Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

A New Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

The Chesapeake Bay Program is developing a new *Agreement* for signing by the Governors of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York and West Virginia, Mayor of DC and the Chesapeake Bay Commission in 2014. This voluntary agreement will be the foundation for cooperative restoration, conservation, and stewardship efforts across the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Chesapeake Bay Restoration Goals & Outcomes *(Proposed)*

Sustainable Fisheries

Protect, restore, and enhance finfish, shellfish and other living resources, their habitats and ecological relationships to sustain all fisheries and provide for a balanced ecosystem in the watershed and Bay.

Blue Crab Abundance and Management Outcome: Manage and maintain a sustainable blue crab population and work with the industry, recreational crabbers, and other stakeholders to improve commercial and recreational harvest accountability.

Oyster Outcome: Restore native oyster habitat and populations in 10 tributaries by 2025.

Forage Fish Outcome: Assess forage fish as food base for predatory species in the Chesapeake Bay.

Fish Habitat Outcome: identify critical spawning, nursery and forage areas within the Bay and tributaries and information needed to inform restoration and conservation efforts.

Vital Habitats

Restore, enhance, and protect a network of land and water habitats to support high-priority species and to afford other public benefits, including water quality, recreational uses and scenic value across the watershed.

Wetlands Outcome: Create or re-establish 85,000 acres of tidal and non-tidal wetlands and enhance function of an additional 150,000 acres of degraded wetlands by 2025.

Black Duck: By 2025, restore habitats to support a wintering population of 100,000 black duck.

Stream Health Outcome: Restore stream health and function.

Brook Trout: Restore naturally reproducing brook trout populations in headwater streams.

Fish Passage Outcome: Restore fish migration by opening 1,000 additional stream miles by 2025.

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Outcome: Achieve & sustain 185,000 acres of SAV Bay-wide.

***Forest Buffer Outcome*:** Restore 900 miles per year of riparian forest buffer and conserve existing buffers until at least 70% of riparian areas throughout the watershed are forested.

***Tree Canopy Outcome*:** Expand urban tree canopy by 2,400 acres by 2025.

Water Quality

Reduce pollutants to achieve the water quality necessary to support the aquatic living resources of the Bay and its tributaries and protect human health.

2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP) Outcome: By 2017, have practices in place to achieve 60% of the nutrient and sediment pollution load reductions to achieve water quality standards.

2025 WIP Outcome: By 2025, have all practices installed to achieve the Bay's dissolved oxygen, water clarity/submerged aquatic vegetation and chlorophyll a standards as in the Bay TMDL.

Healthy Watersheds

Sustain state-identified healthy waters and watersheds, recognized for their exceptional quality and/or high ecological value.

Healthy Waters Outcome: 100% of state-identified healthy waters & watersheds remain healthy.

Land Conservation

Conserve landscapes treasured by citizens in order to maintain water quality and habitat; sustain working forests, farms and maritime communities; and conserve lands of cultural, indigenous and community value.

Protected Lands Outcome: By 2025, protect an additional two million acres of lands identified as high-conservation priorities at the federal, state or local level, including highest value for water quality.

Land Use Methods and Metrics Development Outcome: Develop metrics for measuring the rate of land conversion of agricultural and forest lands, and change in impervious surface coverage.

Land Use Options Evaluation Outcome: Evaluate policy options and identify incentives, resources and other tools that assist local governments in their efforts to better manage land use change.

Public Access

Expand public access to the Bay and its tributaries through existing and new local, state and federal parks, refuges, reserves, trails and partner sites.

Public Access Outcome: By 2025, add 300 new public-access sites, with a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for boating, swimming and fishing, where feasible.

Environmental Literacy

Enable students in the region to graduate with the knowledge to use scientific evidence and citizenship skills to act responsibly to protect and restore their local watershed.

Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience Outcome: Increase the number of students participating in teacher-supported meaningful watershed educational experiences in all grades and measure results.

School and School System Model Development Outcome: Support and highlight models of sustainable schools and local education agencies that use system-wide approaches for environmental education.

Prepared by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay