



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

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CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

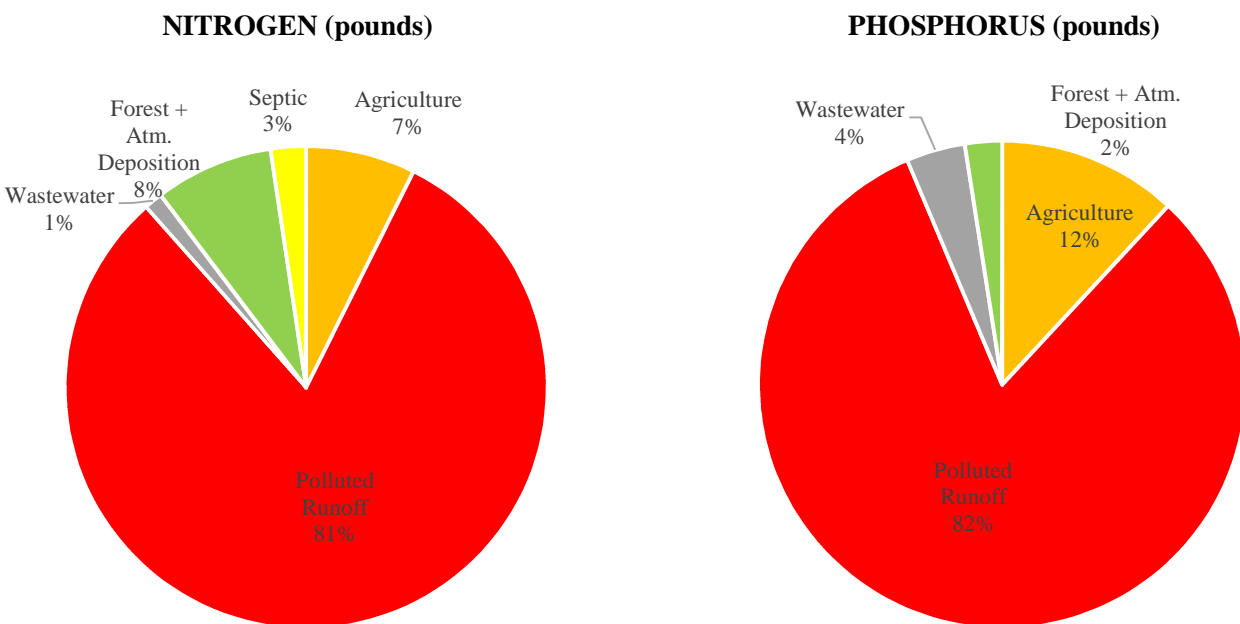
**Stay strong on
stormwater fees**

January 2014

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HAS A BIG PROBLEM: POLLUTED RUNOFF

Polluted runoff is the largest source of water pollution in many Prince George's County creeks and rivers. In the Anacostia River, for instance, 81 percent of the nitrogen pollution comes from polluted runoff, and 82 percent of the phosphorus pollution. Dog waste, chemicals, lawn fertilizer and other contaminants run off county streets, parking lots, and other surfaces during a rain storm, and in many cases discharge straight into the Anacostia River, Patuxent River and Piscataway Creek. This runoff makes water unfit for human recreation and marine life. It is the reason health officials warn us not to touch our creeks for two days after a rain storm; the water is too full of unhealthy bacteria that washed off the land. Runoff also increases local flooding. As an area is paved over, rain that would have soaked into the ground rushes with increasing volume and speed over the hardened landscape. The result: flooded basements and streets. Prince George's County needs a reliable source of funding to reduce polluted runoff.

Anacostia River Pollution

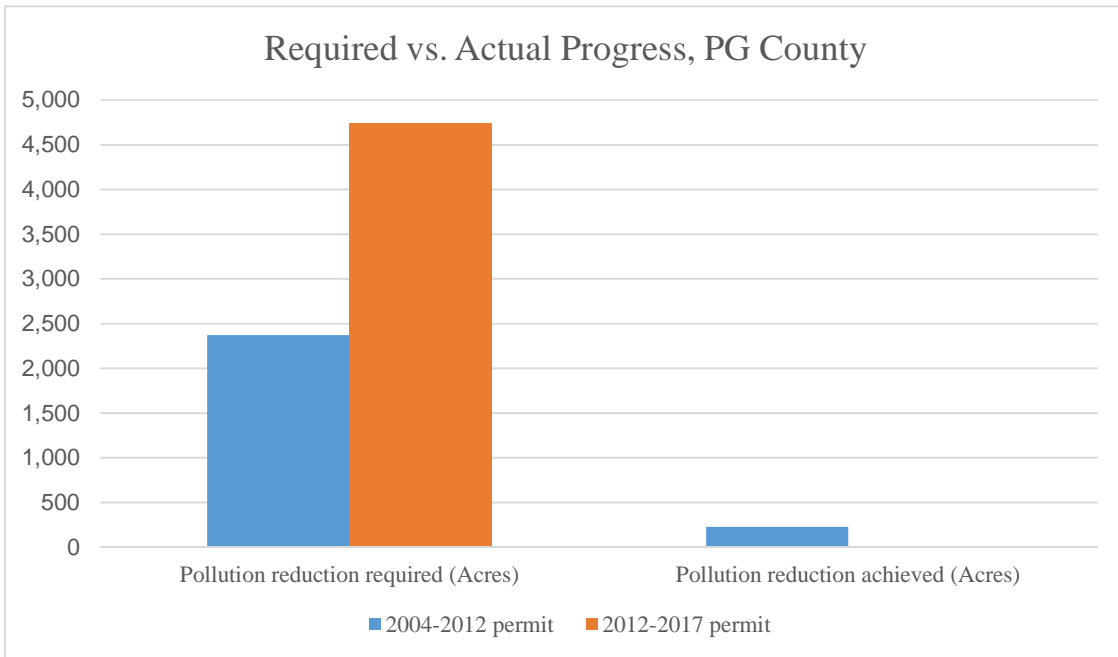


Source: Chesapeake Bay Program 2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads



Sound familiar: *“Homes all across the region experienced flood damage due to last week’s rain, and those with basements are now in the unenviable situation of having to dry out and repair the damage done.”* BayNet, 10/6/2010

PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY LAGS FAR BEHIND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS TO REDUCE POLLUTED RUNOFF; DEPENDABLE FUNDING IS CRITICAL



Sources: Prince George’s County 2012 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Annual Report, Addendum “Permit Administration”; Prince George’s County Final Watershed Implementation Plan, July, 2012

Prince George’s County has fallen far behind the “watershed restoration” goals set in its federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The permit regulates the county’s discharge of polluted runoff. The permit set a goal for the county to improve treatment of polluted runoff on a total of 2,369 acres between 2004-2009, or 10 percent of all hard surfaces. The permit time subsequently was extended, giving the county a total of nine years to achieve that goal. Yet the county has only improved 229 acres needing treatment, **or less than one percent**. What explains the poor progress? Lack of funding. And it gets worse. The county recently received a new permit that **DOUBLES** expectations for the next five years. During that time the county must restore an additional 4,738 acres. But there’s good news. After extensive study, the county believes it can achieve its permit goals, using a stormwater utility fee and an innovative public-private partnership to reduce overall costs long term. This program will fund hundreds of projects in neighborhoods throughout the county, reducing local flooding, and improving water quality.

