

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

PUBLIC ACCESS

GOAL: 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.

CURRENT EFFORTS

- Annual tracking of new public access sites as they are developed.
- Federal agencies and NGOs actively promote and work to develop new public access sites.
- Federal and state grant programs often target projects that enhance existing or develop new public access.
- Localities have leveraged local funds and donations from private corporations to help with the development of new public access sites.
- The Public Access Action Team has also continued to work to identify additional potential sites that fill identified gaps in the access system.
- NPS and their partners have been promoting the development of “blueways”/water trails.
- The National Park Service Chesapeake Office continues to carry out segment planning and implementation along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. The segment plans identify new public access sites as well as enhancements to existing public access sites.

GAPS

- Lack of public access in urban centers that could provide increased public access for a large, diverse population.
- Several specific stretches of waterways and bay shoreline were identified in the Access Plan where there are significant gaps in public access.
- Lack of paddle-in camping sites make a multi-day trip down one of the Bay’s rivers difficult without a place to go ashore and camp for the night.
- More than 400 specific potential new access locations to help meet gaps have been identified.

MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

- Make funding for public access a priority.
- Carry out and support more detailed assessments and project design for potential sites.
- Fill strategic gaps in access along water trails.
- Incorporate identified proposed public access sites and actions in key plans.
- Further examine urban public access issues and needs.
- Work with private sector funders to develop access.
- Engage in hydropower relicensing processes to expand public access.
- Explore options for resolving railroad crossing liability.
- Establish a process that ensures public access is considered in planning appropriate transportation projects .
- Explore potential for additional access on public lands.
- Managing land control for water access using various instruments.
- Prevent loss of access on public rights-of-way.
- Track progress towards the 300 new sites goal.
- Incorporate identified proposed public access sites and actions in local land use plans.
- Enhance Public Access for a diverse population.
- Address climate change and sea level rise projections when planning and developing new access sites.
- Fully address accessibility at public access sites, including for citizens with diverse physical needs.
- Build opportunities for citizen stewardship.



For the full management strategy, visit: www.chesapeakebay.net/managementstrategies