



# Be Salt Wise

WSSC Water

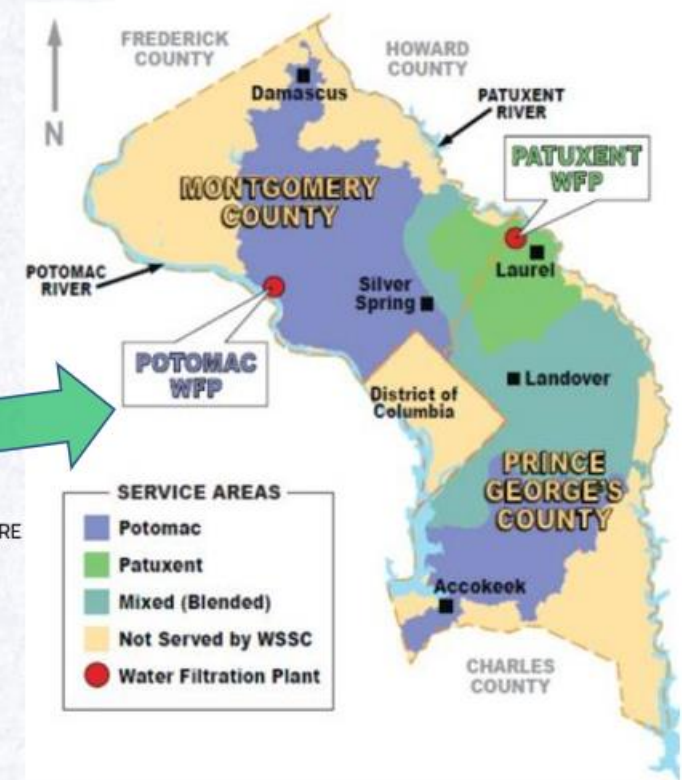
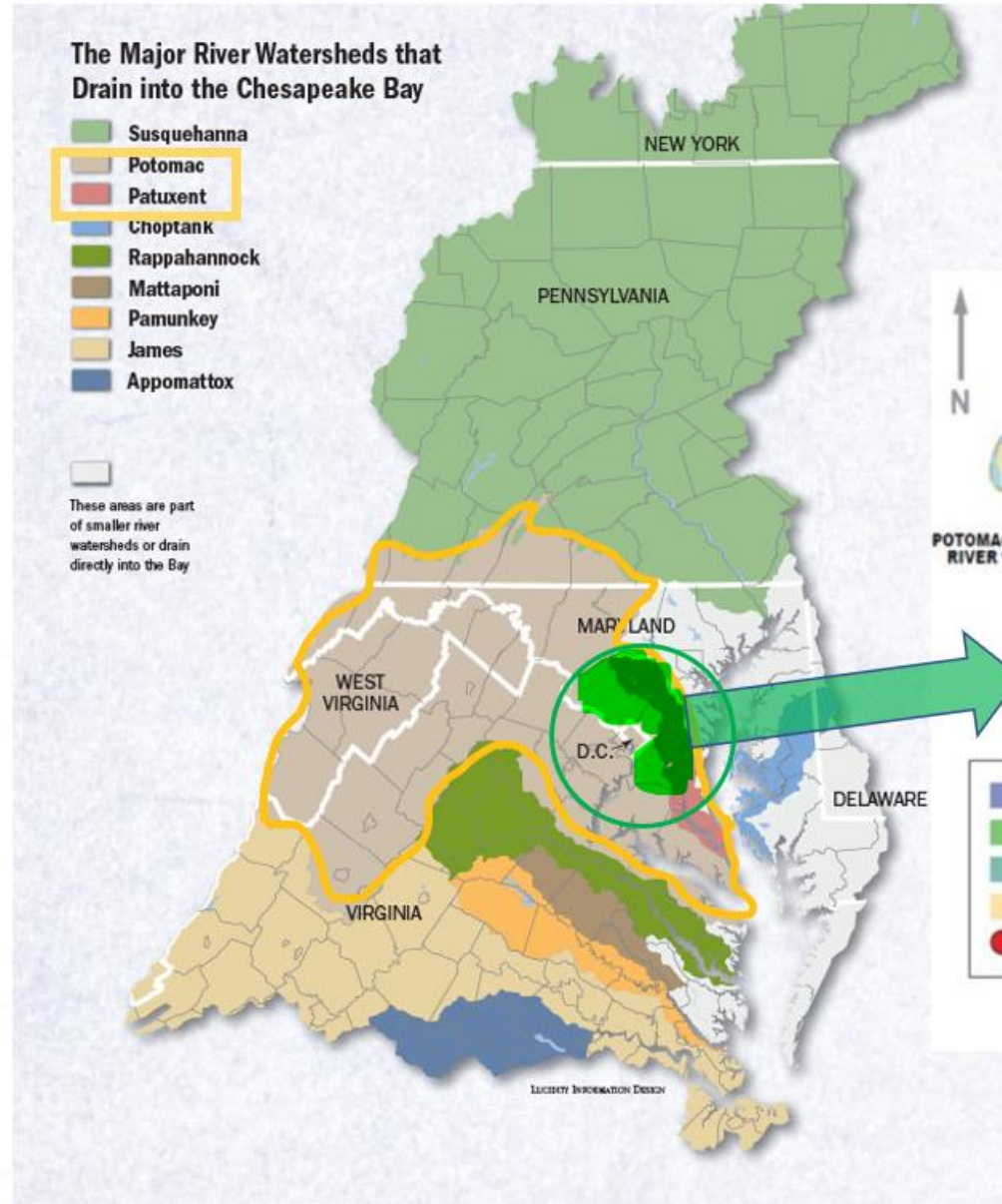
Nicole Horvath, Environmental Outreach Coordinator

