**Executive Summary**

* The Lower Susquehanna River Watershed Assessment found that the majority of the sediment that enters the bay during storm events originates from the watershed, or upstream sources, rather than scour from Conowingo Pond.
* This report is grounded in science and makes clear that the bulk of the pollution that enters the Chesapeake Bay comes from the entire bay watershed and sources upstream from the Conowingo Dam.
* The health of the Chesapeake Bay should be addressed with science-based, regional solutions that will truly address the problem.
* The Conowingo Dam should be relicensed so it can continue to provide clean energy for Maryland and recreational and economic benefits for our community. The dam should be part of a regional solution to the broader issues surrounding the health of the bay.
* Some are trying to inaccurately portray the dam as a source of pollution and are calling for dredging behind the dam to occur. The report makes clear that not only is dredging prohibitively expensive (as much as $270 million per year), but that it will do little to actually help the health of the bay.
* Dredging the Conowingo Dam may ultimately increase sediment in the Chesapeake Bay—the environmental costs to the region are 10 times greater than the potential benefits.
* In addition to being ineffective in helping the Bay’s water quality, dredging could impede or destroy many of the recreational benefits that the dam provides to the region.

**Report Overview**

* The report concludes the primary impact to aquatic life and the bay’s health comes from nutrients and sediment from the Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay watershed.
* The report finds that all three lower Susquehanna River reservoirs, including Conowingo Pond, are at dynamic equilibrium. In dynamic equilibrium state, sediment (and associated nutrients) will continue to accumulate in the reservoirs until an episodic flood (scouring) event occurs. Removing a significant amount of sediment has little long-term impact to the health of the bay
* During lower flow periods, the reservoirs trap sediment and aid bay health until the next high-flow event occurs. The finding strengthens the need to address sediment with a regional approach focusing on the upstream watersheds.
* The LSRWA also concluded that execution of Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) will have the largest influence on the health of the Chesapeake Bay.
* In addition to being ineffective in helping the bay’s water quality, dredging could impede or destroy many of the recreational benefits that the dam provides to the region.
* The report states that nutrients are a greater impact to the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem than sediment.
* The Corps concluded that there are no viable options for reducing the amount of sediment from the reservoir, and removing large amounts of sediment results in minimal and short-lived benefits to the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem at an extremely high cost.

**About the Conowingo Dam**

With a 572 megawatt capacity, the Conowingo Dam is Maryland’s largest source of renewable electricity, producing more clean energy than all other sources combined. The Conowingo power plant:

* Produces 1.6 million megawatt hours of electricity annually, enough to power more than 159,000 typical households for an entire year.
* Does not emitcarbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases. For the past ten years, the clean energy generated at the Conowingo Dam has avoided 6.5 tons of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere. The equivalent of taking 1.2 million cars off the road.
* Has avoided the burning of 2.8 million tons of coal in the past ten years – enough to fill M&T Bank Stadium four times.

The Conowingo Dam and reservoir help sustain wildlife and play a vital role in protecting the health of the Chesapeake Bay. The Conowingo power plant:

* Prevents 2 million tons of sediment a year from entering the upper Chesapeake.
* Provides prime breeding, nesting and foraging grounds for the American Bald Eagle.

Conowingo also offers recreational opportunities like boating, hiking, fishing and bird watching for 250,000 visitors each year.

Conowingo delivers $273 million in annual economic benefits to Maryland and its local communities and pays $10 million in state and local taxes annually, including $3.8 million in property taxes.

Conowingo has been providing electricity to the regional system since 1928.