Prince George’s County has a big problem. Now, it also has a solution.

Stay strong on stormwater fees.



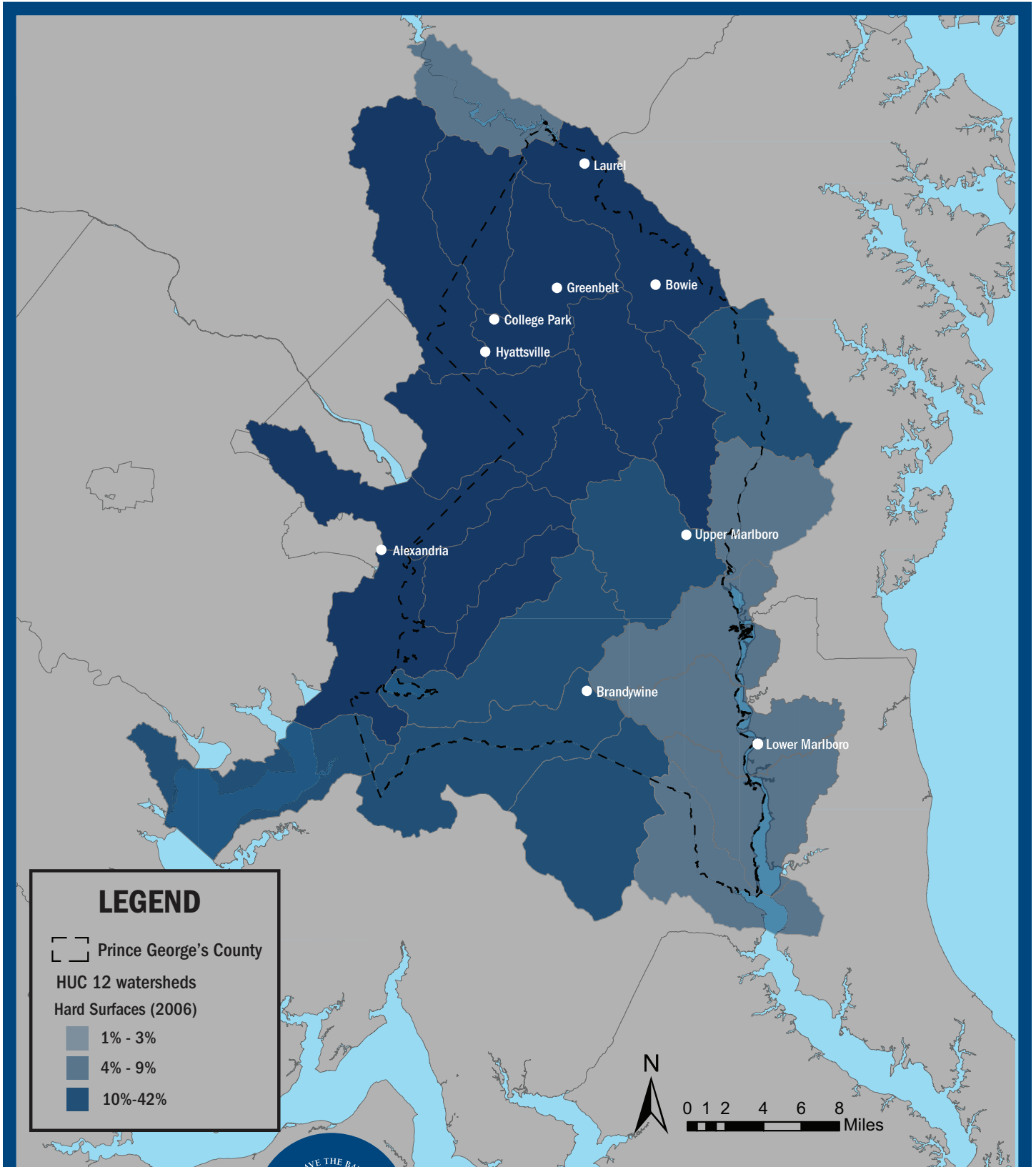
CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

Founded in 1967, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) conservation organization dedicated to saving a national treasure—the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers and streams. Its motto, Save the Bay, defines the organization’s mission and commitment. With headquarters in Annapolis, MD, offices in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia, and 17 field centers, CBF works throughout the Chesapeake Bay’s 64,000-square-mile watershed to build an informed citizenry, advocate pollution-reduction strategy, and enforce the law. CBF is supported by more than 200,000 active members and has a staff of 170 full-time employees. Approximately 80 percent of CBF’s \$23.6 million annual budget is privately raised.

CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION • Philip Merrill Environmental Center • 6 Herndon Avenue • Annapolis, MD 21403
410/268-8816 • 301/261-2350 (from D.C. metro) • cbf.org

HUC12 Watersheds by Percentage of Hard Surface

Prince George's County, Maryland



LEGEND

Prince George's County

HUC 12 watersheds

Hard Surfaces (2006)

- 1% - 3%
- 4% - 9%
- 10% - 42%



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Saving a National Treasure

December 2013



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

POLLUTED RUNOFF IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Prince George's County is a highly suburbanized county, leading to a very high percentage of hard, or impervious, surfaces. The County also drains into several major tributaries that provide fresh water to the Chesapeake Bay, including the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers. Serious water quality problems arise when just 10% of a creek, stream, or river's watershed is covered with impervious surfaces.¹ In fact, sensitive species can be affected in watersheds with less than 10% imperviousness.² In Prince George's County, most watersheds exceed 10% of impervious surface. The amount of impervious surface in a watershed causes such serious impairments primarily because of polluted runoff.

Polluted runoff contaminates our local rivers and streams and threatens local drinking water. Water running off of roofs, driveways, lawns and parking lots picks up trash, motor oil, grease, excess lawn fertilizers, pesticides, dog waste and other pollutants and washes them into the streams and rivers flowing through our communities. This pollution causes a multitude of problems, including toxic algae blooms, harmful bacteria, extensive dead zones, reduced dissolved oxygen, and unsightly trash clusters. These problems result in beach closures, fish consumption advisories, and in some cases complete closure of fisheries. Polluted runoff is a serious problem for the waterways in Prince George's County. For example, a study done on the County's portion of the Anacostia River concluded that the major source of pollutants, including nutrients, sediment and bacteria, is from polluted runoff and leaks from the aging sanitary sewer system. This pollution has led to fish consumption advisories for bluegill and small mouth and large mouth bass in the Prince George's portion of the Anacostia.

Today, polluted runoff is the only major source of water pollution still on the rise. Using the 2009 baseline, urban runoff contributed **29%** of the total Nitrogen in Prince George's County.³ Low water quality in Prince George's County has led to fourteen water quality cleanup plans approved by the Maryland Department of Environment. All of the impaired waters and associated water quality cleanup plans have strong connections to polluted runoff as the source of impairment.

In the Upper Patuxent, which is impaired for fecal coliform bacteria and sediment, eleven of the fifteen stations sampled for benthic and/or fish index of biotic integrity scored poor to very poor (i.e., significantly lower than 3.0). These impairments are strongly linked to the amount of

¹ Schueler, T.R. and H.K. Holland. *The Importance of Imperviousness*. Watershed Protection Techniques 1(3): 100-111. 1994.