July 2023

# Who is WSSC Water



- Established in 1918
- One of the largest water and wastewater utilities in the nation
- Potomac and Patuxent Rivers supply drinking water for roughly 1.9 million residents in two counties in Maryland that surround Washington, DC.
- Committed to environmental stewardship and protecting the health of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed



Why does a water utility care about salt?



# Salty Water Impacts Utility Operations

High salt concentrations in water can lead to:

- Erosion of organic and inorganic material from soil
- High chlorine demand to treat water
- Corrosion of water supply infrastructure
- Discolored water



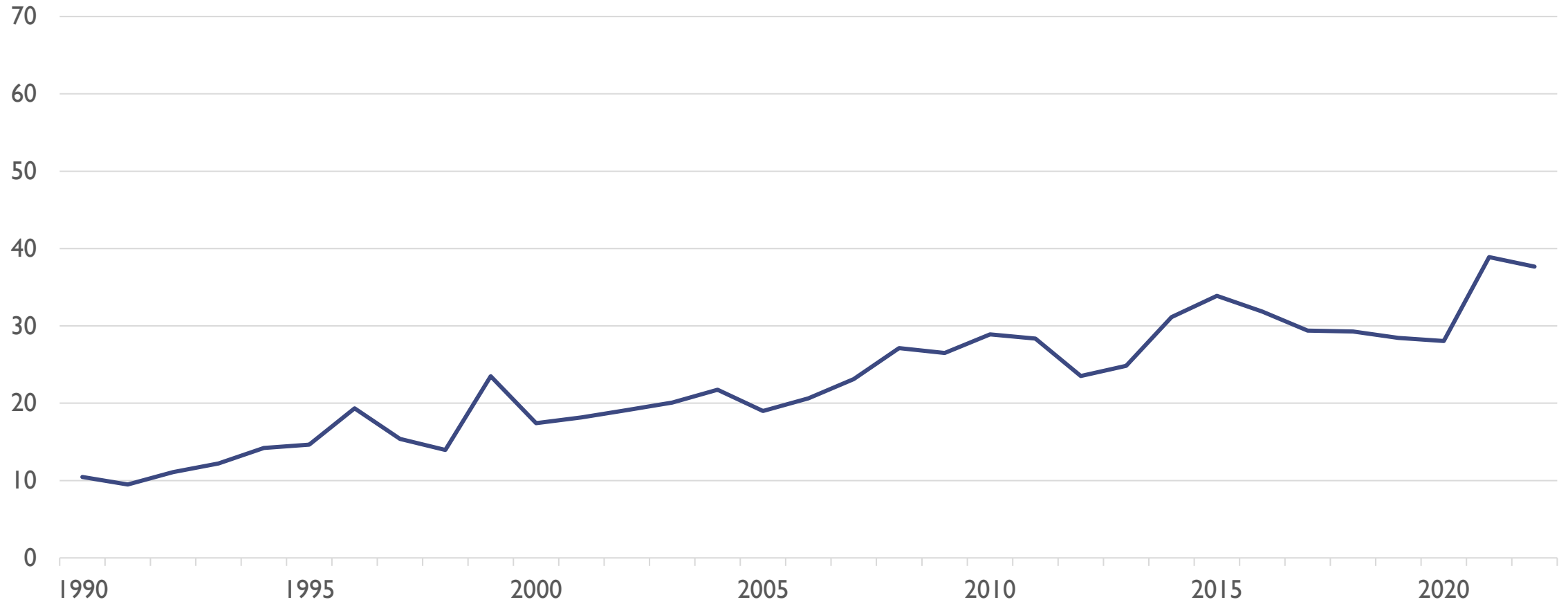
# Salty Water Impacts Customer

- Chloride adds salty taste to the water, decreases customer trust
- EPA Health Advisory at 20 mg/L for individuals with salt restricted diet
- Mobilization of lead in pipes



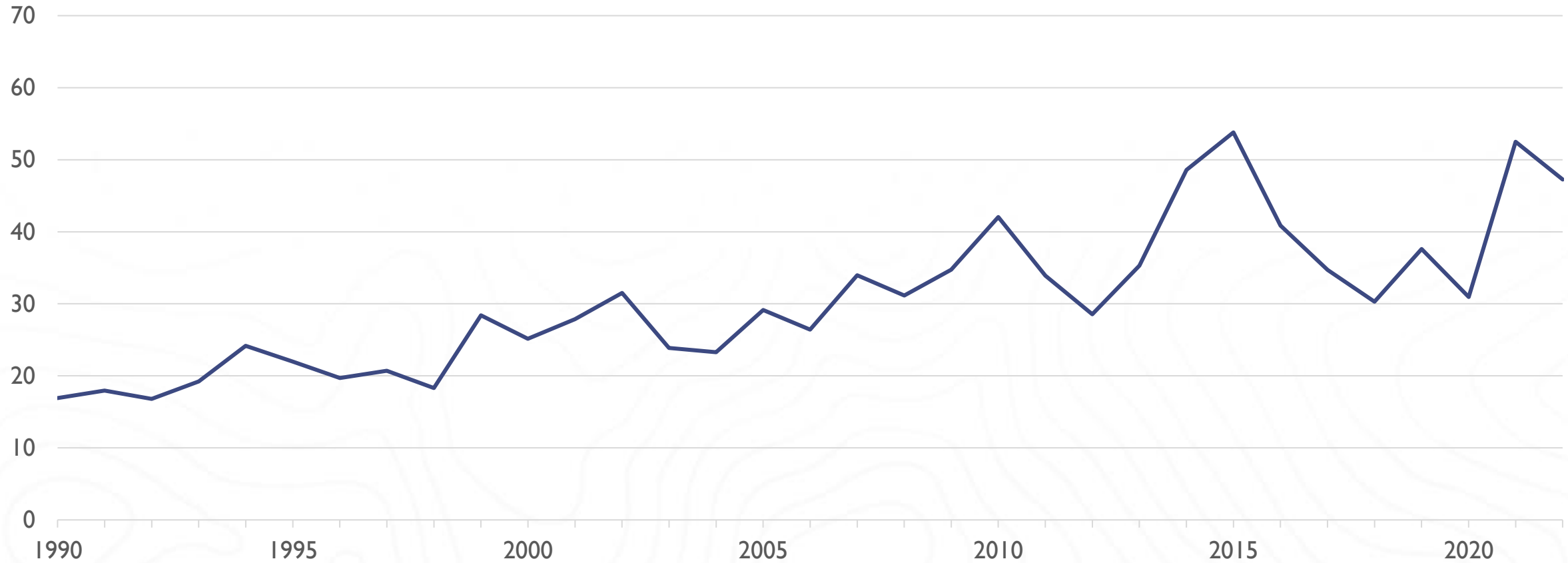
## 260% increase in Annual Average Chloride Concentration of Raw Water in Patuxent River Reservoirs

Average  
Concentration (mg/L)



