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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### Clean Chesapeake Coalition Intervenes in Exelon's Petition to FERC

Chestertown, MD (3 April 2019) – Last week, the Clean Chesapeake Coalition (CCC), on behalf of its Maryland member counties, filed its [Motion to Intervene](#) in the Petition for Declaratory Order by Exelon Generation Company now pending before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The CCC has been at the forefront of this issue for years, long before the current surge of interest in the threat the Conowingo Factor poses to Bay health, back when certain special interest groups were still calling the impacts of the Conowingo Dam a “[red herring](#)” in the context of saving the Bay.

CCC member counties and their county official remain disappointed at the lengths Exelon is willing to take to shirk environmental responsibility associated with the operation of this lucrative power station. This private, for-profit corporation which, according to its [own website](#) recorded \$35.9 billion in revenues in 2018, claims that the Maryland Department of the Environment's qualifications for a Water Quality Certification are “impracticable.” Meanwhile, Maryland counties with annual budgets that are a tiny fraction of Exelon's revenues, are spending enormous amounts of taxpayer dollars to develop and implement their Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP) and help Maryland meet its Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) goals; and the local economies of Bayside counties are hurt by the Conowingo Factor impacts on the seafood industry.

Well-supported by science and enforceable under the law, the Hogan Administration has embraced the once-in-a-generation opportunity to impose licensing conditions requiring the owner of Conowingo Dam to properly manage the vast quantities of nutrients, sediment and other contaminants that are accumulated in the reservoir above the Dam and scoured into the Bay, not just during major storm events but now, with increasing frequency, because of the loss of trapping capacity in the reservoir.

Consider the following: in 2016, according to [United States Geological Survey](#) (USGS) monitoring data, the average daily discharge at the Dam reached or exceeded 100,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) on a total of six (6) days throughout the year; in 2017, this happened 18 times; in 2018, this happened on **77 different days**. In fact, in 2018, there was only one month, June, in which there were no days with an average daily discharge rate at 100,000 cfs or higher. Thus far in the first quarter of 2019 (January 1 - March 31), USGS provisional data has recorded **16 days** with an average daily discharge at or above 100,000 cfs. We know that when the water is coming through the Dam at 100,000 cfs, scouring begins to occur, loading nutrient-laden sediment into the upper Chesapeake Bay in shocking proportions. At this rate, we are on track to reach our allowable nutrient levels for the **entire watershed** solely through the inability of the Conowingo Reservoir to keep upstream pollutants trapped behind the spill gates.

Exelon maintains that the Dam is not a source of pollution and while it may be true that the Dam does not itself *create* pollution, CCC and other intervenors contend that its operations have a severe negative impact on the health of the Bay and that the 14-mile reservoir behind the Dam, also the responsibility of Exelon, must be properly maintained so that the downstream cleanup progress made to date is not wiped out by the next major storm event. Given that there is an 80% chance of a 25-year storm occurring during the re-licensing period sought by Exelon, the billions that have already been spent downstream to improve the quality of our country's largest estuary will be washed down the proverbial toilet if Exelon continues to dodge any meaningful role in Bay stewardship.

A copy of the Coalition's recent Motion to Intervene in the FERC relicensing process may be found on its website: [www.cleanchesapeakecoalition.org](http://www.cleanchesapeakecoalition.org)

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#### **About the Clean Chesapeake Coalition**

The Clean Chesapeake Coalition is an association of Maryland county governments (currently Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent and Queen Anne's) whose local elected officials have coalesced to pursue improvement to the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay in the most prudent and fiscally responsible manner – through research, coordination and advocacy.

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