

February 17, 2022

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Hogan:

This letter serves as support from the Allegany County Chamber of Commerce for the **Potomac River Mitigation Bank** project. It is an exciting flagship project that brings together sorely needed environmental stewardship and human flourishing. Our organization represents approximately 300 businesses in Allegany County, most of which are small businesses that would be impacted by the success of a project as outlined herein.

The restoration of the North Branch of the Potomac River to its natural ecological state is a critical step towards the vision of a River Park, which will also foster economic development, and preserve the historically significant Canal Place in downtown Cumberland, Maryland.

The restoration of the North Branch of the Potomac River will:

- Re-open fish passages that have been obstructed for almost 70 years;
- Improve river habitats for about 5 miles of the Potomac River;
- Welcome outdoor enthusiasts like anglers and kayakers who normally travel further downstream;
- Remove safety concerns around flooding and drowning at the dam;
- Potentially serve as a flagship, educational project in the US and internationally.
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These objectives will be accomplished through the removal of the Cumberland Dam under the Blue Bridge. Fish-friendly, in-stream hydraulic structures will be installed replicating natural whitewater found on reference stream reaches along the Potomac River. With the proposal to perform this work using mitigation banking, I strongly support the expansion of the service area to include areas downstream to the Chesapeake Bay. This extended service area will allow for the mitigation credits to serve the area of impact with the improved upstream activities.

It is time we were proud of our impact on the environment. I request that an expedited review and approval of the project be done.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Juli R. McCoy  
Executive Director

cc: Beth E. Bachur, USACE, Baltimore District  
Kelly Neff, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Allegany County Delegation