

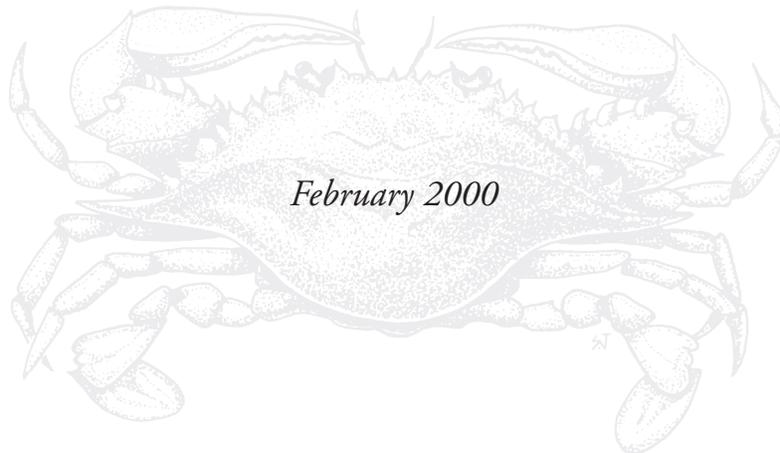
Chesapeake Bay
**GATEWAYS &
WATER TRAILS**
Initiative



Chesapeake Bay Program

Draft Framework

Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Water Trails Network





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Purpose of the

Draft Framework

This draft *Framework* is intended to guide development of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails Network called for in the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998.

The Gateways & Water Trails Network has as its premise a broad partnership among many individual sites and organizations in the Chesapeake Bay region and its broader watershed to achieve certain goals. The draft *Framework* outlines a means for developing this partnership Network.

The draft *Framework* does not specify what places or partners participate in the Network. Rather, the document outlines goals, functions and parameters for the Network in a way that provides for potential partners to coalesce around a focused, cohesive and integrated vision. Through the *Framework*, potential partners associated with the Bay region's special places can begin to see what the Network is intended to achieve, how it will evolve, and how they might participate, benefit and contribute.

Specifically, the draft *Framework* includes sections outlining: a vision for the Network, goals, a geographic and thematic focus, a physical organization, the means of participating in the Network and strategies for supporting the Network and assisting its participating partners.

In keeping with the partnership premise, the draft *Framework* was crafted using ideas from five regional working sessions held around the Bay in late 1999 and involving numerous individuals and organizations. A diverse group of interpreters, planners, educators and researchers from Bay-related institutions helped craft key interpretive themes. The Gateways & Water Trails Initiative Working Group, established by the Chesapeake Bay Program and composed of 15 Bay region organizations, has guided the draft *Framework's* development.

Comments on the draft *Framework* are welcome through March 31. The final *Framework* and a companion "Network Implementation Projects List" will be developed shortly thereafter.

The draft *Framework* also serves as the basis for a series of demonstration project grants that will be awarded in June 2000 to illustrate the potential of the Network. For specific guidance on these grants see the separate "Demonstration Project Grants Program, Guidelines and Application Package."

For the latest information on any Network materials visit www.chesapeakebay.net/gateways.htm

An Annotated Guide to the *Framework*

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<i>The vision provides an impression of what the Gateways & Water Trails Network will be like after five years. It concisely describes the Network's basic geography, physical components and implementation strategies. The remainder of the Framework describes the Network in more detail and how it will be developed.</i>	
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Related Network Documents

“Demonstration Project Grant Program, Guidelines and Application Package,” — February 2000

“Network Implementation Projects List” — this document will be developed in spring 2000

Section I:

A *Vision* of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Water Trails *Network* After Five Years

Imagine a network of linked natural, cultural, historical and recreational sites throughout the Chesapeake Bay region. Think of visiting these places to learn about the Bay's diverse stories, experience its history and enjoy its natural beauty. You might travel from one site to another paddling a water trail, riding on a ferry or driving a scenic tour route. Perhaps you would volunteer some time helping restore a wetland or an historic site. You would easily find information about Bay-related sites, stories, and adventures through a series of Bay Gateways and their associated sites. In effect, this network would become your guide and your entry point to experiencing and learning about the Chesapeake Bay.

This is the vision of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Water Trails Initiative. The partnership Network of sites linked through this Initiative will evolve over time, adding sites, information and new routes to explore the Bay Region. After five years, however, the Network will have distinctive characteristics and capabilities. Moreover, it will have enhanced a cohesive identity for the Chesapeake Region.

Helping people understand and appreciate the Chesapeake Bay through this Network of special places is more than just tourism. Every person who lives, works or visits the region affects the Bay. Linking the places people value to an understanding of the Bay as a system is an integral part of the effort to conserve and restore the Bay's natural environment. Changing how people perceive the Bay by interpreting its resources is a meaningful step toward creating a broader commitment to Bay restoration and conservation. This is a fundamental aspect of the Gateways & Water Trails Network vision.

A Map of the Network

In its early years the Network focuses on the Bay proper and the tidal portions of its tributaries, while linking to the remainder of the watershed through water trails along tributaries beyond the fall line.

Within the heart of the Bay area below the fall line are six regions that give shape to the Network: the northern Bay, the Eastern shore, the Hampton Roads/Lower Peninsula and mouth of the Bay area, the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck, the upper Potomac estuary, and Maryland's western shore. These distinctive Bay regions represent the incredible diversity of the Bay. In doing so they also convey many different manifestations of common overarching themes, resources and relationships that tie the entire Bay together. For this reason, these regions each contain places that people must experience to enjoy and understand the Bay.

To accomplish this, the Network links places within each region, all regions together, and the heart of the Bay to the upper tributaries. Several categories of places, each with a different function, are necessary and visible in the Network.

Each region has one or in a few cases two "Chesapeake Bay Gateway Hubs". They are located in the major entry points to the Bay within a particular region. They are generally in communities where a combination of geography, location, transportation systems and services concentrate people at the Bay. These Gateway hubs are nearby authentic natural, cultural, historic or recreational Bay resources.

Most importantly, Gateway hubs are a key venue for introducing people to Bay-wide interpretive themes and orienting people to the Network and where to experience its places and stories. At a hub, people find maps of the entire Network, on-line opportunities to explore the network electronically and plan their trips, and interpretive programs and facilities focusing on overarching and principal Bay themes. Hubs also have direct links to a route for touring the entire Bay area by road and to boat access for water touring. Gateway hubs are developed or enhanced in partnership with existing institutions already focusing on a part of the Bay story. The hub function expands the interpretive messages, facilities and materials to address Network-wide orientation and themes.

Because of the size of the Bay and the six regions, and because of the regions' distinctive histories and stories, people require additional locations where they can find information about a particular area. A number of communities in each region thus have "Regional Information Centers" orienting people to the particular region, the interpretive themes pertinent to the surrounding area and the region's key resource sites. These

centers are generally located in smaller communities where visitor services are available and often where different modes of transportation (road/water) come together. At a regional information center, people again have access to Network maps and on-line information, but other orientation and interpretive information is more regionally focused. Regional centers are linked to land (road and trail) and water (paddling trails and larger boat) routes for exploring the region. Like Gateway hubs, centers are developed in partnership with existing institutions, allowing them to enhance their interpretive and orientation function.

Central to experiencing the Bay are numerous “Gateway Sites” consisting of Bay-related natural, cultural, historic or recreational resources. These are publicly accessible parks, refuges, museums, historic sites or districts, resource-based recreation sites, historic ports, natural areas and interpretive facilities. It is to these Gateway sites that the hubs and regional information centers orient and direct people. Gateway sites always provide access for people to experience the resource itself. All Gateway sites interpret specific resources in the context of Bay-related themes. Some Gateway sites incorporate opportunities for people to volunteer in restoration projects. In partnership with existing institutions managing the sites, the Network assists in the enhancements needed to fulfill these functions and make Gateway sites visitor ready.

