



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

June 9, 2017

Representative Daryl Metcalfe, Majority Chair
Pennsylvania House of Representatives State Government Committee
144 Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202012
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2012

Representative Matthew Bradford, Minority Chair
Pennsylvania House of Representatives State Government Committee
323 Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202070
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2070

**RE: CBF comments to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives State Government Committee
Public Hearing on the Susquehanna River Basin Commission; June 12, 2017**

Dear Representatives Metcalfe and Bradford,

On behalf of The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) and its more than 200,000 members, we thank the Pennsylvania House of Representatives State Government Committee for holding a public hearing on the Susquehanna River Basin Commission.

Since 1986, CBF's Pennsylvania Office has worked to protect and restore the rivers and streams in the Commonwealth that ultimately flow to the Chesapeake Bay. Through collaboration, education, and restoration with a broad range of stakeholders — including schools, government officials, businesses, farmers, landowners, and others. Central to our efforts has been our nationally and regionally multiple award winning restoration program which has worked with over 5,000 farmers and landowners on projects that keep nutrients and soil on the land instead of the water over the last 20 years.

The Susquehanna River is the largest source of freshwater to the Chesapeake Bay. Rivers and streams from over 27,500 square miles feed into the River that flows 444 miles from Cooperstown, NY to Havre de Grace, MD. Simply stated, the Susquehanna River may divide our region but it unites our communities. The River links thousands of Pennsylvania businesses, farmers, and citizens who rely on it as a source drinking water, manufacturing, agriculture, energy extraction and production, of course, recreation.

For the Susquehanna River and its basin to support our communities, our economy, and our quality of life, there must be clean and abundant water in the River and its tributaries. So, although this public hearing focuses on SRBC's role and rates in the management of the consumptive uses of

water resources, it is important to also recognize the critical role they play in understanding the quality of the River and its tributaries.

SRBC projects and programs are critical to Pennsylvania making informed decisions that protect and enhance public health and welfare, economic activity, and our quality of life. Programs to plan and protect the sources of drinking water, notifying public water suppliers of spills before reaching water intakes, invasive aquatic species surveillance, and others represent vital services SRBC provides to Pennsylvania and its residents.

Two programs, however, are particularly key to the efforts to protect and restore the rivers and streams that feed into the Chesapeake Bay:

Sediment and Nutrient Assessment Program. Critical to understanding and informed decision making, is having real, long-term, yet timely information. SRBC's Sediment and Nutrient Assessment Program was started in 1984 to serve this purpose for scientifically sound tracking of progress and informed decision making. Currently, SRBC has a network 25 monitoring sites throughout the Basin, most of which are in Pennsylvania. The information collected by SRBC and its analysis is essential to Pennsylvania in understanding long-term trends, what is working or what isn't, and potentially, even why. Without this monitoring network, Pennsylvania would have to rely almost exclusively on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Watershed computer model.

Sub-basin Surveys. This program, initiated in the mid-1980s, intensively studies the physical, chemical, and biological condition of the rivers and streams within six (6) drainage areas in the Susquehanna River Basin. This extensive and long-term monitoring and assessment program is used by federal and state agencies, local communities, and others to further understand the condition of local streams, the factors impacting them, and opportunities for restoration and protection.

Both of these programs provide an unparalleled and long-term record of information on the health of the rivers and streams in the Susquehanna River Basin. Without these programs, the Commonwealth's ability to make informed and scientifically-sound decisions about the protection and restoration of our waters would be significantly diminished.

Clean water counts in Pennsylvania. Healthy families, strong communities, and a thriving economy depend on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harry Campbell", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Harry Campbell, Pennsylvania Executive Director
Chesapeake Bay Foundation