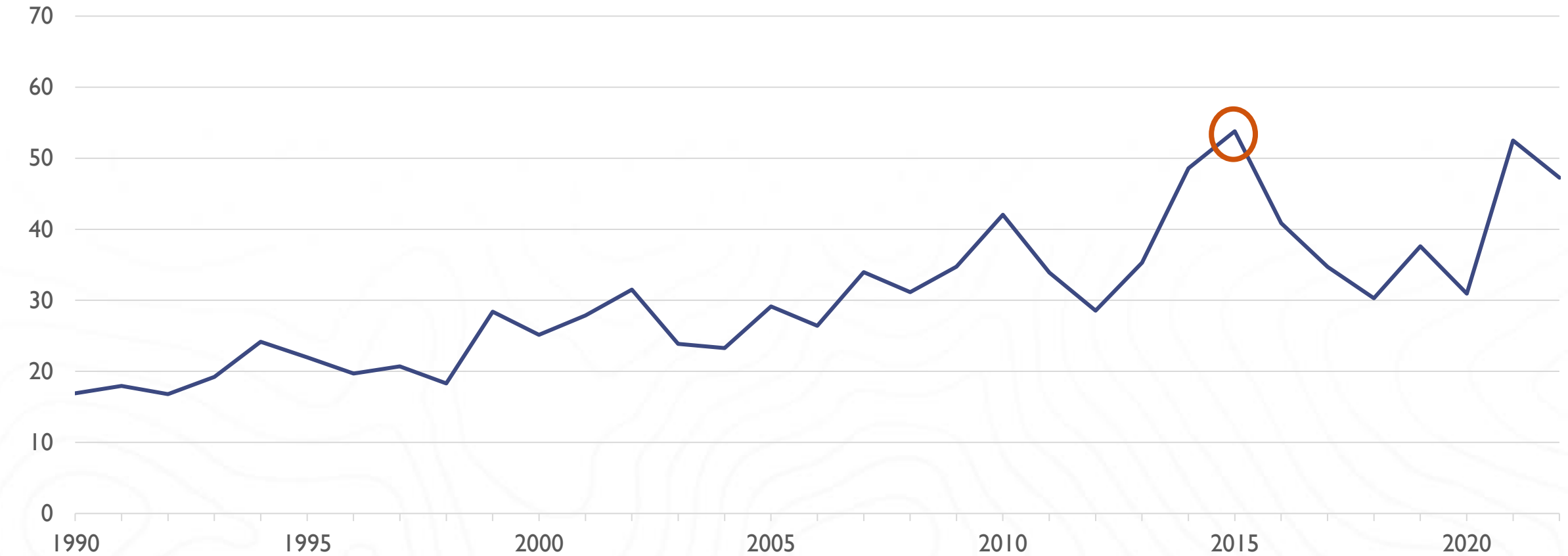
## 200% Increase in Annual Average Chloride Concentration of Raw Water in Potomac River

