



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE WATER RESOURCES OF THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN

## Summary

Susquehanna River Basin Commission

December 2008

### **SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMPACT**

The Susquehanna River Basin Compact (Compact) was enacted in December 1970 as Public Law 91-575 and went into effect in January 1971. It joined the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland as equal partners for a period of 100 years to manage the Susquehanna basin's water resources through proper planning, development and regulation.

### **SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION**

The Compact created the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (Commission) as the single administrative agency to develop, effectuate, coordinate and adopt plans, policies, and programs related to water resources of the basin. As equal partners, the member jurisdictions each appoint a commissioner who serves as the spokesperson for the jurisdiction that he or she represents. Under the leadership of the Executive Director, technical, administrative, and public information personnel support the daily operations of the Commission, which is headquartered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The mission of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission is to enhance public welfare through comprehensive planning, water supply allocation, and management of the basin's water resources. As a federal-interstate compact body, its jurisdiction is defined by the natural boundaries of the river basin rather than the political boundaries of the member states. As such, the Commission serves as a forum to provide coordinated management, promote communication among its members, and resolve water resource issues and controversies within the basin.

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The Compact requires the Commission to formulate and adopt a comprehensive plan for the immediate and long-range development and use of the water resources of the basin. This *Comprehensive Plan for the Water Resources of the Susquehanna River Basin* provides an overarching framework for the Commission to manage and develop the basin's water resources and serves as a guide for all Commission programs and activities. The Plan supports the goals set forth in the Compact and provides a basis for achieving desired results, meeting goals, and taking actions. It is further intended to be a useful resource for the Commission's member jurisdictions, water resource managers, private sector interests and others in the basin. This updated Comprehensive Plan replaces the previous plan, adopted in 1987, and is available on the Commission's web site at [www.srbc.net/planning/compplanfiles.asp](http://www.srbc.net/planning/compplanfiles.asp).

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## **Priority Management Areas**

For the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan, the Commission grouped its focused management responsibilities into the six key water resource needs and identified them as Priority Management Areas; they are as follows:

- (1) Water Supply
- (2) Water Quality
- (3) Flooding
- (4) Ecosystems
- (5) Chesapeake Bay
- (6) Coordination, Cooperation, and Public Information

Each of the six Priority Management Areas covers desired results, goals, ongoing Commission activities, and the actions needed to meet the goals. In total, 30 goals have been established with 74 actions identified as being necessary to meet the goals. The Commission has lead responsibility for many of the actions. Some of the actions are to be taken by member jurisdictions and other groups and organizations, with the Commission providing support, assistance or encouragement.

## **Areas of Special Interest**

While the Priority Management Areas – with their goals and actions – serve as the primary vehicle for meeting the basin’s water resource needs, the Commission also recognized the benefits of including other long-standing and emerging programs and problems of interest within the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission selected 12 topics and designated them as Areas of Special Interest; they are:

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| (1) Abandoned Mine Drainage                                     | (7) Energy Production   |
| (2) Climate Change  | (8) Flood Forecast and Warning                                |
| (3) Consumptive Use Mitigation                                  | (9) Invasive Species  |
| (4) Drought Coordination  | (10) Migratory Fish Restoration                               |
| (5) Economic Development, Recreation<br>and Other Public Values | (11) Potentially Stressed Areas and<br>Water Challenged Areas |
| (6) Emerging Contaminants                                       | (12) Water and Wastewater Infrastructure                      |

Management activities and future direction have been provided for each Area of Special Interest. The Commission believes they need to be addressed by the combined efforts of all levels of government, the private sector and the Commission.

## **WATER RESOURCES PROGRAM**

The Compact requires the Commission to adopt an annual water resources program, based upon the Comprehensive Plan, and consisting of the projects and facilities to be undertaken by the Commission and others during the ensuing six years or other reasonably foreseeable period (currently defined to be two to three years). Accordingly, the Commission’s annual Water Resources Program (WRP) is to serve as the implementation document for the actions identified in this Comprehensive Plan.

## **ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AND FUTURE UPDATES**

The true value of this Comprehensive Plan will be measured by the degree to which its goals are met through the combination of ongoing Commission activities and taking the identified actions. An annual assessment of progress in meeting goals will be made by the Commission when preparing its annual Water Resources Program. Updates to the full Comprehensive Plan will be made every five years and a complete revision will be made every 15 years.