



Choose Clean Water  
COALITION

**2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

### Dear Friends of the Coalition,

This year was critical for Chesapeake Bay restoration. 2018 marked the release of the midpoint assessment, which shows the progress of the Bay cleanup effort. While we must maintain momentum since there are still many areas for improvement, it is important to celebrate the success we have achieved to date. The Chesapeake Bay is rebounding in a record-setting way. For instance, by reducing pollutants, we are seeing the largest resurgence of Bay grasses recorded anywhere in the world. Bay grasses are important because they provide crucial habitat for a wide range of aquatic life, like blue crabs and rockfish. These clean water wins would not be possible without the hard work of the members of the Coalition who continue to play a major role in driving the restoration forward.

While there is progress, we cannot rest on our laurels; we must continue to press on and fight back against attacks on clean water. The Coalition has worked tirelessly with our Congressional delegation to ensure the Chesapeake Bay Program receives level funding and the cleanup continues to gain bipartisan support. As a

coalition, we know that when we forge strong partnerships with our elected officials and pursue collective action within our community, we will have a more significant impact and are able to further our clean water goals.

In 2019, we will continue to cultivate our Chesapeake champions as well as advance clean water policy at the federal, state, and local level. We will accomplish this by building the capacity of our Coalition members to achieve their goals and to engage a larger more inclusive cross-section of the public in our movement. All of this will further our efforts to return clean water to our rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay.



Yours in clean water,

**Chanté Coleman**  
Director

## STAFF LIST



**Kristin Reilly**  
Communications  
Director



**Mariah Davis**  
Field Manager



**Peter Marx**  
Federal Affairs Contractor

Special thanks  
to our state and  
outreach leads

**Angela Hotaling** (NY)  
**Ben Alexandro** (MD)  
**Laura Miller** (DE)  
**David Lillard** (WV)  
**Taylor Nezat** (PA)  
**Pat Calvert** (VA)

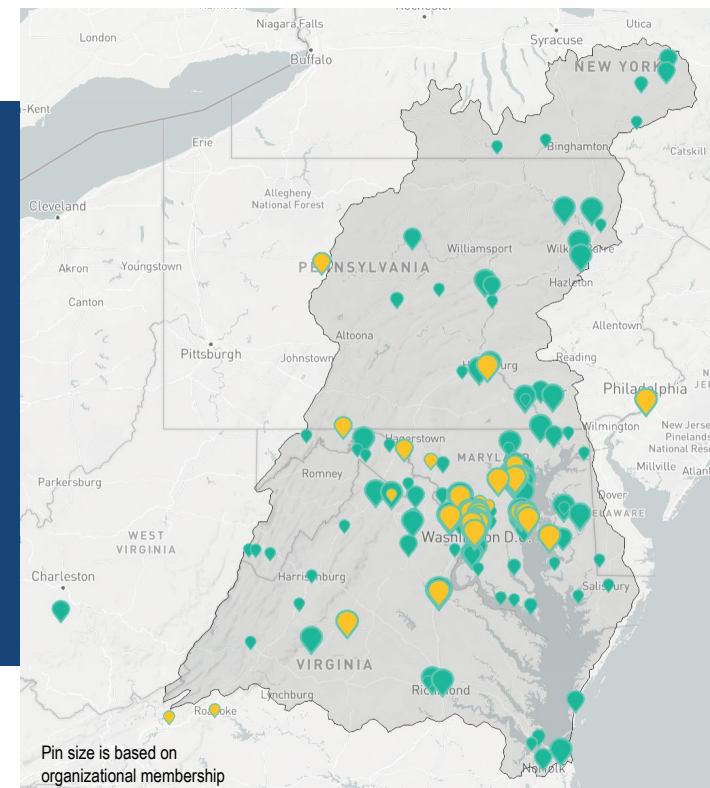
## ABOUT THE COALITION

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.**

### IN 2018 THE COALITION HAD:

- 12** Policy sign-on letters
- 605** Signatures on sign-on letters
- 36** Meetings with congressional offices on Lobby Day