² *Id.*

³ Chesapeake Bay Model 5.3.2

impervious surfaces in the watershed.⁴ In the Patuxent River Upper Watershed in Prince George's County, 47% of the land-use is urban.⁵

Similarly, the Anacostia watershed is impaired for PCBs, trash, nutrients, sediments, and fecal coliform. Most sub-watersheds within Prince George's County range from 19-37% impervious surfaces, which has devastating impacts on water quality due to polluted runoff. In the non-tidal Piscataway, fecal coliform bacteria impairments are strongly linked to the 16.7% urban imperviousness.⁶

Under permits required by the Clean Water Act, Prince George's County is obligated to restore some of this impervious surface. The new permit recently issued to the County requires 20% restoration, on top of the 10% restoration that was required under the previous permit. The combined 30 percent retrofit requirements in the previous and existing round of stormwater permits amount to 7,109 acres of untreated impervious area, which does not include any city of Bowie, state, or federal areas. Restoration does not come cheap, and the need for dedicated funding through a stormwater utility fee is greater than ever.

In addition to meeting permit requirements, cleaning up our local water bodies has an immediate positive effect for the people of Prince George's County, including reduction of swimming closures, improved fishing opportunities, reduced flooding and creating local jobs. The great thing is, taking care of Prince George's local waterways also takes care of its obligations for the Bay.

A COOPERATIVE EFFORT

All the Bay watershed states are now required to reduce runoff pollution to their local rivers and streams and the Bay – since this pollution source is the only major one that is actually growing. Each state has a specific plan in place to do so, and is now undertaking actions to make this happen. Since implementing this plan at the local level costs money, localities all around the watershed are developing different means to pay these costs. Only the ten largest and most urban jurisdictions were *required* to set fees in order to address their polluted runoff problems. They have the most land that doesn't allow water to filter slowly (i.e. impervious area), and they are also the only jurisdictions in Maryland charged with meeting very strict federal Clean Water Act permits. As requested by the Maryland Association of Counties, each jurisdiction got the freedom to set its

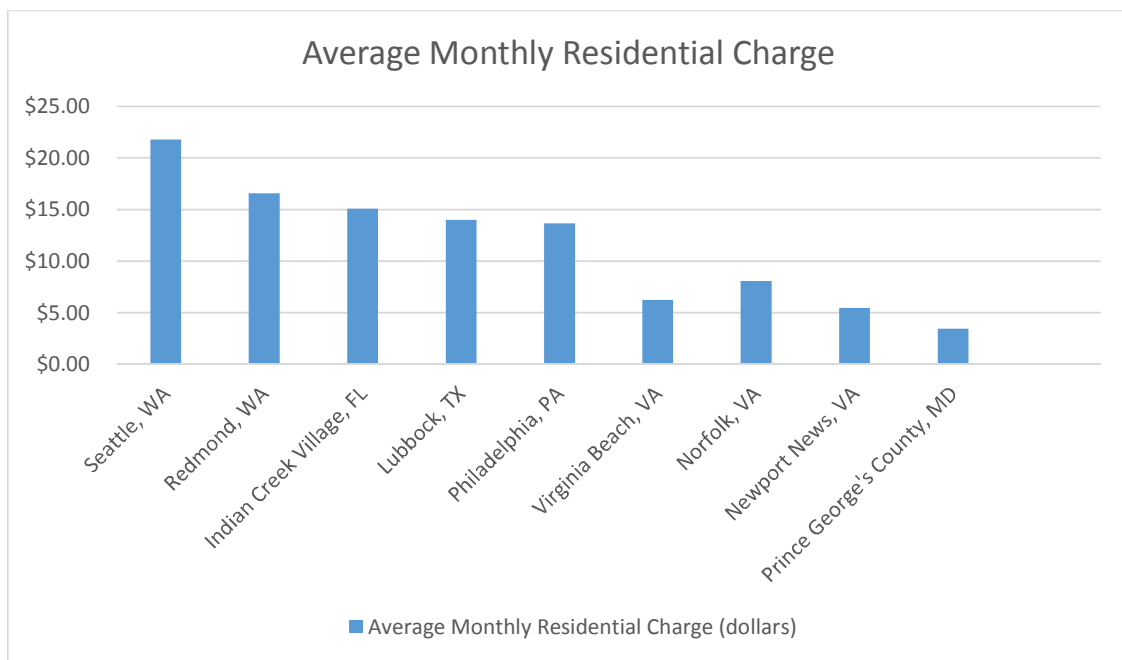
⁴ MDE Watershed Report for Biological Impairment of the Patuxent River Upper Watershed, 2010.

⁵ Based on the Maryland Dept. of Planning 2002 GIS land-use data for the Prince George's County.

⁶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "Surf Your Watershed." Available at: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/locate/index.cfm>.

own set of fees, according to its own polluted runoff needs. That’s why businesses with the same “footprint” might have to pay a different amount in one jurisdiction or another.

The benefit to communities far outweigh the speculative concern that businesses will relocate. While businesses might wish to locate in Delaware, Pennsylvania, or Virginia instead of Maryland, it’s not likely a stormwater fee that will move them to do that. And, if they do, they might be surprised to learn that eighteen local jurisdictions in Virginia, eight local governments in West Virginia, at least two municipalities in Delaware (including the largest, Wilmington), and several in Pennsylvania already have stormwater fee systems in place – and these numbers are growing. Across the United States, there are **at least 1,400 local jurisdictions with stormwater utility fees in place.**⁷ A recent survey of jurisdictions with a stormwater utility fee found that the top three reasons such a fee was imposed were: to comply with regulatory requirements to reduce polluted runoff; to increase revenue stability; and to deal with the increasing costs of addressing polluted runoff.⁸ These top three reasons are equally applicable to the Maryland jurisdictions, and make implementing stormwater utility fees equally important. Even so, Maryland’s stormwater fees are not the costliest in the nation. In fact, they are not even at the higher end of the nationwide range.



STAY STRONG ON STORMWATER FEES!

⁷ Campbell, Warren. *Western Kentucky University Stormwater Utility Survey 2013*. Western Kentucky University, 6 July 2013. Web. 19 Nov. 2013.

⁸ Black & Veatch. *2012 Storm Water Utility Survey*. Black & Veatch, 2013. Web. 19 Nov. 2013. <<http://bv.com/docs/management-consulting-brochures/2012-stormwater-utility-survey>>.

