



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Clean Water Goal Team

New Member Orientation

Version Date: September 2026

Adapted from various materials and subject to change pending Management Strategy development and Phase 7 model development.

Acronyms

- AgWG – Agriculture Workgroup
- AMT – Agricultural Modeling Team
- BMP – Best Management Practice
- BORG – Bay Oxygen Research Group
- CAP – Criteria Assessment Protocol
- CAST – Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (user interface for the CBP Watershed Model)
- CBP – Chesapeake Bay Program
- CBW – Chesapeake Bay Watershed
- CRC – Chesapeake Research Consortium
- CWGT – Clean Water Goal Team
- CWIP: Conowingo WIP Steering Committee
- DAR – Data, Analysis and Reporting Workgroup
- EC – Executive Council
- EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
- GMF – Governance and Management

Framework

- MS – Management Strategy
- PPOW – Plastic Pollution Workgroup
- PSC – Policy Steering Committee
- QAPP – Quality Assurance Project Plans
- RENPS: Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment
- TEC: Toxic and Emerging Contaminants
- TCW – Toxic Contaminants Workgroup
- TMDL – Total Maximum Daily Load
- USWG – Urban Stormwater Workgroup
- WIP – Watershed Implementation Plan
- WQ,SAM – Water Quality, Standards Attainment and Monitoring
- WTWG – Watershed Technical Workgroup
- WWTWG – Wastewater Treatment Workgroup

Outline

1 CBP and the
Watershed Agreement

2 CBP & CWGT
Structure

3 Membership

4 Decision-Making

5 Management Strategy
& Workplans

6 Basics on Some
Common Subjects

The Chesapeake Bay Program and *Watershed Agreement*

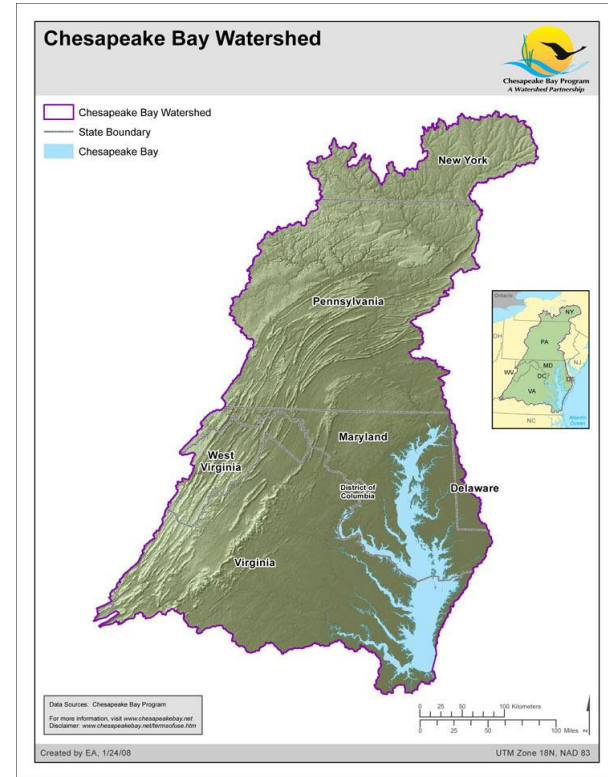
The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP)

Simply put: We are a regional partnership **working together to meet the goals of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.**

