

Fiscal Year 2016
Rivers of the Chesapeake Land and
Water Conservation Fund
Collaborative Proposal
Letters of Support

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 4, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

We are writing in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). In May of 2009, President Obama declared the Chesapeake Bay a “National Treasure” by Executive Order 13508, making the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries an especially worthy selection as one of the collaborative conservation focal areas of the LWCF in the FY16 President’s budget.

As the U.S. Senators representing the states encompassing the proposal area, we commend the exceptional work being done by a variety of federal agencies within the Chesapeake Bay watershed to restore and protect this extraordinary natural resource. For nearly 30 years, federal agencies, tribes, six states, local governments and scores of land trusts and river and watershed protection organizations across the Chesapeake have collaborated in an effort to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay. While great progress has been achieved, there is still much to be done to restore water quality, revive and sustain natural landscapes, protect cultural resources and fill severe gaps in water access and outdoor recreation. The need to take effective, collaborative action on a landscape scale is recognized by members of Congress and the agencies, themselves.

Executive Order #13508: Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed report calls for actions that include protecting an additional 2 million acres of land; adding 300 public access sites; restoring large areas of wetlands and riparian forests; restoring crabs, oysters, threatened and endangered species, black ducks and other migratory birds in decline and other wildlife species; and achieving major water pollution reductions, all by 2025. Furthermore, on June 16th, the six Chesapeake watershed states, the District of Columbia, and the Federal government signed a new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, reemphasizing the two million acre and public access goals. In order to advance these goals, the *Executive Order Strategy* explicitly calls for increasing LWCF allocation for Chesapeake watershed landscapes that can be leveraged with state, local, private, and non-profit investment. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF proposal would provide critical federal resources needed to achieve these important actions.

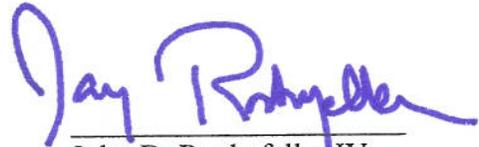
The six focus areas in this proposal are linked by the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and multiple America's Great Outdoors (AGO) projects, including the John Smith Watertrail, Chesapeake Gateways, and the Susquehanna Gateway National Heritage Area. Conservation priorities are reflected in management plans developed for wildlife refuges, national parks, and forests; the Chesapeake Bay public access plan; military base buffer programs; and state and non-governmental organization projects.

Funding the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal in the FY16 budget would result in collaborative conservation actions to protect important wetlands, riparian forests, American Indian sites, Civil War battlegrounds, wildlife habitat, and scenic and historic views, totaling approximately 9,000 acres, and adding 15 new public access site locations. Land and Water Conservation Fund monies would allow Chesapeake conservation partners to make substantial strides toward shared goals, and allow federal agencies to accomplish far more in partnership with others than they could alone and would be a step toward fulfilling some of the commitments outlined in the *Executive Order Strategy* and recent Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.

We urge you to include *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative in the FY16 budget. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,


Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator


John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator


Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator

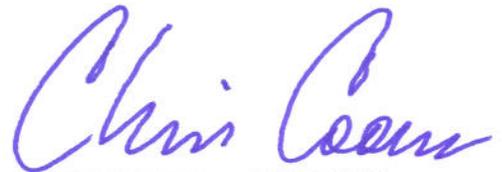

Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator


Robert P. Casey
United States Senator

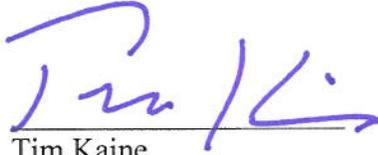

Mark Warner
United States Senator



Joe Manchin, III
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator

BLC:jrk

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

We write in strong support of including the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* as a collaborative landscape conservation initiative under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for fiscal year (FY) 2016. As you know, President Obama declared the Chesapeake Bay a “National Treasure” by Executive Order 13508 making the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries an especially worthy selection.

As Members of Congress representing the states encompassing the Chesapeake Bay watershed, we commend the exceptional work being done by federal agencies to restore and protect this extraordinary natural resource. For nearly 30 years, federal agencies, tribes, six states, local governments, land trusts, and watershed protection organizations across the Chesapeake have collaborated in an effort to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay. While great progress has been achieved, there is still much to be done to restore water quality, revive and sustain natural landscapes, protect cultural resources and improve water access and outdoor recreation opportunities. The strong partnerships developed over many years in the Chesapeake region are now primed and ready to leverage their collective expertise and resources to protect high value conservation targets at a landscape scale.

Our request is not only consistent with *Executive Order #13508: Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, but its logical next step. The executive order specifically calls for actions to protect an additional two million acres of land; add 300 public access sites; restore large areas of wetlands and riparian forests; restore crabs, oysters, threatened and endangered species, black ducks and other migratory birds in decline and other wildlife species; and improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment loads – all by 2025. On June 16th, the six Chesapeake watershed states, the District of Columbia, and the Federal government affirmed these objectives by signing a new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement that reemphasizes the two million acre and public access goals. In order to advance these goals, the *Executive Order Strategy* explicitly calls for increasing LWCF allocation for Chesapeake watershed landscapes that can be leveraged with state, local, private, and non-profit investment. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF proposal would provide critical resources needed to achieve these important objectives.

The six focus areas in this proposal are linked by multiple America’s Great Outdoors (AGO) projects, including the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the

Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, and the Susquehanna Gateway National Heritage Area. Conservation priorities are reflected in management plans developed for wildlife refuges, national parks, and forests; the Chesapeake Bay public access plan; military base buffer programs; and state and non-governmental organization projects.

Funding the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal in the FY 2016 budget would result in collaborative conservation actions to protect important wetlands, riparian forests, American Indian sites, Civil War battlegrounds, wildlife habitat, and scenic and historic views totaling approximately 9,000 acres and adding at least 15 new public access site locations. Land and Water Conservation Fund monies provide a distinct opportunity for Chesapeake conservation partners to make substantial strides toward shared federal and regional conservation goals outlined in the *Executive Order Strategy* and the recent Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.

We urge you to include *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative in the FY 2016 budget. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,


C.A. Dutch Ruppberger


John P. Sarbanes


James P. Moran


Eleanor Holmes Norton


Paul Tonko


Robert C. "Bobby" Scott


Chris Van Hollen


Robert J. Wittman

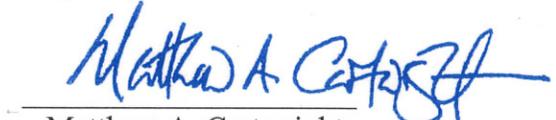

Frank Wolf


Donna F. Edwards


Gerald E. Connolly


John C. Carney Jr.


John K. Delaney


Matthew A. Cartwright


Steny H. Hoyer


Elijah E. Cummings


Scott E. Rigell



STATE OF DELAWARE

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

TATNALL BUILDING, SECOND FLOOR
WILLIAM PENN STREET, DOVER, DE 19901

JACK A. MARKELL
GOVERNOR

PHONE: 302-744-4101
FAX: 302-739-2775

August 5, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I write today to convey the State of Delaware's support for the creation of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) collaborative proposal. We are deeply invested in restoring and revitalizing the Chesapeake Bay and, specifically, the Nanticoke River watershed. We have recently pledged money toward collaborative conservation along the Nanticoke, which we would be able to leverage with federal funds to enhance our impact along the river corridor. We fully support the pursuit of Federal LWCF funds for FY16 for the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal.

There is a record of great successes across the Chesapeake Bay watershed. One of the specific goals of the *Chesapeake 2000* agreement was to permanently protect 20 percent of the land area of the watershed in the signatory jurisdictions by 2010. This goal was met by mid- 2009, primarily through investments made by state and local governments and non-profits. The overwhelming success of the Chesapeake Bay Program, which achieved this initial land conservation goal in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware, serves as a prime example of regional entities working in partnership to accomplish a significant common goal.

This past June, I, along with the governors of the Chesapeake watershed states, signed the *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, outlining collaborative restoration strategies and goals across the Bay's political boundaries. The *Bay Agreement* renews shared conservation goals outlined in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508*, specifically calling for the permanent protection of two million acres by 2025.

The Chesapeake Bay landscape is a national treasure and I have been proud to celebrate the extension of our nation's first national water trail, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, by designating the Nanticoke River Connector Trail. When combined, the Bay, the John Smith Trail and the connector trails have a tremendous economic engine potential and broaden the recreational opportunity spectrum for our residents and visitors to the region. The Bay as an issue polls as a bipartisan project worthy of public and private support with citizen groups, non-profits, businesses and government on all levels continuing to support the protection of its myriad of rivers and landscapes.