Average  
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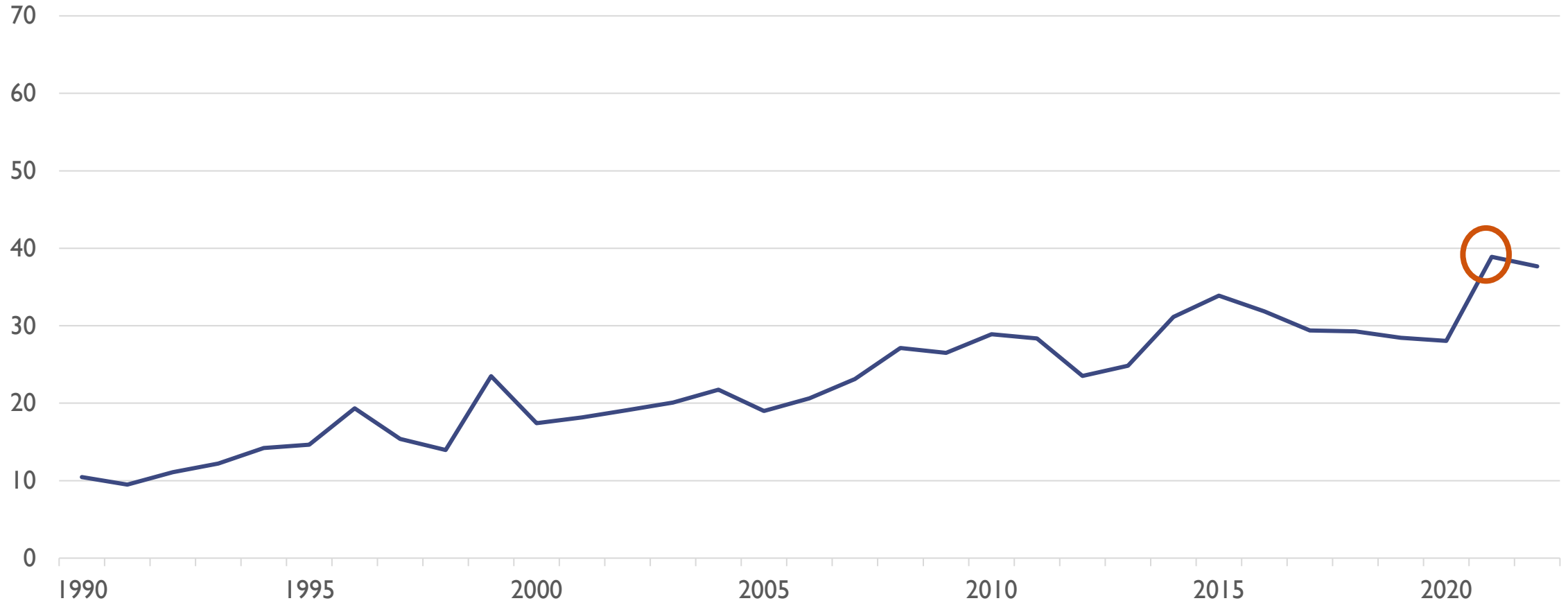
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