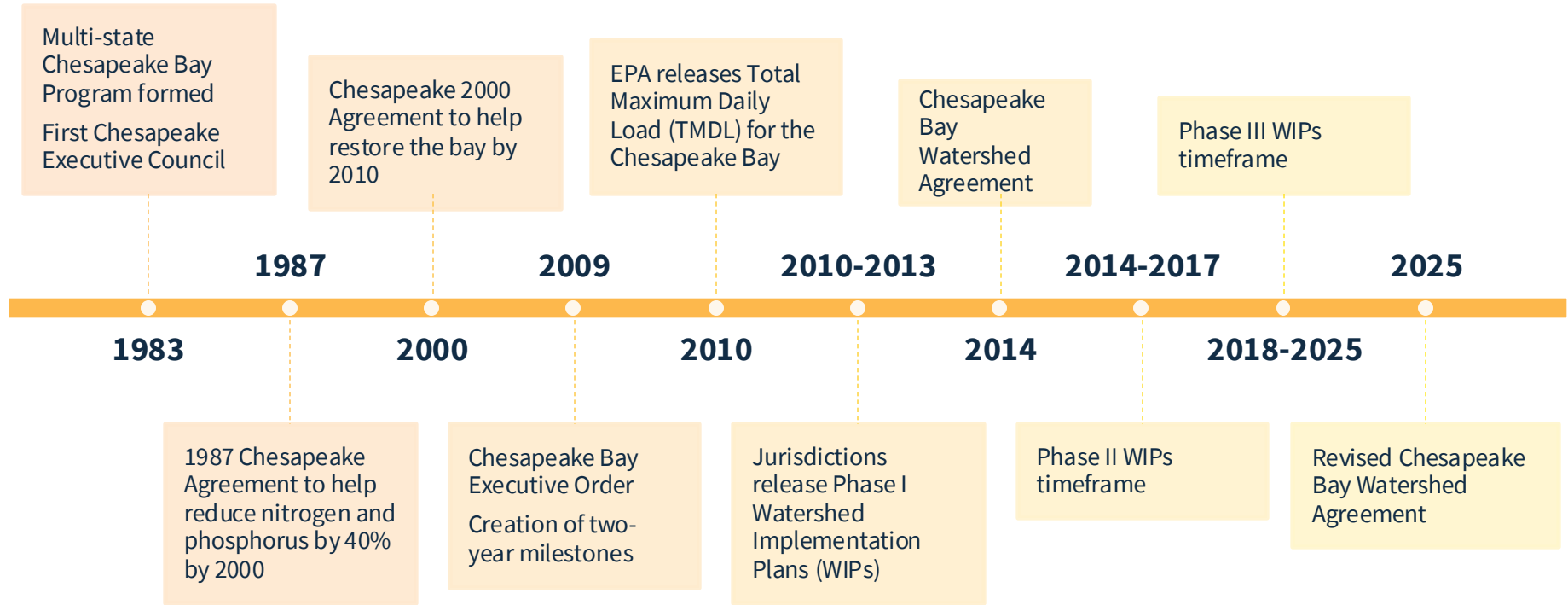


The Chesapeake Bay Watershed

- The watershed is 64,000 square miles and includes 7 jurisdictions:
 - Delaware
 - District of Columbia
 - Maryland
 - New York
 - Pennsylvania
 - Virginia
 - West Virginia
- Chesapeake Bay Program was formed in 1983 due to rapid loss of aquatic life and wildlife due to excess nitrogen and phosphorus



Chesapeake Bay Program: A Brief History



[Additional Bay Program History](#)



“There will be no quick-fix for the Chesapeake’s problems. We will need to **study and monitor**, but while we do that, we will also need to focus concerted **remedial action** on some of the most severe problems in the system. Above all, we will need to continue the continue to **dialogue** among the states and among the users of the Bay.”

(Chesapeake Bay Program: Findings and Recommendations, Sept. 1983)



The Chesapeake Bay *Watershed Agreement*

Simply put: The guiding document that outlines the goals we are working towards. It was revised in 2025 with new goals and outcomes.

- [History and Overview of the CBWA](#)
 - [Clean Water Goal and Outcomes](#)
 - [The 2025 revised *Watershed Agreement*](#)
-

CBP Partners

9 Watershed Agreement Signatories

EPA (Represents U.S. Government)

Jurisdictions (DE, D.C., MD, NY, PA, VA, WV)

Chesapeake Bay Commission

Federal agencies

- E.g., USDA-NRCS

Academic institutions

- E.g., University of Maryland, Penn State University

Non-governmental organizations

- E.g., Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Nature Conservancy

Advisory Committees

- E.g., Scientific and Technical, Local Government

The Chesapeake Bay *Watershed Agreement*

Vision

We envision a Chesapeake Bay region where clean water flows, wildlife thrives and farms, forests and fisheries are healthy and productive. It is a place where people from all walks of life feel connected to the land, to the Bay and local waterways, to their communities and to the rich cultural heritage that makes this watershed unique. Together, we are building a future that is environmentally and economically sustainable, resilient and full of possibility—where everyone can enjoy and help conserve the natural beauty of the Bay, and the lands and waters that surround it, today and for generations to come.