August 5, 2014
Page Two

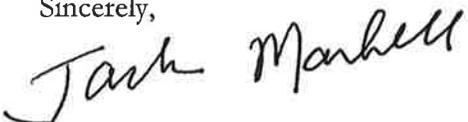
Although Delaware makes up a small portion of the Chesapeake watershed, over 30% of our State lies within the watershed. This land contains critical headwater forests, streams and river segments that come together to create the Nanticoke River, one of the six great river areas that are the focus for this landscape collaborative.

Delaware is a partner with the Chesapeake Bay Program and is working in collaboration with EPA and the Department of Agriculture to achieve water quality goals established under the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements. We have plans in place focused on accelerating land conservation and ecological restoration activities. Large-scale conservation of Chesapeake regional landscapes is vital to restoring the health of the Bay and tributaries that we steward. Preserving working farms and forests, protecting the watershed's character and history, and ensuring access are critical components of landscape-scale success.

We collaborated with the National Park Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service to identify conservation opportunities along the Nanticoke River -- one of the focus landscapes in the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Collaborative. On behalf of the State of Delaware, I fully support the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Collaborative proposal and hope that the Administration's FY16 budget will enable the accomplishment of our shared goals by choosing the Chesapeake as a Federal LWCF focal area.

We are extremely grateful for our current partnerships with the Department of Interior and Department of Agriculture and for all of your efforts on behalf of our great state—and we look forward to extending our relationship further through funding for the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Collaborative.

Sincerely,



Jack A. Markell
Governor

cc: Secretary David S. Small



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG

THE GOVERNOR

August 1, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell & Secretary Vilsack:

I am writing to convey the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's support for the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) collaborative proposal for federal funding within fiscal year 2016. Conservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed is an issue of both regional and federal importance.

This past June, I was pleased to join with the governors of the Chesapeake Bay watershed states to sign the *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, outlining collaborative restoration strategies and goals across the Bay's political boundaries. These goals are consistent with those stemming from the President's 2009 *Executive Order No. 13508*, mandating protection and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and its great rivers. The *Bay Agreement* reaffirms our commitment to the permanent protection of two million acres of watershed land by 2025.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania continues to work toward these collective goals, and the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal is a distinct opportunity to leverage Pennsylvania's commitment to land conservation with existing federal conservation dollars. Doing so advances our shared regional and federal conservation goals.

The Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay are critical bodies of water that offer a multitude of benefits to our state, providing fresh drinking water; offering recreational activities and opportunities for Pennsylvanians and tourists; and contributing to our economic livelihood and prosperity. Pennsylvania has made great strides in reducing nutrient and sediment discharges, and recognizes that large-scale conservation is vital to fully restoring the health of the Chesapeake Bay and the Susquehanna River. Preserving working farms and forests, protecting the watershed's wildlife, character and history, and ensuring public access are critical components of long-term success. It is my hope that the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal will augment the Commonwealth's existing programs in protecting Pennsylvania's important natural resources for generations to come.

I appreciate your careful consideration of this request, and am hopeful that you include funding for the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal within the 2016 fiscal year budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tom Corbett'.

TOM CORBETT
Governor



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor

August 1, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

I am writing to support the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, with lead funding provided by the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). I understand that to be considered for fiscal year 16 federal funding, applications must compete against more than a dozen other landscapes across the country that have been selected to submit a proposal. I urge you to select the Chesapeake application for a number of reasons.

On June 26, 2014, the Governors of the Chesapeake watershed states, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Chairman of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (on behalf of the federal government), signed the new *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, setting restoration goals and outcomes to restore and protect the Bay.

The Agreement renews shared conservation goals contained in the President's Chesapeake Executive Order 13508, specifically calling for the permanent protection of two million acres by 2025. Federal assistance is essential if we are to achieve these goals. The States and their partners in the Chesapeake region submitted a strong proposal for fiscal year 2016 that would conserve more than 31,000 acres in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania over the next three years – lands critical to protect water quality, habitat, and indigenous cultural resources, and increase public access to the Bay and its tributaries.

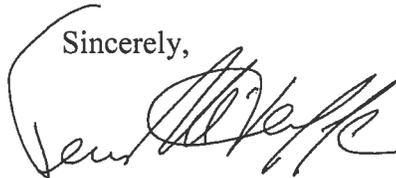
Secretary Jewell
Secretary Vilsack
August 1, 2014
Page 2

The Commonwealth of Virginia remains committed to conserving lands of high ecological, cultural, and historical value. *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposes over 7,500 acres of land conservation opportunities in Virginia alone, connected to our nation's hallowed battlefields, vibrant National Wildlife Refuges, and the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. We have worked closely with the federal agencies and national and local land trust partners to identify these priority areas and support this proposal. We hope that the Administration's fiscal year 16 budget will enable our region to accomplish our shared goals by choosing the Chesapeake as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area.

Of all of the proposals nationwide seeking this designation, the Chesapeake is the only one with a federal Executive Order Strategy explicitly directing the U.S. Department of Interior to "coordinate and target conservation efforts across federal agencies" to achieve the goal of "conserving bay lands through the watershed." It is located in one of the most densely populated, urban, and socially diverse regions of the country, with the potential to affect 11 million people. It is the only proposal that would accomplish the goals of both our America's Great Outdoors Initiative and the Landscape Collaborative.

I urge you to include funding for the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal within the fiscal year 2016 budget. Thank you for your consideration of this proposal, and for your commitment to ensuring that the Chesapeake Bay remains a national treasure for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terence R. McAuliffe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T" and "M".

Terence R. McAuliffe

THOMAS V. MIKE MILLER, JR.
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE
27th Legislative District



The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

Annapolis Address
H-107 State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991
410-841-3700 · 301-858-3700
800-492-7122 Ext. 3700

District Addresses
Prince George's County
P. O. Box 219
8808 Old Branch Avenue
Clinton, Maryland 20735
301-868-6931
Calvert County
P. O. Box 364
Dunkirk, Maryland 20754
410-257-4400

August 6, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

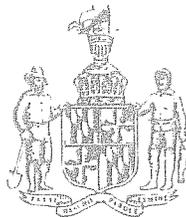
As the President of the Maryland State Senate for the last 27 years, I have worked extremely hard with my colleagues to preserve and protect our environment and the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Maryland has used state funds to preserve over 865,000 acres of open space, has enacted numerous fees and dedicated revenues to fund improvements to wastewater treatment systems, septic systems, and storm water management. In addition to these extraordinary efforts, Maryland has also set goals for nutrient reduction in the Bay that are years ahead of other states in the Chesapeake Watershed.

I am writing to you to offer my strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed to meet our shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a well recognized national and historic treasure is well deserving of designation as a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

Maryland has a long history as a conservation leader in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and we are requesting this new partnership with the federal government to leverage our commitment to conservation and help protect larger landscapes.

Specifically, the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal highlights six focal areas, three of which are located, at least in part, in the State of Maryland – the middle Potomac, the Nanticoke-Blackwater, and the lower Susquehanna. Growing up and representing southern Maryland, I am particularly aware of the value of the Potomac River landscape and that portion of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, which provides valuable habitat, contains historic areas, viewsheds, and cultural resources for our citizens

THOMAS V. MIKE MILLER, JR.
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE
27th Legislative District



The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

Annapolis Address
H-107 State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991
410-841-3700 • 301-858-3700
800-492-7122 Ext. 3700

District Addresses
Prince George's County
P. O. Box 219
8808 Old Branch Avenue
Clinton, Maryland 20735
301-868-6931
Calvert County
P. O. Box 364
Dunkirk, Maryland 20754
410-257-4400

Maryland leaders and citizens would be very grateful if you would include the Chesapeake in your future conservation plans. Thank you for your kind consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas V. Mike Miller".

Thomas V. Mike Miller
President of the Senate

cc: The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Ben Cardin
The Honorable Steny Hoyer



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

RICHMOND

WILLIAM J. HOWELL
SPEAKER

STATE CAPITOL
POST OFFICE BOX 406
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23218

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
RULES (CHAIRMAN)

July 25, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

As a member of the Virginia General Assembly, I am writing in strong support of the Rivers of the Chesapeake collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has had a very ambitious land conservation agenda. Since 2010, we have conserved over 162,853 acres, but there are still important historic and natural areas in need of protection. Federal funding would leverage the Commonwealth's ongoing commitment to land conservation and help us protect larger landscapes.

