake Bay Program

# ADOPTION STATEMENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION ACTION PLAN

**B**ased on the Local Government Task Force's recommendations in the Participation Action Plan and in accordance with the Local Government Partnership Initiative adopted by the Chesapeake Executive Council in November of 1995, we reaffirm the Bay Program's commitment to strengthening its partnership with local governments.



**T**he recommendations encourage local governments throughout the watershed to take or continue to take the following actions in three theme areas that represent local government initiatives to protect local and regional natural resources and contribute to the restoration and sustained health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The theme areas and specific actions are:

#### *Land Use Management*

- Implement measures that reduce resource consumptive and costly sprawl patterns of development by encouraging the revitalization of existing communities and promoting sustainable development patterns.
- Implement and support measures to protect resource lands such as agricultural and forested lands to conserve the countryside and protect water quality and wildlife habitat.

#### *Stream Corridor Protection*

- Establish protective measures for the preservation and conservation of stream corridors.
- Implement measures to coordinate and support individuals, community associations, watershed organizations and non-profit private interests to protect, enhance, and restore wetlands, forest buffers and stream corridors important to water quality and plant, fish and wildlife habitat.

#### *Infrastructure Improvements*

- Implement measures to upgrade sewage treatment plant facilities to improve water quality through the implementation of nutrient removal technologies.
- Implement measures to upgrade, maintain and inspect stormwater management infrastructure to protect water quality.
- Implement measures to encourage the proper use and periodic maintenance of septic systems to protect water quality and plant, fish and wildlife habitat.

- Implement measures to provide public access to the Chesapeake Bay, its tributaries and streams and other parks and green spaces.
- Operate, enhance, and facilitate recycling, household hazardous waste collection, small business pollution prevention and solid waste management programs, in support of Bay Program pollution prevention objectives.

**W**e commit the Chesapeake Bay Program through the States and the Local Government Advisory Committee to work with local governments during the next year to seek review and comment on these themes, to request commitments to carry out these or revised themes, to solicit local government priorities for their achievement, and to report the results of these efforts with local governments to the 1997 meeting of the Executive Council.

**W**e further commit the Chesapeake Bay Program and its partners to take the following immediate actions that will assist local governments in implementing activities that support the protection of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries:

#### *Broaden Outreach Efforts and Improve Communications*

- Support efforts by local watershed organizations, civic associations, and land conservancies/trusts to build constituencies that would support local government decisions or investments in protecting or restoring the Bay, its rivers and streams.
- Disseminate regional updates on the progress being made in protecting and restoring local rivers and streams and actions that can be taken to improve their health to local governments.
- Participate in annual local government association meetings/conferences to inform local governments how local actions contribute to the protection and restoration of streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

- Utilize existing local government technical and informational assistance providers as vehicles to distribute information and outreach on issues related to the protection and restoration of the Bay, its rivers, and streams.
- Develop concise informational materials that are tailored to the local government audience in order to better communicate and share information with local government officials and staff regarding the Chesapeake Bay effort.
- Produce *Bay Currents* quarterly newsletter to share local "models" and facilitate the exchange of information between and among local governments in the watershed. Also, broaden its distribution to both elected officials and staff persons in each Bay Program jurisdiction, make it accessible on the Internet, and announce its availability to local governments in non-signatory states.
- Broaden the utilization of the Internet and facsimile broadcasts to better communicate with local government officials and staff.

#### **Recognize Local Government Efforts**

- Identify and catalogue restoration and protection success stories that can serve as models to assist other local governments in their efforts to protect stream corridors, improve infrastructure and manage land use.
- Initiate the Chesapeake Bay Partner Communities Program as a mechanism to provide recognition and support to local governments protecting the Chesapeake Bay.
- Continue to support the Local Government Advisory Committee's *Community Innovation Awards* Program.
- Utilize *Bay Currents* newsletter to promote local government accomplishments.

#### **Strengthen the Voice of Local Government in the Development of Bay Program Policy**

- Convene periodic local government roundtable meetings in each of the jurisdictions.
- Create a network of local officials and staff with specific expertise in dealing with resource protection issues.
- Identify local officials with appropriate expertise to serve on Bay Program technical subcommittees and workgroups.

#### **Provide Technical and Financial Support to Local Governments**

- Chesapeake Bay Program will target Bay Program funding to assist local government Bay restoration efforts.
- Investigate the feasibility of developing a "Voluntary Community Audits Program" designed to help communities identify sources of pollution entering local streams and rivers and recommend actions, in the form of tools and techniques, to reduce and prevent pollution, and protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a non-profit entity

to further assist local government implementation of Chesapeake Bay protection and restoration activities.

- Develop a compendium of Federal, State, non-profit and private assistance programs that provide local governments with resources to implement Bay protection activities, as well as establish a local to local mentoring program.
- Plan for and provide financial assistance for a representative number of local governments to attend functions of the Program, such as conferences, workshops, meetings, whenever the main objectives or topics are relevant to authorities or interests of local governments.
- Explore proposals for Clean Water Act authority (through reauthorization of the Act) for a Challenge Grants program dedicated to small watershed organizations and local governments to supplement state implementation grants in this area.
- Seek funding from EPA's Sustainable Development Challenge Grant program to assist in the implementation of this Action Plan.
- Identify and publicize single points of contact for local governments to obtain "how to" information related to the protection and restoration of natural resources. The single point of contact should provide local governments with technical support, financing options, and a compendium of technical and financial assistance programs that are available to local government officials and support Bay protection efforts.
- Examine alternative financing solutions that will assist local government efforts to restore stream corridors, implement land use management measures, and improve infrastructure. A compendium of financing options will be developed by September 1997 for distribution by signatory states to local governments.

#### **Provide Scientific Data to Local Governments**

- Broaden the scope of the Chesapeake Bay Program Data Center to meet local government informational needs through the implementation of Chesapeake Information Management System.
- Prepare information on the impacts of septic systems on local resources and the Chesapeake Bay.
- Identify models, technologies, and practices that can be used to assess and minimize the impacts of different development patterns on water quality.
- Prepare and distribute technical information on the costs and benefits of implementing environmentally sensitive land use management measures, stream corridor protection initiatives, and infrastructure improvements.
- Provide periodic technical exchanges with local government officials on alternative stormwater management practices, Biological Nutrient Removal techniques, and other emerging technologies that help protect water quality.

The Local Government Advisory Committee will monitor and track the progress of the Action Plan recommendations, provide guidance to the implementation process when called upon, and report on its progress to the Implementation Committee and the Principals' Staff Committee.

We the undersigned, adopt the Local Government Task Force recommendations directed to the Chesapeake Bay Program, and endorse the Local Government Participation Action Plan to strengthen our partnership with local governments in the protection and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay, its rivers and streams.

DATE OCTOBER 10, 1996

CHESAPEAKE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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