The Chesapeake Bay *Watershed Agreement*

Clean Water Goal

Reduce pollutants entering the Bay and its rivers to achieve the water quality necessary to support aquatic life and wildlife, and support human health.

The Clean Water Goal has three outcomes within it, which are described on the following three slides.

Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus & Sediment

Outcome: Implement and maintain practices and controls to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment. These reductions are necessary to achieve the applicable water quality standards, as described in the Bay TMDL. Those water quality standards support living resources and protect human health, as required by the Clean Water Act.

- Through 2030, signatories will continue to accelerate completion of all interim water quality planning targets through implementation of Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plans, two-year milestone commitments and other innovative strategies to achieve and maintain reduced levels of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment.
- By December 31, 2030, revise the planning targets approved by the Principals' Staff Committee for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, incorporating the latest watershed modeling, monitoring data and research findings, and develop new or amended Watershed Implementation Plans to meet the updated targets by 2040.
- Demonstrate net reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment through multiple lines of evidence, including modeling and monitoring data.

Toxic & Emerging Contaminants

Outcome: Reduce the amount and effect of toxic contaminants, such as PCBs, plastics, mercury and PFAS, on the waters, lands, fisheries, wildlife and communities of the Chesapeake Bay watershed through an increased understanding of their impacts and mitigation options.

- Promote information sharing between researchers, program managers and policymakers on the lessons learned, best practices and most up-to-date science, policy and communications around the toxic contaminants impacting the Chesapeake Bay watershed

Water Quality, Standards Attainment & Monitoring

Outcome: Measure changing water quality conditions by maintaining monitoring networks and tracking our collective progress toward achieving clean water, throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

- Maintain full core monitoring network operations (i.e., nontidal water quality, SAV, tidal water quality, benthic and community science) annually to support analysis and communication of water quality loads, trends and criteria attainment.
- Develop and expand partnership-approved approaches for assessing whether water quality criteria are being met for all designated uses. For dissolved oxygen criteria, establish an approved method by 2028 and apply the method for data analysis and reporting by the end of 2030.
- Maintain or exceed the rate of improvement in the water quality standards attainment indicator relative to the 1985-2022 baseline.
- Analyze and report status/loads, trends and factors affecting those trends for nontidal and tidal water quality.

Guiding Documents for CWGT

CBP Governance and Management Framework

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (*revised 2025*)

- Established goals and outcomes for the restoration of the Bay

Clean Water Act (CWA)

Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

- “Pollution diet” established by EPA in 2010 for nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment.

Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs)

