



DoD CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM JOURNAL

PROTECTING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY FOR MILITARY READINESS, FOR OUR COMMUNITY, FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

A Word from the CBP Coordinator- Happy New Year!

By: Sarah Diebel

As we enter a new calendar year, the DoD Chesapeake Bay Program Office is expecting a tremendous amount of activity coming our way that we need to communicate within the DoD community. Therefore, communication up and down the Chain and across Components will be essential. In the months ahead (deep-breath), be on the lookout for our efforts related to the Federal Facility Target Setting Workgroup, new BMP verification program and protocols, updates from the Virginia Chesapeake Bay Stakeholder Advisory Group, results from Best Management Practice (BMP) Expert Panels, development of management strategies associated with Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, and the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2014. Additionally, the DoD CBP office compiled data for the Maryland-DoD Chesapeake Bay MOU Report and the FY14 DoD CBP Annual Progress Report. Thanks to your reporting, we have captured approximately \$93 million in FY14 funded projects! Updates are provided below on what we've been working on since the last issue for your reading pleasure. As always, please reach out to any of us if you have an article, photo, or issue!

Federal Facility Target Approach Setting Update

From the comments received from the Services, DoD provided a revised approach to EPA. During the 11 December 2014 Principals' Staff Committee meeting, EPA discussed several of our concerns and agreed to form a workgroup to resolve concerns and help clarify the concept. The workgroup is working on identifying and resolving issues for several key elements including: developing criteria for inclusion of federal facilities on jurisdictions' priority lists; use of BayFAST and other tools and process for updating specific information; methodology for developing targets and expectations for pollutant load reductions; progress reporting procedures; linkage to Federal 2-year milestones; a new federal lands data layer; and expectations for Phase 3 WIPs.

Introduction to BMP Verification Program and Protocol

In 2011, the National Academy of Sciences conducted an evaluation of the Chesapeake Bay Program and concluded that it wasn't able to determine the reliability and accuracy of the BMP data reported by the Bay jurisdictions; thus, the need for verification of reported data. The Bay Program defines verification as, "the process through which agency partners ensure that practices, treatments, and technologies resulting in reductions

of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollutant loads are implemented and operating correctly." As part of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, we need to ensure that our BMPs are meeting their maximum potential to meet nutrient reduction goals. As part of the verification process, the Bay Program and jurisdictions want to ensure that the BMPs on which we report are operating as expected and being maintained.

The Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership established the framework for verification and sector-specific guidance and elements for agriculture and urban stormwater. The Water Quality Goal Implementation Team approved the report, "Strengthening Verification of Best Management Practices Implemented in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed: A Basinwide Framework," in October 2014. The report describes how the framework is set-up. This year, DoD will need to begin working to enhance our verification efforts so we can integrate our data into the states' programs and databases.

Virginia Chesapeake Bay Stakeholder Advisory Group

DoD CBP sits on a newly formed workgroup called the Virginia Chesapeake Bay Stakeholder Advisory group. The next meeting is set for March 2015. An update of this meeting will be presented at the next 23 April 2015 CBAT meeting.

BMP Expert Panels

If you would like to be engaged in or participate on one of these expert panels, please let the DoD CBP Office know so we can track DoD participation. A list of subject matters can be found in the CBAT meeting minutes titled, *Status of Current and Upcoming BMP Expert Panels of the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership*.

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Agreement and Management Strategies: Outcomes from the 15-16 January Management Board Meeting

There are 26 management strategies that need to be reviewed to ensure that there are no gaps or red flags that would impact DoD’s current mission and capabilities. With the divide-and-conquer approach, the DoD CBP Office is proposing to send management strategies to the CBAT distribution list for review and comment. Eventually, there will be biennial work plans that correlate to the management strategies. Those biennial work plans will be due December 2015.

Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2014

In December 2014, S. 1000 Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2014 was signed into law. The law highlights the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as the centerpiece for these additional Chesapeake Bay data calls from all federal agencies. The OMB director was given six months to make this law operational. Expect forthcoming guidance in the near future.

