

PA Environment Digest

An Update On Environmental Issues In PA

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PennFuture Joins Municipal Authorities, Chesapeake Bay Foundation Opposing SB 994

PennFuture This week [wrote to members of the Senate](#) expressing their “significant concerns” with [Senate Bill 994 \(Vogel-R-Beaver\)](#) saying the bill would “manipulate and skew the nutrient credit trading market on behalf of one technology being advanced by one company.

PennFuture joined the [PA Municipality Authorities Association](#) and the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation-PA](#) in opposing the bill.

The text of the PennFuture letter follows--

“PennFuture has significant concerns with Senate Bill 994, and urges you to oppose the bill should it come up for a vote in its current form.

“We are open to the general concept of nutrient trading to attain cost-effective reductions in nutrient pollution. We are also open to the general concept of public investments in emerging technologies with potentially significant environmental benefits to help bring the emerging technologies to market or scale. However, Senate Bill 994 does not merit your support for the following reasons:

- Senate Bill 994 would manipulate and skew the nutrient credit trading market on behalf of one technology being advanced by one company. We have substantial concerns as to whether the technology being advanced by the supporters of this legislation would be a cost-effective investment in reducing nutrient pollution.
- It is likely the credits created by Senate Bill 994 would not be approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, meaning Pennsylvania could not use them in meeting its federal TMDL obligations.
- Senate Bill 994 would concentrate public resources at a handful of facilities, which would only benefit a few tributaries and communities as opposed to the existing system that encourages improvements across a much wider range of municipalities.
- Senate Bill 994 would likely divert emphasis and funds away from established and effective water quality and pollution reduction programs that are much broader in scope and provide additional benefits such as reduced flooding and stormwater runoff, and protection of habitat and public drinking water supplies.

-- Despite the amendments made by the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, we are still concerned that the legislation opens the door to raids on existing sources of funding for environmental programs.

“Senate Bill 994 was moved out of Committee without the benefit of a public hearing. When the bill was voted, reference was made to a future joint hearing on the bill to be held by the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee and the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

“We ask you to hold such a hearing so that the concerns raised and questions posed by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, PennFuture, and other organizations can be addressed.”

A copy of PennFuture’s letter [is available online](#).

Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Fact Sheets

The [Chesapeake Bay Foundation PA Office](#) has issued a series of fact sheets outlining the water quality problems and solutions being implemented in the Pennsylvania portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed--

-- [A Primer On Pollutants Of Concern](#)-- outlines the contributions Pennsylvania’s portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed makes to nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution to the Bay.

-- [Nearly 20,000 Miles Of PA Streams Are Polluted](#)-- details the fact there are thousands of stream miles and hundreds of acres of lakes all across Pennsylvania that are considered “impaired” under the federal Clean Water Act that either have or will require what is known as a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).

-- [Cost Effective Solutions Are Known, Documented For The Chesapeake Bay](#)-- notes cost effective pollution solutions have already made significant progress in reducing pollution going to the Bay, particularly in Pennsylvania.

-- [Lancaster County Plain Sect Farms As Clean Water Stewards](#)-- provides a snapshot of the Buffer Bonus initiative from CBF to encourage the installation of stream buffers by Amish and Plain Sect farmers in Lancaster County.

-- [Amish and Old Order Mennonite Farms Protect Streams And The Bay](#)-- provides an overview of a CBF initiative to work with Plain Sect farmers in Lancaster and Chester counties to install best management practices under federal Farm Bill Programs like the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

In addition, Dr. Beth McGee, Senior Water Quality Scientist at CBF, gave a [PowerPoint presentation](#) October 16 on the status of the Chesapeake Bay Cleanup in Pennsylvania and the challenges that remain.

NewsClips:

[CBF-PA Plain Sect Initiative Hits Its Goal, More Work Needed](#)
[October 21 Chesapeake Bay Journal](#)

Links: [Update On CBF Activities In PA By Harry Campbell, PA Office Director](#)