Physical links between Gateway hubs, regional information centers and Gateway sites and to the upper tributaries are fundamental to the Network. Several types of “connecting routes” achieve this. A Bay-wide driving tour connects all six regions, Gateway hubs and key sites. Other regional driving routes link information centers and sites within regions or link sites related to specific interest areas or themes. Water trails and routes are particularly important to the network because of the area’s fundamental orientation to the Bay and its rivers. Water connections at sites and centers are emphasized to provide multi-modal access for paddling water trails and for larger boats traveling across bigger water. Overall, more than 500 miles of additional water trails for paddlers are added to the Network along Bay tributaries, both within the six regions and up into tributaries beyond. For the non-tidal tributaries, these water trails represent the initial Network connections into the broader reaches of the watershed.

Achieving the Network’s Functions

Realization of the Network’s characteristics derives from adherence to strategies carrying out the primary goals of the Gateways & Water Trails Initiative. Briefly, these strategies are as follows.

Understanding and Accessing the Bay with Information

To be effective in a fundamental aspect of its mission — educating people about the Bay and helping them access its resources — the Network conveys information to people. It orients people to the Bay, interprets Bay themes, helps people find key resources, and allows them to plan how to explore those resources. Overall, the information conveys an understandable and identifiable organization of a diverse area. Understanding and appreciating the interconnectedness of the region’s resources in turn helps residents and visitors understand the need for protection and restoration of the Bay.

The physical venues for providing information about the Network and the Bay story are the Gateway hubs, regional information centers, sites and connections. At and through these venues, key devices, materials and programs convey orientation and interpretive information.

A broadly distributed Network map/guide is a critical orientation piece. The map depicts all key components of the network, including the regions, Chesapeake Bay Gateway hubs, regional information centers, gateway sites, Bay-wide driving route, regional driving routes and other connections.

A Network web site allows people to explore the Bay Gateways & Water Trails Network on-line, providing direct links to all centers, sites and connections participating. More importantly, the associated data base is organized to allow on-line searching and exploring by geographic locations, interpretive themes and other key characteristics.

Signage along primary routes and at Gateway centers and sites has a consistent, identifiable image helping organize the Network. Given the many partners in the Network, this signage is designed to enhance both the Bay-wide Network identity and that of participating entities, as well as meet visitors’ needs.

Focus maps provide specific information on accessing particular Bay resources through Network linkages such as water trails and walking routes.

Interpretive information conveys overarching Bay themes and places a broad range of principal and sub-themes and sites in that context. This is facilitated through both an integrated interpretive thematic structure that organizes diverse themes and by specific interpretive strategies carried out in a variety of locations. Gateway hubs interpret overarching and principal Bay themes and orient people to the sites depicting those themes. There is a consistency in how the materials are presented from one hub to another. Regional information centers focus on orienting people to the themes and sites within a particular region; some facilities may be staffed while others are unstaffed kiosks. Gateway sites have interpretive signage, displays, programs or materials focusing on the particular resource associated with the site, but reference other sites in the Network that depict related stories. Interpretation is developed for routes connecting the Network as well: water trails have maps with information interpreting relevant themes along the route; connections or routes linking sites of a single theme interpret the context of those sites.

Accessing Bay Related Resources Through Improved Sites and Connections

Effectively orienting people to the diverse array of existing Bay-related sites is a top Network priority; it provides access through better information. Yet opportunities for improving physical access to the Bay and related resources also abound. In particular, the enhancement of physical access along Network connections and at Gateway sites provides people with more chances to experience, enjoy and value the Bay—when that access is compatible with the carrying capacity of the resource and the goals of both the institution managing the site and the surrounding community.

Access along routes connecting the Network, a fundamental feature, provides people with the opportunity to use those routes. Most connections take advantage of existing infrastructure—such as roads or navigable water—for the primary route; many use existing access points for those routes. But in some cases, additional access points or facilities are developed along water trails or particularly where different modes of transportation intersect.

Public access at selected Gateway sites is enhanced through development of new access points at natural areas or perhaps the opening of newly restored portions of historic or cultural sites.

Restoring and Conserving Bay Resources

Restoring and conserving the Chesapeake Bay and related resources are major on-going undertakings of diverse private and public institutions. The Chesapeake Bay Program partnership coordinates many aspects of the work.

The emphasis of the Gateways & Water Trails Network in restoration and conservation focuses on a limited but crucial range of the broader Bay effort. There are three core facets to this range: (1) of primary importance, the Network interprets Bay and related resource restoration through several overarching and principal themes, exposing people to this story at diverse locations; (2) many Gateway sites, water trails and other trails provide regular on-going opportunities for visitors to volunteer in projects restoring Bay-related resources; this creates a means for direct engagement in a key Network goal and theme; and (3) recognizing the delicate balance between tourism and preservation of the Bay's core working cultural traditions, the Network contributes to targeted efforts that conserve those traditions near Gateway hubs, regional information centers and sites.

The Network Beyond Five Years

Through these measures, the Gateways & Water Trails Network changes the way people see and understand the Bay. The Network continues to develop over time; the sheer magnitude of the resource necessitates it. In five years and beyond, the Network is furthering interpretive connections in non-tidal portions of the watershed, while continuing to develop and expand the actions described above in core portions of the Bay region. The regular appearance of consistent images and information, organized in an meaningful way, brings clarity to people's understanding of diverse places and stories. Finding and accessing a broad range of inter-related resources, and recognizing those connections, is easier. Direct experiences with Bay-related resources, including active involvement in restoration efforts, foster vivid connections with the Chesapeake Bay. All of this leads to a renewed cohesiveness of the Bay region's identity and a broader commitment to Bay restoration and conservation.

Section II:

Origin and Goals of the Initiative & Network

The Chesapeake Bay is the largest and most biologically diverse estuary in the United States and one of the most productive in the world. Through centuries of human settlement, the Bay and its tributaries have sustained the region's economy and defined its traditions and culture. It is a resource of extraordinary productivity, worthy of the highest levels of protection and restoration.

The nation, through the Chesapeake Bay Program, has established a partnership to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay's resources. For almost two decades, the partners have worked to steward the Bay's resources and ensure the public's right to clean water and a healthy and productive Bay ecosystem. The partnership is reaffirming its commitment through Chesapeake 2000, revising the original Bay agreement and expanding the watershed partnership.

One of the most important notions tied to each goal of Chesapeake 2000 is the need to educate residents and visitors of the region about the Bay and the impact of their actions on it, in order to promote individual and governmental stewardship. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the full range of land and water resources that intimately link the Bay's natural systems, history, and cultural heritage. With more than 15 million people now living in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, it is ever more apparent that human actions will influence every aspect of the Bay.

Through the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998, Congress recognized a growing interest in maintaining and enhancing people's connections with the Chesapeake Bay, as well as the need for furthering stewardship of this internationally significant resource. The Act calls for a collaborative, partnership network linking many independently managed special places around the Chesapeake region by:

- identifying, conserving, restoring and interpreting the Bay region's natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources;
- identifying Gateway sites for enhancing public education of, and access to, the Chesapeake Bay's resources; and
- linking Gateways with trails, tour roads, scenic byways, and water trails, creating an overall network of Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails.

These steps are intended to achieve three basic goals:

- Enhancing place-based interpretation and education about the Bay and its related resources to increase public awareness and promote individual stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay region.

The Network will facilitate an integrated approach to interpreting the themes and stories of the Chesapeake Bay through the many participating physical places of the Network. This will help visitors explore, enjoy and better understand these places and their diverse themes in the context of the Bay and its watershed.

- Facilitating access (both informational and physical) to the Bay and Bay-related resources.

The Network will facilitate access to Bay related resources through a system of Gateways and connecting routes. This system will enhance access both through more effective orientation of people to the Bay's resources and through support for improvements at Network components.

- Fostering conservation and restoration of the Bay and related resources.

Bay conservation and restoration is the primary mission of the Chesapeake Bay Program. The Gateways & Water Trails Network will play a key role in the context of the Bay Program, focusing on stimulating public understanding of and involvement in Bay restoration through experiences at the Network's diverse components.