FY 14 DoD CBP Annual Progress Report and Maryland-DoD Chesapeake Bay MOU Report

Thanks to comments received by the Services, the Maryland-DoD Chesapeake Bay MOU Report is currently under review and is expected to be submitted by February. The FY14 DoD CBP Annual Progress Report is nearly complete. Approximately \$93 million was funded on Chesapeake Bay projects across

DoD installations. Below is a snapshot of the FY14 funding for projects based on the FY14 DoD Chesapeake Bay Program Annual Datacall.

Each year after as I continue to review projects submitted, it is apparent that installations, through the dedication of environmental staff and collaboration with other departments, continue to demonstrate that they incorporate restoration, pollution prevention, and stewardship initiatives into DoD’s daily mission. I want to thank everyone that assisted with this year’s datacall and provided information for us to continue to communicate these initiatives—I know there was a lot to report.

FY14 TOTAL FUNDING	
Conserve Land	\$ 14,495,050
Expand Citizen Stewardship	\$ 747,057
Implementation and Accountability	\$ 985,675
Recover Habitat	\$ 9,984,212
Restore Clean Water	\$ 66,200,476
Sustain Fish and Wildlife	\$ 1,442,965
Grand Total FY14 Funding	\$ 93,855,437

REPI Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program

2015 WEBINAR SERIES SCHEDULE

The REPI Webinar Series is brought to you by the Department of Defense. Join us for this online series on best practices, tutorials and knowledge sharing on REPI partnerships that support military missions and accelerate the pace and rate of conservation.

All webinars begin at 1:00 p.m. eastern unless otherwise noted. For detailed webinar descriptions and connection instructions, please visit www.REPI.mil.

- 28 JAN** CONSERVATION FINANCE STRATEGIES SURVEY
<https://bah16f18.adobeconnect.com/r51e2up6ac4/>
- 4 MAR** JLUS—WHAT HAPPENS AFTER?
<https://bah16f18.adobeconnect.com/r925xf33b4a/>
- 29 APR** REPI HELP SESSION
<https://bah16f18.adobeconnect.com/r7hsxtu2pth/>
- 15 JUL** BETTER INTEGRATING NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT WITH YOUR REPI PROJECT
<https://bah16f18.adobeconnect.com/r43if0jh0j/>
- 26 AUG** USING STATE PLANNING TOOLS – STATE WILDLIFE PLANS AND FOREST ACTION PLANS
<https://bah16f18.adobeconnect.com/r6z0lyryo48/>
- 8-10 OCT** JOIN REPI AT LTA RALLY 2015 IN SACRAMENTO, CA
- 14 OCT** NRCS AND OTHER USDA CONSERVATION PROGRAMS
<https://bah16f18.adobeconnect.com/r5qphrat8l2/>
- 2 DEC** HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR SENTINEL LANDSCAPES
<https://bah16f18.adobeconnect.com/r41dunlj0s9/>



Conservation Partnership Purchases 212 Acres on Chesapeake Bay

First Published in Southern Maryland Online

Posted on 13 December 2014

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, Md. (Dec. 11, 2014)—The Conservation Fund, in partnership with the U.S. Navy, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) and St. Mary's County, announced today the purchase and protection of 212 acres on the Chesapeake Bay that will provide opportunities for historical interpretation and recreational access along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, while buffering Patuxent River Naval Air Station (NAS) from land uses that threaten the mission of the base.

Located just south of the military installation, the waterfront property—previously known as Shannon Farm—offers a variety of aquatic and woodland resources that were significant to the Native American and subsequent colonial settlements once found in the area. With 3,400 feet of frontage along the Chesapeake Bay, the land is representative of indigenous landscapes and lies within the scenic viewshed of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the first entirely water-based trail in the National Trail System that traces the 1607-1609 voyages of

Captain Smith as he charted the lands and waterways of the Bay. Later during the War of 1812, the property was used as a staging area for the British fleet.

