

## **Putting Resources to the Level Where the Work Gets Done: Accelerating Restoration in Maryland**

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After 25 years of dedicated effort to restore the Chesapeake Bay, it is clear that Maryland and our partners are not achieving our goal. While improvements have been realized in some areas, there is growing evidence that conditions may be worsening in other areas. A different approach is needed if we are to be successful. To that end, State leaders in Maryland have taken bold steps in their efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Coastal Bays.

In 2007 the State of Maryland identified new ways to enhance their land conservation programs, using targeting, to maximize available funding by setting priorities for which new lands were to be acquired. They followed suit in 2008 with the passage of the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund (Trust Fund), laying the foundation for an ambitious strategy for restoring and protecting the bays and their tributaries.

The Trust Fund is a unique source of funding dedicated to the reduction of nonpoint source pollution and is a cornerstone to achieving Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Funds are prioritized through geographic targeting based on potential nutrient load into the mainstem of the Bay, strength of local government and partner support, ability to leverage maximum funding, and the potential to demonstrate a measurable difference in a relatively short amount of time. This targeting strategy as well as a new accountability tool in development will be discussed in further detail.

As a case study, the Little Patuxent Restoration Partnership will be discussed. Howard County, MD, and local stakeholder group, Columbia Association, have together received over \$2.9M from the Trust Fund to implement a targeted, multi-practice, restoration effort involving the implementation of dozens of stormwater management projects, a citizen outreach and education program, and an intense monitoring program. This intense restoration effort has attracted additional partners to the project, leveraged local, state, and federal funds, and accelerated the implementation of their watershed plan.

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