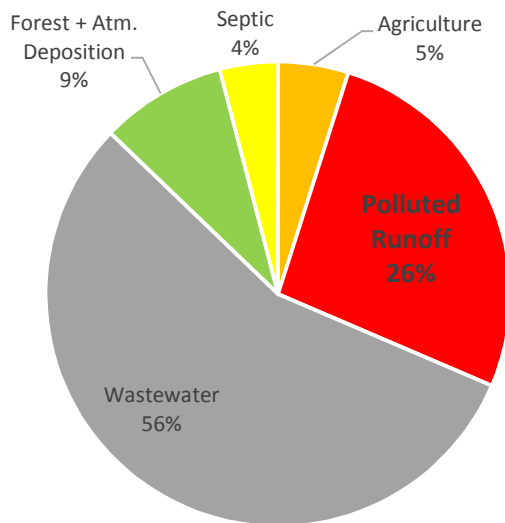
SOURCES OF POLLUTION IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model 5.3—2011 Progress Run Edge of Stream Load Estimates

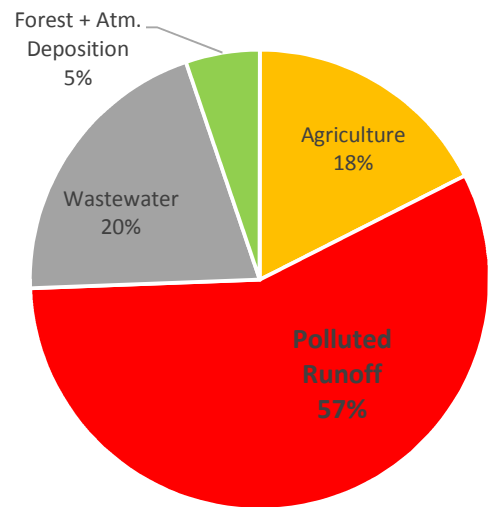
Piscataway Creek

Piscataway Creek is polluted by nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment and is listed on the Maryland Department of the Environment's list of impaired waters, meaning it does not meet the water quality standards for its designated purpose.

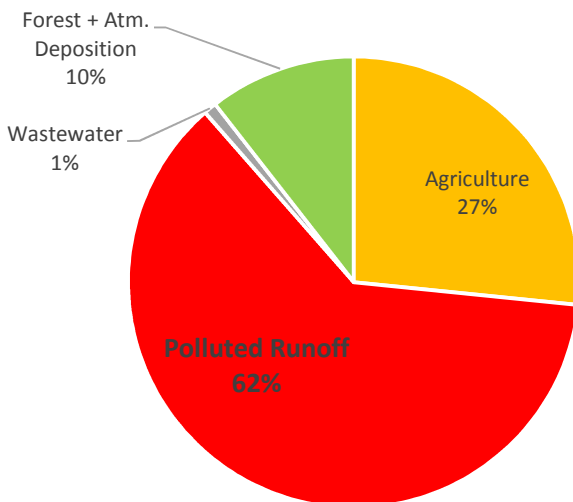
2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Nitrogen (lbs)



2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Phosphorus (lbs)



2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Suspended Sediment (lbs)



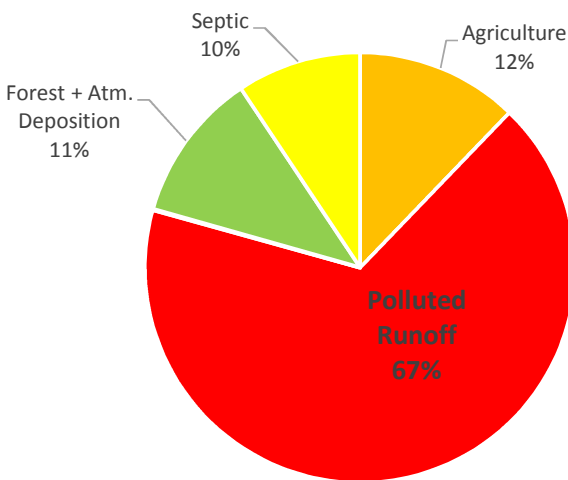
SOURCES OF POLLUTION IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model 5.3—2011 Progress Run Edge of Stream Load Estimates

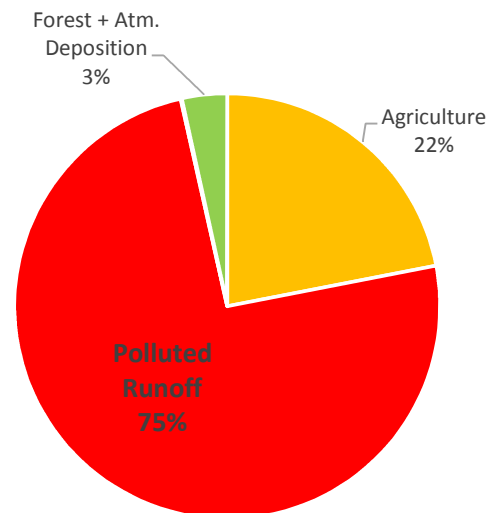
Patuxent River – Western Branch

The Patuxent River is polluted by nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, and is listed on the Maryland Department of the Environment's impaired waters list, meaning it does not meet the water quality standards for its designated purpose.

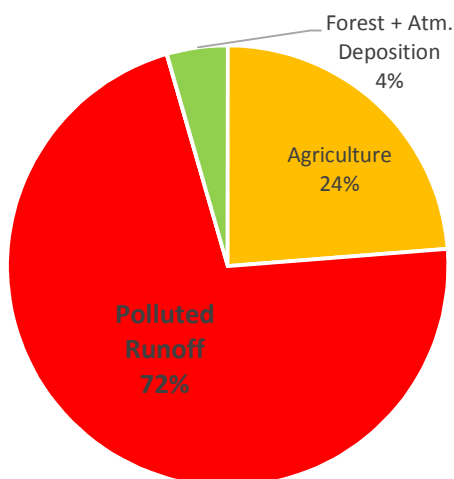
2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Nitrogen (lbs)



2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Phosphorus (lbs)



2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Suspended Solids (lbs)



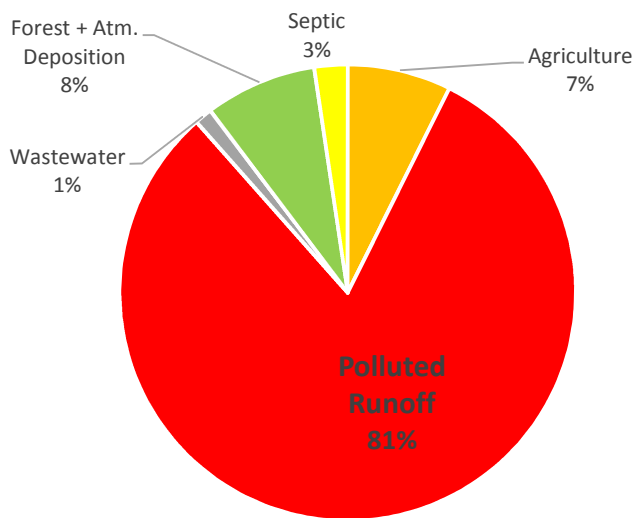
SOURCES OF POLLUTION IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model 5.3—2011 Progress Run Edge of Stream Load Estimates

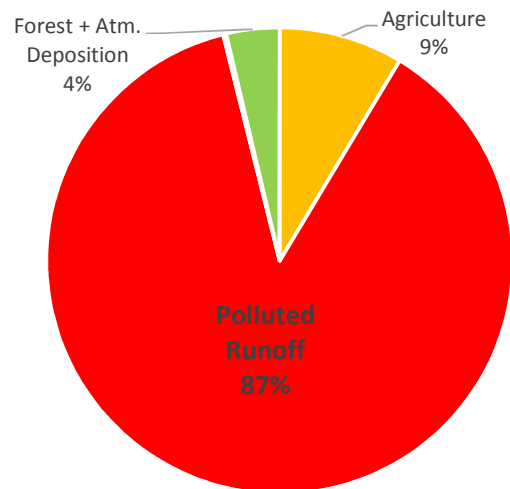
Anacostia River – Maryland Portion

The Anacostia River is polluted by nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, and is listed on the Maryland Department of the Environment's impaired waters list, meaning it does not meet the water quality standards for its designated purpose. Almost half of the Anacostia watershed is located within Prince George's County.