### MAP OF THE COALITION



## STEERING COMMITTEE

- Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley
- Anacostia Watershed Society
- Audubon Naturalist Society
- Baltimore Tree Trust
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania\*
- Delaware Nature Society+
- James River Association
- Maryland League of Conservation Voters+
- National Aquarium
- National Parks Conservation Association
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- National Wildlife Federation\*
- PennFuture+
- Piedmont Environmental Council
- Potomac Conservancy
- Virginia Conservation Network+
- Waterkeepers Chesapeake
- West Virginia Rivers Coalition\*+

\* for Co-chair  
+ for State or Outreach Lead

## CONNECT WITH US

- facebook.com/choosecleanwater/
- @ChooseCleanH2O
- @ChooseCleanH2O

The Coalition has more than  
**230 MEMBERS**  
that span the entire  
Chesapeake Bay watershed,  
with organizations in every state  
and the District of Columbia.

To see full list of Coalition members, visit:  
[www.choosecleanwater.org/members](http://www.choosecleanwater.org/members)

Legend  
■ National  
■ Regional  
■ State  
■ Local

## OUR PRIORITIES

The Coalition focuses on six different policy 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. Here are some of the highlights from these workgroups in 2018.

### AGRICULTURE

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

The Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) Program has distributed more than \$200 million dollars to help thousands of farmers and landowners implement practices like stream exclusion fencing and forest buffers, which help prevent pollution from reaching local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. In 2018, the Coalition's Communications Workgroup partnered with our Virginia members to demonstrate the need for increased and sustained funding for the VACS Program to the Virginia General Assembly.

The workgroup identified and created materials that would be helpful in conducting educational



outreach to newly elected officials, including one-pagers, before and after photos of projects, testimonials, and talking points. The workgroup also determined that a series of videos highlighting Virginia farmers utilizing the state cost-share program would help to elevate this issue.

The Coalition interviewed three different farmers from strategic areas of Virginia about their experience with the VACS program and why the funding is so important. What the videos show is that farmers not only benefit economically from installing these projects, but they also understand the importance of conservation and want to protect their local waterways. For more information on this project and to watch the interviews, please visit [www.choosecleanwater.org/blog](http://www.choosecleanwater.org/blog).

#### More Highlights:

- Agriculture was a critical topic at the Coalition's 9th annual Choose Clean Water Conference in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. There were eight sessions focused on the issue and two field trips to local farms that highlighted clean water projects.

Background photograph courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program

## SHALE

*Protect communities, water resources, and landscapes from the impacts of natural gas development and related infrastructure by supporting member campaigns and sharing significant information.*

The fight to protect our waterways from the impacts of natural gas infrastructure, is challenging, yet over the last year, Coalition members have demonstrated dedication and persistence to protect public health and our most precious resources. Grassroots movements pushing back against new natural gas development have sparked a wave of protests and outspoken leadership at the local, state, and federal level. From the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to the Mountain Valley Pipeline, Coalition members have stood strong in solidarity to protect waterways, drinking water, and communities in the Chesapeake.

This year's Choose Clean Water Conference was held in Pennsylvania, and the Coalition used it as an opportunity to convene grassroots leaders



Background photograph courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program

around the watershed to share their experiences, successes, and failures fighting pipelines in their communities. Melinda Harnish Clatterbuck, founder of Lancaster Against Pipelines, delivered a moving plenary speech on how influential and divisive the fossil fuel industry is in her community and across the state. In addition, members of the Shale Workgroup produced a workshop on various ways communities defend themselves against impending pipeline projects. Strategies include community outreach, advocacy, legal tactics, technology, communications, coalition building, nonviolent action, and visual strategy.

#### More Highlights:

- Coalition members in Pennsylvania defeated HB2154, a bill that would have dramatically rolled back conventional oil and gas protections.
- Coalition members in Virginia and West Virginia coordinated messaging and organizing tactics to delay construction of the Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast Pipelines.
- Coalition members in Maryland are working together to push back the proposed construction of the Eastern Shore Pipeline.