Section III:

A Cohesive Focus for the Network: It's *Basic Geography* and *Major Themes*

The Chesapeake Bay and its watershed are large and the Bay's natural and cultural history is diverse. Achieving the Gateways & Water Trails Network goals necessitates both a geographic and a thematic focus that give shape and cohesiveness to the Network. Geography helps center the locations of places in the Network; themes focus and integrate the range of subjects necessary to address through the Network in order to convey the Bay story.

Initial Geographic Focus of the Network _____

The Chesapeake Bay exists in the context of its watershed. Half of the Chesapeake's water comes from fresh water rivers and streams. Beyond the fall line, non-tidal portions of great rivers, such as the Susquehanna and Potomac, replenish the Bay's fresh water supply creating the unique salinity gradient that sustains the Bay's diversity. The landscapes along the upper portions of these rivers have a different feel and focus from the heart of the Chesapeake. Their stories and cultures are different from the Bay, being scores or even hundreds of miles beyond the fall line in fundamentally dissimilar geographies. However, these more distant parts of the watershed retain a basic connection to the Chesapeake — the waters flowing to the Bay. It is through the developing water trails along these rivers and streams that the Gateways & Water Trails Network links to the rest of the Bay watershed.

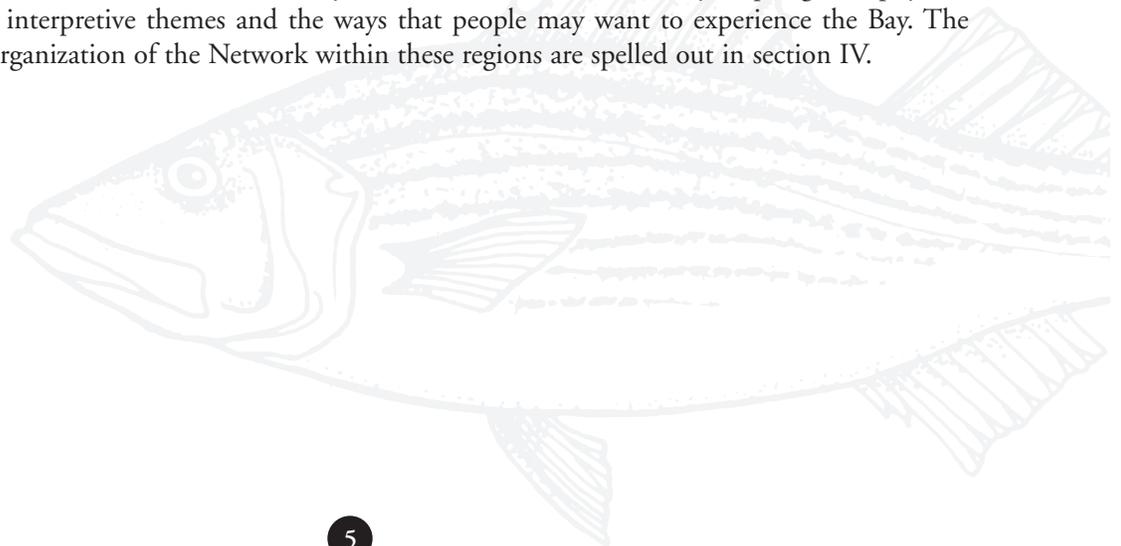
The heart of the Gateways & Water Trails Network lies in the area most typically recognized as the Chesapeake Bay landscape. This is the land and water below the fall line that is twice daily influenced by ocean tides. The Bay proper, and the tidal portions of its tributaries make this landscape fundamentally identifiable and unique. Nature, history and culture in this area are all directly affected by the Chesapeake. The themes and stories of the past, present and future are intimately tied to the geography of this giant estuary. It is in this area that the Gateways to the Chesapeake and many other components of the Network are found.

Regional Organization within

Heart of the Bay Area _____

The land and water area below the fall line, while small compared to the 64,000 square mile watershed, is still large — the Bay alone is some 2,500 square miles. This size, the ecological diversity due to basic differences between the northern and southern parts of the Bay and the varying patterns of history and culture, make for a series of distinctive regions within the larger Bay area.

These regions represent the incredible diversity of the Bay. In doing so they also convey different manifestations of common themes, resources and relationships that tie the entire Bay together. For this reason, these regions have a practical function in the Gateways & Water Trails Network. They help organize physical places in the Network, interpretive themes and the ways that people may want to experience the Bay. The details of the physical organization of the Network within these regions are spelled out in section IV.



Six Network Regions in the Heart of the Bay Area

1. Northern Bay

This region is dominated by the influence of the Susquehanna River, the largest freshwater source for the Chesapeake system, making the Bay its least saline in this area. Important throughout history as a transportation corridor to the inland, the Susquehanna, and now Interstate 95 and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, are conduits funneling commerce, tourism and boaters to the Bay from the Northeastern states.

2. Eastern Shore

On the Eastern Shores of Maryland and Virginia, the influence of the Chesapeake is a constant part of life. Dozens of tidal rivers, estuaries and wetlands create one of the Bay's most ecologically significant regions. They support extensive fish spawning areas, shellfish beds, and habitat for hundreds of thousands of migratory waterfowl. The Eastern Shore is also home to a traditional human culture that throughout time has been tied to the region's natural resources. The villages, towns, and landscapes of this area are a living reminder of the traditional ways of life that are an indelible part of the on-going story of the Chesapeake.

3. Hampton Roads Area & the Mouth of the Bay

In the area around Norfolk, the Atlantic Ocean's influence on the Bay is profoundly clear. It is here where one actually sees the influx of the ocean's waters, tides and wildlife. The salinity is high enough for dolphin breeding areas and other ocean species. The history and culture of the area are tied to both the Bay and the ocean beyond, with fleets of fishing boats and the presence of massive Navy ships. The region is truly the Atlantic's gateway to the Bay, with the remains of the first permanent English settlement (Jamestown) on the James River.

4. Northern Neck & Middle Peninsula

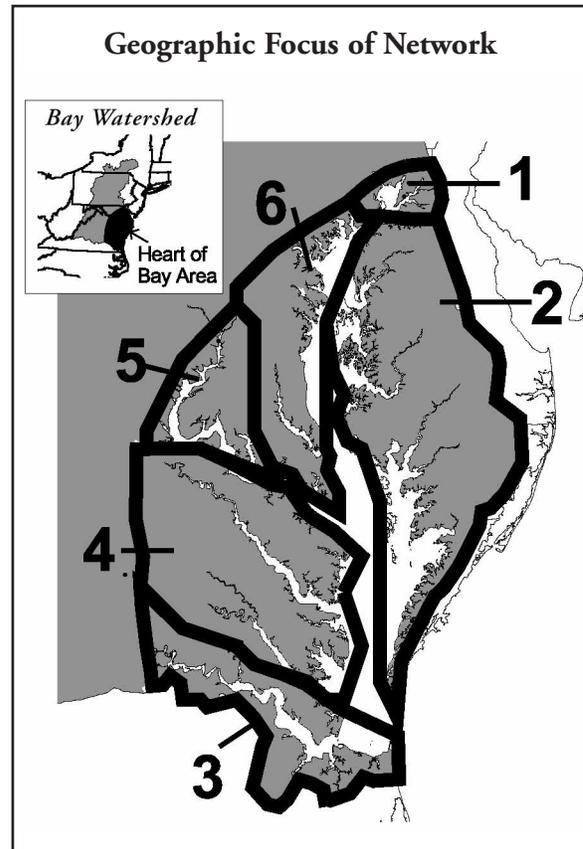
The Potomac, Rappahannock and York create two of the three major peninsulas of Tidewater Virginia—the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. Intimately linked to the Bay, this region's scenic rivers and natural areas intertwine with the patterns and places of colonial history. The area includes the birthplaces of George Washington and Robert E. Lee on the Potomac.

5. Upper Potomac Estuary

Up the Potomac from the Northern Neck and the Western Shore, the tidal estuary reaches to Washington DC, maintaining a close connection with the Bay. Washington is an entry point for millions to the Potomac and the Bay region. Historic and recreational connections to the Bay region abound.

