

VIRGINIA

2017 Election Victories

On Tuesday, November 7 the people of Virginia led the way and voted for clean water, climate action and the environment, and voted against the Trump Administration's anti-science agenda.

Clean Water endorsed **Ralph Northam** and State Delegate **Kathleen Murphy**. Through the support of Clean Water Voters like you, Ralph Northam won the race for governor and Kathleen Murphy won her reelection to the House of Delegates in Northern Virginia's district 34. This is a huge victory for our environment, our water and our communities.

Thank you for letting your voice be heard and for being a Clean Water Voter!



2018 General Assembly Legislative Preview

Every year, Clean Water members and allies successfully help protect the Chesapeake Bay, open space, farmland, and historic sites during Virginia's legislative sessions. With the 2018 Virginia General Assembly Session approaching, Clean Water is putting together an ambitious plan.

Cleaning up Coal Ash Waste and Toxic Pollution from Coal Plants: Clean Water Action is calling for stronger oversight to prevent utilities from implementing closure plans which "cap-in-place" coal ash impoundments where groundwater is in contact with a portion of the waste.

Protecting and Restoring Virginia's Streams, Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay: Clean Water Action will ask state legislators to support a budget appropriation of \$50 million annually to meet obligations to protect waterways from stormwater pollution.

Funding for Cost Effective Agricultural Best Management Practices: Clean Water Action supports

fully funding the Virginia Agricultural Cost-share Program (VACS).

Protecting Communities from the Industrial Gas Development and High-Volume Fracking: Clean Water Action will oppose any efforts to weaken current environmental, health and safety laws and regulations protecting water quality.

Below is an overview of the issues:

Coal Ash is the waste product generated when coal is burned for energy. It is the second largest industrial waste stream in the United States and contains a long list of harmful heavy metals including
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COAL ASH: Virginia must ensure coal ash sites remain subject to strict permitting and siting requirements.

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arsenic, mercury, hexavalent chromium, nickel, lead, cadmium, and selenium. In Virginia, disposal sites are predominantly located close to rivers, creeks, and streams and many are unlined. Virginia must ensure coal ash sites remain subject to strict permitting and siting requirements.

Stormwater pollution from urban and suburban runoff into local streams is increasing and risks impacting the Commonwealth's goal to restore Chesapeake Bay by 2025. The Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) is a state and local matching grant program that helps address pollution from existing sites through implementation projects. The 2017 General Assembly session provided no funding for the program despite the fact that

requirements for stormwater compliance are ramping up.

Agriculture is Virginia's largest source of nutrient and sediment pollution in local streams and Chesapeake Bay. Excess nutrients cause large algae outbreaks and bacterial pollution resulting in "dead zones". This impacts important commercial fisheries and can lead to beach and shellfish harvesting closures. Many farmers would like to use effective conservation practices but are unable to do so due to a lack of technical and financial resources.

Oil and gas companies want to drill for shale gas in new areas of the state, seeking to use high-volume hydraulic fracturing (fracking).

2018 State and Federal Elections

In 2018, Clean Water will continue to build a clean water voter base in Loudoun County, working in alternate years in overlapping districts (VA House District 34 and VA Congressional District 10).

At the federal level, Virginia has one of the most competitive House races in the 2018 elections. The 10th District is currently held by Representative Barbara Comstock. Since January 2017, there has been an unprecedented groundswell of Virginia voters on both

sides of the aisle who are dissatisfied with attacks on common sense protections for health and the environment. Many of them are engaged for the very first time, attending town halls, writing letters, signing petitions, and forming grassroots groups to keep the pressure on. Clean Water Action will take advantage of this increased activism to shape the outcome of state house races, promoting environmental protections and a broader progressive agenda.

MARYLAND

Legislative Preview

Next year is an exciting year in the Maryland General Assembly; it's the last year of legislators' four year terms and everyone is getting ready for elections in 2018.

Here's a preview of what we will be working on:

Community Healthy Air Act: Big chicken houses have been increasing on the Eastern Shore, growing in size and number. For years residents have complained about the emissions coming off these buildings — namely ammonia (a form of nitrogen) and dust. These chicken houses do not need air permits, so the community has asked their delegation for a one year study of emissions, with no success. Clean Water staff are working with a coalition of local advocates and others to get this study.

Septics: Maryland still has a problem with nitrogen and bacteria runoff from septic systems. This summer a work group studied the issues surrounding septic systems, and Clean Water Action will be working on getting those recommendations into law or regulation.

Forest Conservation Act: Maryland is losing trees, mostly because developers only need to replace 1/4 acre for every acre they chop down. Clean Water Action is part of a coalition that is seeking to increase the replacement requirement. Staff are also working in Frederick County on the Forest Resource Ordinance to increase the minimum replacement requirement.

Oil Trains: Clean Water is working on a bill to increase the emergency preparedness in case of the derailment or other spill of crude oil carried by rail.



The Monocacy Aqueduct.

