



**CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION**  
*Saving a National Treasure*

October 15, 2015

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County of Albemarle  
Board of Supervisor's Office

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Albemarle County Board of Supervisors  
County Executive  
401 McIntire Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

**Subject:** Legislative Agenda Planning

Dear Members of Albemarle County Board of Supervisors:

As the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors is planning its legislative agenda for the 2016 General Assembly Session, Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) hopes that you will consider the following suggestions. While each of these suggestions will bring economic and environmental enhancements to the Commonwealth at large, we encourage you to look carefully at the many ways they may benefit your locality and your citizens. We also invite you to discuss these topics in greater detail with us through your preparation of your 2016 legislative agenda.

**Support Adequate Funding for Agriculture Best Management Practices**

Robust and reliable funding of Virginia's agricultural best management practice cost-share program is essential for meeting the Commonwealth's water quality goals. Practices like fencing cattle out of streams, planting streamside trees and grasses, managing manure effectively, planting cover crops, and many others are the most cost-effective steps Virginia can take to restore the Bay and local streams under the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint. To ensure we reach our Blueprint goals, the Commonwealth should deepen its financial commitment to farmers and to clean water with increased cost-share funding for these practices through the Soil and Water Conservation Districts. One indication, among many, of the need: The current stream-fencing backlog in Virginia is more than \$73 million.

**Support Stormwater Grant Funding Initiatives**

Runoff from roofs, sidewalks, and roadways is a major source of toxins and other pollutants to our waterways. Virginia localities are working hard to restore our waterways with enhanced runoff control programs, stream restoration initiatives, and other projects. To support localities' work and meet our Clean Water Blueprint goals, the Commonwealth must substantially increase funding for the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF), a program that provides matching grants to localities for effective stormwater management projects. According to *VirginiaForever*, a coalition of major businesses and conservationists, a \$50 million investment for management of polluted runoff is needed annually. Taking the need for solid, long-term planning into account, the 2016 General Assembly should appropriate \$150 million to the SLAF to provide for needed stormwater management practices over the next three years.

**Support Funding for Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades**

Modernizing wastewater treatment has been a major success story in Virginia. The installation of nutrient removal technology at numerous wastewater treatment plants has reduced the flow of pollution to the Bay and Virginia rivers, dramatically improving local and regional water quality in accordance with the Clean Water Blueprint.

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But the process of upgrading Virginia plants, which has depended on the existence and timely availability of matching grants from the Commonwealth, is not yet complete. Finalizing the upgrades for the next group of plants will require an additional \$58 million. We urge Virginia to live up to its commitments by ensuring funds are available to complete the projects, improve water quality, ameliorate utility rate increases on citizens and businesses, and protect jobs.

**Support Oyster Replenishment Program Funding**

Oysters cannot restore the Chesapeake Bay, but the Bay will never be restored without a vibrant oyster population. Oysters filter Bay water and oyster reefs provide food and habitat for hundreds of marine creatures. Overharvesting, pollution, and disease decimated oysters, but in recent years, oysters have shown signs of recovery. The oyster industry once supported thousands of jobs and added many millions to the economy. Oysters can do so again—and more—if Virginia builds on efforts to grow the fishery and boost restoration. The General Assembly should provide robust support for oyster restoration and oyster replenishment.

CBF very much appreciates you considering our recommendations. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please feel free to contact me at (757) 622-1964 or [ceverett@cbf.org](mailto:ceverett@cbf.org).

Sincerely,



Christy Everett  
Acting Virginia Executive Director