6. Maryland's Western Shore

The Bay's western shore combines rural landscapes and small communities with the cities of Baltimore and Annapolis. The Bay and river front areas of southern Maryland, once the seats of plantations, now increasingly attract people seeking recreational pursuits. Annapolis and Baltimore are major destination points for visitors today, just as they have been for centuries. Baltimore is located at the convergence of the Chesapeake's historic land and water transportation routes. Annapolis, Maryland's state capitol, is a major maritime focal point.



A Thematic Focus and Organization for the Network ---

The heart of the Chesapeake Bay area is rich in natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources and the many stories that go with them. Organizing these stories in a series of themes that weave together the whole Bay story and link to the watershed is key to the cohesiveness of the Network.

Interpretive themes organize seemingly disparate information. They provide a context in which a large array of Bay-related events, eras, places, people and species can be understood and explored. Themes identify relationships and serve as links and connectors, helping people make sense of vast amounts of information and focus their experiences. They allow visitors to understand and appreciate a particular site or region in relationship to the Bay and its watershed. In sum, interpretive themes serve as the lens through which visitors see and experience the Bay.

Interpretive themes also help give structure to the Gateways & Water Trails Network itself. They influence the components of the Network and inform the kinds of interpretation that occurs at any given place.

A Chesapeake Bay Thematic Structure

The Gateways and Water Trails Network uses a thematic structure for organizing Bay stories. The thematic structure is based on current research as well as ongoing interpretive programs. It was informed by regional work shops around the Bay and developed in part through a subsequent session bringing together a diverse group of interpreters, planners, educators and researchers.

The thematic structure does not prescribe specific themes for particular sites. Rather, it fosters development of a cohesive approach to interpretation by placing specific stories in context, and by outlining the focus of interpretation for network-wide functions.

The themes are organized in a hierarchical manner:

- *Overarching themes*, emphasizing “interconnectedness,” “interdependence,” and “knowledge and mystery,” are the main interpretive messages of the Network. They are broad, but integrating themes, essential to conveying and understanding the essence of the Chesapeake Bay today.

Overarching themes provide a context in which principle and sub-themes—and all places in the Network—can be viewed and understood. Particularly important, overarching themes are broad enough to apply to Network locations (water trails) along Bay tributaries outside the core Bay area. This provides a Network-wide interpretive connection throughout the watershed.

- *Principal themes* focus on core aspects of the Bay story that give the Chesapeake its unique and significant character. Unlike overarching themes which can be addressed in some way at all locations, principal themes do not apply to every site or interpretive location. Principal themes represent major story lines, each tying a large number of Bay sites and sub-themes or topics together. For example, “The Living Natural Bay” may be interpreted at a range of different sites, each focusing on a different or related aspect of the story.

- *Sub-themes or topics* are even more discrete. They represent a range of Bay-related topics that might be addressed within the context of a single principal theme. Often a particular Bay site might directly interpret one, or at most a couple, of sub-themes or topics. In general, specific sub-themes have a fewer number of sites where they can be adequately interpreted than do principal themes. For example, the principal theme “An Economic Resource: Commerce, Productivity and Transportation” offers numerous opportunities for interpretation throughout the Bay region, but a specific sub-topic “ship-building and design” will be more satisfactorily interpreted in fewer sites.

Structuring themes in this manner helps bring clarity and focus to organizing a Network of sites that together convey an understanding of the Bay to visitors. Strong and clear links between interpretive themes and specific places in the Network become central to conveying that understanding. The thematic structure is a tool for connecting a broad array of Network locations so visitors can navigate and make sense of the complex web of intricate relationships in the Bay area.

OVER-ARCHING INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Interconnectedness

The essence of the Chesapeake Bay story is found in the dynamic interconnectedness of water, place, nature and people over time. To fully appreciate and understand the Bay, each of these fundamental ingredients must be taken into account and viewed in relationship to the others.

Long and continuing interaction of place, nature and people has molded a complex Bay story characterized by change and continuity, diversity and unity. This story has unfolded from the time of geological formation, with the emergence of rivers and streams, through the appearance and disappearance of diverse species of plant and animal life and centuries of encounters by humans with the environment and one another.

Interdependence

For centuries, human well-being has depended on the Bay's abundance; today the Bay's well-being is dependent on human decisions and actions.

Over a period of 13,000 years, the Bay has been a vital source of food, place of habitat and means of transportation, communication, economic development and recreation. Tiny settlements have grown into large port cities, rivers and streams have been navigated and dammed, forests cleared, and marine life intensively harvested. People have depended on the Bay's resources. Now, as we continue to rely upon the Bay, its future sustainability is intimately tied to our day-to-day decisions and our actions towards restoration and conservation.

Knowledge and Mystery

Although one of the most studied bodies of water in the world, the Chesapeake Bay retains a spirit of mystery and unpredictability.

Human beings have observed, surveyed, mapped, examined and investigated the Chesapeake Bay. It has inspired art, literature, poetry and song. In some instances, our explorations have been part of an effort to profit from the Bay's vast natural resources. In other cases, our inquiries were undertaken because of deep seated appreciation for the Bay and concern for its well-being. Despite the huge stores of information gathered, the Bay continues to surprise, awe, inspire and mystify. Although well known, it remains an enigma, constantly attracting us to its waters, inspiring art, literature, poetry and song.

PRINCIPAL THEMES

The Living, Natural Bay

A complex interaction of water, land, climate, geological formations and topographical features creates a unique ecosystem that supports the Bay's remarkable diversity and abundance.

Long before humans came to the Chesapeake region, natural forces were shaping the Bay and its watershed. With a surface area of 2,500 square miles, the Bay is one of the largest estuaries in the world, serving as home for a wide variety of plant and animal life. Today, both natural and human forces continue to impact and change the Bay and its watershed.

Peoples of the Bay

From early settlement to today, the natural environment of the Bay and the diverse population it attracted gave shape to distinctive cultural traditions.

People from all over the world settled side-by-side along the Bay, with both cooperation and conflict marking their communities. Racial, religious, ethnic, political and economic divisions have been counterbalanced by united efforts, common concerns and shared values. Throughout the history of its peoples, the water and land of the Bay influenced and transformed the culture taking root. This heritage has given the region a distinctive style and identifiable sense of place.

Settlement of the Bay

The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries have attracted settlement by humans throughout time, resulting in patterns that shape the region's landscape and reflect the nation's history.

First, indigenous peoples, then Europeans and soon after, Africans established footholds in the Bay area, opening a gateway for the burgeoning nation. The early arrivals dispersed along shorelines creating patterns of settlement characterizing the new Nation and reflected to this day. Later arrivals have fueled the growth of the region's metropolitan centers. Throughout, the Bay has served as magnet and crucible, attracting, defining, shaping and reconfiguring the patterns of settlement around it.

An Economic Resource: Commerce, Productivity and Transportation

The rich, natural abundance of the Bay has been a powerful incentive for commercial development, influencing the region's economy, transportation, and productivity.

The Bay's resources and geography shaped the economic development of the region. Terrestrial and marine creatures, as well as the land and waterways, led to development of specific industries, harvesting methods, modes of transportation and even boat designs. It is this resource-based economy and its connections to other parts of the nation and the world that are responsible for producing much of the image of the Bay area. Despite modern transformations, natural resources remain a fundamental component of the Bay's economy.

Military and Naval Presence on the Bay

Because of its vast waters and strategic location, the Bay has long played a critical role in the military and naval history of the United States.

As the site of the nation's capital, historic battles and significant military installations, the Bay has long been intricately involved in a complex and dramatic web of national and international affairs. Today the Chesapeake region continues to be home to a sizable military and naval presence.

The Bay as a Source of Recreation and Renewal

Abundant opportunities for a broad range of leisure-time activities, involving sport, education, culture and stewardship, spring from the vast resources and exquisite landscapes of the Chesapeake Bay.

