



Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Rachel Carson State Office Building
P.O. Box 2063
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063
February 14, 2008

Secretary

717-787-2814

Dear Local Government Official:

Recent media reports suggest a great deal of misunderstanding exists with regard to the commonwealth's Chesapeake Bay water quality improvement obligations. In order to clarify what is required of Pennsylvania under the federal Clean Water Act, I am inviting local elected officials from throughout the watershed to meet at 10 a.m., on Wednesday, Feb. 20, in the 2nd floor auditorium of the Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17101.

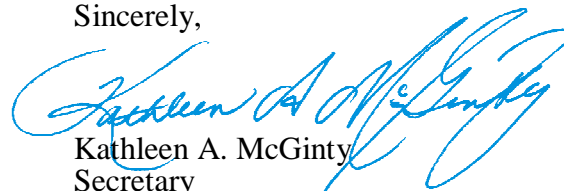
This meeting will provide an opportunity to answer questions you might have on the state's Chesapeake Bay Compliance Plan. For example, it has been suggested that the nutrient reduction requirements are an initiative of the commonwealth. These requirements are a federal mandate, which the state has no discretion to waive or delay action on beyond federal deadlines.

Questions also have been posed about whether the compliance plan equitably distributes the regulatory burden. As can be explored in the session in much greater detail, the compliance plan addresses the need for farmers and other nonpoint pollution sources to reduce pollution by an amount equal to their relative contribution to pollution, as it similarly directs point sources of pollution to reduce theirs. Point and nonpoint sources alike face a mandate in this regard.

Finally, many have underscored the need for more funds to comply with our federal obligations. Governor Rendell agrees. He has led the charge to call upon the White House to restore the more than half-a-billion dollars that have been cut from the key federal water infrastructure account, and recently announced his intention to create a high-level task force in the state to identify new funding streams for water infrastructure and investigate non-structural alternatives.

These and many other questions will be discussed at the session and we look forward to your participation. I hope you can join us on Wednesday, Feb. 20 in Harrisburg. Please confirm your attendance by contacting your DEP local government liaison, or the department's Office of Community Revitalization and Local Government Support at 717-783-1566. In the meantime, should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Kathleen A. McGinty
Secretary