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EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson Becomes Chair of Chesapeake Executive Council

PAST-CHAIR GOVERNOR TIMOTHY M. KAINE PRAISED FOR LEADERSHIP AND ACTIONS ON BAY

Arlington, Va. – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson today became chair of the Chesapeake Executive Council, promising to continue the positive momentum of the Chesapeake Bay Program and lead the regional partnership into a new era of progress and accountability.

“It’s an honor to chair the Executive Council at this moment of unprecedented opportunity. Governor Kaine’s leadership, the work of our council partners, and President Obama’s Executive Order on the Bay made 2009 a year of historic progress – and set the stage for even greater action in 2010,” said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. “Chesapeake Bay communities have spent years calling for cleaner water and a healthier environment. We have a renewed opportunity to show them real progress.”

During a meeting of the Executive Council in Arlington, Virginia, Administrator Jackson noted that 2009 was a historic year for the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort, with the states’ commitment to two-year milestones for implementing pollution controls and President Obama’s Executive Order on the Chesapeake Bay.

Administrator Jackson said 2010, however, could be a turning point for the Chesapeake Bay through the completion of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and a new restoration strategy required by the Executive Order. The six states and District of Columbia will also receive an additional \$11.2 million in grants from the EPA in 2010, more than doubling 2009 funding levels. These grants will go to increase permitting, enforcement and other key regulatory activities.

“Success in restoring the Chesapeake Bay and local waterways hinges on the collective effort of all stakeholders, and this partnership provides a vehicle for federal and state governments to collaborate and ultimately reach our common goals,” said Administrator Jackson, who also serves as chair of the Federal Leadership Committee established by the Executive Order. “I value the opportunity for EPA to assume a leadership role.”

The Chesapeake Executive Council chair was transferred from Virginia Governor Timothy M. Kaine, who held the position since November 2008 and whose gubernatorial term ends this month.

"Last year, we charted a new, more effective course for improving the health of Bay waters by establishing critical two-year milestones that will serve as the foundation for future success," said Governor Kaine. "I am pleased with what we've been able to accomplish by working together, and I have no doubt that Administrator Jackson will build on our progress in 2010."

Members of the Executive Council praised Governor Kaine's actions on Bay issues. As Governor of Virginia, he permanently conserved nearly 400,000 acres of land, worked with Maryland to better protect the blue crab population, strengthened stormwater regulations, and launched climate change planning. As chair of Executive Council, Kaine led the effort to create two-year milestones, which represented a fundamental shift in goal-setting, and worked with the White House on the Executive Order, the most significant federal action on the Chesapeake Bay in 25 years.

"The health of our Chesapeake Bay is critical to the environmental and economic future of the states that surround it and the people who enjoy it, and these regional partnerships – particularly between Maryland and Virginia under Governor Kaine's leadership – have been invaluable to these efforts," said Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, past chair of the Executive Council. "Adding to these efforts the passion, partnership and authority of EPA Administrator Jackson will guide us through a new era of progress and accountability. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and the deepest wellspring of our history, economy, recreational life and character, and it is our obligation to preserve and protect it for future generations."

"Governor Kaine has been a dedicated leader during a very exciting year for the Chesapeake Bay," said Chesapeake Bay Commission Chair, Virginia Delegate John A. Cosgrove. "In Virginia, he has worked closely with the legislature on Chesapeake Bay issues over the last four years, and together we have made a tremendous amount of progress. I know that Governor-elect McDonnell will do his very best to meet the high standards set by Governor Kaine. The Chesapeake Bay Commission looks forward to continuing the strong partnership we have established with the Bay Program and working closely with Administrator Jackson in finding new and innovative ways to clean our Bay and preserve this national treasure for generations yet to come."

The Chesapeake Bay Executive Council sets the policy agenda for the Chesapeake Bay Program. For more on the Executive Council, visit www.chesapeakebay.net/committee_ec_info.aspx.

The Chesapeake Bay Program is a regional partnership that has coordinated and conducted the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. Partners include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; the U.S. Department of Agriculture; 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; and advisory groups of citizens, scientists and local government officials.