The Rivers of the Chesapeake proposal highlights six focal areas, four of which are located, at least in part, in the Commonwealth of Virginia – the middle Potomac, the Rappahannock, the James/York/Mouth of the Bay, and the Potomac/James Headwaters. The Rappahannock River, in particular, has parcels in immediate need of protection. Near-term development plans threaten the integrity of Fones Cliffs, a landscape evocative of the 1600's, a place of cultural importance to the 300 members of the Rappahannock tribe and an unspoiled wooded river corridor that is home to the largest concentration of bald eagles on the East Coast. The James and Potomac Rivers also have tremendous conservation potential for their critical historic and ecological resources. The focal areas put forward in this proposal will protect the Chesapeake region for future generations.

Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting the landscapes of the Chesapeake Bay region.

Sincerely,

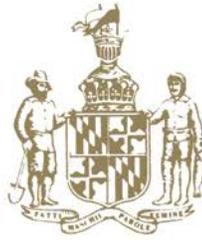
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "W - J Howell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

William J. Howell
Speaker, Virginia House of Delegates

cc: The Honorable Mark Warner
The Honorable Tim Kaine

MICHAEL E. BUSCH
SPEAKER

30th Legislative District
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY



State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991
800-492-7122 Ext 3800
410-841-3800 · 301-858-3800

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

As Speaker of the House of the Maryland General Assembly, I am writing in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

Maryland has a long history as a conservation leader in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Our state-funded land conservation programs have protected over 865,000 acres in Maryland. Nevertheless, there are still important historic and natural areas in need of protection. Federal funding would leverage our commitment to conservation and help protect larger landscapes.

The Rivers of the Chesapeake proposal highlights five focal areas, three of which are located, at least in part, in the State of Maryland – the Potomac, the Nanticoke, and the lower Susquehanna. We would be very grateful if you would include the Chesapeake in your future conservation plans. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael E. Busch".

Michael E. Busch Speaker

cc: The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Ben Cardin
The Honorable Steny Hoyer

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I write to support the “Rivers of the Chesapeake” collaborative proposal as a specific implementation action in support of the America’s Great Outdoors program and President Obama’s Executive Order related to the Chesapeake.

I live in Virginia. I am retired from a career in the National Park Service, and familiar with such collaboratives in other parts of the country, and their great value. I am active in Chesapeake watershed activities, including being the Commonwealth of Virginia Citizen Representative on the Chesapeake Bay Commission, founding board member of the Chesapeake Conservancy and Chair, Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council.

In 2004, in response to a request from the Congress, the National Park Service completed the Final Chesapeake Bay Special Resource Study and Environmental Impact Statement. In January 2010, Assistant Secretary Fish, Wildlife and Parks Thomas L. Strickland transmitted the study to the Congress, and in his letter said:

“The Resource Study/EIS found that the Bay is an outstanding example of a unique set of ecological and cultural elements with longstanding and expansive influence on the history and development of the United States. The Bay is unquestionably nationally significant...it can only truly be understood as an interconnected and interdependent mosaic where each part contributes to the overwhelming significance of the whole.”

For several decades the United States and the Bay states have worked very hard to improve the water quality of the Bay. The Chesapeake Bay Commission has been an unusually effective construct to work with states in these efforts.

In the last several years, the National Park Service and its national historic trails related to the Bay, the connector trails to the John Smith Trail, and the Chesapeake Gateways program have increased both government and citizen awareness of the myriad significant qualities of the bay and its watershed.

Over the last 20 years or so, states and the federal government, particularly the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Defense, have made important strides forward to protect landscapes important to the Bay and its history and ecology. Many private land trusts, NGO’s and local jurisdictions have also contributed.

What remains?

A true watershed-wide collaborative, the purpose of which is to achieve protection of the ecological, cultural and recreational values of this great landscape, providing a nearly incredulous array of recreation opportunity and supporting good business and farming practices, is what remains to be done.

This undertaking is critical to the long term protection of the Bay and the resources of the watershed on which it depends. Through judicious use of the Land and Water Conservation Fund combined with community assistance programs, the coordinated activities of the various federal agencies and their state, local and private counterparts and a phalanx of affected citizens one of America's most iconic land and waterscapes can be protected and used to the benefit of the nation as a whole and its peoples. It is a task equal in importance to that of saving the Everglades and the values of the other existing large landscape collaboratives.

My experience in this watershed has shown me that the desire and the ability are there.

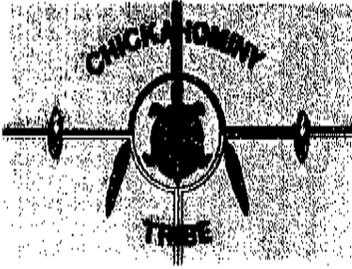
I strongly advocate the listing and funding of the Chesapeake as a LWCF Collaborative.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

John J. Reynolds
5059 Brook View Road
Crozet, VA 22932

cc: Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service
Michael Caldwell, Regional Director, Northeast Region, NPS
Lisa Mendelson-Ielmini, Acting Regional Director, National Capital Region, NPS
Chuck Hunt, Superintendent, Chesapeake Bay Office, NPS



Chickahominy Tribe

8200 Lott Cary Road, Providence Forge, Virginia 23140
Ph: (804) 829-2027 Fax: (804) 829-2222

Tribal Council

Stephen Adkins,
Chief

July 21, 2014

Wayne Adkins,
1st Assl. Chief

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

Reggie Stewart
2nd Assl. Chief

Marlin Adkins,
Secretary

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

Rhonda Canaday,
Treasurer

On behalf of the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Collaborative conservation proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals.

Adam Adkins,

Ralph Adkins

Iron Adkins

Paulhan Green

Jessica Stewart

Ross Stewart

Dominan Winn

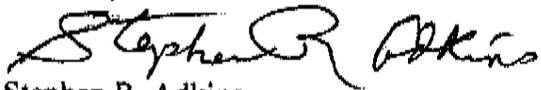
The Chickahominy originally lived in permanent villages along the Virginia River that still bears our name. While the Treaty of 1646 displaced the Chickahominy people from this area, the Chickahominy families began a gradual migration to the area called the Chickahominy Ridge, where they now reside, only a few miles from one of our 1607 village sites. The Chickahominy Tribe, formally recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia since 1983, is active in advancing a vision of life in harmony with creation and in conserving resources for future generations.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal for focusing Land and Water Conservation Fund monies would provide critical resources to achieve these goals. This proposal would make very substantial contributions to permanently protecting lands and resources of great significance to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe and other Virginia Indians. In addition, the stewardship of these valuable resources provides a medium for

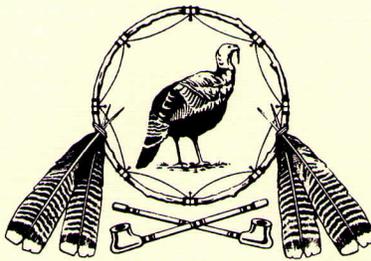
the Indigenous Peoples who thrived on these lands and waterways to assume their rightful place in the history and culture of the states through which these waterways flow.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. We urge you to work to include the "Rivers of the Chesapeake Collaborative" in the President's fiscal year 2015 budget. As Chief of the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, I thank you for your time, your consideration of this matter, and your commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen R. Adkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "S".

Stephen R. Adkins



LENAPE INDIAN TRIBE OF DELAWARE

July 25, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware, a member of the Confederation of Sovereign Nanticoke-Lenape Tribes of the Delaware Bay, the Alliance of Colonial Era Tribes, and the National Congress of the American Indian, I write to express my strong support of including the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* as part of the administration's collaborative landscape conservation initiative under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for FY16.

American Indian heritage in the Chesapeake watershed spans many thousands of years. Our nation respects the environments and endeavors to show that respect in the way we live. We hope that this proposal will protect historic aboriginal lands in the Chesapeake watershed, especially those along the great rivers, will provide us with an opportunity to indicate our relationship with these lands and will help us to share our environmental values with the American people.

I commend the exceptional work being done by a variety of federal agencies within the Chesapeake Bay watershed to restore and protect this extraordinary natural resource. While enormous progress has been achieved, there is still much to be done to restore water quality, revive and sustain natural landscapes, protect cultural resources, and improve water access and outdoor recreation opportunities.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

The Honorable Sally Jewell and Tom Vilsack
Page Two

Funding of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal in the FY16 budget would result in collaborative conservation actions to protect over 9,000 acres, add new public access site

locations, and conserve important wetlands, riparian forests, American Indian sights, wildlife habitat, and scenic and historic views.

I urge you to include the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative in the FY16 budget, Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis J. Coker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dennis" and last name "Coker" clearly distinguishable.

Dennis J. Coker
Principal Chief
Lenape Indian Tribe of Delaware

CC: The Honorable Thomas Carper
The Honorable Christopher Coons
The Honorable John Carney
David Small, Secretary, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

STATE OF MARYLAND
Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor



E. Keith Colston
Administrative Director

Commissioners

Acting Chair
Ashley Minner

Virginia Busby

Patricia Ward Carson

Robert F. Killen

Rico Newman

Lisa Savoy

Rebecca Stone

Leanora E. Winters

July 15, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA), I write in strong support of the "Rivers of the Chesapeake" collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The MCIA and the indigenous people of Maryland have a vested interest in the health and enjoyment and, therefore, conservation of the rivers and lands within the Chesapeake watershed. As the original resource stewards and river keepers, we cherish the watersheds such as the Nanticoke, the Potomac and the many others that still bear our names. We cherish the life and culture related to them. From our perspective, the treatment of these watersheds within the context of large landscape conservation of the Chesapeake watershed is essential to ensuring that our children and all the children of the Chesapeake for generations to come may thrive and enjoy these resources of our homeland. The tribes of Maryland, indigenous organizations and the MCIA are working on their own and with local, state and federal agencies and conservation organizations to support the conservation of this large indigenous landscape.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact. Conservation along the focal areas highlighted in the proposal will help to conserve lands of natural and cultural significance to the tribes and decedent communities in Maryland.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Ashley Minner
Acting Chair
Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs

CC: The Honorable Martin O'Malley
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Ben Cardin
The Honorable Elijah Cummings
The Honorable John Delaney
The Honorable Donna Edwards
The Honorable Andy Harris
The Honorable Steny Hoyer
The Honorable C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
The Honorable John Sarbanes
The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
The Honorable Michael Busch
The Honorable Mike Miller
Joseph Gill, Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

PISCATAWAY CONOY TRIBE
P.O. Box638
Bryans Road, Maryland 20616

July 21, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

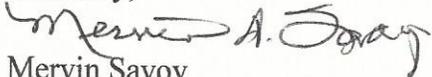
Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Piscataway Conoy Tribe I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Collaborative conservation proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary continue to provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact. Conservation along the six focal areas highlighted in the proposal would make very substantial contributions to permanently protecting lands and resources of great significance to the Piscataway Conoy Tribe who have live along it's tributaries for more than 5,000 years.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. We urge you to work to include the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Collaborative in the President's Fiscal Year 2016 budget. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



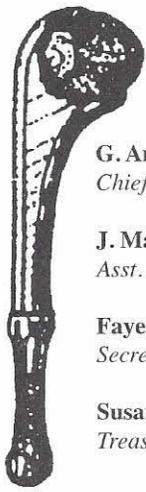
Mervin Savoy

Tribal Chair

Piscataway Conoy Tribe

cc: Emily Myron, emyron@chesapeakeconservancy.org

Project Manager Chesapeake Conservancy



RAPPAHANNOCK TRIBE, INC.

Founded Before 1570

THE POWHATAN CONFEDERATION
(POWHATAN WIDOKODADIWIN)

Tribal Office

5036 Indian Neck, Virginia 23148

(804) 769-0260 or 1242

Fax (804) 769-9250

G. Anne Richardson
Chief

J. Mark Fortune
Asst. Chief

Faye Fortune
Secretary

Susan Johnson
Treasurer

July 31, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Rappahannock Indian Tribe, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Collaborative conservation proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Rappahannock people have occupied the lands of the Rappahannock River for 11,000 years, and it continues to be a resourceful staple for our physical and spiritual sustenance.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact. Conservation along the five focal areas highlighted in the proposal would make very substantial contributions to permanently protecting lands and resources of great significance to the Rappahannock Indian Tribe and other Virginia Indians.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. We urge you to work to include the "Rivers of the Chesapeake Collaborative" in the



ACCOKEEK
FOUNDATION
at Piscataway Park

July 11, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of Accokeek Foundation, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and is highly worthy as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area in the FY16 budget.

Working with Mount Vernon, the National Park Service, and state and local agencies, the Accokeek Foundation has conserved some 5,000 acres in the Middle Potomac River watershed. Our most recent success was the private purchase of a 65-acre property in Charles County, Maryland, which provides critical screening and protects the scenic landscape values for which Piscataway Park was created. We remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in our organization's jurisdiction in the Chesapeake watershed, especially in Charles and Prince George's Counties in Maryland.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay, a national natural and economic asset, is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to support the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your commitment to protecting our nation's vital landscapes.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hayes
President

cc:



July 21, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

I am writing in behalf of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has a long history of advocating on behalf of long-term protection of the 2,185-mile Appalachian Trail corridor and the surrounding landscape. This land base, spanning the Appalachian mountain region from Georgia to Maine, connects significant state and federal conservation lands and functions as an important flyway and migratory corridor. It also protects vital headwater streams for major East Coast watersheds, including the Chesapeake Bay.

Proposed properties for protection in the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF proposal include scenic and water quality important parcels adjacent to section of the Virginia Appalachian Trail. Federal-side LWCF will augment shared long-term conservation goals for the Appalachian Trail and, in turn, the greater Chesapeake watershed.

We are very pleased that the collaborative acquisition proposal includes important tracts along the Appalachian Trail within the George Washington National Forest and several properties, also in Virginia, on Loudoun Heights, adjacent to lands recently donated to the state of Virginia to create a new state park next to the Trail.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe both the Appalachian Trail and the Chesapeake Bay are national natural and cultural treasures worthy of receiving significant Land and Water Conservation Funds in FY '16. Thank you for your consideration of this request and your commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ronald J. Tipton'.

Ron Tipton
Executive Director



Route 1 Box 328
High View WV 26808
304-856-1010

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July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing on behalf of Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust works with local landowners to permanently ease land that maintains healthy rivers, protects forest and farmland, and preserves rural heritage. Through shared conservation efforts with partners and landowners within West Virginia, we have permanently protected 13,078 acres through 48 conservation easement agreements. Proposed properties for protection under the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal include forests that are important for water quality within the Cacapon and Lost Rivers watersheds. Permanent protection of these properties will make steps towards shared conservational goals, and a healthier, more productive Chesapeake watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Kelly Watkinson
Executive Director

CAPITAL REGION
LAND CONSERVANCY 

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Capital Region Land Conservancy (CRLC), I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The CRLC has conserved over 6,500 acres in the James River and York River watersheds combined, including forests, wetlands, streambank and riverfront, cropland, and scenic viewsheds. We remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in our organization's service area within the larger Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Tara Quinn, Executive Director
Capital Region Land Conservancy

CC: Joel Dunn, Chesapeake Conservancy

P.O. Box 3417
Fredericksburg, VA 22402
540. 374. 0900 TEL
www.cvbt.org



Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

July 28, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

I am writing on behalf of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust works to permanently preserve American Civil War heritage sites throughout the Rappahannock River Valley. Through advocacy for battlefield protection within local governments, we have collaboratively worked to preserve 1,060 acres of critical battlefield acres within Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Wilderness and Spotsylvania. Proposed properties for protection within the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal include hallowed Civil War battlefields. Permanent protection of these properties will make steps towards shared conservation goals, while ensuring protection of culturally important Civil War heritage sites.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Mike Stevens
President

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Dr. Mamie Parker | *Secretary*
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Ret.

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Chickahominy Tribe

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Joel Dunn

July 31, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Chesapeake Conservancy, I am writing in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Chesapeake Conservancy works to engage citizens, government agencies, elected officials and non-profits in the conservation of large landscapes in the Chesapeake for multiple, long term public benefits. We strongly believe the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal will have a major impact on restoring the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The rivers of the Chesapeake and the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail provide an innovative, collaborative framework to achieve the President's conservation goals for the region, as defined by the Executive Order #13508 *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* and by the Administration's *America's Great Outdoors* report.

No other state in America can match the intensity or proven success of the multi-state collaborative efforts demonstrated here since the historic 1983 Chesapeake Bay agreement, when signatory states, EPA and the District of Columbia agreed to restore the bay. In 2000, the initial water quality focus of Bay restoration efforts was expanded to include the conservation of the watershed natural areas, which has been a bright spot for the Chesapeake Bay program. By 2010, Federal, State, and Local governments and private efforts protected 20% of the watershed's land area, achieving a major program goal. Nevertheless, we need your support to achieve the *Executive Order Strategy* and 2014 *Chesapeake Bay Agreement* goals of conserving an additional 2 million acres and providing 200 new public access sights by 2025.

