

WIP III Narrative

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service strives to meet the requirements of environmental policies and programs. These include the Clean Water Act, Executive Order 13508, Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007, as well as state and local policies. Some specific activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are shown in the following paragraphs for the four states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed where U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service facilities are located. These four states are Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service previously completed numerous actions that reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment in the Chesapeake Bay. More actions are planned. Additionally, much of this work directly benefits fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats.

Maryland

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Maryland are Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, Martin National Wildlife Refuge, Patuxent Research Refuge, and Susquehanna National Wildlife Refuge. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's county locations in Maryland include Dorchester County, Kent County, Somerset County, Anne Arundel County, and Prince George's County. The total land area of these stations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Maryland is about 45,077 acres.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to continue maintenance and habitat enhancement in Maryland. This may include stream restoration, tree planting, and septic system improvements. These actions reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment in the Chesapeake Bay.

Past BMP project example: Martin National Wildlife Refuge's shoreline received protection from erosion in 2016. As a result, a 20,950 foot long living shoreline now protects marshes at Fog Point. The \$9 million project helps protect more than 1,000 acres of interior tidal high marsh, sheltered water, submerged aquatic vegetation and clam beds against the effects of future storms. It also enhances the natural defenses of saltwater habitats important to the island's soft crab fishery, a natural resource local Smith Island residents depend on for their livelihoods.

Pennsylvania

The Northeast Fishery Center and Lamar National Fish Hatchery are U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Pennsylvania. They are located in Clinton County.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to maintain current operational practices and to work with Pennsylvania to continue compliance with Lamar National Fish Hatchery's NPDES permit. Additional conservation projects may be planned and completed.

Past BMP project example: In 2018, effluent solids were removed from raceways through filtration. The solids settled in a clarifier before being removed by a dewatering trailer equipped with a polymer coagulant agent. This reduces solids in discharges from Lamar National Fish Hatchery.

Virginia

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Virginia are Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge, Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge, Fisherman Island National Wildlife Refuge, Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, James River National Wildlife Refuge, Martin National Wildlife Refuge, Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge, Nansemond National Wildlife Refuge, Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Plum Tree Island National Wildlife Refuge, Presquile National Wildlife Refuge, Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge, and Harrison Lake National Fish Hatchery. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's county locations in Virginia include Northampton County, Chesapeake County, Suffolk County, Prince George County, Fairfax County, Prince William County, Poquoson County, Chesterfield County, Caroline County, Essex County, King George County, Richmond County, and Charles City County. There are about 24,835 acres of land at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Virginia.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to continue good maintenance practices and to enhance wildlife habitat further. Projects in Virginia may include forest conservation, streamside forest buffers, and completion of conservation plans. Additional water control structures are planned to further slow drainage in the swamps at Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. There may be a study of the extent of the phosphorous, nitrogen and sediment release reductions from Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

Past BMP project example: Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge installed two new weirs that increased water levels, in 4,000 acres of Chesapeake Bay watershed wetlands on the Refuge, to their highest levels in 60 years. The \$1.4 million project concluded in 2013. The resulting improved management of water levels slows the release of mercury, nutrients and sediment from the swamp. The project helped reverse the effects of swamp drainage from logging in the 18th and 19th centuries.

West Virginia

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service locations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in West Virginia are Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge and the National Conservation Training Center. The National Conservation Training Center is in Jefferson County. The total land area in these Chesapeake Bay watershed locations in West Virginia is about 563 acres.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to improve wastewater treatment processes. This will increase performance in relation to the NPDES permit for the wastewater treatment plant at the National Conservation Training Center.

Past BMP project example: In 2011, the National Conservation Training Center converted 40 acres of land from agricultural use to wildlife habitat. Hay farming was ended on these 40 acres. The area is now a wildlife friendly landscape.