## EQUITY

*Promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and incorporate these issues into the structures of the Coalition.*

Diversifying the conservation movement is not just the right thing to do, but it is needed to keep up with the rapidly changing demographics of the Chesapeake Bay watershed and the United States. By 2019, a majority of youths under 18 will be people of color, and by 2050, these numbers will more than double, meaning that over 50 percent of the population will represent the global majority. Since its infancy, the Chesapeake Bay cleanup effort has lacked the diversity it needs to be successful. The Coalition sees this gap as an opportunity and remains committed to providing member organizations the tools needed to increase their skills to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) in the watershed.

In May 2018, the Equity Workgroup facilitated a workshop at the Coalition's annual conference which explored best practices on how to build strong and authentic partnerships with community leaders and residents. The workshop featured breakouts on building transparency through collaboration and meaningful engagement.



### More Highlights:

- Over the summer, the Equity Workgroup met in-person at Masonville Cove Education Center in Baltimore, MD to explore upcoming opportunities to expand DEIJ practices in 2019. Not only was this the workgroup's first in-person meeting, but it presented a huge opportunity to align the goals of the 2019 Equity workplan with the Coalition's new five-year strategic plan.
- For the first time ever, members of the Equity Workgroup moved to officially endorse federal legislation. In partnership with the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed, members of the Coalition wrote a letter urging members of Congress to cosponsor Senator Cory Booker's (D-NJ) Environmental Justice Act of 2017.
- The Coalition, in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, released a Bay-wide DEIJ survey to assess where our members and funding partners perceive they are in moving the needle on DEIJ. The Coalition is using the survey results to inform the development of a DEIJ plan for the region so member organizations have the tools and resources they need to build a more inclusive conservation movement.

## STORMWATER

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

Thanks to increased urbanized areas and sprawl, stormwater is the fastest growing source of pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. In order to mitigate the impacts that stormwater has on our local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, it is imperative that local governments consider green infrastructure projects for existing and future urban and suburban areas, especially as the last phase of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup begins.

For this reason, the Coalition partnered with the Maryland League of Conservation Voters (Maryland LCV) to help Coalition members in Maryland advance their capabilities in communicating with local officials about the importance of on the ground projects that help reduce stormwater. As part of this project, the Coalition and Maryland LCV organized a series of in-person trainings to help members learn how to communicate effectively about stormwater and how to be successful when planning and executing a meeting with a decision maker.

As a result, Coalition members were provided with a variety of tools that they can use when planning



upcoming meetings with influencers, such as county council members and county executives, church and school leaders, and other local officials. This project utilized previous work done by Maryland LCV around the creation of the Pollution Solutions website. More information on this can be found at [mostcenter.org/casestudies](http://mostcenter.org/casestudies).

### More Highlights:

- In December, the Stormwater Workgroup met with the Environmental Protection Agency's Region 3 Administrator Cosmo Servidio to discuss the Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan process in Pennsylvania, general MS4 permit renewals, enforcement of Clean Water Act permits, and listing the lower Susquehanna River as impaired under the Clean Water Act.
- Sixteen Coalition members met with Carroll County Department of Land and Resource Management staff to learn about and tour their stormwater projects in Westminster, Maryland.
- The Coalition had an op-ed published in the Washington Post titled, "After Ellicott City, good news for the environment" signed by the Coalition's Director, Chanté Coleman. The piece was done in an effort to advocate for more innovative solutions to address stormwater best management practices, accountability for climate change, and challenges of population growth related to combating disastrous flooding in the future.

Background photograph courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program

## POLLUTION LIMITS

*Ensure the Chesapeake Bay pollution limits, corresponding state watershed implementation plans and other applicable requirements are effectively implemented so as to return clean water to the Chesapeake Bay watershed.*

In early 2018, our Pollution Limits workgroup developed a joint advocacy plan to ensure strong and coordinated outreach among Coalition members ahead of the midpoint assessment, which indicated how close we are to reaching our bay restoration goals. This included strategies on how to communicate with the public about the successes of the cleanup and ways to engage and educate local officials about the importance of clean water projects. Many of the Coalition's members participated in the development of the plan and have already started taking action.