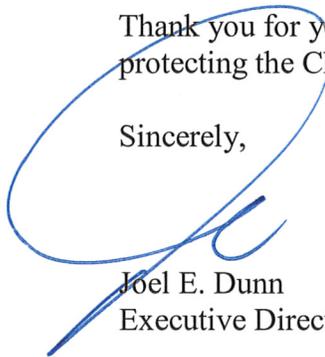
The Chesapeake Conservancy is a partnership driven organization and has cooperative agreements with the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the Chesapeake. Some of our recent initiatives have included supporting the designations of the Harriet Tubman Underground

Railroad National Monument and Fort Monroe National Monument, providing over \$1 million in private funding for land acquisitions along the Nanticoke Rivers portion of the John Smith Trail and Nanticoke Unit of the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, and funding several new public access canoe and kayak launch sites along the James, Rappahannock, Potomac, Susquehanna, and Nanticoke Rivers. All of these efforts overlap with the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposed focus areas.

As the lead private partner of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal, we are confident that many top level elected officials and community leaders share our intense desire to see the Department of Interior and Department of Agriculture choose the Chesapeake as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area and to act upon our highest priority conservation needs.

Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Sincerely,



Joel E. Dunn
Executive Director

CC: Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service
Daniel M. Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Neil Kornze, Director, Bureau of Land Management
Thomas Tidwell, Chief, U.S. Forest Service
Patrick F. Noonan, Trustee, Chesapeake Conservancy



CIVIL WAR TRUST

*Saving America's
Civil War Battlefields*
Civilwar.org

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Franklin, Tennessee

* Chairman Emeritus

July 29, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing on behalf of the Civil War Trust in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake Bay and the Civil War battlefields at its headwaters are national treasures and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Civil War Trust is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving America's remaining Civil War battlefields. Thanks to the generosity of our 200,000 members and supporters, the Civil War Trust has protected more than 39,000 acres of hallowed ground in 20 states. In the coming years, we hope to permanently preserve at least 20,000 additional acres of battlefield land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

As you may know, priority properties within the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* include irreplaceable parts of our shared Civil War heritage in the Virginia headwaters focus area. Permanent protection of these sacred sites within Richmond National Battlefield Park on the James River, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on the Rappahannock River, and Williamsburg and Yorktown battlefields on the York River will make great steps towards the shared conservation goals outlined in the proposal.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative proposal represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources, while also leveraging past, present, and future investment to achieve these conservation goals.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely yours,

O. James Lighthizer
President



Essex County Countryside Alliance

Officers: Peter C. Bance, President • Robert H. Baylor, Jr., Vice President

Tripp Taliaferro, Treasurer • A. Fleet Dillard, III, Secretary

Directors: Hylah H. Boyd • Betty Jo L. Butler • Margaret H. Davis • Susanne Derieux •

Frances H. Ellis • Charlotte Frischkorn • Muscoe Garnett, III • Mac Garrett •

James H. Hundley • Wesley E. Pippenger • Julie Strock. • David Taliaferro • Hill B. Wellford

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing on behalf of the Essex County Countryside Alliance in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and is highly worthy as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area in the FY16 budget.

The ECCA was formed in 2007 as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization to promote and protect the rural character of Essex County, Virginia by preserving farms, forests, natural and historic resources for the benefit of future generations. We remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in our organization's service area within the larger Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to address the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Peter C. Bance

The Essex County Countryside Alliance serves to promote and protect the rural character of Essex County – preserving farms, forests, natural and historic resources – for the benefit of future generations.

c/o Betty Jo Butler • 748 Tidewater Trail • Supply VA • 22436



FARM & NATURAL LANDS TRUST of York County

156 N. George Street, Suite 300, York, PA 17401
Telephone (717) 843-4411 Fax (717) 854-7452

Dedicated to preserving our farm and natural lands for future generations.

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

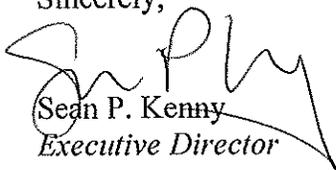
I am writing on behalf of Farm & Natural Lands Trust of York County (FNLT) in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

FNLT works to preserve the integrity of Southern Pennsylvania's farmlands, open spaces, small towns, and communal atmosphere through land easements and outreach. Ever expanding population, congestion, and suburban sprawl are an ever-present threat to York County's rural heritage. Proposed properties for protection under the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal for Federal-side LWCF adjacent to the Susquehanna River, if funded, will fulfill shared conservation goals and preserve the integrity of York County's countryside.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Sean P. Kenny
Executive Director

cc:

David M. Davidson, Jr
Board Chair

The Farm & Natural Lands Trust is a charitable 501 (c)(3) organization as provided by Internal Revenue Service requirements.

A copy of official registration and financial information may be obtained by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999.
Registration does not imply endorsement.



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July 15, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Friends of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge has recently conserved 825 acres in the Nanticoke River watershed. The Refuge remains committed to the conservation of large landscapes in its organization's jurisdiction in the Chesapeake watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Rick Abend, President
Friends of Blackwater NWR

cc: Emily Myron, Chesapeake Conservancy



Friends of the Rappahannock

Advocacy • Restoration • Education

Headquarters

3219 Fall Hill Ave. Fredericksburg, VA 22401 • 540-373-3448

Tidal Office

531 N. Church Ln. Office B, Tappahannock, VA 22560 • 804-443-3448

July 15, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of Friends of the Rappahannock, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

Friends of the Rappahannock has conserved nearly 5,000 acres in the Rappahannock River watershed. We remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in our organization's jurisdiction in the Chesapeake watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

John Tippett
Executive Director, Friends of the Rappahannock



THE HARFORD LAND TRUST

Helping landowners, private and public, to conserve land and protect the natural resources,
scenic beauty, rural character and a healthy way of life in Harford County.

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing on behalf of the Harford Land Trust in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Harford Land Trust works to help private and public landowners to conserve land and protect the natural resources, scenic beauty, rural character, and a healthy way of life in Harford County, Maryland. Through work with local partners, the Harford Land Trust has helped to protect more than 10,000 acres throughout Harford County Maryland. Our commitment to stewardship of conserved lands will ensure that much of this region's valuable farmland, forests, wetlands, scenic countryside and historic heritage are forever protected. Proposed properties for protection under the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* proposal for Federal-side LWCF adjacent to the Susquehanna, if funded, will fulfill shared conservation goals and preserve the integrity of Harford County's countryside.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide a framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*. These goals are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Benjamin A. Lloyd
President

The Harford Land Trust is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization.

A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by contacting HLT. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Solicitation Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State for the cost of copying and postage.

HARFORD LAND TRUST, INC. • P. O. BOX 385 • CHURCHVILLE, MARYLAND 21028
(410) 836-2103 • www.harfordlandtrust.org





THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

July 31, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Izaak Walton League of America, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) focal area in the fiscal year (FY) 2016 budget.

The Izaak Walton League has restored more than 6 miles of stream banks in the Susquehanna River and Potomac River watersheds and our volunteers regularly monitor the water quality of hundreds of streams throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. We are committed to the conservation of large landscapes throughout the Chesapeake region.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Scott Kovarovics
Executive Director

cc: Mike Leahy, Conservation Director; Leah Miller, Clean Water Program Director



July 15, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I write to you on behalf of the James River Association, a river conservation organization dedicated to protecting “America’s Founding River”, to convey our support for the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and is highly worthy as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area in the FY16 budget.

First, we have a track record: Land conservation has been a bright spot in our collective Bay restoration efforts. One of the specific goals of the *Chesapeake 2000* agreement was to permanently protect 20 percent of the land area of the watershed in the signatory jurisdictions by 2010. This goal was met by mid-2009, primarily through investments made by state and local governments and non-profits. The overwhelming success of the Chesapeake Bay Program, which achieved its initial land conservation goal of protecting 20 percent of the land in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia by 2010, serves as a prime example of regional actors working in partnership to accomplish a significant goal.

Second, our landscape is of national significance: The Administration’s *America’s Great Outdoors* initiative listed the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail as a priority project in both Maryland and Virginia. The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the historic viewshed near Jamestown are currently threatened by a proposed power transmission line. Preserving the scenic qualities of the Chesapeake Bay watershed through landscape conservation is important.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America’s Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

Third, land conservation plays a vital role in Chesapeake Bay restoration: We are focused on reducing nutrient and sediment pollution and will see these efforts to success. We firmly believe that large-scale conservation of our region’s landscapes is vital to restoring the health

of the Bay and our rivers, and that preserving working farms and forests, protecting the watershed's character and history, and ensuring access are critical components of this success.

We understand that the National Park Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service submitted a proposal to the Department of the Interior to protect 21,000 additional acres in the watershed. We support this proposal and hope that the Administration's FY16 budget will enable our region to accomplish our shared goals by choosing the Chesapeake as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area.

We are extremely grateful for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Street', written in a cursive style.

William H. Street
Executive Director
James River Association

cc: Justin Doyle – Outreach Manager, James River Association

July 16, 2014

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The Honorable Sally Jewell
 Secretary
 U.S. Department of the Interior
 1849 C Street, N.W.
 Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
 Secretary
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
 Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing on behalf of The Journey Through Hallowed Ground (JTHG) Partnership in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership is a non-profit corporation, comprised of over 350 organizations including every municipal jurisdiction within our 4-State region, dedicated to raising awareness of the unparalleled American heritage from Gettysburg, PA to Jefferson's Monticello in Charlottesville, VA and including 100 Scenic rivers all within the Chesapeake Bay water shed. With more historical sites, including 9 Presidential Homes, 13 National Parks, and the largest concentration of battlefields in the nation, Congress designated the Journey Through Hallowed Ground a National Heritage Area in 2008 because it is a national conservation priority. Target properties for conservation within the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF proposal include irreplaceable battlegrounds that will further our mission to protect and preserve our natural, historic and cultural landscape.

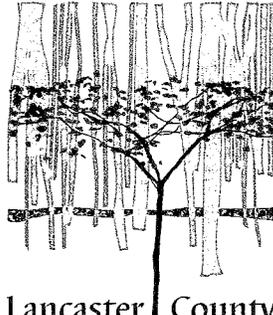
The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Cate Magennis Wyatt
 Founder and President



Lancaster County
Conservancy
SAVING NATURE

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell

On behalf of the Lancaster County Conservancy, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

Lancaster County Conservancy is a 45 year old accredited land trust and serves as the lead organization for the PA DCNR Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape Initiative. The Conservancy has taken a leadership role in an innovative partnership with local utility companies to preserve critical lands along the Susquehanna River. During FY13 and FY14, the Conservancy has accepted over 1,200 acres of land from PPL as part of re-licensing of their hydroelectric plant along the Susquehanna River. These lands will be managed in concert with the Conservancy's existing preserves, and previous PPL transfers which total 5,100 acres. Management funding was provided by PPL. LWCF funds can be leveraged with DCNR funding to preserve key parcels linking natural lands and insuring the permanent protection of this critical landscape

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Mike Burcin
CEO



The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Lancaster County Conservancy, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

Lancaster County Conservancy is a 45 year old accredited land trust and serves as the lead organization for the PA DCNR Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape Initiative. The Conservancy has taken a leadership role in an innovative partnership with local utility companies to preserve critical lands along the Susquehanna River. During FY13 and FY14, the Conservancy has accepted over 1,200 acres of land from PPL as part of re-licensing of their hydroelectric plant along the Susquehanna River. These lands will be managed in concert with the Conservancy's existing preserves, and previous PPL transfers which total 5,100 acres. Management funding was provided by PPL. LWCF funds can be leveraged with DCNR funding to preserve key parcels linking natural lands and insuring the permanent protection of this critical landscape

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Mike Burcin
CEO



July 24, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Land Trust of Virginia, its members, and its Board of Directors, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Land Trust of Virginia has conserved approximately 14,000 acres in the Potomac, Rappahannock, and James River watersheds. We remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in our organization's jurisdiction in the Chesapeake watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

John Magistro
Acting Executive Director

**Board of Directors
and Officers**

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Chairman
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Chris Dematatis, *Vice
President*
Sally Kurtz, *Secretary*
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Lower Susquehanna
Heritage Greenway, Inc.
4948 Conowingo Road
Darlington, Maryland 21034
410-457-2482
lshginfo@comcast.net
www.hitourtrails.com



July 21, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway is a non-profit organization whose mission is to stimulate local economic activity by developing a linkage to natural, historic, and cultural resources through land and water recreational trails along the Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay. To date, 22 of our planned 40 miles of continuous public recreation trails connecting Harford and Cecil counties have been constructed. The trail system has been designated priority segments of both the Star-Spangled Banner and Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trails.

In addition to the recreational benefits of this trail, the development of our heritage area has become a catalyst for regional economic development, historic preservation, and environmental stewardship. The LSHG has leveraged over 15 million dollars in public / private project and is in the process of leveraging millions more. Currently, we are working with the city of Havre de Grace to create two waterfront parks on the Chesapeake Bay. We are also working with the town of Perryville on a waterfront-adjacent park. Over 5.8 million dollars will be invested in the next two years in development of these parks.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ann Lisanti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Mary Ann Lisanti
Executive Director



July 18, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET), I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and is highly worthy as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area in the FY16 budget.

MET, a statewide land trust, has conserved over 121,000 acres in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Maryland, including the Nanticoke and Potomac River watersheds. As the steward of more than 1,050 conservation easements, MET remains committed to the protection of Maryland's scenic, natural, and cultural landscapes for its citizens today and future generations.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and for your commitment to the conservation of the irreplaceable landscapes of the Chesapeake Bay region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Buxton". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Elizabeth Buxton
Director

Cc: Joel Dunn

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Ellen Kelly
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July 21, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

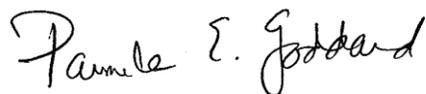
I am writing on behalf of the National Parks Conservation Association in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is a nonpartisan advocacy organization that is dedicated to protecting and enhancing America's national parks for current and future generations. With more than 875,000 members and supporters across the nation, nearly 135,000 live in the Chesapeake watershed and benefit from the region's 55 national parks. The *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* implementation plan calls for renewed efforts to promote and create an additional 200 public access sites throughout the Chesapeake Watershed. Aligning with our mission to promote and protect public access to national parks, monuments, and open spaces alike, the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal includes plans for over 15 new public access sights throughout the Chesapeake watershed, fulfilling shared federal and local conservation goals.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Pamela Goddard
Senior Manager
Chesapeake & Virginia Program
National Parks Conservation Association

NANTICOKE RIVER WATERSHED CONSERVANCY, INC.

P.O. Box 418 Seaford, Delaware 19973

July 28, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Nanticoke River Watershed Conservancy, I am writing to express our strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. Our organization, in Delaware's largest watershed, helps protect lands in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin and believes that the Chesapeake Bay watershed should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Nanticoke River Watershed Conservancy (NRWC) has protected, in perpetuity, over 430 acres in the Nanticoke watershed. We actively monitor and manage these lands for the health and well-being of Delawareans and residents of the Chesapeake Bay watershed and are also committed to the conservation of natural landscapes in NRWC's jurisdiction in the Chesapeake watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

The Chesapeake Bay has provided immeasurable benefits to millions of Americans over the last four hundred years, to native peoples for hundreds of years before that, and is a national treasure worthy of receiving LWCF dollars – funds that would address the watershed's most urgent conservation needs for future generations of Americans.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and for your commitment to protecting our nation's irreplaceable natural landscapes.

Sincerely,



Marlene H. Mervine
President, Nanticoke River Watershed Conservancy

cc: Blaine Phillips, The Conservation Fund

July 18, 2014

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Peggy Stevens

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust serves the six counties of Northern Virginia. We are committed to conserving nature in this increasingly high-density area, protecting water quality, and working with our partners to protect the streams and rivers of the Chesapeake Watershed that flow through our counties, the Potomac River, and beyond. We are a 20-year-old land trust working cooperatively with county governments to help them achieve their open space plans as we achieve our mission. Specifically, we are working now in Fairfax County to protect the 400-acre Belmont Bay Farm. This project would benefit directly from the approved *River of the Chesapeake* Collaborative.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

- more -

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure, and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Peggy Stevens
Executive Director

cc:

Senator Tim Kaine
Senator Mark R. Warner
Representative Gerry Connolly
Representative Jim Moran
Representative Rob Wittman
Representative Frank R. Wolf





*Safeguarding the landscape, communities and heritage of Virginia's Piedmont
by involving citizens in related public policy and land conservation*

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing on behalf of the Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC) in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

Formed in 1972, the Piedmont Environmental Council seeks to protect land with natural values that support the Piedmont's productive family farms, thriving communities and vibrant economy. Our outreach has supported permanent easement of 370,000 acres throughout the Virginia Piedmont region, all of which lies within the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, and includes the views from the Shenandoah National Park and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, 13 Civil War and Revolutionary War battlefields, more than 150,000 of prime and important agricultural soils and the watersheds of the Shenandoah, Potomac, Rappahannock, and James Rivers. As we progress toward our ambitious goal of one million acres protected, PEC's commitment to stewardship of conserved lands will ensure that much of this region's valuable farmland, forests, wetlands, scenic countryside and historic heritage are forever protected. Federal-side LWCF funding towards shared conservation goals within the region will make important strides towards this goal, helping to anchor and buttress the hundreds of thousands of acres of privately conserved land in the region.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Christopher G. Miller
President

