



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Executive Department

### **Executive Directive Number Seventeen (2021)**

#### **Virginia Leading by Example to Restore the Chesapeake Bay and Its Tributaries**

##### **Importance of the Initiative**

Overwhelming scientific evidence shows us that nutrient and sediment pollution degrade water quality and harm living resources. The Commonwealth of Virginia has pursued and achieved significant reductions in nutrient and sediment pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and the rivers and streams that are tributaries to the Bay. Despite real progress, continued reductions in nutrient and sediment pollution are necessary both to restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and to meet federal Clean Water Act requirements.

A restored Chesapeake Bay will make Virginia a more desirable place to live, work, and play. It will enhance our state and local economies by supporting tourism, outdoor recreation, fisheries, aquaculture, and other sustainable, water-oriented economic development. Restoration work also creates jobs, improves land management, and benefits local communities by making them more attractive and resilient places to live.

In order to meet our commitment to restoring the Bay, the Commonwealth developed a Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) to achieve the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load no later than 2025 while also accounting for the additional pollution loads resulting from climate change. The WIP calls for additional actions to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution by local governments, homeowners, wastewater treatment facilities, developers and farmers. State agencies and public institutions of higher education that own land in the Commonwealth's Chesapeake Bay watershed must also take action to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution. The Commonwealth therefore committed in the Phase III WIP to develop a watershed implementation plan specific to state lands.

##### **State Lands Watershed Implementation Plan**

The goal of the State Lands Watershed Implementation Plan (SWIP) is to achieve significant reductions in, or to offset, unregulated, nonpoint source nutrient and sediment pollution originating from the lands and activities of all Virginia agencies, public institutions of higher education, and other state governmental entities that own or manage land within Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The SWIP required development of a comprehensive dataset of acreage of state lands within the Chesapeake Bay watershed and calculation of pollution load reductions using the Chesapeake Bay Watershed model. The SWIP details reduction targets of 122,000 pounds of nitrogen and 10,100 pounds of phosphorus.

To achieve the reduction targets, the SWIP describes 11 programmatic actions:

1. Standards for Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry
2. Converting Managed Turf to Native Landscapes
3. Unregulated Stormwater Runoff from Impervious Surfaces on Developed Land
4. Native Habitat Valuation for Human Health, Wildlife, and Water Quality
5. Onsite Sewer Systems
6. Pilot Fee-for-Documented-Performance Projects
7. Community Outreach and Education
8. Aligning Habitat Restoration, Resilience, and Water Quality Goals
9. Build Water Quality Improvements into Virginia's Hazard Mitigation Plan
10. Interagency Technical Support and Collaboration
11. Clean Water Jobs Training Collaborative

The SWIP also identifies specific pollutant load reducing practices, treatments, and technologies to be implemented between 2021 and 2025 in order to achieve nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment reduction targets by major river basins.

The SWIP can be found [here](#).

### **Directive**

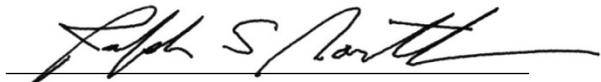
Accordingly, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Chief Executive by Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, I hereby order the Secretary of Natural Resources in partnership with the Secretary of Administration, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, and the Conservation Cabinet to ensure that the SWIP is fully implemented by all Virginia executive branch agencies, public institutions of higher education, and other state governmental entities that own or manage land within Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed.

**Effective Date of the Executive Directive**

This Executive Directive shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or rescinded by further executive directive.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 3rd day of June, 2021.



  
Ralph S. Northam, Governor

Attest:

  
Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth