

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

Chairman Mike Simpson  
Energy and Water, and Related Agencies  
Subcommittee  
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Marcy Kaptur  
Energy and Water, and Related Agencies  
Subcommittee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

March 15, 2016

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Kaptur,

As Members of Congress with an interest in the Chesapeake Bay, we thank the Subcommittee for its long history of support for Bay restoration efforts, including Poplar Island, the Chesapeake Bay Comprehensive Plan, and oyster habitat. The states we represent are investing in the Blueprint to restore this national treasure to its place as one of the most productive estuaries in the world, with important support from federal agencies. To maintain and build on their progress, we urge the Committee to include strong support for the Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Restoration business line in the FY17 Energy and Water Appropriations bill.

States in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed have been working together on restoration since 1983, when they signed the first Chesapeake Bay Agreement. As a testament to the value of this multistate partnership, the most recent Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement now includes New York, West Virginia, and Delaware alongside the original signatories of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

The Army Corps Environmental Restoration business line provides critical support to the Bay restoration effort. For example, the Chesapeake Bay Oyster Recovery Project has helped construct and seed new oyster reefs, which both increase the oyster population improve water clarity as those oysters filter water when they feed. The Army Corps efforts help achieve the goal of restoring oyster populations in 20 Bay tributaries by 2025 and play an important role in meeting state water quality goals in the Bay Blueprint.

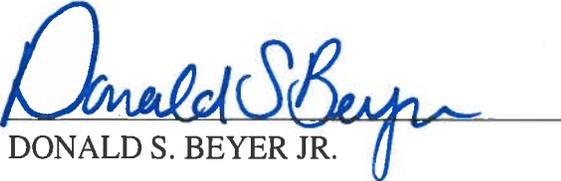
The Army Corps conducts other important environmental restoration work in the Bay watershed as well, including the Poplar Island Project, a sustainable solution to manage dredged material for the Port of Baltimore, and the Chesapeake Bay Comprehensive Plan, which will identify priority projects to meet the restoration goals in the Chesapeake Bay Agreement and the President's Executive Order for the Bay.

We urge you to provide strong support for the Environmental Restoration business line for FY17 to allow the Army Corps to continue important efforts like oyster recovery that have a positive impact on Chesapeake Bay restoration and other environmental efforts across the county.

Sincerely,

  
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

  
ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

  
DONALD S. BEYER JR.

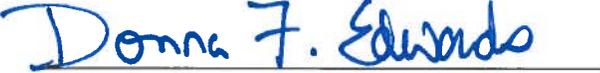
  
JOHN CARNEY

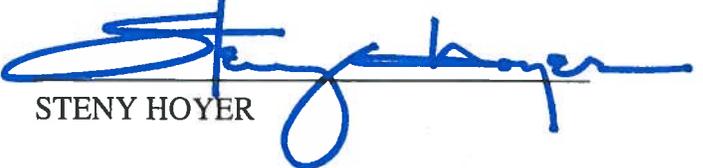
  
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