## Chesapeake Bay Executive Council Approves Local Initiative

(Continued from Page A1) governments.

The Chesapeake Bay Program **Executive Council includes Virgi**nia Gov. George Allen, who serves as chairman, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge, Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening, District of Columbia Mayor Marion Barry, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner, and Chesapeake Bay Commission Chairman Michael Weir.

The emphasis of the agreement is to emphasize the importance of local efforts to increase the effectiveness of strategies to protect tibutaries within the Chesapeake Bay basin.

"Much of our success to date has been due to locally developed siteand situation-specific solutions," Gov. Allen stated in a news release

"And now, for the first time, locally elected officials will be assured an essential role in the direction and commitments of the Bay Program."

By approving the Local Government Partnership Initiative, council members have agreed to convene a task force by Feb. 1 for the purpose of establishing a "Local **Government Participation Action** Plan."

The task force is to consist of: five representatives from the Local Government Advisory Committee, one to chair and the other four to represent the interests of its jurisdiction;

• six more representatives, one from each of the staffs of the members of the council;

 six local government representatives from Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia (Two from each state and at least three shall be local elected officials and up to three can be representatives of "associations that provide services to local governments in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.");

• and two representatives from the local governing sectors of the District of Columbia who shall represent municipal wards and advisory neighborhood commissions (ANC), with at least one of the two being an elected ANC commissioner, the other may be either a ward representative or a member of city council.

The task force is then to prepare an action plan by Oct. 1, 1996.

That action plan is to do several things.

It is to identify opportunities and document recommendations for obtaining technical and financial assistance for local governments.

It is to broaden outreach to more directly engage local govern-

local government representatives on its committees and subcommittees:

develop a series of local government "indicators" by July 1, 1996. which show the status and progress in restoring resources under the authority of local governments; prepare a "handbook for local governments" that would identify projects and programs local governments can do to help support efforts for Bay protection and restoration:

- establish a program to recognize local governments' achievements; convene a conference by October to showcase local government innovations in protecting the Bay and local environments.

· identify public information documents and other means of communications which can be tailored for local governments.

Also during the council meeting, members reviewed a report containing more than 100 case studies of Bay-improvement projects ranging from storm water management to habitat restoration.

The report, Chesapeake Bay Communities — Making the Connection, included examples of how communities can enhance the value of their local resources while at the same time contributing to the overall Bay restoration.

Also during the meeting, each member gave an overview of progress being made on the Bay cleanup.

According to comments, some of the highlights of progress include the fact that feshwater portions of the Bay and major rivers are cleaner now than 10 years ago. According to the news release, The tital freshwater portions of the Bay and the Bay's major tributary rivers are cleaner and healthier than they were 10 years ago.

"The improvement in water quality in these sections of the Bay and rivers is directly connected to reduced runoff from agricultural land, the phosphate detergent ban and phosphorous reductions from point sources, such as wastewater treatment plants and other industrial facilities."

The release also stated that because nitrogen levels have not been reduced significantly, "The saltier parts of the Bay are not showing the same improvement

"However, the Bay Program is seeing nitrogen reductions in spe-

• work to increase the number of cific geographical areas, like -Maryland's Patuxent River, where point source nitrogen removal techniques are in place, and the tidal fresh James River in Virginia, where pollution prevention techniques are showing benefits."

In other environmental improvements, the council stated that there have been significant reductions in toxic chemicals released into the Bay basin.

According to the news release, the amount of toxic chemicals released by industries within the Bay's basin has decreased by more than 52 percent between 1988 and 1993. (The national average reduction was 42 percent.)

The council also cited the fact that almost 300 miles of riverway within the basin has been reopened to migratory fish needing to swim upriver to reach spawning areas.

The goal of the program is to have 1,357 miles reopened to migratory fish by 2003. The migratory species include the American shad, striped bass and herring.

The American shad restoration project on the Susquehanna has been successful to date resulting in ... substantial increases in the American shad in the Bay region. The American shad population estimates in the upper Bay and Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania increased from below 10.000 shad in 1980 to well over 300,000 in 1995.'

It was also reported that 120 local and state officials received stream restoration training through funding provided by the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Those officials were provided with skills necessary to carry out 500 locally funded restoration projects. Trainees are now working to restore about 250 miles of stream and riparian habitat in 18 major river basins.

In addition to adopting Local Government Partnership Initiative, the executive council also adopted statements concerning the use of pesticides and management of ballast water in the basin and bay.

Its pesticide statement preface begins with an explanation of the fact that in October 1994 the council adopted the Chesapeake Bay Basinwide Toxics Reduction and Prevention Strategy.

"As part of that strategy, we agreed to manage the use of pesticides to prevent adverse effects on living resources and human health within the Chesapeake Bay basin.

"We further committed to establish, by 2000, voluntary integrated pest management practices on 75 percent of all agricultural, recreational, and public lands, within the Bay basin.'

According to the adopted statement, "... we adopt as part of the Chesapeake Bay Basinwide Toxics Reduction and Prevention Strategy, the following additional goal:

"Develop and conduct basinwide education and outreach programs for commercial and household pesticide applicators to promote, by the year 2000, voluntary integrated pesticide management (IPM) practices on 50 percent of all commercial land and 25 percent of the residential land in the Bay basin.""

## **Ballast Water**

In adopting its ballast statement the executive council adopted the recommendations of the Chesapeake Bay Commission.

The problem of ballast water discharged into the Bay - as well as other international port waters — is that it is a source of introduction of foreign aquatic diseases, plants and animals that threaten indigenous species or their habitat.

The introduction of the razor clam into the Great Lakes system, aquatic plants over the years, fish species, etc., has caused the loss of an uncalculable amount of wealth

to all people because of the costly battles needed to protect remaining resources from deterioration, or because of the entire loss of a commercially valuable species.

According to the statement adopted by the executive council, "This fulfills our pledge made by the Chesapeake Executive Council in 1993 and contained in the 'Chesapeake Bay Policy on the Introduction of Nonindigenous Aquatic Species' to establish a panel consisting of user groups, federal and state agencies, and other interested parties to identify options to reduce the risks associated with the discharge of ballast water into the Chesapeake Bay.

"By adopting the recommendations, we support the reauthorization of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nusiance Prevention and Control Act of 1990, the implementation of a national program of voluntary ballast water management guidelines and reporting procedures, collaborative ballast water management protocols by all nations, development of vessel designs to facilitate ballast water exchange, the demonstration of ballast water management technologies and practices, and multi-lingual education campaigns for crews of ships."

In its statement the council acknowledges and joins in support of the resolutions adopted by the General Assemblies of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia in urging the federal government to take action to prevent the introduction of non-indigenous species to the Chesapeake Bay and other areas at risk.

## **Riparian** Forest

Last year, the council adopted a Riparian Forest Buffer Directive. An update was presented to the council.

Under the directive a panel was (Turn to Page A33)



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ments in watershed pro tection and restoration. It is to identify and recommend changes to the organizational structure and functions of the Chesapeake Bay Program.

It also is to identify the technical and program resources local governments can offer to support the goals of the Bay Program.

In addition to outlining the support the Chesapeake Bay Commission staff is to provide the task force, the executive council also approved that it will:



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