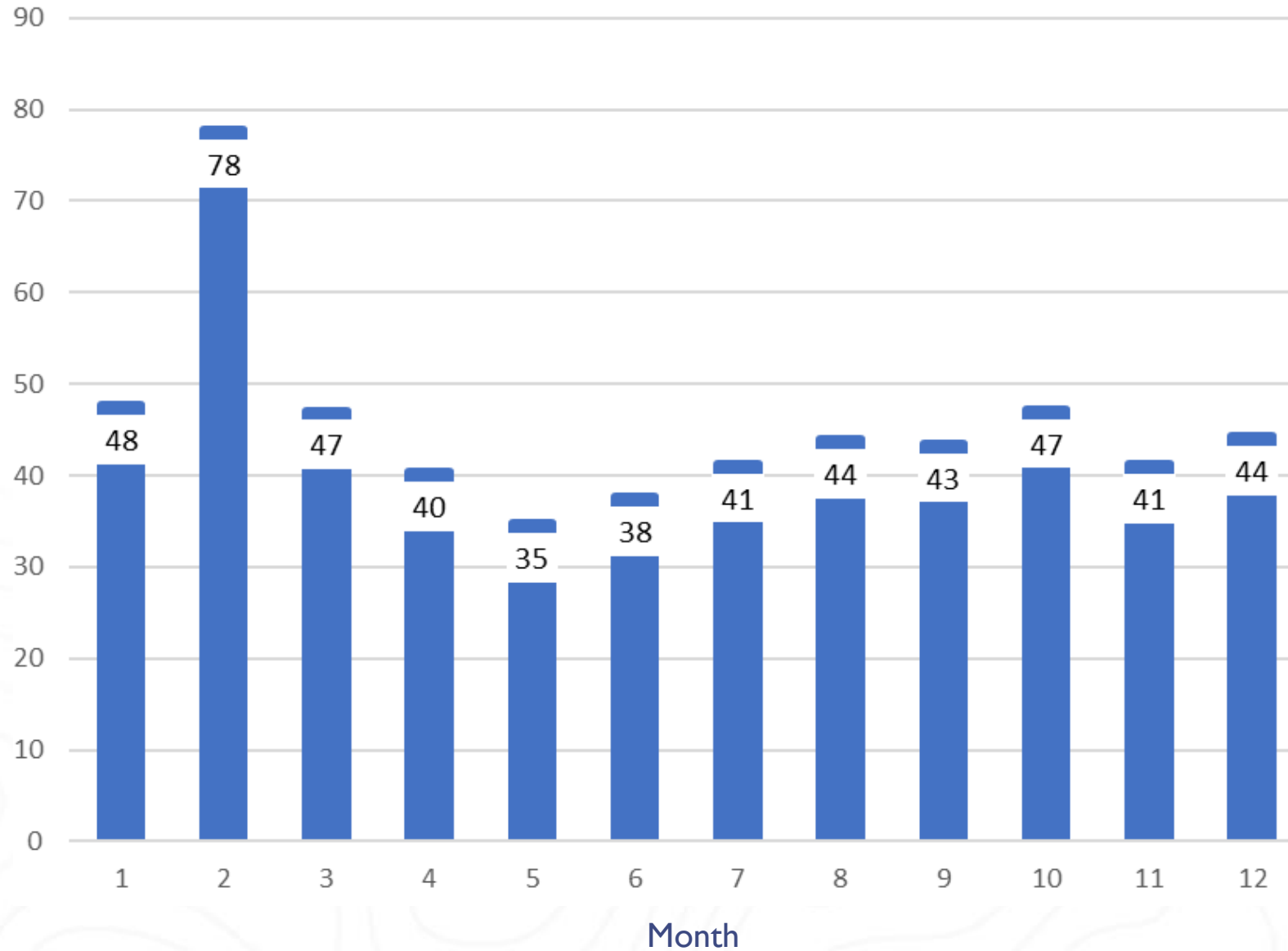
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## Potomac Monthly Tap Average Chloride (2012-2022)