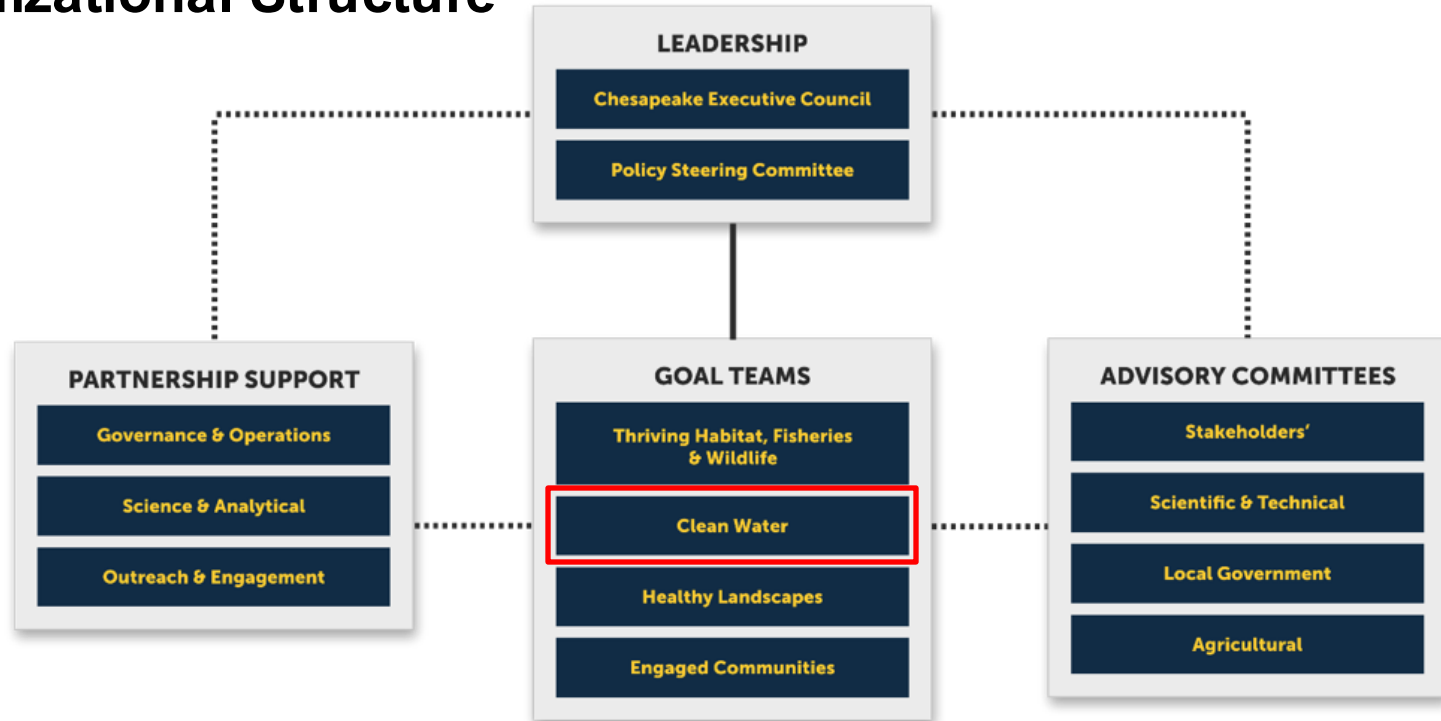
- Jurisdictions developed plans to reduce pollution from specific sources (e.g., wastewater treatment plants, urban stormwater, agriculture)

CBP Websites

- chesapeakebay.net - The main site for most CBP information including workgroup pages, meetings calendar, blogs, press releases, etc.
- chesapeakeprogress.com - Communicates to partners and the public progress towards the outcomes in the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.
- data.chesapeakebay.net - Data, decision-support tools and other data resources from the Chesapeake Bay Program and its partners
- cast.chesapeakebay.net - All things related to using and understanding Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST), a web-based nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment load estimator tool for environmental planning.

CBP & CWGT Structure

Chesapeake Bay Program Organizational Structure



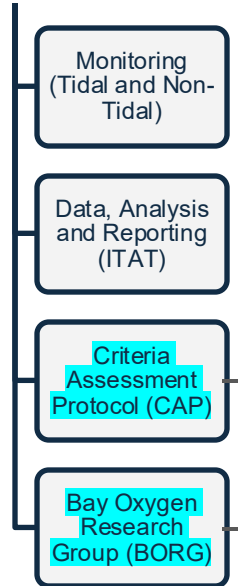
Clean Water Goal Team Structure

Groups are shown under the outcome they most closely support.

Action Teams, who will function until their charge is fulfilled, are highlighted in blue.

More information on the proposed function of each group is [available here](#).

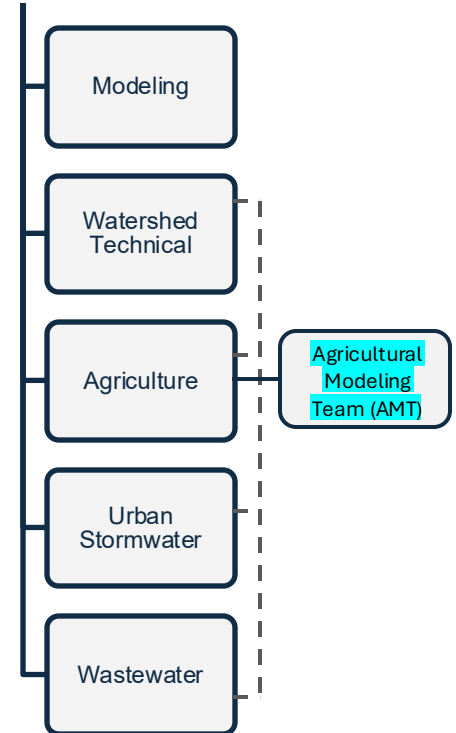
Water Quality, Standards Attainment & Monitoring



Toxic & Emerging Contaminants



Reducing Excess Nitrogen, Phosphorus & Sediment



Version Date:
September 22, 2026.

