

Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin



One Basin, One Future

**Celebrating 80 Years
Protecting the Potomac**

ICPRB MISSION

Our mission is to protect and enhance the waters and related resources of the Potomac River basin through science, regional cooperation, and education. Considered the "Nation's River," the Potomac plays an important role in the lives of more than six-million basin residents. Major cities in the Potomac basin include: Washington, DC; Frederick, MD; Harrisonburg, VA; Chambersburg, PA; and Martinsburg, WV. Through regional cooperation and partnerships, the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB) is protecting the river and improving the quality of life in the watershed.



Authorized by an Act of Congress in 1940, the ICPRB is a scientifically-focused, non-regulatory interstate compact agency of the Potomac basin jurisdictions. The Commission includes appointed Commissioners from each basin jurisdiction (Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia) as well as the Federal government. ICPRB was formed in response to extreme pollution levels that required a regional, cooperative response.

In 1970, amendments to the compact empowered ICPRB to address not just pollution issues, but water resources and related land issues.

Thanks to ICPRB and our partners, the Potomac River's water quality has in many ways vastly improved, but ongoing threats to the river (population increases, land use change and the growth of impervious surfaces, chemical contaminants, and nutrient and sediment enrichment) require regional attention. The regional efforts needed to address these challenges are set out in ICPRB's Comprehensive Plan.



SIGNING THE COMPACT

STUDYING AQUATIC LIFE



PROTECTING DRINKING WATER

ICPRB

80 YEARS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 1943 - IMPROVING TREATMENT OF WASTEWATER

In 1943, just three years after its founding, ICPRB issued a "Report on the Conditions Existing in the Potomac River Basin." The critical lack of infrastructure at that time was highlighted by the finding that only nine percent of sewage was being treated at a plant. By 1980, secondary treatment was achieved at all local wastewater treatment plants.



- 1978 - SUPPORTING AQUATIC RESOURCES

Led by ICPRB, the Low Flow Allocation Agreement (LFAA) was signed in 1978 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the states of Maryland and Virginia, the District of Columbia, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the Fairfax County Water Authority. Under the LFAA, each party agrees to maintain in-stream flows to meet minimum aquatic habitat requirements during a drought. It was the first significant example of multi-level co-operation on water use in the region.



- 1979 - COOPERATING ON DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

In 1979, ICPRB formed the Section for Cooperative Water Supply Operations on the Potomac (CO-OP), which helps guarantee a reliable supply of drinking water for the metropolitan area. Since 1981, CO-OP has conducted annual drought exercises that demonstrate the benefits of coordination among the water suppliers. The landmark Water Supply Coordination Agreement, which established a cooperative system of drought operations and planning, was signed in 1982.

**- 1984 -
ASSISTING
WATERSHED GROUPS**

In 1984, ICPRB sponsored a regional conference that drew national attention to the Anacostia as "The Other River." An ICPRB citizen stream steward created the Anacostia Watershed Society. Over the years, ICPRB assisted in the formation and development of several other watershed organizations, including the Rock Creek Conservancy and a sister-river relationship with the Arakawa River Society in Japan.



**- 1985 -
CREATING THE
EMERGENCY RIVER
SPILL MODEL**

In the mid-1980's, ICPRB developed the Emergency River Spill Model to provide time-of-travel information to water suppliers and emergency response agencies along the river, so they can appropriately respond to the situation and protect drinking water. The model continues to be an important tool during a spill response.



**- 1990 -
DEVELOPING
OPEN-SOURCE DATA**

Since the 1990s, ICPRB helped create and maintain standardized databases for water monitoring results in the basin. Thanks to ICPRB, data from various sources are now available online in a uniform format, where they can be easily accessed for state water quality assessments, Chesapeake Bay Program efforts, research, and information sharing.

The ICPRB guided the development and implementation of Shared Vision Planning on the North Branch Potomac River. Formed through a 1993 agreement by the governors of Maryland and West Virginia, as well as the Chair of ICPRB, the task force helps improve water quality and recreational opportunities in the region.



In 1995, ICPRB began restoration of the American shad in the Potomac through stocking, habitat restoration, and education. The ICPRB developed a partnership of federal, state, and regional governments along with watershed groups and schools. Shad stocks rebounded by 2002. Students still stock the river for educational purposes today.



In 2004, along with other partners in the basin, ICPRB organized and led the formation of a voluntary partnership between water suppliers and state and federal agencies known as the Potomac River Basin Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership (DWSPP). The group focuses on protecting the water quality of the river as the source of drinking water for millions of basin residents.