2/4/2021 12:00 AM

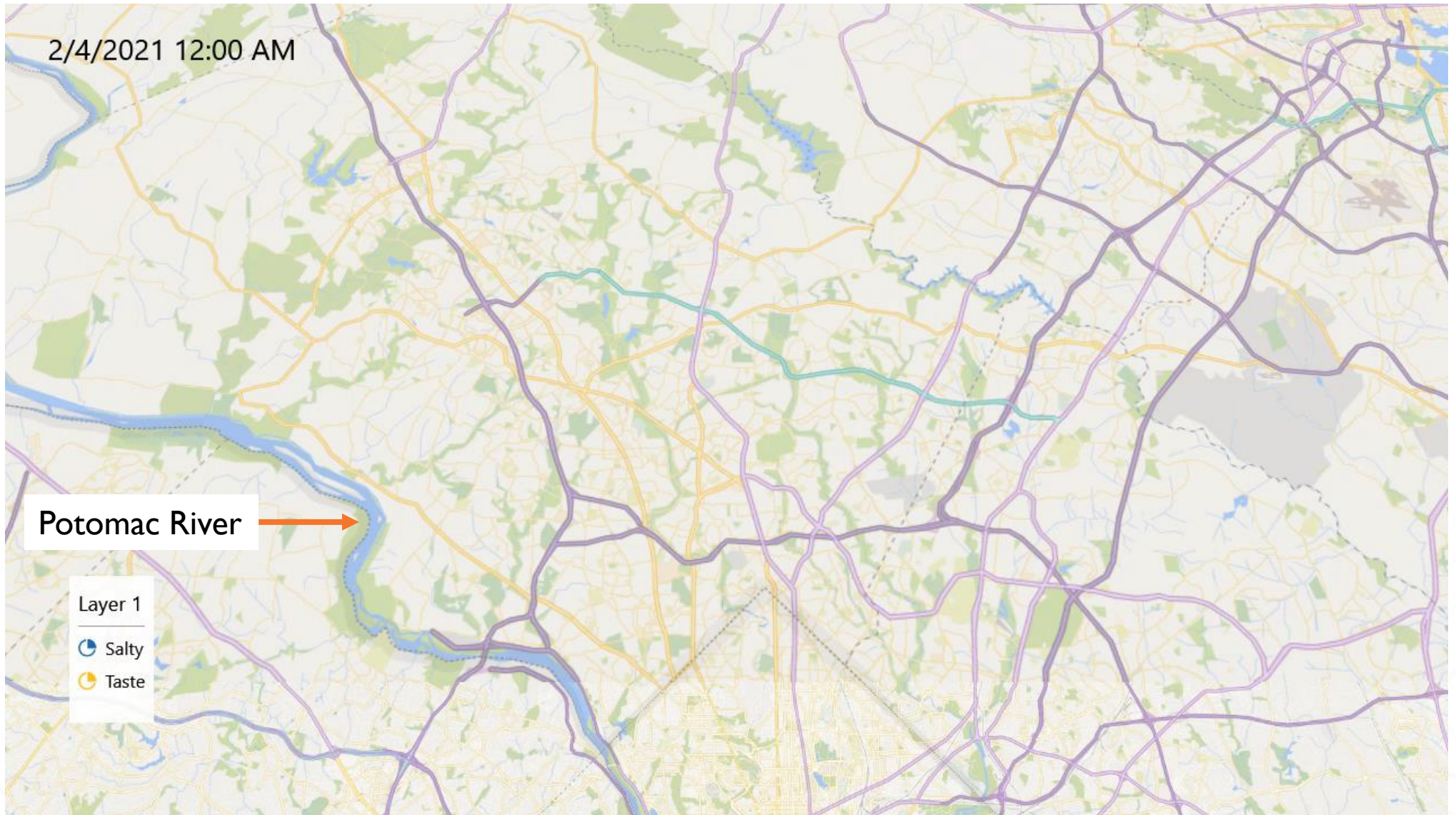
Potomac River



Layer 1

 Salty

 Taste



# What is WSSC Water Doing?

# WSSC Water - Salt Summit

- Goal - discuss issues related to winter salting and water quality and develop regional initiatives to reduce impacts on waterways and infrastructure
- Bring together state and local agencies
- Take Aways
  - Topic that all agencies were concerned
  - Many agencies are already doing great work to reduce the amount of salt put on roadways.
  - More data is needed
  - Need to also focus on public perceptions
- Created 3 workgroups – outreach, policy and technical

# Regional Salt Outreach Workgroup



- Why do we need a regional work group?
  - Many impacting WSSC Water's drinking water sources aren't customers
  - Allows the Winter Salt message to be amplified across the region
    - Ensures continuity of messaging
  - More human resources & potential savings
  - Increased visibility with local media outlets



# Salt Outreach Work Group Activities

- Salt applicator trainings – Statewide, Regional and Local
- Messaging to residents via newsletters and social media
  - Smart Salt pledge
- Development of Radio PSA
- Data shared for High School Biology Road Salt Unit
- Winter Ready media events
- Paint the Plow



As temperatures drop and winter weather moves in, neighbors rely on each other to keep their public walkways clear from ice and snow. Sometimes, road salt is necessary to prevent icy pavement. Are you a salt-savvy neighbor? Take the quiz below...

I clear the snow from my walk as soon as possible

I wait until after all the snow is removed to apply road salt

**Did you know?**  
12 ounces of salt is the perfect amount for 10 sidewalk squares or a 20 foot driveway. Any more than that is ineffective, and unnecessarily harmful to humans, pets, plants, wildlife, and infrastructure.

12 oz. mug = 10 sidewalk squares  