Main Office PO Box 460 Warrenton, VA 20188 (T) 540.347.2334 (F) 540.349.9003

www.pecva.org



8403 Colesville Road, Suite 805
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
T: 301.608.1188
F: 301.608.1144

potomac.org

July 25, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Potomac Conservancy, I write to express our strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet important conservation goals. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and is highly worthy as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Potomac Conservancy has conserved over 13,000 acres in the Potomac River watershed. We have identified additional properties on both sides of the Nation's River that deserve additional protection. We remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in the Chesapeake watershed and feel any future success will require strong and sustained federal leadership and investment.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay, a national natural and economic asset, is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to support the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your commitment to protecting our nation's vital landscapes for future generations

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hedrick Belin", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Hedrick Belin
President

Rappahannock Wildlife Refuge Friends
P.O. Box 1565
Warsaw, VA 22572

804-366-6851

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing on behalf of the Rappahannock Wildlife Refuge Friends Group in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Ann Graziano
President

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Faye C. Cooper

July 22, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell,

On behalf of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, I am writing to express my strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in order to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

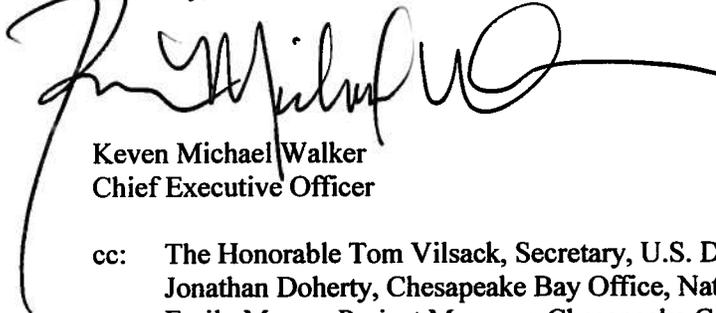
The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation works to preserve and promote historic Civil War battlefields in the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. Together with public and private partners, we have protected 4,576 battlefield acres within the Shenandoah Valley since 2000. But even with those successes, 14,627 core battlefield acres (and 63,247 study acres) are still at risk, and still in need of protection.

And that's where the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF proposal will directly help our work. Because the priority properties within the proposal include hallowed battlefields in the Valley, it will directly support our efforts to preserve battlefield land and achieve our conservation goals.

The rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative effort represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

The Chesapeake Bay is a natural and cultural treasure, one that is very worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter, and for your dedication and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Keven Michael Walker
Chief Executive Officer

cc: The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jonathan Doherty, Chesapeake Bay Office, National Park Service
Emily Myron, Project Manager, Chesapeake Conservancy



R. Creigh Deeds

Michael A. Garber

James R. "Rod" Graves

Joe T. May

Rhodes B. Ritenour

David R. Ruth

N.C. "Butch" Smiley

C.J. Stewart Thomas, III

Miles Carrington Williams

Keven M. Walker
Chief Executive Officer

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

Post Office Box 897 New Market, Virginia 22844 ph: 540.740.4545 / 888.689.4545 fx: 540.740.4509

www.ShenandoahAtWar.org

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Treasurer

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John P. Ackerly, III

Childs F. Burden

Faye C. Cooper

July 22, 2014

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, I am writing to express my strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in order to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

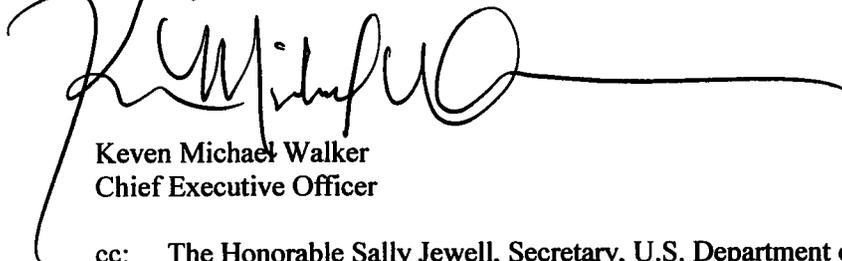
The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation works to preserve and promote historic Civil War battlefields in the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. Together with public and private partners, we have protected 4,576 battlefield acres within the Shenandoah Valley since 2000. But even with those successes, 14,627 core battlefield acres (and 63,247 study acres) are still at risk, and still in need of protection.

And that's where the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF proposal will directly help our work. Because the priority properties within the proposal include hallowed battlefields in the Valley, it will directly support our efforts to preserve battlefield land and achieve our conservation goals.

The rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative effort represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

The Chesapeake Bay is a natural and cultural treasure, one that is very worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter, and for your dedication and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,



Keven Michael Walker
Chief Executive Officer

cc: The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
Jonathan Doherty, Chesapeake Bay Office, National Park Service
Emily Myron, Project Manager, Chesapeake Conservancy



R. Creigh Deeds

Michael A. Garber

James R. "Rod" Graves

Joe T. May

Rhodes B. Ritenour

David R. Ruth

N.C. "Butch" Smiley

C.J. Stuart Thomas, III

Miles Carrington Williams

Keven M. Walker
Chief Executive Officer

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation



SPOTSYLVANIA GREENWAYS INITIATIVE

July 24, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

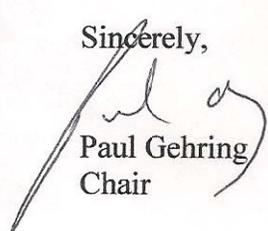
I am writing on behalf of the Spotsylvania Greenways Initiative in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal, which seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Spotsylvania Greenways Initiative preserves greenways between naturally and culturally significant areas, while promoting recreational opportunities through the creation and maintenance of walking trails. The *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* implementation plan calls for renewed efforts to promote and create an additional 200 public access sites throughout the Chesapeake Watershed. Aligning with our mission to promote public access to green spaces, the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal includes plans for over 15 new public access sights throughout the Chesapeake Watershed, fulfilling shared federal and local conservation goals.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,


Paul Gehring
Chair

July 22, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250



1706 Long Level Road
Wrightsville, PA 17368

7 1 7 . 2 5 2 . 0 2 2 9

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area has worked with our partners to conserve 368 acres in the Susquehanna River watershed. Specifically, we have developed the Susquehanna Heritage Park – a signature park, heritage site and education center that showcases the historic, cultural and environmental resources of the lower Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay. Located in the river bluffs south of Wrightsville, Pennsylvania, the park includes multiple properties, such as Highpoint Scenic Vista and Recreation Area and two Native American heritage sites that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. We are also undertaking a \$1.48 million enhancement project at our office, the Zimmerman Center for Heritage, providing needed public recreational access to the lower Susquehanna River.

In our role as a regional advocate for protection of cultural and natural resources, the Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area is working with local, state and national partners to help conserve thousands of acres in the Susquehanna River Watershed for outdoor learning and adventure. Through our partnership with Lancaster County Conservancy, and PA DCNR, we have worked with PPL on an historic agreement that will permanently protect 1,200 acres in the Lower Susquehanna. LWCF funding will provide the opportunity to further expand this land preservation effort. We also played a key role in helping save Camp Security, a 150-acre historic site, significant for its role as a Revolutionary War prisoner of war camp, at the headwaters of a tributary to the Susquehanna River. We remain committed to the conservation of

large landscapes in the Susquehanna's critically important share of the Chesapeake watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark N. Platts", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Mark Platts
President

THE
CONSERVATION FUND

1655 N. Fort Myer Drive, Suite 1300, Arlington, VA 22209

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

RE: FY2016 LWCF Collaborative Landscape Proposal – Rivers of the Chesapeake

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of The Conservation Fund, I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake's* Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Collaborative Landscape proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and is highly worthy as a Land and Water Conservation Fund focal area in the Fiscal Year 2016 President's Budget.

The Conservation Fund has conserved over 300,000 acres in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and we remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in our conservation work across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

The Great Rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary – many linked by the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail - provide an important conservation framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay, a national natural and economic asset, is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to support the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your commitment to protecting our nation's vital landscapes.

