CHOPTANK RIVERKEEPER

The overall pattern this year showed that the Upper Choptank River region had surprising improvements in water clarity and a notable improvement in TP; whereas the Lower Choptank River region reported worse water clarity and TN. Reviewing the weather data for 2017 pinpointed a unique rainfall pattern. The season saw an average amount of rainfall, but May, July, and August were very wet months with at least 7" of rain in each. In July and August, the rain was less frequent, but it was intense with greater amounts of precipitation per rain event. When the Lower Choptank River region received these storms, the runoff (or "input") was more impactful because the flow path from land to water was shorter. In the Upper Choptank region, where there are more narrow streams flowing through a larger landmass, that rainfall had more land to soak into before reaching our waterways. Many agricultural best management practices aim to slow down the flow of water to process pollution. We're optimistic that the many efforts to reduce the number of inputs coming from the land are working!