Main POCs

[HOW WE'RE ORGANIZED](#) >

Clean Water Goal Team

The Clean Water Goal Team works to reduce pollutants entering the Bay and its rivers.

On This Page

[Meetings](#) | [About](#) | [Projects](#) | [Publications](#) | [Related Resources](#)

Each group's Co-Chairs, Coordinator, Staffer and Members can be found on the right panel on their webpage on chesapeakebay.net

Every group is supported by a Staffer. They keep distribution lists, create and coordinate meeting materials and are the primary point of contact for questions.

Contact

Jeremy Hanson (Coordinator)
hansonj@chesapeake.org

Petra Baldwin (Staffer)
Baldwin.Petra@epa.gov

Caroline Kleis (Staffer)
Kleis.Caroline@epa.gov

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▼ Our Members

Lee McDonnell (Chair)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
mcdonnell.lee@epa.gov

Gregorio Sandi (Chair)
Maryland Department of the Environment
gregorio.sandi@maryland.gov



3

Membership



Goal Teams: (pp 15-19)



- **Leadership:** 2 co-chairs
 - nominated by the Goal Teams
 - approved by the PSC
- **Voting Members:** Up to 15
 - 9 appointed by PSC signatories
 - Up to 6 at-large confirmed by Goal Teams
- **Non-voting Members:**
 - 4 Advisory Committee reps
 - Workgroup chairs
 - Additional state & fed reps approved by Goal Teams

Workgroups: (pp. 19-20)



- **Leadership:** at least 1 chair, approved by Goal Teams
- **Members:** recruited, self-nominated, or recommended; approved by WG chairs in consultation with Goal Team co-chairs
 - **Voting Members:** Up to 15
 - Up to 9 PSC signatory appointees
 - Remainder: at-large members
 - Confirmed by Goal Team
 - **Non-voting Members:**
 - Number, source, and approval at discretion of WG chairs in consultation with Goal Team co-chairs

Action Teams: (pp. 20-21)



- **Leadership:** determined by establishing entity
- **Membership:** determined by Action Team leadership, in consultation with establishing entity
- Action Team Operations default to Workgroup procedures
- Action Teams dissolve upon completion of mission

What makes an effective member?

- **Attends meetings regularly**
 - If a member cannot attend, it is appreciated if they notify us ahead of time and have someone on the line to represent them (signatory members have alternates; alternates are optional for at-large members).
- **Actively participates in meetings**
 - Participates in discussions and provides feedback to the CWGT leadership or presenters when requested.
- **Communicates with CWGT leadership ahead of a meeting regarding concerns or objections over certain decisional or agenda items.**
 - An open line of communication enables us to be proactive in addressing concerns or issues ahead of a meeting in order to bring forward the most appropriate and accurate information and/or proposals.
- **Conducts themselves in a professional, ethical, and respectful manner.**

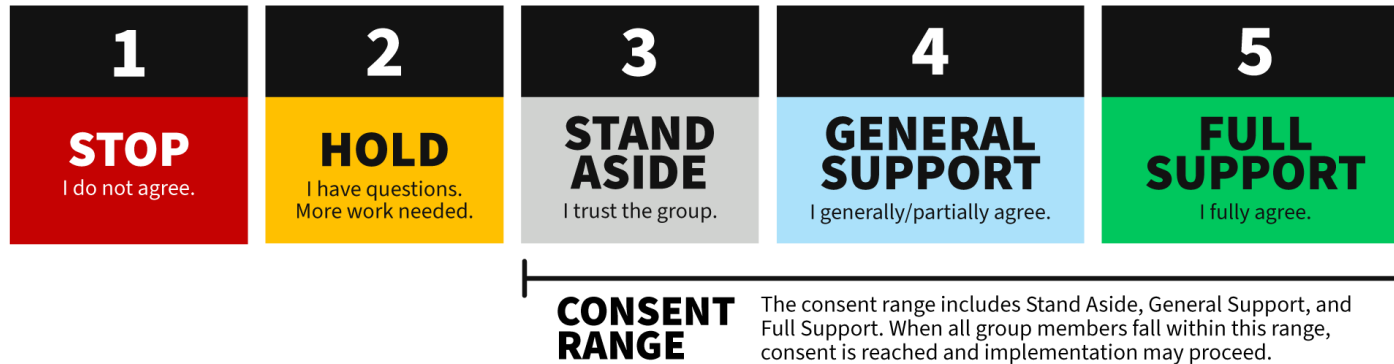
Guidance from Governance and Management Framework

