

# Proposed edits to Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement to address occurrences of the word “citizen(s)”

May 27, 2022

Following are proposed edits to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement to address the unintentional, but exclusionary nature of 17 instances of the word “citizen(s)” in the document.

## General criteria / considerations that were followed in drafting the proposed edits:

- Overriding goal was to maintain the intent of the original language.
- All changes were kept to the minimum necessary to address replacement of the word “citizen(s)”
- The preferred edit was to simply delete the word if possible. If deletion was not possible, then every effort was made to keep the replacement word(s) as consistent as possible.
- Informal definitions used to guide the edits:
  - “Citizen” = a legal resident of the United States. It is exclusive of watershed residents who are not legally in the United States and may also be exclusive of their children who (although they may legally be citizens by virtue of having been born in the United States) do not consider themselves “citizens” because their parents are not citizens.
  - “Resident” = includes all citizens and non-citizens who live in the watershed.
  - “People”, “Public”, “Community” = includes all citizens, residents, and visitors to the watershed. As the most inclusive of the replacement terms, these were preferred unless it was interpreted that the original language specifically intended to refer to those living within the watershed (in which cases, “resident(s)” was used).
- There were many cases where it was recognized that there is no one perfect replacement for “citizen(s) and multiple replacements may work. See “Comments” associated with some of the edits below.

## Process that got us to this point:

- In order to address expedited review requested by Management Board at their May 12, 2022 meeting (i.e. present recommended edits and discuss at June vs July MB meeting), a small group of GIT 5 and GIT 6 members drafted proposed edits as per above criteria.
- Proposed edits were distributed to full GIT 6 membership and GIT 5 leadership on May 19 with request for comments or edits due back by COB May 25.
- Very few (6) edits were received. All edits were non-contradictory and were incorporated into this draft.
- All GIT 6 members had the opportunity to review and comment, and all comments received have been addressed. The edits below, however, are not the result of a consensus discussion by GIT 6.

## Color-coded categories of edits:

**Edits to General Text** = 11 cases. Could be approved by PSC.

**Edits to Outcomes** = 2 cases. Could be approved by PSC.

**Edits to Goals** = 2 cases. Must be approved by EC.

**Edits to Vision Statement** = 1 case. Must be approved by EC.

**Edits to Signature Page** = 1 case. Must be approved by EC.

## Listing of Proposed Edits:

- Edits below are presented based on above color-coded categories.
- Edit #'s are assigned based on the order that they appear in the Watershed Agreement. Page numbers in parentheses below refer to pagination in the attached Watershed Agreement.
- Edits can also be reviewed in full context in attached Watershed Agreement.

## Edits to General Text

#2 (pg 1): “Local governments are key partners in our work, as ~~are individual citizens~~ is the public, businesses, watershed groups and other non-governmental organizations.”

*Comment: There was some discussion to simply replace “citizens” with “residents” on the logic that the original intent was to focus on individuals who lived in the watershed, but we choose to recommend replacing with “the public” as it is more inclusive.*

#3 (pg 2): “Achieve Goals and Outcomes in a timely way and at the least possible cost to ~~our~~ citizens the public.”

*Comment: Considered keeping “citizens” because it speaks to cost, but decided that “the public” was more appropriate because, a) many non-citizens still pay taxes, and b) to the extent that federal funds are used, they are paid by all US taxpayers, not just residents of the watershed.*

#4 (pg 2): “Engage ~~citizens~~ the public to increase the number and diversity of people who support and carry out the conservation and restoration activities necessary to achieve the Goals and Outcomes of the Agreement.”

#5 (pg 3): “This work will require effort from many, including all levels of government, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, watershed groups, businesses and individuals ~~citizens.~~”

#6 (pg 3): “Environmentally literate ~~citizens~~ people are more engaged stewards of the Chesapeake Bay’s healthy watersheds.”

#7 (pg 8): “Reducing the impacts of toxic contaminants is critical to improve the health of fish and wildlife, thereby improving their recreational value ~~for citizens.~~”

#8 (pg 10): “The long-term success of the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort will depend on local leadership – and local action that depends primarily on ~~a~~ strong ~~citizen~~ individual and community stewardship.”

#9 (pg 10): “More than 600 local conservation and watershed organizations in our region are educating and empowering ~~citizens~~ communities to restore and protect their local streams and rivers.”

#10 (pg 10): “Tens of thousands of local ~~citizen~~ volunteers continue to donate their time and talent to our shared goals.”

#15 (pg 13): “The well-being of the Chesapeake Bay watershed will soon rest in the hands of its ~~youngest citizens~~ youth – the more than three million students in kindergarten through twelfth grade.”

#16 (pg 15): “This participation may include sharing knowledge, data or information, educating ~~citizens or members~~ the public, working on future legislation and developing or implementing programs or practices.”

*Comment: Deleted “members” also because it is not clear who it is referring to and makes the sentence awkward.*

### Edits to Outcomes

#12 (pg 10): “~~Citizen~~ Stewardship Outcome”

#13 (pg 10): “Increase the number and diversity of trained and mobilized ~~citizen~~ volunteers with the knowledge and skills needed to enhance the health of their local watersheds.”

### Edits to Goals

#11 (pg 10): “**GOAL:** Increase the number and diversity of local ~~citizen~~ stewards and local governments that actively support and carry out the conservation and restoration activities that achieve healthy local streams, rivers and a vibrant Chesapeake Bay.”

#14 (pg 11): “**GOAL:** Conserve treasured 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.”

*Comment: Could have replaced “citizens” with “residents” or “people”, but suggested change does not alter the intent and flowed better.*

### Edit to Vision Statement

#1 (“Vision” page): “The Chesapeake Bay Program partners envision an environmentally and economically sustainable Chesapeake Bay with clean water, abundant life, conserved lands and access to the water, a vibrant cultural heritage and a diversity of engaged ~~citizens and~~ stakeholders.”

*Comment: This one was the most challenging because, a) it is the partnership’s Vision Statement, and b) the term “stakeholders” also carries exclusionary context with some readers (implies holding a financial stake). We considered replacing “citizens” with “residents” OR deleting “citizens and stakeholders” and replacing with, “members of the public”. Opted for simply deleting “citizens and”.*

### Edit to Signature Page

#17 (pg 16): “~~Every citizen of~~ Everyone in this great watershed is invited to join with the Partnership, uniting as a region and embracing the actions that will lead to success.”

*Comment: There was one comment that this may be a case where “citizen” is appropriate as this is signed by elected leaders and only citizens may vote. Emphasizing those who vote may emphasize accountability of those who signed and their predecessors.*