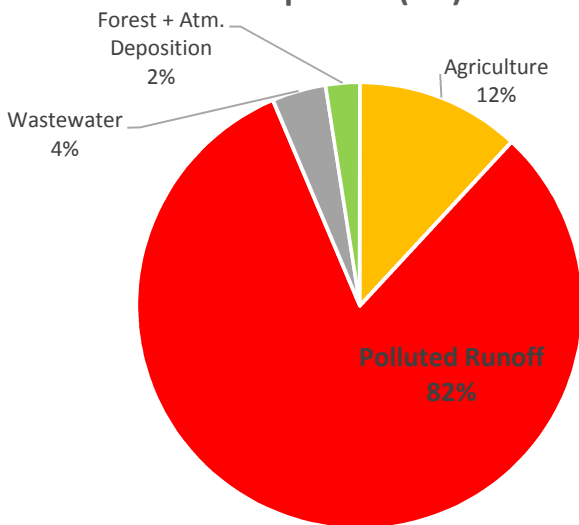
2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Nitrogen (lbs)



2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Suspended Sediments (lbs)



2011 Progress Run Modeled Loads Phosphorus (lbs)



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Watershed Protection and Restoration Program

Bringing Green Jobs, Revitalization and Clean Water to Prince George's County

Required by a Federal mandate, the Watershed Protection and Restoration Program instructs Maryland's nine largest counties and the City of Baltimore to establish a funding plan to pay for stormwater management improvements by July 1, 2013.

This program provides an opportunity for Prince George's County to revitalize aging neighborhoods, launch a green economy and put people to work.

It will benefit the County by creating 5,000 new jobs and new green local businesses; expanding existing local businesses and summer youth jobs programs; beautifying our neighborhoods; developing fellowship programs with local universities and colleges; and cleaning our waters.

REVITALIZING AGING NEIGHBORHOODS



CREATING 5,000 NEW JOBS



EXPANDING EXISTING AND LAUNCHING NEW GREEN, LOCAL BUSINESSES



DEVELOPING A FELLOWSHIP WITH LOCAL UNIVERSITIES AND BUSINESSES



Anacostia River
Anacostia Watershed

PROTECTING THE QUALITY OF OUR FUTURE WATER SUPPLY

MAKING OUR RIVERS AND STREAMS HEALTHY AND SAFE FOR RECREATIONAL USES



Rushern L. Baker, III
County Executive



Adam Ortiz
Acting Director

For more information on the program, please see the frequently asked questions on the back.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
Watershed Protection and Restoration Program

Bringing Green Jobs, Revitalization and Clean Water to Prince George's County

FAQs

WHAT IS THE WATERSHED PROTECTION AND RESTORATION PROGRAM?

In 2010, the Federal government required states to meet new standards under the Clean Water Act to address stormwater runoff pollution from impervious areas (that don't absorb water) such as parking lots, roads and roofs. In 2012, to meet this mandate, Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law House Bill 987 (The Watershed Protection and Restoration Program) that requires nine Maryland Counties and the City of Baltimore to collect a fee from property owners to implement a program to address this issue, the Clean Water Act Fee.

WHAT IS STORMWATER RUNOFF POLLUTION?

Every day, trash, oil, sediment, chemicals and other pollutants collect on our roofs, roads, parking lots and driveways. When it rains, the pollutants travel over these surfaces, flow into the storm drains and eventually end up in our creeks, rivers, lakes and streams.

WILL THIS FUND CREATE JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY?

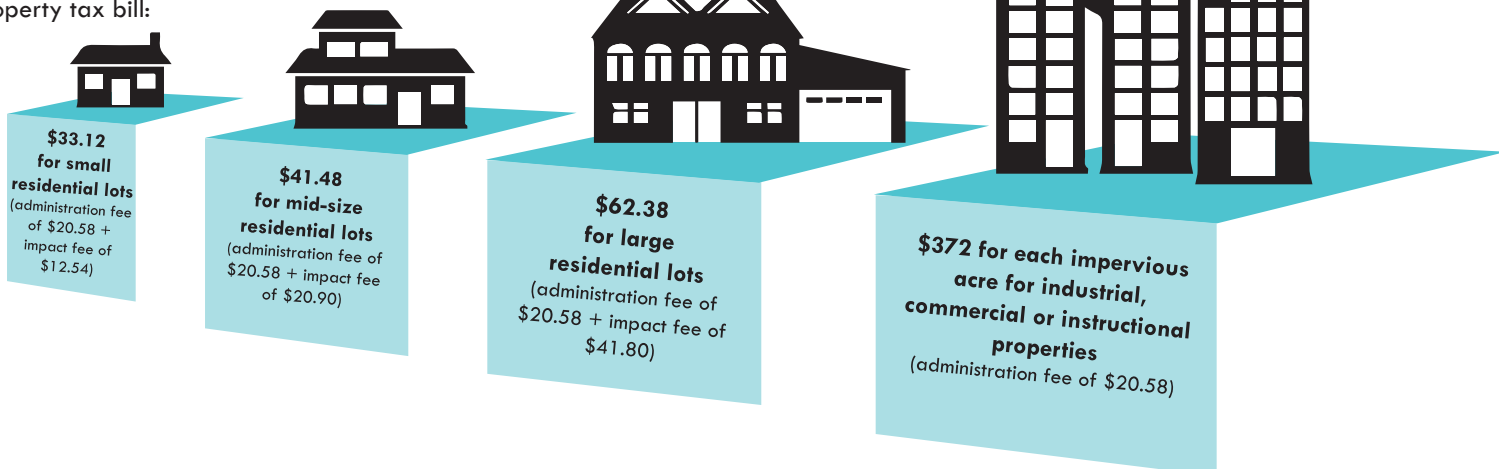
This fund provides an opportunity for Prince George's County to revitalize aging neighborhoods, launch a green economy and put people to work. It will benefit businesses and residents by creating 5,000 new jobs and new green local businesses; expanding existing local businesses and summer youth jobs programs; developing fellowship programs with local universities and colleges; and improving our waterways.

HOW WILL THESE FUNDS BE SPENT?

The funds will be used solely to retrofit parking lots, roads and roofs with various treatment devices that will naturally filter out pollutants from stormwater. To meet the Federal mandate, the County has to treat 8,000 acres of uncontrolled impervious surfaces at a cost of approximately \$1.2 billion and complete the program by 2025.

HOW IS THE FEE CALCULATED?

Prince George's County established a three-tier payment structure to be paid annually by property owners through their property tax bill:



ARE THE FEES FAIR AND EQUITABLE?

Prince George's County is dedicated to meeting our Federal requirements while keeping the fees as low as possible. Our fee structure is equitable and lower than most Maryland Counties.

