



MARYLAND  
LEAGUE OF  
CONSERVATION  
VOTERS



# 2024 Legislative and Environmental Community Priority

## Whole Watershed Act *HB 1165 / SB 0969*



### BACKGROUND

Maryland's quest to meet its 2025 Chesapeake Bay Restoration Goals faces challenges, as highlighted by the Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response (CESR) Report. Recognizing the need for a strategic shift, the WWA, championed by Senator Sarah Elfreth and Delegate Sarah Love, draws inspiration from successful models in neighboring states to prioritize effective Best Management Practices (BMPs) and focus on underserved communities. This innovative approach aims to overcome the fragmented efforts of the past, streamlining restoration across Maryland's varied landscapes.

- The CESR Report underscores the necessity for targeted restoration, recommending a focus on shallow waters and community-engaging interventions.
- Pennsylvania's rapid delisting program demonstrates the potential for focused watershed efforts to yield significant improvements.

Revolutionizing Maryland's watershed restoration through coordinated, science-based efforts to enhance water quality and community well-being.



### WHAT THE WHOLE WATERSHED ACT DOES

- Allocates \$20M towards the implementation of whole watershed restoration projects over five years, reflecting a commitment to diverse geographies and Environmental Justice communities.
- Employs a multi-agency State Management Team to oversee project selection, providing comprehensive support and expediting the permitting process.
- Advocates for restoration practices that offer multiple co-benefits, thereby fostering both environmental and community health.

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR MARYLAND

The WWA offers a path to not only meet but exceed Chesapeake Bay Restoration Goals. By embracing a holistic approach and prioritizing equity, Maryland sets a precedent for effective environmental stewardship, ensuring the health of its waterways for generations to come. This initiative is a key step in Maryland's journey towards becoming the greenest state, aligning environmental restoration with social justice.

The Maryland League of Conservation Voters educates and activates people to take equitable and just political actions for clean water, healthy air and climate-resilient communities.