The Conservation Fund, a national organization dedicated to creating land and water protection strategies that balance environmental stewardship with economic vitality, purchased the property this summer and then sold it to St. Mary's County in late November for incorporation into a county park for passive recreational activities and educational use. Funding for the acquisition was provided by the MD DNR's Program Open Space.

“The Commissioners of St. Mary's County were very happy and proud to have guaranteed the protection of Shannon Farm from further encroachment,” said former St. Mary's County Commissioner President Francis Jack Russell. “This is a win-win for the citizens of St. Mary's County now and into the future by securing another great natural resource in our county”.

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NAS Patuxent River and the Atlantic Test Range serve as an important flight testing site. (Photo Source: www.repi.mil)



In addition, the U.S. Navy acquired a conservation easement on the property as part of its Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program that will limit incompatible use and protect the rural character of the landscape within the Atlantic Test Range of the Patuxent River NAS. U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Barbara Mikulski and U.S. Representative Steny Hoyer have supported U.S. Congressionally appropriate funding for REPI.

“We don’t need to choose between protecting a wonderful indigenous landscape, providing for public access and ensuring security for Pax River. By working collaboratively, the U.S. Navy, The Conservation Fund and federal, state and local officials have shown how all these goals can be reached together,” said U.S. Senator Ben Cardin. “The purchase of the Shannon Farm tract will enhance the experience of those using the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, which also is a result of visionary partners in conservation. I am proud to see how we are able to preserve an archaeologically, historically and naturally significant piece of the Chesapeake Bay watershed while still securing the adjacent military operations.”

“I am very pleased that The Conservation Fund, the U.S. Navy, MD DNR, and St. Mary’s County have been able to work together in such an innovative way to ensure the protection of Shannon Farm,” stated Congressman Steny Hoyer. “Not only is this a spectacular waterfront property, with wonderful vegetation and species diversity in its own right, but it is also now able to be shared with the public as part of telling the storied history of the Chesapeake Bay.”

“Due to its close proximity to NAS Patuxent River, less than a half mile from the fence line, Shannon Farm lies within a high noise area underneath the flight tracks of planes taking off and landing. It also had been approved for development of over 450

homes, which would have been subjected to high levels of noise on a daily basis,” said Russell Byrd, CPLO for NAS Patuxent River. “For these reasons, Shannon Farm was the highest priority parcel, on the list of over 50 potential parcels, for the Navy to purchase using REPI Program funds.”

“It’s rare for the protection of a piece of land like this to offer so many ecological, historical, cultural, recreational and economic benefits,” said Bill Crouch, Maryland director of The Conservation Fund. “As a driving force in the creation of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, we’re thrilled to help the County and the U.S. Navy not only provide access to the route that Captain Smith and his men took over 400 years ago, but also protect the mission of the Patuxent River NAS—St. Mary’s County’s most significant economic driver. With multiple funding sources and a simultaneous three way closing, the complexity of this project required a high level of coordination and expertise that has become The Conservation Fund’s specialty.”

“Shannon Farm’s 3,400 feet of Chesapeake Bay shorefront will provide much needed public access to the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail as well as protect the scenic view from the trail,” said Joel Dunn, executive director of the Chesapeake Conservancy, which is the National Park Service’s primary non-profit partner in developing the trail. “We congratulate the U.S. Navy, the State of Maryland, St. Mary’s County and The Conservation Fund on protecting this historically important property. Its conservation will help retain the rural character of the Atlantic Test Range south of Patuxent River Naval Air Station and allow archaeologists to explore the land’s past. We know from what Capt. Smith and early settlers wrote that the land was important to southern Maryland’s Native Americans.”

Public-Private Partnerships Explored in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

By: Fred Furney, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is working to employ alternative financing/resourcing and delivery methods to key water-related infrastructure and services, as enabled by the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA). WRRDA authorizes a wide variety of resourcing and delivery structures, including Public-Private-Partnerships, or P3. This new legislation allows USACE the opportunity to examine innovative means of funding infrastructure projects and services, with more increased investment from the private sector. The USACE P3 program also aims to more extensively partner with federal, state, local, and military organizations in order to meet shared objectives and leverage kind and in-kind resources.