CAN THE FEE BE MODIFIED OR REDUCED?

Property owners that retrofit their property with approved runoff treatment practices can receive up to a 100 percent reduction in the impact fee. The County will also provide a limited amount of rebate funds each year to property owners to retrofit their properties. A fee can also be appealed to the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) if there is an error in the way the County calculated the fee.

WILL THERE BE A PROGRAM FOR FINANCIAL HARDSHIP?

Yes, property owners who receive the homeowners tax credit or benefits from the Energy Assistance subsidy during the tax year for which the fee is billed, will automatically be exempted.

DO AGRICULTURAL PROPERTIES PAY THE FEE?

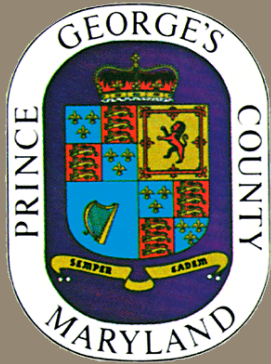
Yes, but the fee is based only on the impervious surfaces of the principal residential property and not the land in agriculture.

DON'T I ALREADY PAY FOR A STORMWATER PROGRAM?

Yes, but that program is designated for flood control and not clean water.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The Clean Water Act Fee is administered by the Department of Environmental Resources. Please visit DER's website at <http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/Government/AgencyIndex/DER/index.asp> or call (301) 883-5833 for more information.



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
CLEAN WATER ACT FUND PROGRAM
MARYLAND STORMWATER FEE (HB 987-
2012)**

June 2013

ECONOMIC STIMULUS — NEW BUSINESSES & JOBS

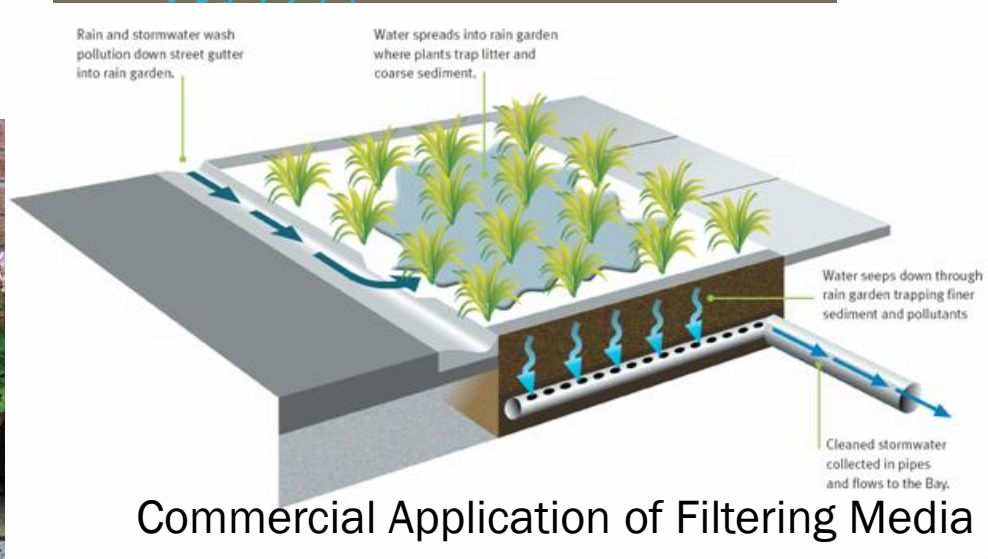
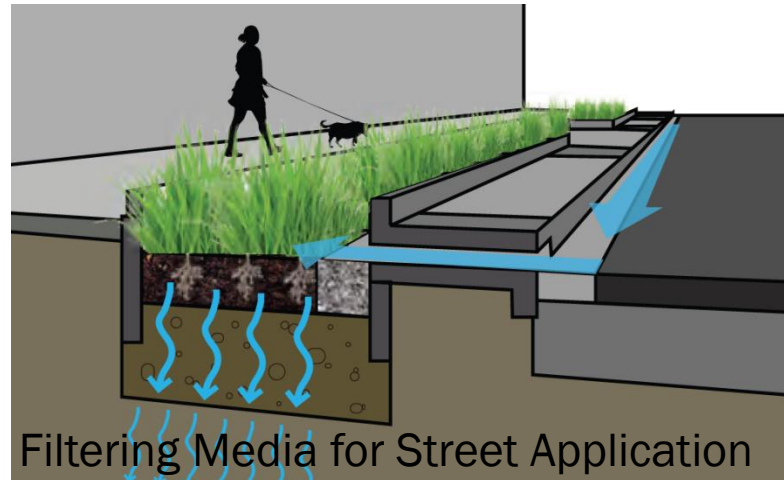
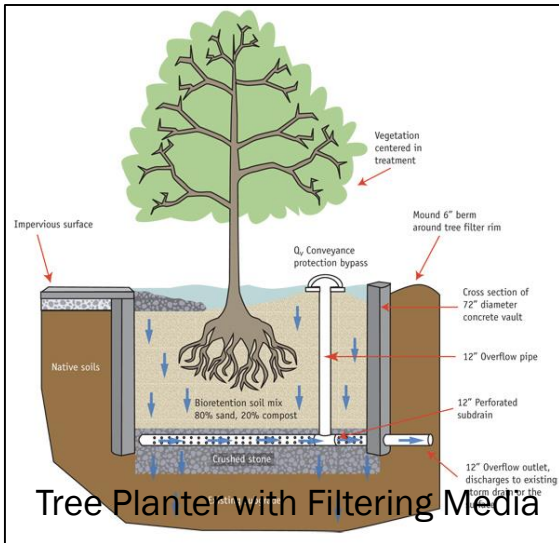
WATER QUALITY MANDATE WILL CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Investing \$1.2 Billion Locally

- Create sustainable, new local businesses
- Create approximately 5,000 new jobs (Inner Beltway)
 - Engineering, Landscape Architects, Construction, Maintenance
- Expand summer youth jobs program
- Partner with Bowie State and Community College
- Revitalize Neighborhoods
- Improved Quality of Life

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO!

Green Street Retrofits, Beautification Upgrades



WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO!

Green Street Retrofits, Beautification Upgrades



Street retrofit with green filtering devices



Residential R/W applications with filtering media

Meet Federal Clean Water Act Requirements 5

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO!

Rain Gardens



Rain Garden – with Street Treatment

Rain Garden – Residential Applications



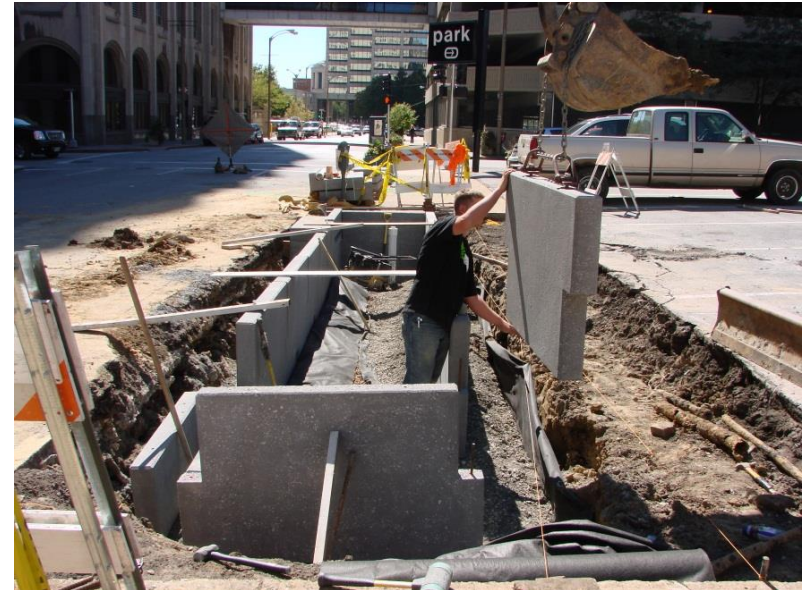
WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO!

