

# **Strategic Outreach & Education Program for Local Elected Officials in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed**

Presentation to the Chesapeake Bay Program  
Communications Workgroup  
by Ecologix Group,  
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## Purpose of today's discussion

- Describe the project, final report and its recommendations.
- Communications approaches to implement the recommendations.
- Outreach methods that will engage local elected officials.

# Key Finding: Local Leaders Need to Know How Bay Goals Can Also Help Meet Local Priorities

- Use the Local Priorities (different for each locality) as portals through which to communicate around local best practices for local water resource, natural resource protection.
- Work through Trusted Sources, peer trainers and messengers.
- Use local field trips, peer-to-peer learning
- Tell a story
- Work through partners' conferences, forums
- Communicate Bay issues and goals via online methods.

# Project Methods

## Phase I (2015)

Prior report in this project – Interviews with 18 local officials and experts

## Phase II (2016-2017)

- (1) Four Focus Groups >100 people total
- (2) Follow-up interviews with some Focus Group participants
- (3) Internet-based research
- (4) Write report, seek peer review and share with CPB.

# Report Structure

- 1) Content that needs to be conveyed
- 2) Existing programs – and gaps
- 3) Best way to coordinate and deliver existing programs
- 4) Cost estimates and funding sources
- 5) Best ways to measure progress

# Key Recommendation on Content and How to Frame, Deliver It:

## Top Three Priorities for Local Elected Officials:

Economic development

Infrastructure maintenance and financing

Public health and safety

# What have we learned?

- These local priorities link to local natural resource protection/restoration needs and best practices to meet those needs– which link to Bay goals.
- Local leaders want to do their part to restore the Bay watershed, but resources are limited and their mandate is to address local priorities.
- Natural Resource topics that local officials frequently linked to other priorities included: drinking water; flood prevention and mitigation; outdoor recreation; tourism – agro and eco-based.
- Peer-to-peer, small-site-scale, field trips and field days, are the best educational /information transmission methods.

# Content



# Other Recommendations

## Delivery Mechanisms

3 Levels of Leadership Structure – Baywide (Key Partner: Alliance for Chesapeake Bay); Statewide; Local.

Learning Modes –In-Person and Online.

Trusted Partners – 23 Organizations Listed in Report's Appendix, spanning 6 Bay States + District of Columbia.

## Educational Content

### Watershed Fundamentals

Engaging Concise Lectures

### Local Best Practices

Peer-to-Peer Active Learning

#### In Person

Targeted Audiences

Expert Presentations

Peer-to-Peer Workshops  
and Site Visits

#### Online

Broadly Accessible

“Shed Talks”  
(Film Series)

Online Forums  
with Action Toolkit

# Example 1 – Nelson County, Virginia

Respondents were asked to check the most important economic strengths of Nelson County. The highest rated factor was Nelson's pristine rural setting (84%). The County's overall quality of life was ranked as the second most important economic factor (68%), followed by natural resources and tourism assets, both at 63%.

<http://tjpc.org/media/2b-ii-Nelson-Route-29-Econ-Dev.-FINAL.pdf>



*The tourism industry in Nelson continues to thrive*

## Example 2 – Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

To make Harrisburg strong once again, Mayor Papenfuse has identified three local priorities:

1) Blight & Beautification



1) Tree Planting + Maintenance Program

2) Crime & Safety



2) Tree Planting + Green Infrastructure program

3) Education & Youth



3) Youth training, job and career program in green infrastructure, flood mitigation, horticulture, urban forestry.

Examples of possible approaches to link these local priorities to local best practices that further Bay goals:

## Final report

**Cost estimates** on strengthening and coordinating existing programs, and potential funding sources.

**Best ways to measure progress** – what are the measures of success in meeting the goals and milestones of this program.