The Integrated Water Resources (IWR) team at USACE HQ is the lead office responsible for establishing this program within USACE. IWR recently announced its support for P3 using innovative new approaches and financing for design, construction, renovation, management, operation, and/or maintenance of public infrastructure. Benefits include reduced projects costs, duration, and overall increased availability of expertise across partners.

USACE is now shaping its capability to support this pioneering approach, which first includes an evaluation of measures, authorities, and policies. The agency is addressing gaps, impairments, and constraints across existing financial structures, contracting mechanisms, and partnership agreements with the goal to prioritize what changes need to be made. The next step will be to develop a schedule and a roadmap for who/how/when to influence the gaps and reduce the constraints. Supporting P3 teams are in place nationally to investigate these challenges.

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In the meantime, P3 pilot projects are actively being investigated and pursued across the country. In particular, the Baltimore District located in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, has been working with other USACE Districts as well as public and private partners from all sectors to form P3 partnerships that leverage a variety of funding sources with a multitude of benefits.

For example, Baltimore and Philadelphia Districts are currently investigating a partnership with Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), to use dredge material from the C & D Canal approach channels for shoreline protection and ecosystem restoration at Poole's Island, currently owned by APG.

Pooles Island Lighthouse (Photo Credit: Todd Beser)

Partnering together on this project will have many positive benefits for Poole's Island, APG and USACE including:

- The opportunity to serve as a mission platform;
- A reduction in total suspended solids and aquatic habitat improvement to the Bay, which meet goals under Executive Order 13508 and the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Agreement;
- Maintenance of critical navigation routes from the C & D Canal;
- Optimization of navigational disposal costs;
- Climate resiliency dataset from managing sea level rise with shoreline practices;
- Protection of the Poole's Island Light House; and,
- A reduction in contamination from historic areas of Unexploded Ordnance.



Additionally, Baltimore District on behalf of the USACE, North Atlantic Division and the National Planning Center for Coastal Storm Risk Management, recently completed the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study, a two-year effort to respond to the devastation in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. The goals of the NACCS were: 1. providing a risk management framework, consistent with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/USACE Infrastructure Systems Rebuilding Principles; and 2. support resilient coastal communities and robust, sustainable coastal landscape systems, considering future sea level and climate change scenarios, to manage risk to vulnerable populations, property, ecosystems, and infrastructure. The NACCS highlighted example projects representing a systems approach to managing coastal risk and promoting resilient coastal communities. These examples also represent opportunities for similar projects across the North Atlantic Coast for USACE and other government and private entities to partner together to provide technical expertise and other resources, including USACE mission-specific requirements like maintenance dredging and beneficial use of dredged materials.

Other on-going examples involving Baltimore District and potentially P3 include:

- National Mall Underground flood risk management (USACE, DC Planning, Coalition to Save our Mall);
- Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition (USACE, USFWS, USFS, USGS, MdDNR, Chesapeake Conservancy, NFWF, The Conservation Fund, Rails to Trails, Parks and People, etc.);
- Blackwater Resiliency Project (USACE, USFWS, USGS, MdDNR, NFWF, The Conservation Fund); and,
- The Chesapeake Bay Comprehensive Plan (USACE, USEPA, Chesapeake Bay Commission, 6 states, NFWF).

Over the next few months, Baltimore District will also be seeking partnership arrangements to secure grant program funds that support P3 initiatives. Most grant programs require federal and non-federal cost share, as well as targeted geographical priority areas, so data sharing using geographical information system (GIS) analyses is important.

Under programs like P3, USACE can maximize funding and get projects accomplished in a timely manner. They also enable USACE to provide technical expertise to an expanded partnership base, use existing cost-sharing authorities to the fullest extent, and explore new ways to partner with others. USACE looks forward to attracting new partnerships in support of these innovative P3 projects that serve our communities, our state and federal partners, and military installations!