Examples of Bioretention & Rain Gardens



Rain Garden – with Street Treatment
Prefabrication will speed up installation

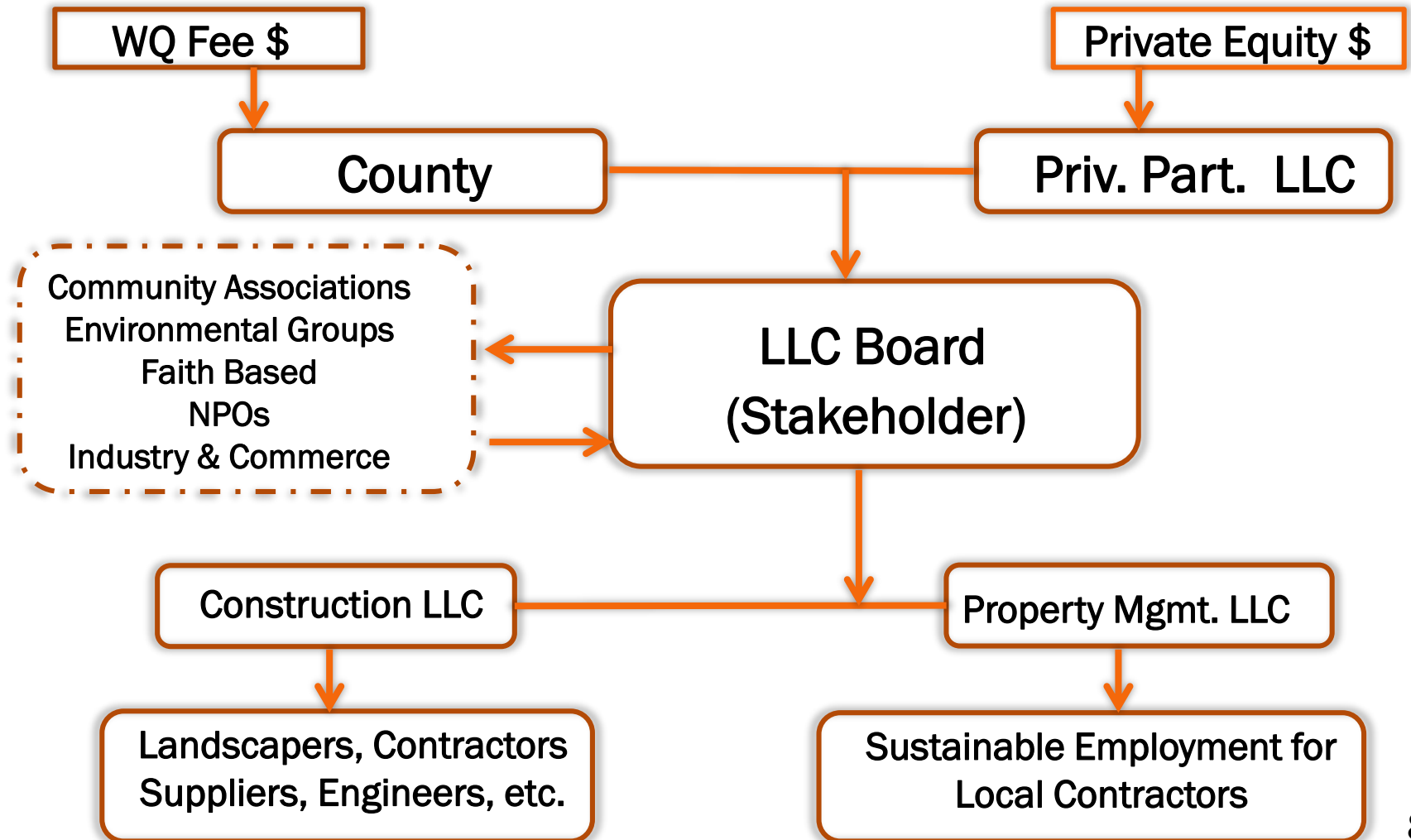
Rain Garden – Municipal Applications



INVEST LOCALLY / SAVE MONEY

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

LEVERAGE / INCUBATE BUSINESSES / SAVE MONEY





November 2013

THE FACTS ABOUT POLLUTED RUNOFF AND STORMWATER UTILITY FEES

What is polluted runoff?

As water flows off of our streets, parking lots, and building rooftops, it picks up fertilizers, pesticides, oil, and automotive fluids, pet waste, sediment, and other pollutants. This simple process—untreated stormwater flowing through gutters and storm drains—pollutes our rivers and streams and threatens our drinking water. It also causes problems like local flooding of streets and homes, beach closures, fish advisories, and sewage system overflows.

Why has urban & suburban polluted runoff emerged as a national issue?

Up until about the 1980s, builders didn't know much about the problems associated with polluted runoff. They just designed developments to flush the water off the property quickly. Now we realize runoff should be slowed down, and soaked up, where possible.

In fact, in the Chesapeake Bay region, this sort of pollution is the only major pollution sector still on the rise. Air pollution is down, as is pollution from wastewater treatment plants and agriculture. Urban and suburban runoff is the last nut to crack.

Why has polluted runoff become a big issue in Maryland specifically?

Maryland's cities and suburban areas contain some of the highest concentrations of impervious surfaces in the whole Chesapeake Bay watershed. And, not surprisingly, the state also has a huge list of waterways that are officially considered polluted. In fact, the "impaired waters" list includes waterways in every county in the state. Damage from this pollution to the Chesapeake Bay is also dramatic, because Maryland's concentrated areas of urban and suburban development are close in proximity to the Bay compared to urbanized areas in most of Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint requires each of the Bay states to reduce pollution or be subject to consequences for failure. But polluted runoff has ramifications far beyond the health of the Bay. This pollution damages local rivers and streams, is often responsible for expensive flooding, and, especially after a significant rainfall, can put human health at risk.

What is the Stormwater Utility Fee?

In 2012, the Maryland General Assembly passed House Bill 987, the Watershed Protection and Restoration Program. This legislation required the 10 largest and most urban jurisdictions to set fees to address their polluted runoff problems. These 10 urban areas have the most land that doesn't allow water to filter slowly (impervious area), and they are also the only jurisdictions in Maryland charged

with meeting very strict federal Clean Water Act permits. At the request of the Maryland Association of Counties, the law allowed localities to set a fee at whatever level they wished, based on their needs.

Where did this fee come from? I knew nothing about it.