Clean Water Frederick

The Monocacy River is one of the most polluted rivers in Maryland, impaired by sediment, phosphorus and nitrogen pollution, and even fecal bacteria. It has been impacted by long-term polluted runoff and erosion, and its banks offer insufficient tree canopy and cover to protect water quality and provide habitat for local plants and animals. Planting trees is one of the quickest and cheapest ways to improve water quality — forested buffers can reduce phosphorus pollution by 85% and nitrogen pollution by 80%, with real benefits to water quality, wildlife habitat, and even drinking water.

This year, Clean Water Action has been standing alongside Frederick County residents who want to see a cleaner Monocacy. Staff have been speaking in support of the Monocacy Scenic River Management Plan, which describes the river's ecology, history, physical environment, and uses — including providing a quarter of Frederick City's drinking water! — and makes key recommendations for sustainable land uses, best management practices, and activities that support and protect the River. Head to www.cleanwaterfrederick.org to learn more and join the movement!

Rallying in Howard County. Clean Water Action was busy this summer in Howard County rallying support for the Citizens' Election Fund. This new form of campaign finance enables candidates to qualify for public matching funds if they refuse to accept BIG money from PACs, unions, or corporations to get elected. The organization's canvass took to the streets to encourage residents sign petitions and call their county councilmembers. On July 3rd, the County Council passed the fund into law! A new fair elections campaign has just formed in Prince George's County with a broad coalition of pro-democracy, consumer rights, progressive, and environmental groups.

MARYLAND

Spreading the Word About Crude Oil Trains — Neighborhood by Neighborhood

“Most of my district is within one mile of the tracks that crude oil has been transported on. I don’t want any more crude oil tank cars putting the neighborhoods in my district at risk.”

That was what City Councilman Ed Reisinger, who represents District 10 in Baltimore City, had to say after seeing what a crude oil train explosion would look like. Three years into the campaign against crude oil trains, Clean Water organizers are still talking to people every day who don’t know that crude oil trains can travel through their backyards — or who know, but feel powerless to prevent it. So, through the month of September, Clean Water hosted meetings to educate and inform residents, which included a new Baltimore-focused documentary, factsheets and figures, and lots of discussion, to communities across the Baltimore blast zone: Curtis Bay, Brooklyn, Hollins Market, Mount Vernon, McElderry Park, and Highlandtown. Since then, Clean Water staff have been working with Councilman Reisinger, Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke, and others in city government to do as much as the city can to stop crude oil trains.

In October, Baltimore City introduced landmark legislation to prevent any new or expanded terminals for crude oil from being built in Baltimore. Now is the time: with minimal crude oil shipments to the East Coast because of the low price of oil, Baltimore hasn’t seen a new terminal proposed since 2014. But an



increase in the price of oil or other change in market factors could spark renewed interest in using Baltimore’s port as a fossil fuel hub. Instead of fighting off terminal proposals one by one, we can use this legislation to put a stop to crude oil hubs altogether.

Watch the documentary [here](#), and [click here](#) to send a message to the City Council: It’s time to take action against crude oil trains.

Examining the Baltimore blast zone at the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore — three blocks from the crude oil train route.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advocating for the Anacostia River

Last year, Clean Water joined the Anacostia Park and Community Collaborative (APACC), a coalition of 20 community-based and citywide nonprofit organizations. APACC members are working to maximize positive impact in the 10 neighborhoods, the river shoreline and green space, and catalyze and assist the transformation of the Anacostia River Corridor in the District. The principle objective is to help create a great socially and economically beneficial civic space, on a clean river, adjacent to healthy, green, diverse, and exemplary communities. Our organizations and the people we serve will be part of that transformation.

APACC and Clean Water are dedicated to working with community members, particularly those who have lived in Wards 7 and 8 the longest, to inform and actively participate in the work of the collaborative. Through this process we will foster the growth of a thriving, diverse, and sustainable community that actively accepts and takes ownership of the challenges and opportunities along this cherished water source to improve the lives and livelihoods of both current and future residents.

In 2017, Clean Water Action brought community voices to advocate for improvements along the river corridor to benefit the health and environment

of residents. Working with APACC partners, staff organized community residents to submit public comments and provide testimony in support of restoring funding for soil remediation and cleanup of toxic sites along the Anacostia. A strong showing by the community, especially by Ward 7 residents most affected by these toxic sites was noticed by Committee Chairwoman, Mary Cheh, “Neither the river

nor the people there are forgotten any more, at least by this Committee.”

Officials respond when communities make their voices heard. In May, Chairwoman Cheh and the Committee proposed restoring funding for Anacostia hazardous remediation in their budget report for the city council, and in June the District Council

approved a final budget that included \$3.5 million to complete sediment remediation plans by 2018.

2018 is the 100-year anniversary of the legislation that designated and preserved the Anacostia Park as a place to be cherished along the Anacostia River. This centennial is a unique opportunity to build the grassroots and community outreach capacity of APACC and highlight the history of the Anacostia River parks and adjacent neighborhoods, existing challenges and opportunities of the urban waterway, and celebrate a shared vision of the next 100 years.



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Anacostia Park with the Anacostia River in the foreground.

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