As we enter the last phase of the cleanup, we have an opportunity to advocate for strong Phase III Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs), which outline how Bay jurisdictions, including local governments, will achieve pollution reductions from now through 2025. As a part of the advocacy plan, the Coalition developed Engagement Guides for each state that provide our members with



information and resources they need to advocate for strong WIPs. This advocacy plan builds the capacity of our members to engage in the restoration effort and helps to further our goal of returning clean water to the region.

### More Highlights:

- Forty-six coalition members submitted comments on Exelon's application for Clean Water Act Section 401(a)(1) Water Quality Certification to Secretary Ben Grumbles of the Maryland Department of the Environment, Deputy Program Administrator Elder Ghigiarelli, Jr. of the Wetlands and Waterways Program - Maryland Department of the Environment, and Maryland Governor Larry Hogan.
- Thirty-six coalition members sent a letter to the Principals' Staff Committee of the Chesapeake Bay Program asking that the impact of climate change on our region be considered in the creation of the states' Phase III WIPs.
- At the annual conference, the Coalition hosted a workshop titled "Don't be Fazed by Phase III," focusing on how to leverage the midpoint assessment and the Phase III WIPs in order to meet our water quality goals.

Background photograph courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program

## FEDERAL

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

The first big challenge for 2018 was to secure federal funding for the Chesapeake restoration effort. President Trump's first budget surprised many people by eliminating all funding for Chesapeake Bay. This funding battle became the highest priority for the Coalition, and along with our members, we were successful in convincing Congress to restore all funding for the restoration. This included \$73 million for the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program. Congress also directed EPA to continue two key restoration grant programs at \$6 million each.

The year also culminated two years' worth of work by the Coalition to pass a federal Farm Bill with strong programs to help the region's farmers implement key conservation practices. The five-year Farm Bill passed Congress and was signed by the President in December 2018. This bill contains some strong conservation provisions and through two key programs, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), should lead to more pollution reduction

practices being implemented and also provide greater habitat for fish and wildlife throughout the region.

The RCPP will provide considerably more funds for pollution reduction practices in eight Critical Conservation Areas across the country – and the Chesapeake Bay watershed is one of those eight areas. The Program is better funded than it was five years ago, and is also streamlined and improved to better assist applicants and awardees, and to provide technical assistance. The CREP is the single most important Federal program to assist in getting riparian forest buffers installed, and the new Farm Bill has expanded this program to allow more flexibility for landowners and to significantly expand the number of acres that will be buffered.

### More Highlights:

- The Coalition successfully worked with Congress to prevent the Trump Administration from physically dismantling the Chesapeake Bay Program based in Annapolis, Maryland.
- In March 2018, members of the Coalition meet with 36 different legislative offices to discuss the importance of federal support for the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort.
- In addition to funding for the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program, the Coalition helped to restore funding for the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails program and the U.S. Geological Survey, which provides the scientific foundation for the policies needed to restore the bay.



## 2018 CONFERENCE

The Coalition hosted the 9th Annual Choose Clean Water Conference in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on May 22-23. This 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, "Connecting Our Power," a slogan developed by our members that highlights how strong our community is when we work together.

More than 300 people attended the conference, which featured sessions on diversity, equity, and inclusion, agriculture, communications, and more. The conference also included remarks from Malinda Harnish Clatterbuck of Lancaster Against Pipelines and a panel discussion featuring Secretary Cindy Dunn, Secretary Patrick McDonnell and Secretary Russell Redding on the state of the restoration effort in Pennsylvania. There were also nine field trips that highlighted local clean water projects, including a green infrastructure bike tour, snorkeling in a local river, and two local dairy farm tours.

