



# Press Release

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## **Chesapeake Bay Program Director to Tour New York Environmental Projects** *Head of Bay restoration partnership will meet with local citizens and officials on three-day trip*

**Binghamton, N.Y.** -- Chesapeake Bay Program Director Jeffrey Lape will visit New York from Dec. 1-4 to learn how local citizens, government officials and community leaders are taking action to protect and restore the New York waterways that flow to the Chesapeake Bay.

Lape, who heads the federal-state Chesapeake Bay restoration partnership based in Annapolis, Md., will discuss how the Bay Program can help support the region's environmental protection programs and encourage locals to become involved with conservation projects in their communities.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed – the 64,000-square-mile area of land that drains to the Bay – begins at Otsego Lake in Cooperstown, N.Y., which forms the headwaters of the Susquehanna River, the Bay's largest freshwater tributary. Community-based projects to reduce pollution, preserve land and restore wildlife habitats improve both the Chesapeake Bay's health and the quality of life for citizens in New York.

"Our New York partners are a critical link in the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort, since everything that we do upstream affects the health of the waters downstream," Lape said. "As an Upstate New York native, I am eager to learn about local efforts to foster stewardship and protect local waterways, which have enormous benefit to the entire Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay."

During his visit to the area, Lape will visit Binghamton and Cooperstown for meetings with the Department of the Environment and the Upper Susquehanna Coalition to learn about the region's key environmental challenges and opportunities. One of these opportunities is an emerging collaborative land protection initiative among the Upper Susquehanna Coalition and four local land trusts.

Lape will also spend time in the Delaware County village of Sidney to hear from citizens, local government officials and high school students about local efforts to restore Carr's Creek. Wetlands restoration projects and new stream monitoring and flood forecasting programs on the creek are protecting the Sidney community from future floods while having an added benefit of filtering polluted runoff and providing important wildlife habitat.

Additionally, Lape will tour Butternut Valley with representatives from the Butternut Valley Alliance, a citizen group dedicated to protecting the valley's natural environment and farming heritage, and lodge with farmers in Franklin, N.Y., to learn about local agricultural conservation efforts.

The Chesapeake Bay Program is a unique regional partnership that has coordinated the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed since 1983. Bay Program partners include the states of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia; the District of Columbia; the Chesapeake Bay Commission, a tri-state legislative body; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, representing the federal government; and participating citizen advisory groups.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is home to more than 16.7 million people living in parts of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

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