Sincerely,



Patrick F. Noonan
Chairman Emeritus

THE
CONSERVATION FUND

1655 N. Fort Myer Drive, Suite 1300, Arlington, VA 22209

cc: Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service
Dan Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Tom Tidwell, Chief, U.S. Forest Service
Neil Kornze, Director, Bureau of Land Management
Joel Dunn, Executive Director, Chesapeake Conservancy
Bill Crouch, Maryland Director, The Conservation Fund

July 24, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of The Nature Conservancy's programs in Virginia and Maryland, we are writing to offer our strong support for including the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* as one of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) collaborative projects in the President's budget for fiscal year 2016. The Nature Conservancy has deep roots in land conservation efforts around the Chesapeake Bay, and such work will remain central to our larger conservation strategies in this landscape well into the future. Much of that protection work has been accomplished in close partnership with federal agencies, most notably the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Blackwater, Eastern Shore of Virginia, and Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuges.

Much of the discussion and attention on the Chesapeake Bay has been focused on addressing the Bay's serious water quality impairments. While such a focus is understandable, we also need to appreciate, value, and protect the many healthy and intact habitats found along the Bay and its tributaries. These special places remain the heart of the Bay and their protection is essential to the Bay's continued resilience and its ultimate restoration. The need to focus on land protection is well reflected in the recently-signed Chesapeake Bay Agreement, *Executive Order #13508 Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* and by *America's Great Outdoors* report. By targeting actions, encouraging cooperation, and providing a blueprint for ambitious but achievable at-scale success, the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative project will provide badly needed resources to achieve these and other established conservation objectives.

We firmly believe that the Chesapeake Bay is a natural and cultural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to seize on the watershed's many pressing and increasingly fleeting conservation opportunities. As such, we urge you to include the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative in the FY2016 budget and to accelerate your departments' proud record of accomplishment in this iconic landscape. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



Michael Lipford
Virginia Director



Elizabeth Gray
Maryland Director



Graham Simmerman

President, Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited

Elizabeth Maclin

Vice President for Eastern Conservation, Trout Unlimited

July 31, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Re: Rivers of the Chesapeake FY16 LWCF Collaborative Funding Proposal

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

On behalf of Trout Unlimited (TU), we write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) collaborative funding proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Chesapeake Bay watershed is a national treasure highly worthy as a LWCF focal area in the FY16 budget. We are particularly pleased with this proposal's focus on headwaters conservation in Virginia and firmly believe that targeting LWCF funds in this area will advance our work protecting and restoring wild trout populations there.

This proposal's "Headwaters Focus Area" (HFA), which covers a large swath of western Virginia from Roanoke north to Winchester, includes some of the best trout habitat and trout fishing opportunity in the Commonwealth. Nearly half of all coldwater streams—streams that contain or likely contain wild trout—designated by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries are within or cross the boundaries of the HFA. Sixty-two percent of all brook trout habitat in Virginia falls within the HFA, including most of the best habitat: 26 of 36 subwatersheds rated as having "intact" brook trout populations by the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture in Virginia are within or intersect the boundaries of the HFA. In short, the significance of this region to Virginia's wild trout resource cannot be overstated.

Nine of the specific parcels proposed for acquisition as part of this proposal would benefit native brook trout populations, as they include lands with frontage on, or that drain to, brook trout-bearing streams. Three of these fall within the Shenandoah River watershed, where TU has operated a Home Rivers Initiative since 2008. The others are situated in the James River watershed, where TU hopes to launch a Home Rivers Initiative soon. Through these initiatives, TU works with partners such as federal and state agencies, local governments, NGOs, and

private landowners to restore habitat for wild trout. The George Washington and Jefferson National Forest and Shenandoah National Park are two such partners. Moreover, the service areas of 6 local TU chapters fall within the HFA. These chapters are partners in Home Rivers Initiatives and also work independently on their own conservation projects.

In addition to advancing TU's work in Virginia, *Rivers of the Chesapeake* will also advance the goals of several collaborative efforts of which TU is a part. One example is the new *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*, signed by EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy on behalf of the Federal Government, which includes goals and outcomes for brook trout habitat restoration, land conservation, and public access. *Rivers of the Chesapeake* will help put partners on track to achieve these goals and outcomes. The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture's *Action Strategies*, another example of a collaborative conservation effort, calls for the, "protection of critical brook trout habitat on private land" in Virginia. *Rivers of the Chesapeake* would do exactly that.

We encourage you to make *Rivers of the Chesapeake* a LWCF Collaborative Landscape in FY16. Thank you for your consideration of this request and for the constructive partnerships your Departments have developed with TU in Virginia over the years.

Sincerely,



Graham Simmerman



Elizabeth Maclin



July 15, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack,

Chesapeake and Central
Appalachians Field Office
660 Pennsylvania Ave SE
Suite 401
Washington, DC
20003
T (202) 543-7552
F (202) 544-4723
www.tpl.org

On behalf of The Trust for Public Land, I am writing in support of the FY 2016 Collaborative Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) proposal for the Chesapeake Bay - *Rivers of the Chesapeake* - that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. This proposal would enable significant conservation achievements in the watershed of the nation's largest estuary. The Chesapeake region contains outstanding natural and cultural resources, offers exceptional recreational opportunities for visitors and residents and provides economic benefits to local communities.

The Trust for Public Land is a long-standing partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including efforts at the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia, and with the National Park Service at such sites as Piscataway National Park in Maryland and Prince William Forest National Park in Virginia. These areas are among those federal units that would benefit from designation of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* as a collaborative landscape.

Federal investments in this landscape have leveraged state, local and private dollars in support of these conservation efforts because of their multiple benefits of improving recreational and educational opportunities, protecting wildlife habitat and increasing public access to public lands through the acquisition of inholdings.

For many years, The Trust for Public Land has worked with local and national partners on successful projects throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, most notably in Maryland and Virginia. We are pleased that the new collaborative program offers an unprecedented opportunity to achieve our landscape-scale goals for protection of these important resources. The inclusion of the Chesapeake Bay in the President's Budget as part of the FY 2016 Collaborative LWCF package would enable additional successes on the ground, benefitting communities and major natural resources and help implement the Executive Order for the Chesapeake Bay and the newly signed 2014 *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kent Whitehead, Director
Chesapeake Bay Field Office





VALLEY CONSERVATION COUNCIL

Promoting land use that sustains the farms, forests, open spaces, and cultural heritage of the Shenandoah Valley region

23 July 2014

The Honorable Salley Jewell, Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Valley Conservation Council, Inc. (VCC), I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals.

The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure highly worthy as a "Land and Water Conservation Fund" focal area in the FY16 budget.

The VCC and its conservation partners have helped to protect over 130,000 acres in the Shenandoah, James, and Potomac Rivers watersheds. Since 1990, we have been strong advocates for the conservation of natural and working landscapes in our organization's 11-county service region, which falls within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The many rivers and streams that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the President's conservation and access goals for the region, as outline by the *2014 Chesapeake Bay Agreement, Executive Order #13508 Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* as well as the Administration's *America's Great Outdoors* report.

We firmly believe that the Chesapeake Bay, a national natural and economic asset, is worthy to receive "Land and Water Conservation Fund" support to provide for the watershed's most urgent conservation needs.

Thank you for your kind consideration and for your ongoing commitment to protect our nation's vital landscapes.

Sincerely,

H. Bruce Rinker, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Cc: Ms. Faye Cooper
VCC Immediate Past Executive Director



August 6, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Jewell and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (an instrumentality of the Commonwealth of Virginia created in 1966 by the Virginia General Assembly), I write in strong support of the *Rivers of the Chesapeake* collaborative proposal that seeks to protect significant landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet shared conservation goals. We believe the Chesapeake is a national treasure and should be a LWCF conservation focal area in the FY16 budget.

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation has protected approximately 700,000 acres across Virginia. The vast majority of these protected Virginia lands are in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This work is done primarily through easements that protect a wide variety of natural and cultural resources in perpetuity. We remain committed to the conservation of large landscapes in our organization's jurisdiction in the Chesapeake watershed.

The many rivers that support our nation's largest tidal estuary provide an innovative framework to achieve the collective land conservation and access goals outlined in the newly signed *Chesapeake Bay Agreement*, which are consistent with the goals in the *Chesapeake Executive Order #13508* and the emphasis put on the region in the *America's Great Outdoors* report. The *Rivers of the Chesapeake* LWCF collaborative represents a unique opportunity to provide critical resources to achieve these conservation goals, while leveraging present and future investment for a landscape-scale impact.

We firmly believe the Chesapeake Bay is a national natural treasure and is worthy of receiving Land and Water Conservation Funds to act upon the watershed's most urgent conservation needs. Thank you for your time, consideration of this matter, and commitment to protecting our nation's treasured landscapes.

Sincerely,

Brett Glymph
Executive Director

cc: Stephanie Ridder