The traditional uses of the Bay's waters by area residents — boating, fishing, hunting — have long attracted visitors for recreation and renewal. Especially in recent decades, Bay-related recreation has become an economic force in the region. Today, the Chesapeake represents a source of inspiration and personal renewal through its diverse recreational opportunities and the Bay's natural and cultural heritage on which they are based.

Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability of the Bay

The Bay and its living resources are suffering from the cumulative effects of human use and exploitation. But, new environmental attitudes, policies and behaviors offer hope for the Bay's renewal and sustainability.

Realizing that an ecological crisis exists has impelled residents, visitors, governments, and organizations to reassess the ways in which humans interact with the Bay and use its resources. The changes resulting from this attention are helping to restore the Bay and creating a world-wide model for environmental programs. Restoration and conservation are crucial to sustaining the Bay and its tributary rivers and streams which make such fundamental contributions to our well-being, our heritage, and our spirit.

ASSOCIATED SUB-THEMES OR TOPICS

The Living, Natural Bay

- Geology and Formation of the Bay
- Bay Geography and Topography
- Area Mineral Deposits
- The Bay's Waters
- Estuarine Ecology
- Tidal Wetlands
- Natural Productivity and Abundance of the Bay
- Biological Diversity
- Native Plant Communities
- Finfish and Shellfish
- Wildlife and Waterfowl
- Migratory Patterns in the Bay and the Atlantic Flyway
- Natural Disasters

Peoples of the Bay

- Peoples of the Bay: 13,000 Years of Immigration and Diversity
- Changing Societies and Cultures Throughout the Bay's History
- Occupations of Bay Inhabitants
- Heritage Tourism
- Political Issues, Events and Developments in the Region
- Religious Groups, Activities and Influences on Bay Culture and Society
- Racial and Ethnic Heritage
- Sources of Conflict and Cooperation
- Values and Social and Multi-cultural Endeavors of the Peoples of the Bay

Settlement of the Bay

- Settlement Patterns in the Bay Region
- Impact of Geography and Topography on Settlement Patterns
- Indigenous Communities
- European Discovery, Exploration, and Settlement in the Bay
- Africans and African Americans
- Later Immigration to the Bay
- The Built Environment of the Bay
- The Growth of Region Communities, Colonies, Towns, Capitals, Cities and Suburbs

An Economic Resource: Commerce, Productivity and Transportation

- Marine Resources, their Harvesting and Harvesters in the Bay
- Land and Mineral Resources: Their Harvesting and Harvesters
- Agriculture in the Chesapeake Bay
- Trade Relationships and the Bay
- The Bay and Its Tributaries as Highways
- The Evolution of Transportation
- Shipbuilding
- Throughout the Region and to and from the Nation
- Recreation and Tourism in the Bay
- Area Manufacturing and Industrialization
- The Bay Economy in the Twenty-First Century

Military and Naval Presence on the Bay

- Conflicts of Early Settlers with Indigenous Peoples of the Chesapeake Bay
- The Battles and Impact of the Revolutionary War in the Bay Area
- The Chesapeake in The War of 1812
- The Civil War in a Divided Region
- Bay Installations in Twentieth Century Wars
- United States Naval Academy
- Naval Ports and Military Installations
- Naval Shipbuilding, Design and Weaponry
- The Bay's Role in Development of Modern Weaponry

The Bay as a Source of Recreation and Renewal

- Water Sports in the Bay
- Fishing
- Exploring the Bay's Terrain: Hiking, Camping, Hunting, Sightseeing
- The Bay in Art: Photography, Painting, Literature, and Poetry
- Decoy Carving
- Birding and Wildlife Viewing
- Emergence of Bay Heritage Tourism and Ecotourism
- Regional Music and Folklore

Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability of the Bay

- Changing Perspectives on the Bay
- Changing Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors
- Living Resource Protection and Restoration for the Bay
- Vital Habitat Protection and Restoration
- Water Quality Restoration and Protection
- Sound Land Use in the Bay Area
- Sustainable Regional Economic Development
- Individual Responsibility for the Bay
- Community Engagement With Bay Concerns and Watershed Protection

Section IV:

The *Types of Places* in The Network

The Gateways & Water Trails Network is intended to tell the Chesapeake Bay story through the real places of the Bay — the diverse natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources where people can experience, enjoy and learn about the Bay, its themes and its connections to the broader watershed.

The partnership Network is envisioned as composed of several types of these places, all of which participate in the Network on a voluntary basis. The components include: hubs, regional information centers, sites and routes within the heart of the Bay area, with water trail links to the tributaries and watershed beyond. These components can encompass a diversity of places that, in total, reflect the Bay's natural and cultural history.

Importantly, this draft *Framework* does not identify the Bay locations that fill the Network components' roles. Participation in the Network partnership and designation as a Network component is based upon self-nomination, with review by a Network Working Group. This is outlined in more detail in section VI.

A Summary of Network Components

In each of the six regions in the heart of the Bay area are a series of Network components that tie the entire Bay story together and allow people to understand and experience its regional distinctions. These include:

- one or two **Chesapeake Bay Gateway hubs**, which function as the primary locations for orienting people to the entire Network and interpreting overarching Bay themes
- several **regional information centers** providing people with information about accessing the Network and interpreting regionally important principal themes
- many **Gateway sites** — parks, refuges, historic sites, museums — that provide a place to experience the Bay and learn about the role of the particular site in the Bay's natural and cultural story
- many **connecting routes** linking Gateway sites, including water trails, trails and driving routes; these routes stitch the Network together and provide people with ways of linking more than one place into an overall experience and understanding

In addition to these components within each region, the Network links all regions, and many of the most important places through a Bay-wide driving tour and Network map, an interactive Network web-site and other mechanisms described in section V.

Moreover, beyond the fall line and the heart of the Bay area, water trails provide access to Bay tributaries, interpret watershed related themes and provide the key Network links to the Bay watershed.

Each type of Network component is described in the tables on the following pages, which outline the purpose of the component within the Network, its defining characteristics, and key means of achieving Network goals.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE NETWORK'S COMPONENTS

Chesapeake Bay Gateway Hubs	
<i>Purpose</i>	Primary physical venues for introducing people to Bay-wide interpretive themes and orienting people to the Network and where to experience its places and stories.
<i>Defining Characteristics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one, or in some cases two hubs, per region • located in the major entry point to the Bay within a particular region • in communities where a combination of geography, location, transportation systems and services concentrate people at the Bay • in communities with a combination of interpretive facilities, authentic Bay resources — natural, cultural, historic or recreational — and public access to the Bay • places with a facility providing an outstanding opportunity for orienting visitors to the Network and interpreting Bay-related themes • places with a local willingness to serve as a primary orientation point for the Network • locations with the ability to facilitate convenient connections to the rest of the Network
<i>Achieving Network Goals</i>	<p><i>Interpretation:</i> Visitors discover interpretive materials, exhibits, activities or programs introducing the Network's overarching and principal themes. Some hubs also include interpretive materials or exhibits that are more regionally focused, addressing the manifestations of principal Bay themes within the particular region.</p> <p><i>Informational & Physical Access:</i> Hubs provide all key orientation information to facilitate access to the Network including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maps of the entire Network • on-line opportunities to explore the Network electronically, identify sites connected with themes and plan trips • maps and guides related to sites, connecting routes and themes within the region <p>Centers also link people to Gateway sites via a Bay-wide tour route, boat access for water touring and other connections.</p> <p><i>Restoration & Conservation:</i> Hubs interpret Bay restoration and conservation as part of key over-arching and principal interpretive themes and provide information on opportunities to volunteer in restoration projects at sites and along water trails.</p>