- Ethical Behavior Guidelines ([GMF](#), page 8)
- Additional expectations for signatory member engagement ([GMF](#), page 17 for Goal Teams and page 19 for workgroups)
- Some guidance is also outlined in this [Meeting Best Practices document](#), though this is being updated to align with the GMF.

Decision Making

Decision Making

Chesapeake Bay Program Decision-Making Continuum



While **consensus** (defined in the GMF as unanimous full support) is the partnership's goal, the partnership employs a **consent-based decision-making** approach. Should a decision-making body fall short of unanimous consent, the voting members may use a vote to proceed.

Consent-based Decision-Making Process

Before meeting:

1. **Identify a decision is needed**

- *Group leaders, with input of members, make the determination and include the topic on the meeting agenda.*
- *Agenda and supplemental materials are posted with adequate advanced notice, if required.*

At meeting:

2. **Check for quorum of voting members**

3. **Discussion with all members**

4. **Form and present a decision proposal**

5. **Call for consent by all members***

- *If unanimous consent is reached (no member expresses dissenting views by taking a position of “1” or “2” on the decision-making continuum), the decision has been approved.*
- *If unanimous consent is not reached, dissenting members should articulate their concerns.*

6. **Identify and address concerns**

7. **Modify proposal and call for consent by all members***

**For the PSC, only voting members participate in calls for consent.*

Source: [GMF 101 Webinar](#)

If Consent Cannot Be Reached...

8. Voting members will vote.

- *For a decision to be approved, a group must meet the **quorum requirements and decision threshold** for that group.*
- *Group chairs will call for each voting member to take a position: **support, oppose, or stand aside**.*
- *The decision threshold is based on the total number of designated voting members, not the number of voting members who are present.*

For goal teams and workgroups, the quorum requirement is two thirds and the decision threshold is two thirds. If there are 15 voting members, a decision is approved if at least 10 of voting members take a position of support or stand aside. If between 10 and 15 voting members are present, decision approval still requires 10 to register support or stand aside.

For the PSC, quorum requires 7 of the 9 voting members and the decision threshold is 7 of 9. A decision is approved if at least 7 voting members support or stand aside.

Strategic Plan: Management Strategies and Workplans

Management Strategies and Workplans

Management strategies for each goal, contained within a single strategic plan, describes how we will accomplish each outcome and its targets in the *Watershed Agreement*.

Workplans describe the major activities that partners will implement over the next three years in relation to each management approach.

More information on Management Strategy development, including templates are available on [this page](#).

Unpacking the Multiple Layers

Strategic Plan (CBP-wide)

Management Strategy (1 Goal = 1 Chapter)

1. THFW

2. Clean Water

3. Healthy Landscapes

4. Engaged Communities

Workplan (1 per Outcome*)

2.1 RENPS

2.2 T&EC

2.3 WQ, SAM

* Workplans are not included in the CBP-wide Strategic Plan. 1 workplan per outcome is prescribed in GMF; CWGT workgroups will also have workgroup-level plans. The sum of workplans will be the same, but unbundled.