## SAVE THE DATE FOR 2019

The Coalition is excited to announce that the 10th annual Conference will be held on May 20-22 in Baltimore, Maryland. Stay-tuned for more information. To learn more about this year's conference, and to register, visit [www.choosecleanwater.org](http://www.choosecleanwater.org).

Background photograph courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program



## Thank you to the amazing work of our Coalition members!

### INTERNATIONAL:

Namati  
**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 Integrity Project  
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  
Rachel Carson Council  
Restore America's Estuaries River Network  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Trout Unlimited

### REGIONAL:

Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance  
Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay  
Anacostia Riverkeeper  
Anacostia Watershed Society  
Audubon Maryland/DC  
Audubon Naturalist Society  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Chesapeake Conservancy  
Chesapeake Foodshed Network  
Chesapeake Legal Alliance  
Chesapeake Stormwater Network  
Coalition for Smarter Growth  
Downstream Project  
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

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

DC Environmental Network  
Earth Conservation Corps

Groundwork Anacostia River DC  
Institute for Local Self Reliance  
Surfrider Foundation – DC Chapter

### MARYLAND:

Alice Ferguson Foundation  
American Chestnut Land Trust  
Annapolis Green  
Back Creek Conservancy  
Back River Restoration Committee  
Baltimore Green Works  
Baltimore Tree Trust  
Blue Water Baltimore  
Cecil Land Use Association  
Chapman Forest Foundation  
Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center  
Chesapeake Climate Action Network  
Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council  
Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage  
Citizens to Conserve and Restore Indian Creek  
Clean Bread and Cheese Creek  
Conservation Montgomery  
Corsica River Conservancy  
Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth  
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 Beaverdam Creek  
Friends of Quincy Run  
Friends of Sligo Creek  
Friends of St Clements Bay  
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.  
Maritimas  
Maryland Academy of Science at Maryland Science Center  
Maryland Conservation Council  
Maryland Environmental Health Network  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
Maryland Native Plant Society  
Maryland Nonprofits  
Maryland Pesticide Education Network  
Maryland Stormwater Consortium  
Mattawoman Watershed Society  
Montgomery Countryside Alliance  
Muddy Branch Alliance  
Neighbors of the Northwest Branch  
NeighborSpace of Baltimore County  
Patapsco Heritage Greenway  
Parks and People Foundation  
Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust  
Port Tobacco River Conservancy  
Preservation Maryland  
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  
Transition Howard County  
Trash Free Maryland Alliance  
University of Maryland Extension  
Howard County  
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  
Envioneers, Inc.  
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 Land Trust Alliance


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:

Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley  
Appalachian Voices  
Audubon Society of Northern Virginia  
Capital Region Land Conservancy  
Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore  
Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park  
Clean Fairfax Council  
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  
Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection  
Richmond Audubon Society  
Rockfish Valley Foundation  
Scenic Virginia  
Shenandoah Riverkeeper  
Sierra Club - Virginia Chapter  
Southeast CARE Coalition  
Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center  
Virginia Conservation Network  
Virginia Eastern Shorekeeper  
Virginia Interfaith Power and Light  
Virginia League of Conservation Voters  
Virginia Organizing  
Virginia Wilderness Committee  
Wetlands Watch  
Wild Virginia

### WEST VIRGINIA:

Blue Heron Environmental Network  
Blue Ridge Watershed Coalition  
Cacapon Institute  
Friends of Cacapon  
Laurel Mountain Preservation Association  
Potomac Valley Audubon Society  
Sleepy Creek Watershed Association  
Warm Springs Watershed Association  
West Virginia Citizens Action Group  
West Virginia Environmental Council  
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
West Virginia Rivers Coalition



**THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL FUNDERS**

Agua Fund, Inc.  
The Campbell Foundation  
The Curtis & Edith Munson Foundation  
Oak Hill Foundation  
Prince Charitable Trusts  
Rauch Foundation  
Shared Earth Foundation  
Town Creek Foundation

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**Choose Clean Water Coalition**  
20 Ridgely Ave, Suite 203, Annapolis, MD 21401  
[www.choosecleanwater.org](http://www.choosecleanwater.org)