Regional Information Centers

<p><i>Purpose</i></p>	<p>Complement orientation function of hubs by serving as key outlets for information about the Network and more specifically by orienting people to the particular region in which they are located, key Network sites and how to access them.</p>
<p><i>Defining Characteristics</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • several in each region • generally located in smaller communities that serve as primary centers of visitor services for a portion of the overall region • often located where different modes of transportation (road/water) come together at the Bay or along its tidal tributaries • places providing an opportunity for orienting visitors and interpreting Bay-related themes • nearby authentic Bay resources — natural, cultural, historic or recreational • in locations where there is a local willingness to serve as a key orientation point for the Network • have the ability to facilitate convenient physical connections within the region
<p><i>Achieving Network Goals</i></p>	<p><i>Interpretation:</i> Visitors find Network-wide interpretive materials addressing overarching and principal themes. Some, but not all, information centers include materials, exhibits, activities and/or programs focusing on the manifestations of principal Bay themes within the particular region.</p> <p><i>Informational & Physical Access:</i> Centers provide key orientation information to facilitate access to Network components in the vicinity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maps and guides related to sites, connecting routes and themes within the region • maps of the entire Network • on-line opportunities to explore the Network electronically, identify sites connected with themes and plan trips <p>Centers link people to regional land routes (roads and trails) and water routes (paddling trails and larger boat connections) connecting sites in the region.</p> <p><i>Restoration & Conservation:</i> Visitors find information on opportunities to volunteer in restoration projects at sites and along water trails in the vicinity.</p>

Gateway Sites

<p><i>Purpose</i></p>	<p>The primary places to which people are directed to access, experience, enjoy, learn about and contribute to a particular Bay-related natural, cultural, historical or recreational resource and its role in the overall Bay story.</p>
<p><i>Defining Characteristics</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many in each region • are publicly accessible parks, refuges, museums, historic sites or districts, resource-based recreation sites, historic seaports, natural areas and interpretive facilities related to Chesapeake Bay themes • are located near the Bay or its tidal tributaries • provide an opportunity to interpret particular Bay-related resources • support linkages with other gateways that are geographically or thematically related • provide an opportunity for developing volunteer projects that involve visitors in resource restoration or conservation activities
<p><i>Achieving Network Goals</i></p>	<p><i>Interpretation:</i></p> <p>At Gateway sites visitors encounter a particular Bay-related resource together with its specific stories and find information pertaining to the Bay themes to which it relates. They find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretive materials, exhibits or programs telling the sites’s story and placing it in the context of overarching and principal Bay themes • maps and guides linking one site with others pertaining to the same or related themes <p><i>Informational & Physical Access:</i></p> <p>Sites provide direct, physical public access to Bay-related resources, as well as the site maps and other user orientation materials to facilitate that use by visitors. At times, sites undertake projects to improve, enhance or expand existing public access to natural, cultural or recreational resources. Sites link with other sites that are thematically or geographically related via various connecting routes.</p> <p><i>Restoration & Conservation:</i></p> <p>Most sites have on-going conservation and restoration missions and programs and at times restore natural or cultural resources to increase or enhance public access to those resources. Importantly, sites develop and provide on-going opportunities for people to volunteer in restoration or conservation projects. These opportunities are linked to interpretation of relevant Bay themes.</p>

Physical Connections & Linkages — *Water Trails*

<p><i>Purpose</i></p>	<p>Provide recreational experiences, serve as key water based physical and interpretive connections between other Network components (hubs, information centers, sites, other routes), and provide physical and interpretive Network connections to the Bay watershed.</p>
<p><i>Defining Characteristics</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many in each region and above the fall line in the watershed • are publicly accessible non-motorized paddling routes, generally along rivers, streams and smaller bays • provide access to appropriate facilities and resources on land, particularly to other Network components (Gateway sites, hubs, information centers) when below the fall line • provide adequate information to orient users to the route • have a designated organization responsible for coordinating management and information issues • foster stewardship along the route and support for conservation of the Bay and local watershed resources • provide an opportunity to interpret particular Bay-related resources and themes • provide an opportunity for developing volunteer projects that involve visitors in resources restoration or conservation activities
<p><i>Achieving Network Goals</i></p>	<p><i>Interpretation:</i></p> <p>Along a water trail people have the chance to both directly experience Bay-related resources and use interpretive information addressing relevant themes in the context of over-arching and principal Bay themes. Interpretation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maps, guides and materials providing information on Bay-related interpretive themes along the route • interpretive signage at key access points or related sites <p><i>Informational & Physical Access:</i></p> <p>Users find helpful information on locating water trails through all of the Network’s venues. At water trail access points people find maps and directional and user-information signage. Water trails make use of publically navigable waters. In most cases, water trails use existing access points for put-in, take-out and docking spots. Access enhancements occur through projects that improve existing public access or facilitate new access at Gateway sites connected by a water trail.</p> <p><i>Restoration & Conservation:</i></p> <p>Like Gateway sites, water trails develop and provide on-going opportunities for people to volunteer in restoration or conservation projects. These opportunities are linked to interpretation of relevant Bay themes.</p>

Physical Connections & Linkages — *Other Water Routes*

<p><i>Purpose</i></p>	<p>Recognize the historic and modern importance of recreational water transport in larger boats on broader expanses of the Bay by linking Gateway hubs, information centers and sites to water transportation.</p>
<p><i>Defining Characteristics</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are primarily open water routes on broader expanses of the Bay and its tributaries • connect and provide boat access to Gateway hubs, information centers and sites • include formally scheduled routes for publically accessible ferries and tour boats as well as suggested private boating routes for visiting a series of Network sites
<p><i>Achieving Network Goals</i></p>	<p><i>Interpretation:</i></p> <p>Along a water route people directly experience the Bay and may visit sites and other Network components to enjoy and learn about a particular place using site-based interpretation. Interpretive information for a formally scheduled or suggested route may be developed to include maps and guides introducing relevant themes along the route in the context of over-arching and principal Bay themes.</p> <p><i>Informational & Physical Access:</i></p> <p>Users find helpful information on locating water routes through all of the Network’s venues. Water routes make use of publically navigable waters. In most cases, water routes make use of existing access points for put-in, take-out and docking spots. Access enhancements occur through projects that improve existing public access or facilitate new access at Gateway sites connected by a water route</p> <p><i>Restoration & Conservation:</i></p> <p>Water route interpretive materials introduce Bay restoration and conservation as part of key over-arching and principal interpretive themes and provide information on opportunities to volunteer in restoration projects at sites along the route.</p>

Physical Connections & Linkages — *Land-based Routes*

Purpose and Defining Characteristics

Bay-wide driving route:

- connects all six regions, Gateway hubs and key Gateway sites
- serves to give people a primary land route for connecting with and accessing components of the Gateways Network
- is identified on Network-wide map and guide and signage

Regional driving or biking routes:

- link Gateway hub, regional information centers and Gateway sites with a particular region or sub-region
- serve to give people a primary land route for accessing components of the Gateways Network in a particular region

Thematic driving or biking routes:

- link sites in one or more regions related to specific interest areas or themes
- function as connecting routes and as interpretive experiences

Trails and walking tours:

- link sites within a smaller geographic area, such as historic sites within an historic district in a Gateway hub or regional information center community
- provide specific venues for experiencing and interpreting Bay sites and themes

Achieving Network Goals

Interpretation:

Land-based connecting routes introduce visitors to a range of interpretive themes, depending on the focus of the route. Some routes follow one theme; others link people with diverse sites in an area. Interpretive themes are conveyed in the context of overarching and principal Bay themes through route maps and guides and signage, materials and programs at the linked Gateway sites.

Informational & Physical Access:

Network visitors find information for using connecting routes at all Network locations. The information includes:

- a Network-wide map and guide identifying the Bay-wide driving tour, Gateway hubs, information centers, sites and introducing overarching interpretive themes
- regional maps and guides detailing routes, sites and primary themes represented within the region
- thematic maps and guides for routes connecting thematically related sites
- trail or walking tour maps and guides
- directional signage along all routes and interpretive signage along walking routes

Connecting routes provide physical access to Gateway sites. Most, if not all routes will make use of existing public rights of way.

Restoration & Conservation:

Like water trails, some land-based trails develop and provide on-going opportunities for people to volunteer in restoration or conservation projects. These opportunities are linked to interpretation of relevant Bay themes.

