

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

ENVIROMATTERS

January 12, 2007

Secretary Kendl P. Philbrick: "The Future is Bright for MDE"

In the last four years of the Ehrlich-Steele administration, under Governors Ehrlich's leadership and his strong political will, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has accomplished what few administrations have been able to do. We have taken aggressive measures to protect the Bay through the Bay Restoration Act, revitalize our land resources with Brownfield's reform, and working for cleaner air through the Healthy Air Act.

It has been my privilege and honor to work with the very talented and dedicated men and women of MDE, who have the best interests of the citizens Maryland and our environment at heart.

Our Most Precious Resource - Our People

The strength in reaching this administration's goals lies in the talents of our employees. MDE's employees approach their work with a positive attitude and solid teamwork. They deal with controversial issues by exercising appropriate authority and diplomacy among multiple stakeholders and representatives. MDE personnel put the state and environmental issues above their own; they are effective at solving problems – to craft and implement strategies that ultimately restore and protect the environment for all Marylanders.

The people at MDE help craft policy and decision-making that make real environmental improvements possible. Their daily work yields distinct improvements that are applied and in effect – not just data gathering and studies. At the end of the day, what's important is that we have achieved real, measurable environmental improvements.

The Brownfields Reform Act, Improving Maryland's Land Resources

Reforming the Voluntary Cleanup Program addresses cleaning up polluted vacant and underutilized industrial and commercial properties. In signing into law the Brownfields Reform Act, the Governor was able to expedite getting these projects off the ground by simplifying the application process and strengthening the liability protection features of the Voluntary Cleanup Program.

Bay Restoration Act - Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay

Maryland has, time and again demonstrated its capability of leading the way in the Chesapeake Bay watershed restoration. MDE has gained the endorsement of many

environmental stakeholders who consider the Bay Restoration Fund, the most significant legislation ever passed to reduce nutrient discharge to the Bay.

Healthy Air Act - Helping Marylanders Breathe Cleaner Air

Governor Ehrlich's leadership prompted one of the most sweeping clean air legislative initiatives in the country. Although ozone levels have dropped drastically in the last few years, much more needs to be done to continue the trend toward cleaner air. Implementing controls on our own major in-state sources shows that Maryland is doing their part in reducing air pollutants at the source. In addition, Maryland, along with other eastern states, has begun meaningful dialogue with several upwind states to identify ways in which we can work together to improve air quality in the pollutant transport areas. All of our efforts place our state ahead of many to meet the Bay Agreement commitments.

Our partnership efforts take a "lead by example" approach. We are all in this together – protecting Maryland's environment involves cooperation among citizens, local, state and federal governments.

Cooperation and Coordination Makes Cohesive Union

I feel that MDE has contributed significantly in bringing about an unprecedented level of cooperation among our sister agencies than ever before. By cooperating with agencies in planning, agriculture, transportation, and natural resources – we've succeeded in leveraging our abilities to improve Maryland for all our citizens.

I will truly miss the people and the opportunity to continue working with MDE – the future is bright for this agency and I trust that my successors will continue to strive for environmental restoration, protection and improvement.

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