

Chesapeake Bay Program Stewardship Workgroup

What is the [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)?

Chesapeake Bay Program partners envision an environmentally and economically sustainable Chesapeake Bay [watershed](#) with clean water, abundant life, conserved lands and access to the water, a vibrant cultural heritage, and a diversity of engaged citizens and stakeholders.

The Chesapeake Bay Program is a unique regional partnership that has led and directed the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. Bay Program partners include Federal and state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations and academic institutions. Staff members work at our offices in Annapolis, Maryland, and at partner organizations throughout the watershed. Since the Program's foundation, its partners have used written agreements to guide the restoration of the nation's largest estuary and its watershed. Setting goals and tracking progress holds partners accountable for their work, while developing new agreements over time ensures our goals are aligned with the best available science to attain restoration success. The current [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#) was signed in 2014 with an aim to achieve the goals and outcomes outlined by 2025.

The Agreement outlines a [set of 10 goals](#) that will advance restoration and protection of the Bay watershed, and support the health of the public and of the watershed as a whole. The Program's organization includes six Goal Implement Teams (GITs) intended to focus and drive implementation to achieve very explicit progress and results within the scope of their goal area. Each goal is further developed with specific Outcomes that are addressed through workgroups. One of these GITs is responsible for work under four of the 10 goals: Stewardship, Environmental Literacy, Public Access, and Land Conservation.

What is the [Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship GIT](#)?

The charge for the Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT 5) is to engage and assist watershed residents, communities, and local governments in undertaking initiatives to conserve treasured landscapes; and to support environmental education for all ages. The team hopes to reconnect the public with nature and foster a shared ownership of the Chesapeake's diverse resources. This approach will build public support of restoration and conservation efforts and increase engagement and active stewardship.

- [Stewardship Goal](#): Increase the number and diversity of local stewards [residents] 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.

What is the [Stewardship Workgroup](#)?

The Stewardship Workgroup, aligned under GIT 5, is responsible for the Stewardship Outcome under the Stewardship Goal of the 2014 Watershed Agreement.

- [Stewardship Outcome](#): 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.

Long-term success and sustainability of the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort will ultimately depend on the actions and support of the 17 million residents of the region who call the watershed home. The cumulative impact of these millions of individuals and their daily actions can both positively and negatively affect the health of watersheds, streams and rivers. Hundreds of local conservation and watershed organizations in addition to a growing number of community associations, religious institutions and others are leading efforts at the local scale to engage and empower residents to restore local streams, reduce pollution, protect the environment and improve their communities. The efforts of these groups and of community leaders also result in an ever increasing number of residents adopting behaviors and taking individual actions that ultimately reduce our collective impact on the Bay.

To achieve the Outcomes of the 2014 Watershed Agreement, each of the Bay Program workgroups are guided by management strategies and logic & action plans that are updated or revised every two years. The Stewardship Outcome's logic & action plan describes the desired actions of the workgroup through 2021 and includes several specific actions under the following categories:

- Establish mechanisms to **measure** impact and **track** progress of stewardship programs;
- Provide assistance to help develop and implement [highly effective] **programs** for maximum impact on stewardship;
- Increase capacity to expand the number and diversity of community **volunteers** and community **leaders**;
- Recruit, train, and support more **community leaders and local champions** (Expand the number and diversity of community leaders and local champions).

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