



*Continually improve the knowledge of land conversion and the associated impacts throughout the watershed. By 2016, develop a watershed-wide methodology and local-level metrics for characterizing the rate of farmland, forest, and wetland conversion, measuring the extent and rate of change in impervious surface coverage and quantifying the potential impacts of land conversion to water quality, healthy watersheds, and communities. Launch a public awareness campaign to share this information with local governments, elected officials, and stakeholders.*

**Why is this outcome important?**

Land use change is a local issue with regional consequences. Land use can affect restoration and protection efforts if not understood, mitigated, or otherwise planned for. This outcome was included in the Agreement to ensure that there are appropriate methods for understanding and tracking land use changes.

**Current Conditions:**

During the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) process, differences have come to light between the land use data set used by the Chesapeake Bay Program that covers the entire watershed over a multi-decadal period and local-scale information. These differences have created challenges for implementation planning and reporting in support of the WIPs. It is vital that the land use data used in the watershed model is perceived as relevant at the local government scale.

**How was the outcome derived? Who came up with it?**

This outcome responds to public comments received that an earlier version of the Agreement did not sufficiently address the extent and impacts of land use change in the watershed. The Land Use Workgroup of the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team was instrumental in developing this outcome, along with representatives of the Maryland Department of Planning and the Chesapeake Bay Commission.

**What was the basis or baseline?**

The Land Use Workgroup will directly involve stakeholders in the generation of land use data for modeling. The challenge will be to assemble a more accurate baseline dataset using local information to the extent possible while estimating historic land use acreages in a clear, transparent and logical fashion.