



Federal Agencies Committee Meeting Highlights

A Federal Agencies Committee (FAC) meeting was held on January 22, 1998, at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) in Annapolis, Md. Announcements and highlights from this meeting included:

- Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, has developed design plans to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant with complete biological nutrient removal technologies. These designs will be implemented even though the installation plans to privatize the plant.
- Over 90 percent of the nutrient inputs into the Anacostia River are coming from stormwater. A panel has been developed to establish short- and long-term solutions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has provided \$7.2 million toward this effort.
- The U.S. Postal Service has developed an Action Plan in keeping with its 1996 agreement with the EPA. This plan establishes targets in the areas of underground storage tanks, hazardous chemicals, spray paint operations, mail transport equipment, recycling, pollution prevention, state and local regulations, awareness training, environmental quality assurance reviews, regulatory outreach, and energy and water conservation.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will host a work session to determine ways in which to encourage more federal facilities to use BayScapes as a part of their landscaping practices.

Implementation Committee Meeting News

An Implementation Committee (IC) meeting was held on January 29, 1998, at the CBPO in Annapolis, Md. Announcements and highlights from this meeting included:

- Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) beds are being threatened by shellfish harvesting practices that dredge the vegetation, scour the Bay's floor, and alter the bottom habitat. A request was made to encourage the Maryland and Virginia governments to protect the SAV beds from such damaging practices.
- SAV is one of the most economically valuable species in the Bay, providing nursery habitat, water clarification, nutrient cycling, shoreline erosion control, commercial fisheries, and recreational services. If put in dollar terms, SAV would provide approximately \$7,700 per acre per year in services. This would mean that the Bay's 63,459 acres of SAV provided \$488,634,300 in services in 1996.
- The states reported on their urban nutrient management practices. Virginia reported that it is approaching its lawn fertilizer dealers, lawn care companies, and manufacturers with an agreement that they will apply fertilizer at the correct time and rate and encourage their customers to do so too, in exchange for using the agreements as promotional sales tools.
- Pennsylvania is conducting nutrient reduction training conferences for lawn care services and residential groundskeepers. The commonwealth is also training Master Gardeners to encourage nutrient reduction practices with homeowners.
- Maryland has developed a statewide implementation plan that identifies current nutrient reduction programs and educational resources and has established a workgroup to develop nutrient reduction criteria for homeowners and lawn care companies.
- The Chesapeake Bay Basinwide Toxics Reduction and Prevention Strategy Progress Report has been completed. Results show that 15 of the strategy's commitments have been fulfilled and 24 are expected to be met on schedule. Nine commitments will probably be outstanding and need to be reviewed and assessed.

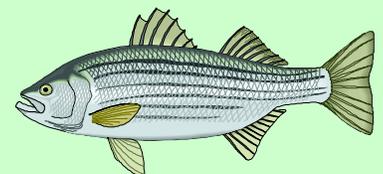
State of the Bay: A Striped Bass Mystery

Claire Buchanan, of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, gave a presentation on lesions that have been found on adult striped bass over the past 4 years. According to Buchanan, these lesions are not the result of *Pfisteria*, but are caused by common viruses and pathogens. Buchanan theorized that these common ailments are having such severe effects on the fish because the striped bass are starving and therefore losing their ability to fight diseases.

Buchanan traced the striped bass starvation to declining populations of Bay anchovies and Atlantic menhaden – the preferred prey of striped bass. As a result of the decline in these fish, striped bass have become scavengers and are depending on less abundant food sources, such as sand shrimp, hard crabs, spot, and white perch.

Buchanan stated that the Atlantic menhaden is currently at its lowest levels in the Chesapeake Bay. The decline in these fish, she hypothesized, is mainly due to a decline in zooplankton – the Bay's food base. Bay monitoring stations are showing that zooplankton levels have decreased in number and diversity, particularly in the mainstem and towards the mouth of the Bay.

The decline in zooplankton can be linked to a number of factors, including reproduction, parasites, excessive predation, toxicity, food quality, and turbidity. Buchanan concluded her presentation by noting the importance of monitoring in the Bay effort and in finding the answers to the many questions her presentation proposed.



African-American History in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed



In 1619, a Dutch trading ship sailed into Jamestown, Virginia, carrying 20 frightened and disoriented African men. As they climbed out of the ship and onto the Chesapeake's shores, little did these men realize that their

first steps on shore that day marked the beginning of African-American history in the Chesapeake Bay region.