For questions regarding USACE P3 program in Baltimore District, please contact: *Heather Cisar 410-962-2911*



Legacy Award Brings Beauty to Bethel Park

By: Thomas Olexa, Natural Resource Manager at Joint Base Langley-Eustis

After applying to a 2014 Legacy Award, Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE) won for their submittal for the Bethel Park Restoration project. This project was a successful venture between JBLE, National Environmental Education Foundation, and the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program. As part of National Public Lands Day, 108 volunteers from JBLE and the local community participated in part of the \$6,212 Legacy award which included the creation of a nature trail at the Battle of Big Bethel Civil War Monument; collecting and recycling 1,692 old tires; removing 2 tons of wood and invasive species debris; planting 87 native trees, shrubs, and flowers to create a pollinator garden; construction of wildlife nest boxes and a floating dock for wildlife observation and fishing. The completion of each project helped raise awareness and enhanced natural and cultural resources at Bethel Park Outdoor Recreation and Family Campground.

“This project greatly improved both natural and cultural resources while fostering a sense of stewardship among the volunteers and stakeholders,” said Tom Olexa, the Natural Resource Manager at JBLE.

The public new nature trail offers an opportunity for park visitors to learn about the historic Battle of Big Bethel while traversing through a scenic woodland and overlook to the reservoir. Approximately 60 pounds of invasive plants were removed as part of the nature trail project and a total of 1,692 unclaimed old tires were collected for recycling. The old tire stockpiles were a pollution concern from leaching and a major breeding ground for mosquitoes, which may carry diseases, such as West Nile virus. Construction of the floating dock enhanced opportunities for park visitors to observe wildlife or freshwater fish.

“The 1,200 square foot native pollinator garden was perhaps the most rewarding part of the project,” said Olexa, “because it was designed by the Hampton Master Gardeners.”

The Master Gardeners and volunteers were able to plant a diversity of native trees, flowers, and shrubs that will bloom from early spring to late summer. This particular project will cultivate the park’s landscape with an area that will support the health and abundance of local pollinator species.



Volunteers collect and recycle 1,692 tires as part of the National Public Lands Day at Joint Base Langley Eustis. (Photo Credit: Tom Olexa)



The Master Gardeners and volunteers were able to plant native trees, flowers, and shrubs that will bloom from early spring to late summer. (Photo Credit: Tom Olexa)

“Each project event involved varying levels of participation, enthusiasm, and outreach for volunteers. During each event volunteers received interpretative lessons on native pollinator gardens, invasive species, recycling, riparian buffers, public lands day, and the Battle of Big Bethel. The Virginia Department of Natural Resources ‘Habitat at Home’ and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ‘Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping’ publications were distributed along with fact sheets about the 21st National Public Lands Day. Each volunteer received a follow-up email discussing accomplishments from the project events and included a volunteer certificate of appreciation,” said Olexa.

So many volunteers made this statement, “I never realized this place was here and I can’t wait to come back.”

“The National Public Lands Day message of *getting a chance to explore and know where public lands are* was clearly embraced after the first time this comment was made. This single statement made this project a success, regardless of the number of tires recycled, trails made, or native flowers planted,” said Olexa.



Conservation of Coastal Habitats in a Changing Climate

By: Kelly Duckworth, Michael Baker International

On 13 January 2015 at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve hosted a presentation on the climate change vulnerability assessment tool for coastal habitats (CCVATCH). The CCVATCH is a decision support tool in which local habitat managers, decision-makers and researchers work in collaboration to assess the climate vulnerability of site specific habitats. The process provides a way to identify habitats that are most likely to be affected by projected changes in climate, while also providing insight as to why these habitats are vulnerable and to identify potential management actions.

