

NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office

NOAA Authorization Act of 1992

Passed/Signed October 1992

SEC. 307. CHESAPEAKE BAY ESTUARINE RESOURCES OFFICE.

a. ESTABLISHMENT. (1) The Secretary of Commerce shall establish, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an office to be known as the Chesapeake Bay Estuarine Resources Office (hereinafter referred to as the "Office").

(2) The Office shall be headed by a Director who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council. Any individual appointed as Director shall have knowledge and experience in research or resource management efforts in the Chesapeake Bay.

(3) The Director may appoint such additional personnel for the Office as the Director determines necessary to carry out this section.

b. FUNCTIONS. -- The Office, in consultation with the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council, shall--

(1) provide technical assistance to the Administrator, to other Federal departments and agencies, and to State and local government agencies in --

(a) assessing the processes that shape the Chesapeake Bay system and affect its living resources;

(b) identifying technical and management alternatives for the restoration and protection of living resources and the habitats they depend upon; and

(c) monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of management plans;

(2) develop and implement a strategy for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that integrates and science, research, monitoring, data collection, regulatory, and management responsibilities of the Secretary of Commerce in such a manner as to assist the cooperative, intergovernmental Chesapeake Bay Program to meet the commitments of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement;

(3) coordinate the programs and activities of the various organizations within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Chesapeake Regional Sea Grant Programs (including programs and activities in coastal and estuarine research, monitoring, and assessment; fisheries research and stock assessments; data management; remote sensing; coastal management; and habitat conservation);

(4) coordinate and activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with the activities of the Environmental Protection Agency and other Federal, State, and local agencies;

(5) establish an effective mechanism which shall ensure that projects have undergone appropriate peer review and provide other appropriate means to determine that projects have acceptable scientific and technical merit for the purpose of achieving maximum utilization of available funds and resources to

benefit the Chesapeake Bay area;

(6) remain cognizant of ongoing research, monitoring, and management projects and assist in the dissemination of the results and findings of those projects; and

(7) submit a biennial report to the Congress and the Secretary of Commerce with respect to the activities of the Office and on the progress made in protecting and restoring the living resources and habitat of the Chesapeake Bay.

(c) BUDGET LINE ITEM.--The Secretary of Commerce shall identify, in the President's annual budget to the Congress, the funding request for the Office.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.--Section 2 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Marine Fisheries Program Authorization Act (Public Law 98-210; 97 Stat. 1409), as amended by Section 302 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

(e) Of the sums authorized under subsection (a) of this section, no more than \$2,500,000 are authorized to be appropriated for each of the fiscal years 1992 and 1993 to enable the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish the Chesapeake Bay Estuarine Resources Office under Section 306 of the National Oceanic and atmospheric Administration Authorization Act of 1991. No more than 20 percent of the amount appropriated under the authorization in this subsection shall be use for administrative purposes.

(f) CHESAPEAKE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.--For purposes of this section, "Chesapeake Executive Council" means the representatives from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Environmental Protection Agency, the District of Columbia, and the Chesapeake Bay Commission, who are signatories to the Chesapeake Bay Agreement, and any future signatories to that Agreement.

For more information, contact:

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