Like most of the first blacks who came to the New World, these men were indentured servants, not slaves. Many earned their freedom and went on to own land, raise crops and livestock, trade, defend their rights in courts, and sometimes even purchase their own servants. Initially, their numbers were few. In 1650, only 300 blacks made up the total Chesapeake population of 13,000.

The Chesapeake colonies grew quickly, and by 1680 the need for more manpower was apparent, particularly on the tobacco producing plantations along the western shores of the Bay. With the decline of indentured servants from England, the colonists converted the role of blacks to one of slavery. Soon the Chesapeake's ports were filled with slave ships and slave auctions. By 1780, slaves made up nearly 40% of the Chesapeake population.

During the Revolutionary War, John Murry, the fourth Earl of Dunmore and leader of the British forces in Virginia, promised the blacks freedom if they helped fight against the rebel patriots. Over 5,000 slaves escaped bondage to join Dunmore's Ethiopian Troops. Poorly fed, clothed, and quartered and given the worst of tasks, such as digging and filling in latrines, many died of dysentery and smallpox.

Not all blacks fought for the British. Masters sometimes sent slaves to serve in their stead and later rewarded them with freedom. Some free blacks chose to fight for the colonists' cause, such as William Flora of Portsmouth, Virginia who helped defeat Dunmore's British Forces at the Battle of Great Bridge in Virginia. Other blacks took advantage of wartime chaos and escaped to Virginia and Maryland cities where they blended in with the crowds.

By the end of the Revolutionary War, Chesapeake slave society reflected the growing national division toward slavery. In Maryland and northern Virginia, slavery declined as Abolitionist attitudes took hold and plantations reverted to less labor-intensive crops. The opposite occurred in southern and central Virginia where the number of slaveholders and slaves increased as slavery became more entrenched.

While differences split the young nation, Harriet Tubman led slaves to freedom via the Underground Railroad or Liberty Line. An escaped slave from Bucktown, Maryland, she returned to the Chesapeake region 19 times in the 1850s to escort over 300 slaves to freedom. Although she had many routes, her most frequent went from southern Maryland through Delaware's Delmarva Peninsula and on to Philadelphia in the free state of Pennsylvania.

On April 12, 1861, the Civil War began when the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Blacks served on both sides of the conflict during the war. For the Confederacy, they were a labor force building fortifications, maintaining the railroads, and mining coal. As Union forces came South, tens

of thousands of slaves fled to join the Union ranks 5,700 from Virginia alone. They could not enlist in the Union regiments, however until 1863 when Congress passed a law permitting them to join. By the end of the war, 17 black soldiers and 4 black sailors were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. One of these was Sergeant Major Christian A. Fleetwood who was honored for bravery in the Battle of Chapin's Farm in Virginia.

The end of the Civil War was a time of poverty and despair for all. In Virginia, 360,000 blacks became homeless wanderers. Many migrated to the cities but some remained on the plantations, either out of loyalty to their former masters or because farming was their only skill. In southern Maryland, the decline in agriculture caused people to look to the Bay for new livelihoods. For blacks, this change meant menial jobs, such as oyster shucking.

The Civil War ended slavery but it did not stop discrimination. Blacks from around the Chesapeake joined in the struggle for racial equality. In the late 1800s, Booker T. Washington, a former slave from Hales Ford, Virginia, advised presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft on racial problems and was influential in appointing several blacks to federal office. In 1935, Lillie Mae Carroll Jackson of Baltimore became the head of Maryland's branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. For 35 years, she worked to desegregate Baltimore's stores, restaurants, and theaters through boycotts and pickets.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a baptist minister from Alabama, began organizing the Civil Rights Movement in 1955. In August 1963, he brought national attention to civil rights when he and over 200,000 demonstrators marched in Washington, D.C. At the base of the Lincoln Memorial, he appealed for racial equality in his stirring "I Have A Dream" speech. Strong laws ensued in the following years that protected the civil rights of all citizens.

From the first steps on Jamestown's shores in 1619 to the present day, the Chesapeake region has grown rich in African-American history. One area where blacks are making history today is in saving their Bay. The Bay, however, needs not only the help of black leaders but the joint commitment of all citizens throughout the Chesapeake watershed to restore her to her former splendor.



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