Section V:

Support for the Network and Its Participants: Network-wide Strategies, Coordination and Assistance

Key to achieving the vision of the Gateways and Water Trails Network is a system of support for Network-wide functions and individually participating hubs, information centers, sites, water trails and other routes. This system of support is based on: core Network-wide strategies and products, ensuring coordination of the Network and technical and financial assistance for participants.

Network-wide Strategies

The individual physical places of the Network are integrated and linked not just by travel routes, but also by a series of visible and programmatic tools. These tools make the Network cohesive and assure that Network goals can be achieved. Moreover, these tools provide direct support for all of the Network's places.

1. Interpretation

Interpreting the Bay's stories and themes is a core goal and function of the Network. The primary physical venues for interpreting the Bay are the Network's individual components — participating hubs, information centers, sites, and connecting routes. Each site or water trail has a part of the Bay story to tell.

Network-wide, the means for organizing all of the individual parts into a cohesive and understandable picture of the Bay as a whole is through the thematic structure outlined in section III. The themes provide a Bay-wide context for all Bay-related interpretation.

In general, Network technical and financial assistance will focus on developing or enhancing interpretation that presents materials, exhibitry, signage, activities or programs in relationship to Bay overarching and principal themes. The general relationships of individual Network components to these themes are outlined in the "Achieving Network Goals" portions of the charts in section IV.

A Network interpretive plan will be developed to provide guidance and assistance for Network components in using the thematic structure. The plan will assist partners in developing ways to relate the stories of the place they are interpreting to the broader overarching and principal themes of the Bay. It will also guide development of Network-wide interpretive information.

Aspects of the Network-wide orientation strategies and tools discussed below will also incorporate, address and convey interpretive themes.

2. Informational and Physical Access to Bay Resources

Most physical access is provided through individual components of the Network, rather than Network-wide strategies. However, the Network enhances access to Bay resources not only through improvements of physical access sites, but through conveying useful information to people about how to find and use resources. The Network orients people to the Bay, introduces Bay themes, helps people find key resources, and allows them to plan how to explore those resources. Overall, the information conveys an understandable and identifiable organization of a diverse area.

At, through and in association with the Network's physical components and venues, certain Network-wide devices, strategies and materials help convey orientation and interpretive information.

The Network's Virtual Side

Just as one can imagine a Network of linked physical places that people visit, so too can one envision a virtual version. A Gateways & Water Trails Network web-site will be developed as a fundamental tool for linking, conveying and accessing information about the Chesapeake Bay. The site will go beyond simply linking the web-sites of participating Gateway sites and other components. It will also provide a searchable data-base that

allows users to search the Network for places by geographic region, interpretive themes, type of site and other characteristics. The site will also provide interpretive information on core Bay themes. The site will be a key tool for virtual Network visitors to use in planning their trips to the real places of the Bay and for visitors to Gateway hubs and information centers to use to locate near-by sites and themes.

A Guide to the Network — The Chesapeake Bay Gateways & Water Trails Map

A map and guide of the Network is an essential device. It accomplishes several key functions by: (a) helping visitors use the Network and find its various sites; (b) giving visibility to the Network and its participating sites through broad distribution; and (c) establishing the Chesapeake Bay and the Network as a unified system through a single integrated map.

The map will locate all key components of the Network: Chesapeake Bay regions, Gateway hubs, regional information centers, Gateway sites, water trails, the Bay-wide tour route and other connections. It will also include introductory information about the Network, how to use it and overarching interpretive themes. The map will be distributed through all Network outlets.

Consistent Imagery and Signage:

Identifying Network Image/Logo:

A common Network identifying image or logo is a necessity. With the diversity of visual information on the landscape and the magnitude of the Chesapeake Bay, people must easily recognize a singular pattern or look as the identifier of a Bay-wide system. The Network image or logo must be used in association with all physical components of the system, so that people readily identify regional information centers or sites as part of that system. When used in these places and found on helpful publications, the web-site and other materials, people will recognize the image and all places associated with it as useful, valuable tools for their Bay experiences.

The Network logo will not supplant or replace the individual identities of the many institutions participating in the Network as Gateway sites and other places. It is important to both maintain the unique diversity of Gateway Network sites, while at the same time ensuring they are recognizable as part of a system. The Network image/logo will be used along with existing local site images.

Directional/Identifying Signage:

Directional and /or identifying signage is an important aspect of all connecting routes. The approaches to this signage should incorporate some overall consistency, but also vary by the type of the connecting routes:

- The Bay-wide driving route is a key connector for the overall Network. Signage for the route should be based around the Network image.
- Regional and thematic tour routes give identity to the particular region or unifying theme. Signage should facilitate this identity, while maintaining a visible link to the Network image.
- Water trails, trails and walking tours may have local or regional identities similar to that of a particular Gateway site. Signage design should again facilitate that identity, while also identifying the route as a component of the Network.

Interpretive Signage:

Interpretive signage may be a component of a range of different Network components—hubs, information centers, sites, trails. New signage developed with Network assistance will focus on conveying information illustrating overarching and principle Bay themes and the relationship of particular Network components to those themes. Interpretive signage developed with Network assistance will incorporate the Network image.

Site-specific Orientation or Interpretation Materials:

Maps or guides developed for components of the Network, such as regional or thematic driving tours, water trails or other routes should follow the same design principles as for directional signage.

A Bay Access Code

In many areas familiar standards for use of public places are commonly known. For example, many park systems have “Leave no trace” principles encouraging people to leave the area as they found it.

A set of voluntary, familiar, universal and common sense standards for appropriate use and stewardship when accessing public places in the Network should be developed. This “Bay access code” would outline simple universal principles of conduct when accessing or using Gateway sites, water trails and other Network components. The code could be included in orientation materials and site signage as appropriate. Such a code would be one additional tool for developing broad public understanding of Bay stewardship.

Bay-wide driving route

A Bay-wide driving tour is a key Network-wide integrating device. The route should connect all six regions, Gateway hubs and key Gateway sites, following primary roads. It should be shown on the Network map and function as a primary land route for accessing important components of the Network.

3. Restoration & Conservation

The Gateways & Water Trails Network is one component of the broader formal partnership effort to restore and conserve the Chesapeake Bay. The Network is integrated with and contributes to this effort in a particular way. Its focus is on stimulating understanding of, support for, and involvement in Bay resource restoration and conservation. This involves three core Network-wide strategies.

Interpreting Bay Stewardship

The Bay interpretive themes directly incorporate issues and stories related to restoration and conservation. Effective interpretation of these themes through materials and experiences at Gateway hubs, sites and water trails will help develop an understanding of the interconnectedness and interdependence of the Bay system, as well as the Network. These are the foundation on which knowledge of the Bay and support for its conservation are built.

Opportunities at Sites to Volunteer

Gateway sites and water trails are exemplary places for restoration and conservation efforts. This presents a tremendous opportunity for creating on-going venues for people to volunteer in a restoration project. Interest in this type of volunteerism is growing, right along with the increasing popularity of heritage and eco-tourism. At one site the project may involve restoring a wetland, at another, re-building an historic structure. There could be opportunities for continuing involvement over time or for short half-day volunteer work. When this occurs, visitors have a direct experience with the particular resource being restored and with the Bay’s overarching and principle themes. There is no better way to stimulate long-term support for Bay restoration and conservation.

Applications for Network technical and financial assistance will have a higher priority when the project incorporates an on-going volunteer restoration opportunity for site or water trail visitors.

Mitigating impacts to traditional working culture

One of the special treasures of the Chesapeake is the unique relationship developed over time between people and the Bay. In many places this relationship has manifested itself in the long-standing traditions of the Bay’s working culture and landscape. For many, the watermen culture of the Eastern Shore and other parts of the Bay is a central feature of the Bay’s on-going story.

These working traditions are not only part of the Bay’s culture, but also part of its economy and influenced by its natural systems. Changes in this dynamic, whether through increased tourism or other causes, can threaten or alter what is so valued—the long-standing cultural and economic traditions.