**- 1993 -
SPEARHEADING
THE NORTH BRANCH
POTOMAC RIVER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**- 1995 -
RESTORING
THE AMERICAN
SHAD FISH**

**- 2004 -
PROTECTING DRINKING
WATER SOURCES**

In 2008, ICPRB established the initial Chesapeake Basin-wide Index of Biotic Integrity for non-tidal stream macroinvertebrates, called Chessie BIBI. A refined version of the index is now used by the Chesapeake Bay Program to measure progress in restoring the watershed's streams.



In 2014, ICPRB, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and The Nature Conservancy published the "Middle Potomac Watershed Assessment: Potomac River Sustainable Flow and Water Resources Analysis," which showed the need for a basin-wide plan for the management of water resources. After working with a team of technical experts and engaged stakeholders, ICPRB issued the "Potomac River Basin Comprehensive Water Resources Plan" in 2018. The plan is a shared vision of reliable drinking water supplies, good water quality, healthy aquatic life, and sustainable land use in the basin.



Today during a spill in the river, ICPRB continues to facilitate coordination among water suppliers and government agencies to ensure quick and efficient response to protect our drinking water. The ICPRB is working to secure additional supplemental off-river water storage to meet the water needs of the growing Washington, DC metropolitan area.

**- 2008 -
ASSESSING STREAM
BIOLOGICAL HEALTH**

**- 2014 -
GUIDING REGIONAL
PLANNING**

**- TODAY -
PREPARING FOR THE
FUTURE**

**ADOPTED IN 2018, THE ICPRB
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONTAINS
14 RECOMMENDATIONS:**

ALL AREAS

- Develop an inventory of roles, responsibilities, and areas of authority and discuss how effectively current programs and activities are being carried out.

ENSURE SUSTAINABLE WATER USES AND SUPPLIES

- Report on basin-wide water uses, projected demands, and consumptive demands.
- Conduct additional studies on water uses that fall below state water reporting thresholds.
- Pursue actions that would contribute to a more sustainable and resilient water supply, including an evaluation of the potential impact of climate change and reviews of existing interstate water management agreements.

PROTECT AND IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

- Promote water quality information sharing.
- Educate citizens and professionals about water quality in the Potomac basin.
- Pursue actions that would contribute to protecting and improving water quality, such as identification of common water quality goals and recommending roles and actions for other agencies.

MANAGE LAND USE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

- Research timely land use related information for decision-making.
- Effectively disseminate scientific data and information compiled by ongoing research.
- Pursue actions that would contribute to managing human land to protect water quality, water use, and aquatic health, for example, applying a watershed approach for mitigation and restoration and tracking, promoting and increasing riparian buffer protection.

PROTECT ECOLOGICAL HEALTH

- Share across jurisdictions the data, analysis results, and other information from successful restoration approaches.
- Coordinate across jurisdictions plans and programs that protect ecological value.
- Support and coordinate programs that identify, protect, conserve, restore, enhance, and connect natural areas, especially along waterways, for example, considering ecologically valuable waters in all land and water use planning and improving coordination between multiple, diverse restoration efforts.
- Pursue complementary actions that would contribute to protecting ecological health, including actions involving identification of stressors and protection of refugia.

Make a difference by helping fund the ambitious Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the Potomac River Basin will fulfill the human and ecological needs of current and future generations.

On October 10, 2020, ICPRB will hold an 80th anniversary celebration. Sponsorships are available. All proceeds will go to implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Your support will help ensure clean and abundant drinking water, a fishable and swimmable river, sustainable land use practices, and coordinated actions that address threats to water quality. Remember, it is **"One Basin, One Future."**

**You Can Help
Protect the
Potomac**

**Sponsor an award
at our
80th anniversary
celebration!**

**Oak is the traditional
80th Anniversary.**

**Native trees are
important for water
quality!**

**For more
information about
sponsorship
opportunities,
please contact us.**

WEBSITE
potomacriver.org

AWARDS

- ◆ Montgomery Meigs (Drinking Water)
- ◆ Abel Wolman (Clean Water)
- ◆ Rachel Carson (Aquatic Life)
- ◆ Gilbert Gude (Communication & Education)
- ◆ Herbert Sachs (Leadership)

SPONSOR LEVELS

- ◆ White Oak: \$80,000
- ◆ Scarlet Oak: \$40,000
- ◆ Chestnut Oak: \$20,000
- ◆ Chinkapin Oak: \$10,000
- ◆ Pin Oak: \$5,000
- ◆ Northern Red Oak: \$1,000

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