

TIDELINES

News & Notes From the Hampton Roads Office of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation

MARCH 2018

Critical Funding for Clean Water Needed

In separate budgets released in February, the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates released funding proposals for the Commonwealth's clean-water programs for the next two fiscal years.

CBF was pleased that legislators from both chambers included funding for the state's agricultural cost-share program. This program helps farmers install conservation practices like fencing cattle out of streams and planting streamside trees on their land.

Both chambers also included funding for oyster restoration and replenishment efforts, which will allow our native oyster populations and the watermen whose livelihoods depend on them to continue to flourish.

Regrettably, the House did not include funding in its proposed budget for the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund, which provides matching grants to localities for installing effective polluted runoff management practices. Fortunately, the Senate did include \$20 million for the fund in its budget.

We thank both the Senate and the House for supporting increased funding for clean-water programs. Virginia is largely on track to meet its pollution-reduction goals under



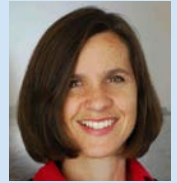
From left to right: Volunteer Bob Burnett, Senator Lynwood Lewis, and CBF's Heather North met at the General Assembly in February.

the Clean Water Blueprint, and support from the Commonwealth is essential to keeping up progress in restoring our rivers, streams, and the Bay. As legislators make final budget decisions, we urge them to maintain strong investments in these programs.

We also thank our many volunteers who traveled to Richmond to meet with their representatives to ensure that clean-water funding was included in both chambers' budgets.

Now it's your turn: Please contact your legislator and ask him or her to support this critical funding in the state's final budget. See the calendar section for more information on how.

From the Desk of
Christy Everett
HAMPTON ROADS
DIRECTOR



CBF was disappointed when a House Committee of the Virginia General Assembly refused to consider a bill that would bring the Commonwealth into compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's new management plan for Atlantic menhaden.

These small fish play a key ecological role as both filter feeders and primary food sources for many Bay species such as striped bass, bluefish, summer flounder, and osprey, among others. They are also caught by a reduction fishery in Reedville that processes the fish into oil and meal, making the small Northern Neck town one of the largest fishing ports in the country.

CBF was pleased when the Northam Administration introduced new legislation patroned by Delegate Barry Knight to advance the coastwide management plan. We were even more pleased when the bill was acted on in the House of Delegates and passed out of committee.

CBF is now urging legislators to support House Bill 1610 to make the required updates to Virginia's menhaden management plan. This critical piece of legislation is a win both for the ecology of the Bay and the multitude of businesses that depend upon a healthy menhaden population.

Christy Everett

Oppose Offshore Drilling

CBF was dismayed earlier this year when the Trump Administration released a draft five-year offshore drilling plan that proposes to allow annual lease sales off the coast of Virginia and other Atlantic states. The Bay is a national treasure and offshore drilling poses unjustifiable risks to its living resources, the tourism economy, and the many jobs that depend on clean water.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is accepting public comments on their proposed drilling plan until March 9. Visit boem.gov/National-OCS-Program to learn more about the plan and to submit your own comments.



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

Oyster Campaign Launches

A partnership of more than 20 organizations, businesses, non-profits, and educational institutions has established a bold new goal of adding 10 billion new oysters to the Chesapeake Bay by 2025. The result will be cleaner water and job creation that will help local economies.

The 10 billion oysters will come from a combination of expanded restoration activities, fishery repletion activities, and the continued growth of the Bay's oyster aquaculture industry.

The partnership has established as its top three priorities ensuring robust funding for oyster restoration, establishing sound science-based management that ensures sustainable harvest of the Bay's oyster population, and expanding the oyster aquaculture industry.

CBF is already working to achieve the 10 billion oyster goal. For example, we recently worked with a Northern Neck landowner Jeff Duffy and the Tidewater Oyster Gardener's Association to recover oyster shells used as landscaping at Mr. Duffy's home.

Bay Program in Jeopardy

In its fiscal year 2019 budget, released in February, the Trump Administration proposed cutting funding for the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program by 90 percent. This slash in funding would severely damage Bay restoration efforts, just at a time when we are seeing significant progress—dead zones are shrinking, water quality is improving, and crabs, oysters, and underwater grasses are rebounding.

And this progress is generating real change locally, with more jobs, improved human health, and rebounding local economies. That's why Virginians from each of the state's congressional districts traveled up to the U.S. Capitol recently to talk to their legislators about how this funding is critical



CBF and Elizabeth River Project staff survey reefs they constructed in the Lafayette River.

The group was able to retrieve nearly 176 bushels of shell—and that was only about half! The shells will eventually be returned to local waterways to build reefs that provide safe nursery grounds for oysters.

CBF and partner Elizabeth River Project also sampled oyster reefs in Norfolk's Lafayette River to see how they fared after the cold winter. Some oysters perished from the persistent low tides and freezing temperatures, but many are still doing great. We will continue to monitor reefs in the Lafayette to ensure they remain healthy.

The Lafayette River is a prime example of what partners can achieve when they work together: It's on track to be the first river in Virginia with a restored oyster population.



From left to right: Volunteer Mike Taylor, Representative Scott Taylor, and volunteer Winston Bibee pose after meeting at Congressman Taylor's Washington, D.C. office.

to their communities. We thank this amazing group for their efforts and urge you to contact your federal representative, asking for their commitment to the Bay Program.

CBF in the Community

RESTORATION

Shell Recycling Bin Construction

Thursday, March 15

10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon

Museum of Chincoteague Island

7125 Maddox Boulevard, Chincoteague

Help CBF construct our newest shell recycling bin on the Eastern Shore. To volunteer, contact Heather North at hnorth@cbf.org or 757/644-4125. To learn more, visit cbf.org/shellrecycling.

ADVOCACY

Offshore Drilling Comments

Through Friday, March 9

Submit your comments on the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's proposed offshore drilling plan. Visit boem.gov/National-OCS-Program to learn more and submit comments electronically.

General Assembly Session

Through Friday, March 9

Ask your state legislators to support funding for clean-water initiatives and House Bill 1610 in support of menhaden. To find your representatives' names and contact information, visit CBF's Find Your Representative page at cbf.org/take-action/find-your-representative.html.

Federal Budget Advocacy

Contact your Congressional representative, urging him/her to support funding for the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program. To find your representatives' names and contact information, visit cbf.org/take-action/find-your-representative.html.

COMMUNITY

Legends of the Fly

Saturday, March 10

4:00–8:00 p.m.

Museum of Contemporary Art

2200 Parks Avenue, Virginia Beach

Learn more about angling at this community event. Portions of the proceeds go to CBF. Visit legendsofthefly.com for details.

Oysters and Wine

Sunday, March 18

1:00–4:00 p.m.

Brock Environmental Center

3663 Marlin Bay Drive, Virginia Beach

Join us as we explore the flavors of Bay oysters paired with Virginia wines. Space is limited so get your tickets at cbf.org/baytovine now! Registration is \$50 for CBF members and \$60 for non-members.



CHESAPEAKE BAY
FOUNDATION

Saving a National Treasure

CBF.ORG

HAMPTON ROADS
Brock Environmental Center
3663 Marlin Bay Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23455
757-622-1964
hamptonroads@cbf.org

VIRGINIA
Capitol Place
1108 East Main Street
Suite 1600
Richmond, VA 23219
804-780-1392

CBF HEADQUARTERS
Philip Merrill Environmental Center
36 Herndon Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403
410-268-8816
Membership information: 888-SAVE-BAY