or  
a one-lane 20ft driveway

I only use salt when absolutely necessary

I use only the amount of salt that is needed

I spread salt evenly so that the granules are 1-3 inches apart

IF YOU CHECKED EVERY BOX, THEN YOU'RE A WINTER PRO!

For more information and resources, visit us at <https://bit.ly/MDEsaltsmart> or scan the QR code

Audience	Motivator	Message Focused On	How/Where to Message
Residents – single family homes	safety, judgement from neighbors, perception/need to get out/get to work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protecting Fresh Water</li> <li>2. Smart Salting Actions</li> </ol>	Social Media, radio, community centers, community group newsletters
Applicators and Contractors	Need to meet contract expectations, customer's needs, liability, equipment constraints (cost)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Large Scale Implementation</li> <li>2. Necessary Tools &amp; Resources</li> </ol>	Applicator Trainings, Industry events, word of mouth
HOA Boards	community needs, liability, ease of service, expense, protecting fresh water.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Safety</li> <li>2. Protecting Fresh Water</li> <li>3. Cost Savings</li> </ol>	Community Newsletters Bulletin Boards
Property Manager Portfolio Manager	quick snow and ice removal, reducing liability and unsafe conditions, reducing property damage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintaining quality of service</li> <li>2. Protecting community assets</li> <li>3. Safeguard against liability claims</li> </ol>	?
Business Owners	Need to be open for business, make money, customer safety & expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safeguard against liability claims</li> <li>2. Cost Savings</li> <li>3. Maintaining quality of service</li> </ol>	Local chamber of commerce event and business networking events





**Questions?**