HB 987 was debated in the Maryland General Assembly in 2012. The media reported the debate. Also, nearly identical bills were debated in previous sessions of the legislature and reported by the media. Some counties and municipalities have been holding similar debates for several years as they tried to find a way to finance the upgrade of their neglected and outdated stormwater systems.

Some counties and municipalities have had similar fees in place for decades. For example, Prince George's County has assessed a tax for polluted runoff since 1986. Bowie has charged commercial properties a fee to address polluted runoff since 1988. A number of other areas implemented similar fees in the 1990s and 2000s.

If we already pay taxes, why does the government need to charge additional fees to restore the Bay?

With all the challenges they face, state and local governments have generally chosen to do the minimum required to reduce polluted runoff. HB 987 gave a nudge to local governments to act, but left it up to them to determine the size of their local fee. With an adequate fee, the local government can implement practical, proven solutions that were previously too expensive, or that could have only been done if money was taken from other important social services. The fee also provides important leverage for financing projects with bonds or state revolving loans. **Regardless of financing option, local creeks and rivers will get cleaner only to the degree local officials fund needed work.** Little or no new funding will continue to mean dirty, unhealthy local waters.

Why do we need a new fee? We already pay the Bay Restoration Fee ("flush tax").

The Bay Restoration Fund or "flush tax" money goes to upgrading sewage plants. The money is being well spent. Most major plants in the state have been upgraded or are being upgraded, reducing nitrogen pollution into local waters by more than six million pounds a year. The flush tax was doubled in 2012 to finish the job of upgrading sewage plants. **The stormwater fee goes to upgrade the stormwater system**—the ponds, pipes, gutters, and other structures that are supposed to channel and treat polluted runoff before it reaches creeks. That spending will provide substantial, additional pollution reductions in each community.

Why aren't other local governments beside mine included in those that must charge a fee?

The problem is most severe in the 10 jurisdictions that were mandated to charge some level of fee, due to the large amount of impervious surface in those areas. And those are the only local jurisdictions already required by detailed Clean Water Act permits to deal with this problem. Many other counties in Maryland that are more rural don't discharge as much polluted runoff into local creeks and rivers.

Am I being charged the same amount as other property owners with more pavement or hard surfaces?

Each of the 10 local governments was given complete freedom to decide not only the size of the fee, but how it was collected. Some opted to charge property owners with more “impervious surfaces” higher fees. Other jurisdictions opted for a “flat fee.” The ten jurisdictions took different approaches.

Contact your local government for more detailed information, or visit the following website: <http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Marylander/Pages/StormwaterFeeFAQ.aspx>

What about the assertion that these fees are a tax on rain (or a “rain tax”)?

That moniker is catchy but blatantly false. It is designed to mislead and confuse. The truth is that we are talking about a fee to reduce pollution from water that washes off hard surfaces and empties into local waterways. Runoff pollution is real—it is responsible for no-swimming advisories and beach closures in local waters, fish consumption advisories, and dead zones in the Bay that can’t support aquatic life. It also causes localized flooding and property damage. And in many areas, it is the largest source of pollution.

The bottom line is that this work must be done. There are federal and state requirements to reduce runoff pollution from urban and suburban areas. A fee on impervious surface is the best model to do this because the fee is connected to the cause of the pollution. If counties don’t implement stormwater fees, they will need to raise the revenue by other means, such as property taxes or income taxes.

What about the complaint that these fees represent a top-down mandate?

It is true that the General Assembly required the fee. But the General Assembly also gave the counties the flexibility to design a fee structure that meets our unique needs. This is not a “one size fits all” policy. Counties have the leeway to develop local policies to address their local runoff pollution problems.

Are the fees used locally?

Yes! The fees are collected by the county or city, and used only in the county or city that collects them, to fix polluted runoff problems. The money will never go into a state fund, and there is accountability and transparency.

The fee are used for simple, proven solutions that work by slowing down and absorbing much of the polluted runoff. These solutions include planting trees, planting vegetation around streams, restoring stream beds, and using rain barrels and rain gardens. These local projects not only reduce pollution and improve water quality, but also make our communities more beautiful, reduce flooding, and create jobs. Scientific monitoring will verify that the projects are effective and efficient

Why are all the fees different?

Each county and city is unique, and so are their water quality problems. The Maryland Association of Counties, a non-profit association representing the needs of local government to the Maryland General Assembly, requested that the state law provide flexibility that allowed each jurisdiction to address these differences. Each county or city therefore can set its own fee. The approach taken by each county has varied, but the approach that provides the greatest benefit to local communities is setting a fee that reflects the jurisdiction’s estimated cost of compliance with Clean Water Act permits and cost of

restoring local streams and rivers. Despite the amount of work needed to restore Maryland's rivers and streams, Maryland's polluted runoff fees are lower than those in quite a few other states.

Does Chesapeake Bay Foundation receive funding from the "rain tax?"

Absolutely not. Neither do we receive a penny of funding from the Bay Restoration Fund, or "flush fee." These are government initiatives. We are a non-profit, private agency.

Can I have my fee reduced? I've heard some of the 10 jurisdictions are offering discounts.

HB987 required all the 10 local governments affected to offer some type of credits or discounts if a property owner takes steps to reduce polluted runoff from his land. Contact your local government for more information, or visit:

<http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Marylander/Pages/StormwaterFeeFAQ.aspx>

Don't we have bigger pollution problems to worry about? Isn't the water pollution that causes closed beaches and unsafe swim areas caused mostly by sewage spills, not polluted runoff?

Polluted runoff from city and suburban landscapes is the only major type of water pollution that is increasing in the region. Pollution from farms, sewage plants, and other sources is decreasing. Thanks to the "flush fee," for example, we've dramatically reduced nitrogen pollution from sewage plants. A handful of sewer systems in the state are so old it will take many years more to stop recurring spills and overflows. Spills from those systems can play a major role in beach closings. But Sally Hornor, a microbiologist with Anne Arundel Community College who has tested county water for years, says bacteria from polluted runoff is the culprit in unsafe swim areas far more often. Sewage spills are occasional. Polluted runoff occurs after every storm generating about one-half inch of rain or more.

Do the fees hurt Maryland's business competitiveness?

Forward-thinking community leaders believe the benefit to communities from addressing polluted runoff far outweigh the speculative concern that businesses will relocate. And if businesses consider relocating to Delaware, Pennsylvania, or Virginia instead of Maryland, they might be surprised to learn that 18 local jurisdictions in Virginia, eight local governments in West Virginia, at least two municipalities in Delaware (including the largest, Wilmington), and several in Pennsylvania already have stormwater fee systems in place—and these numbers are growing. Nation-wide, more than 1,400 jurisdictions—including large cities like Houston and Tampa—have similar policies in place—and they are working.

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CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

Founded in 1967, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) conservation organization dedicated to saving a national treasure—the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers and streams. Its motto, Save the Bay, defines the organization's mission and commitment. With headquarters in Annapolis, MD, offices in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia, and 17 field centers, CBF works throughout the Chesapeake Bay's 64,000-square-mile watershed to build an informed citizenry, advocate pollution-reduction strategy, and enforce the law. CBF is supported by more than 200,000 active members and has a staff of 170 full-time employees. Approximately 80 percent of CBF's \$23.6 million annual budget is privately raised.