Increasing people’s exposure to the Bay and its stories is a central focus of the Gateways & Water Trails Network. As this can at times affect cultural traditions, the Network will give a higher priority to projects incorporating ways of mitigating impacts to traditional working culture near Gateway hubs, information centers or sites.

Network Coordination

Any Network requires on-going coordination and support. For the Gateways & Water Trails Network this occurs through a series of organizations committed to carrying out specific support functions.

The Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 directs the National Park Service to facilitate development of the Gateways & Water Trails Network, in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency, and in cooperation with other non-profit organizations, local, state and federal agencies. The National Park Service acts as a facilitator, convenor and leader of the effort to develop the Network.

Coordination of the Gateways & Water Trails Network with the overall Chesapeake Bay Program, and thereby with state and Bay-wide non-profit programs, occurs through the Network Working Group. The Working Group is established by and through the Chesapeake Bay Program Implementation Committee and includes:

- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
- Chesapeake Bay Commission
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Chesapeake Bay Trust
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Historical Trust
- Maryland Office of Tourism Development
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
- Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission
- US Environmental Protection Agency (Chesapeake Bay Program Office)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service (Chesapeake Bay Field Office)
- US National Park Service
- Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- Virginia Tourism Corporation

The Working Group: reviews all Network materials, coordinates on-going planning for development of the Network, develops policy and priority recommendations to the Bay program, including annual priorities for technical and financial assistance, up-dates a “Network Implementation Projects List”, develops annual funding requests, coordinates agency and organizational commitments to the Network, facilitates coordination with other agency programs and ensures effective communication about the Network with the overall Chesapeake Bay Program.

Network Support

Beyond a coordinating function, organizations participating in the Network Working Group provide direct support to the Gateways and Water Trails Network and to participating hubs, information centers, sites and other components. This support includes:

Technical and Financial Assistance:

Gateways and Water Trails Program

A core aspect of the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 is a technical and financial assistance program for developing the Gateways & Water Trails Network. The Act authorizes \$3 million in federal funding annually to support this program over the five year period 1998 to 2003. Actual appropriations are made by Congress on an annual basis and may vary from the authorized funding level.

The technical and financial assistance program is carried out by the National Park Service in coordination with the Network Working Group. In general, the program provides:

- technical assistance and advice for a range of projects or issues associated with Gateway hubs, information centers, sites, water trails and other components; as just one example, assistance may be provided for planning of interpretive materials or programs
- matching grants (50/50) for projects at Network components

Priorities for the types of projects assisted in a given year may vary. Specific guidelines for eligible projects are based on the Gateways & Water Trails Framework, but are outlined in detail in a separate annual grant application package. For up-to-date information on these guidelines visit the Gateways & Water Trails Network web site at www.chesapeakebay.net/gateways.htm

Other Technical and Financial Assistance Programs

Many of the other organizations participating in the Network Working Group provide various forms of technical or financial assistance which may be relevant to Gateways & Water Trails Network projects. In some cases, assistance provided by these organizations may qualify as a match for the federal Gateways matching grants program. For information contact these organizations directly or access their web sites through the Gateway & Water Trails Network web site.

Development and Up-dating of the Network Implementation Projects List:

A key tool for implementing the Network and this Framework is the “Network Implementation Projects List.” This annually updated list will identify potential projects associated with Gateway hubs, information centers, sites, and connecting routes, as well as Network-wide projects, that contribute to implementing the Gateways & Water Trails Network. The list will be a basis for developing annual funding requests to Congress for the federal Gateways technical and financial assistance program. The initial Network Implementation Projects List will be developed in spring 2000. Inclusion of a project on the list will not constitute a commitment towards future financial assistance.

Implementing key Network-wide projects

The Network Working Group and its member organizations will provide for specific Network-wide projects. Examples of these projects include:

- development of the Network web-site
- creation and publication of the Network map
- development of the Network image and any Network-wide signage designs
- preparation of the Network interpretive plan
- planning and implementing the Bay-wide tour route
- development of a Bay access code

Other organizational commitments to implement specific actions will follow completion of the Network Implementation Projects List in spring 2000.

Section VI:

Participation in the Network

The Gateways & Water Trails Network is a partnership of many Gateway hubs, regional information centers, sites, water trails and other connections, each managed separately by different institutions. Participation in the Network follows several core principles:

- it is voluntary, based on a nomination or application
- it occurs through becoming a designated hub, regional information center, site, water trail or other Network connection, based on the definitions in the Framework
- it requires the support of the institution responsible for management of any facilities associated with the particular Network component
- it requires the support of the local government(s) in whose jurisdiction the particular Network component lies
- it involves no change in management responsibility by virtue of participation
- it conveys both the benefits of participating in the Network, as well as certain responsibilities as a member
- it is necessary in order to receive financial assistance through the Gateways & Water Trails grants program

The Mechanics of Joining the Network

The process of joining the Network is relatively straight-forward. It begins when the sponsor for the proposed Network component either: (a) submits a nomination package to join the Network, or (b) submits an application for a Gateways & Water Trails Network grant.

A. Joining by Nomination

Joining the Network by nomination is a three-step process involving:

- **Nomination:** The managing institution of a potential hub, information center, site, water trail or other connecting route proposes an addition to the Network through a standard nomination package. The package outlines such information as the type of Network component, its relationship with other nearby existing or potential components, the type of resources and interpretive themes involved, the degree to which the site is visitor ready, and the level of support for the proposal (e.g., letters of support from the host institution and local government).
- **Review:** The nomination package is reviewed by the Network Working Group for consistency with the definitions and characteristics for the particular type of Network component and other aspects of the Framework.
- **Designation:** The designation of Network participation is made by the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Program Office.

Nomination packages will be reviewed and acted upon within 60 days of receipt. Guidelines for preparing a nomination package will be developed in spring 2000.

B. Joining by Application for a Matching Grant

An application for a Gateways & Water Trails Network grant is automatically considered as a nomination proposal for joining the Network. Consideration of the proposed Network component (hub, regional information center, site, connecting route) and review of the grant application is simultaneous. Funded projects are automatically entered into the Network.

The application requirements for matching grants are set out in an annual grant guidelines package, separate from this Framework. They include similar basic information such as that required for the nomination package described above.

Benefits and Responsibilities

Recognized hubs, regional information centers, sites, water trails and other components of the Gateways & Water Trails Network benefit from the range of Network support activities described in the Framework, including:

- participation in the interactive Gateways & Water Trails Network web-site
- inclusion within Network maps and guides
- use of Network logo and signage
- linkage with other Network components, including hubs and regional information centers orienting and directing visitors to sites
- eligibility for technical and financial assistance

With participation in the Network, hubs, regional information centers, sites and other components agree to:

- carry out the orientation and interpretive functions described for the specific type of Network location
- use the Network logo and other Network identifying images or signage
- link to the Network web site
- address Network interpretive themes as appropriate for the particular site

Partnership Opportunities for Particular Network Components

Gateway Hubs and Regional Information Centers:

Gateway hubs and regional information centers offer opportunities to be developed or enhanced through partnership between a potential hub or center community and an existing institution already focusing on a part of the Bay story. An existing community/institution that qualifies as a hub or information center location can propose to expand its interpretive and orientation materials to address Network themes and functions. As one example, particular opportunities exist for partnering the functions of hubs or information centers with regionally focused orientation facilities associated with Maryland's Heritage Area Program.

Gateway Sites:

Many if not most potential Gateway sites are already developed and managed by a wide range of existing institutions, ranging from non-profit museums to state and federal parks and refuges. Sites may partner with other organizations on interpretive, access and restoration projects for the particular site. Moreover, these sites might partner with others that are geographically or thematically related to develop or propose connecting routes or associations with a potential hub or regional information center.

Developing Water Trails and other Connecting Routes:

Water trails, trails, walking routes and other connectors are primarily developed through partnership efforts between user groups, outfitters, relevant local and state agencies and the institutions managing sites which may be linked through the route. There are numerous examples of such partnerships now developing in the Bay watershed that have potential to be key components of the Network.