

Critical Asks from Received Beyond 2025 Public Feedback (February—March 2025)

1. Expand and Strengthen Land Conservation Efforts

- Update and extend the *Protected Lands Outcome* beyond 2025 with new milestones for 2040 and 2050.
- Increase funding and policy support for conservation easements, public land acquisition and urban green space protection.
- Prioritize conservation in areas under development pressure, including tribal lands and urban spaces.

2. Recognize and Empower Indigenous Leadership in Bay Governance

- Formally include the *Indigenous Conservation Council (ICC)* as a signatory to the revised *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.
- Establish and fund an *Indigenous Guardianship Program* to build tribal capacity for conservation.
- Create an *Advisory Committee for Tribal Nations* within the Chesapeake Bay Program.

3. Increase Public Access to Natural Spaces

- Improve and expand public access to waterways and parks to foster environmental stewardship and economic benefits.
- Ensure underserved communities have equitable access to outdoor recreation and green spaces.

4. Enhance Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategies

- Update climate resilience goals to address extreme weather, flooding and drought.
- Implement large-scale wetland conservation and restoration projects to mitigate climate impacts.
- Ensure conservation policies prioritize climate adaptation and ecosystem connectivity.

5. Reform Pollution Control Strategies

- Shift focus from general conservation efforts to directly addressing major pollution sources like industrial agriculture.
- Improve stormwater and nutrient pollution controls to prevent further degradation of the Bay.
- Strengthen water quality monitoring and accountability measures.

6. Maintain and Expand Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem Restoration

- Continue large-scale oyster reef restoration beyond the 2025 goals.
- Protect and restore blue crab and forage fish habitats with better fisheries management.
- Improve wetland conservation policies to prevent further losses.

7. Strengthen Local and Regional Conservation Partnerships

- Provide more resources and funding to local governments for land conservation and water protection efforts.
- Support regional collaboration and standardized metrics to track conservation success.

8. Prioritize Environmental Education and Public Engagement

- Maintain funding for environmental literacy programs to ensure long-term community involvement in conservation.
- Integrate environmental education into school curricula with hands-on learning experiences.