



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Lia Parisien, (202) 266-4931 or lparisien@ecos.org

Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)

ECOS to Present 2016 Innovation Awards to District of Columbia, Virginia, and Washington State

Washington, DC – The Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) today announced the recipients of its 2016 State Program Innovation Awards, to be presented later this month at the association’s Fall Meeting in Wheeling, West Virginia. The annual awards program recognizes outstanding state initiatives that can serve as replicable models for other states.

“Highlighting state innovation on the environment is a key longstanding ECOS goal reinforced in our new strategic plan and in weekly state success stories now posted on our website,” said ECOS President Martha Rudolph, Director of Environmental Programs with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. “As part of that mission, ECOS each year puts out a call for the best examples of state innovation and ingenuity so that bright ideas can be transferred across the nation. The dozen programs nominated in 2016 are quite impressive and already are yielding tangible results.”

Selected by the ECOS Executive Committee, this year’s honorees are:

- ❖ **The District of Columbia’s Stormwater Retention Credit (SRC) trading market.** The program aims to solve the longstanding challenge of runoff by accelerating the installation of green infrastructure through strong, innovative stormwater regulations that provide flexibility for regulated development while maximizing protection of waterbodies and incentivizing voluntary retrofits. Credit trading is leveraging private investment to reap community benefits.
- ❖ **Virginia’s Wetland Monitoring and Assessment program.** The robust, science-based strategy for evaluating the condition of wetlands in the Commonwealth seeks to develop a long-term implementation plan for wetland monitoring and assessment. Data collected from the assessment have been compiled into a handy online GIS-based wetland data viewer called the Wetland Condition Assessment Tool (WetCAT).
- ❖ **Washington State’s first-of-its-kind app to warn emergency responders.** The new smartphone app developed and piloted by the state allows emergency responders to access Community Right-to-Know data on what chemicals are stored at a facility and in what quantity. The app proved vital in responding to a recent wildfire that burned a warehouse containing toxic chemicals.

On September 26 at the Fall Meeting, ECOS will hear presentations on the winning programs from Brian Van Wye, Chief of the District Department of Environment’s Stormwater Management Division Program Implementation Branch; David Paylor, Director of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; and Maia Bellon, Director of the Washington Department of Ecology. To register for the meeting, visit www.ecos.org.

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ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental agency leaders.