Climate change will significantly affect the coastal zone through changes to sea levels, storm severity and frequency, erosion and sediment supply, invasive species, freshwater inflows, and water quality, potentially causing the degradation or loss of habitats that perform critical ecosystem services for coastal communities. Coastal land managers need methods to identify habitats that are likely to be adversely affected by climate change in order to make informed decisions about habitat management actions and restoration projects. Climate change vulnerability assessments can support decision-making by providing managers with methods of identifying which habitats are likely to be most affected by projected changes in climate as well as insight as to why these habitats are likely to be vulnerable.

Several tools have been developed to guide decision-makers through the process of assessing vulnerability, but currently available tools either are not designed to be used for coastal systems (e.g., they do not include the effects of sea level rise) or are species oriented rather than examining vulnerabilities at a habitat scale. Recognizing the need for a tool to assess the vulnerability of *coastal habitats* to climate change, several members of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System formed a workgroup in the fall of 2011 to develop the CCVATCH, which allows for quantitative assessment of the relative vulnerabilities of habitats to predicted climate change stressors.

Although the tool will not be ready until spring 2015, CCVATCH is spreadsheet based decision support tool that integrates local data and knowledge with climate change research, predictions, and assessments to provide an evaluation of habitat vulnerability. It will evaluate how changes in precipitation, air and water temperature, and storm frequency and severity will affect non-climate stressors such as invasive species, nutrients,

and sediments. The tool is also meant for an adaptive, collaborative learning framework to engage planners, local stakeholders, and expert scientist for the following: survey local stakeholders' research and data needs to ensure relevance of CCVATCH outputs; establish a collaborative online site for data sharing and coordination of feedback; engage local stakeholders and researchers in the tool usage; work with the experts and researchers to complete the tool for habitats selected by local stakeholders; discuss outcomes of the project and application of the tool; and finally, assess applicability of the final results. As a result of this work, the project team will develop a refined habitat vulnerability assessment tool that includes a scoring sheet and resources for information on the effect of climate change on coastal habitats.

Since the Chesapeake Bay watershed has many DoD installations with coastal habitats, this tool could be a good resource for the DoD community. For example, when natural resource managers are updating their INRMP, climate change could now be incorporated into the plans with CCVATCH. Additionally, when designing a living shoreline, the CCVATCH would address the longevity of the potential design with relation to the coastal habitat and climate change.

For more information on CCVATCH and for the final release of the tool, please visit: www.northinlet.sc.edu.



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CHECK IT OUT

EPA has developed three web-based training modules on topics related to TMDLs and NPDES permitting. The presentations are intended for TMDL developers and NPDES permitting staff to gain a better understanding of TMDL implementation through NPDES permits. Each module is offered as a recorded presentation that enables participants to review the material on demand in a self-paced environment. In addition, the modules are also available as unrecorded PowerPoint presentations with slides and scripts (approximately two hours long).

You can find the training at: <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/npdes/Web-based-Total-Maximum-Daily-Load-TMDL-and-National-Pollutant-Discharge-Elimination-System-NPDES-Permit-Training.cfm>

Module 1: Understanding TMDLs: A Primer for NPDES Permit Writers

Module 2: Understanding WLA Implementation in Permits: A Primer for TMDL Developers

Module 3: Understanding TMDLs with Stormwater Sources and the NPDES Stormwater Permitting Process

The US Army Corps of Engineers just released the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS) and is now available at: <http://www.nad.usace.army.mil/compstudy>

Along with the final report, the webpage includes links to all the report's appendices as well as associated technical products and tools that were advanced by the study to close identified data gaps. The page also includes a short overview video, interactive graphics, and links to the study's webinars from the past two years. The NACCS team brought together experts from federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations, tribes, and academia to collaborate on the effort to prepare a coastal storm risk management framework to help all stakeholders in identifying the risk of coastal flooding and evaluate the full range of strategies available to reduce those risks.

This newsletter is produced by Michael Baker International under Contract No. N62470-10-D-3000 for DoD/Navy Chesapeake Bay Program Support.

This newsletter is distributed via email. Contact the DoD Chesapeake Bay Program with any questions, comments, or to be added to the email distribution list (email: sarah.diebel@navy.mil or telephone: 757-341-0383).