Multiple Layers: Completing the Template

Clean Water goal chapter

**Situation analysis
(inc. challenges)**

**Goal-level
Management
approaches**

Outcome level (x3)

**Baseline &
current
condition**

**Monitoring
progress &
indicators**

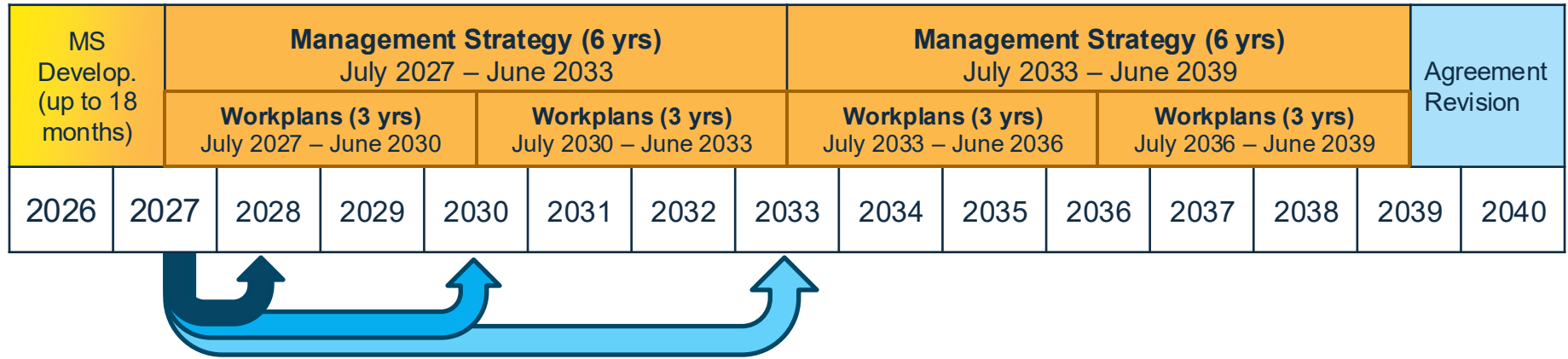
**Situation
Analysis inc.
challenges**

**Snapshot of
signatory
programs*

**Management
Approaches**

**Participating
partners*

Accountability and Adaptive Management



- Annual Check-Ins** – extended PSC meetings that communicate progress, and address and prioritize implementation needs
- Triennial Reviews** – cross-program review & symposium to document successes and challenges and initiate new Workplans
- Strategy and Program Evaluation** – assess the current progress towards achieving the Goals and Outcomes of the Agreement, evaluate the efficacy of existing Management Strategies and identifies opportunities for improvement
- In 2040, the Strategy and Program Review will prompt revision to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

Source: [Demystifying Management Strategies](#)

Development Timeline

OCTOBER 22, 2026

Send Strategic Plan draft to Policy Steering Committee (PSC).
(Chapters due Oct. 19)

DECEMBER 3-18, 2026

PSC approves draft Strategic Plan for Public Feedback Period release via email.

APRIL 2027

Present revised Strategic Plan to PSC.

Receive and incorporate input

MAY 2027

Goal Teams approve Strategic Plan

MAY 2026

JUN 2026

JUL 2026

AUG 2026

SEP 2026

OCT 2026

NOV 2026

DEC 2026

JAN 2027

FEB 2027

MAR 2027

APR 2027

MAY 2027

JUN 2027

NOVEMBER 5, 2026

Present draft Strategic Plan chapters to PSC.
Receive and incorporate PSC input.
(Revisions due Nov. 20)

JANUARY 5 – 31, 2027

Strategic Plan Public Feedback Period

JUNE 2027

PSC approves Strategic Plan

Goal Teams approve Workplans

Source: [Demystifying Management Strategies](#)

Basics on Some Common Subjects

What are...the Watershed Model and CAST; Annual progress; BMP Verification?

[This section to be updated.]

With the ongoing Phase 7 model development, and other changes, we are still developing briefing slides related to the model, CAST, BMP verification, and Annual Progress.

A few general resources on modeling are provided here:

- [Modeling the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Fact Sheet](#)
- [Understanding Chesapeake Bay Modeling Tools: A history of updates, governance, policy and procedures](#)
- [Phase 7 Model Development Webpage](#)

In the meantime, refer to the [Aug 2024 WQGIT Orientation Slides](#), which include primers on key topics on [slides 21-33](#).

- ***Note: some of this information may be out of date, but can provide basic background context and resources. Notably, all Progress BMP submissions now occur directly via CAST instead of through NEIEN, so please disregard references to NEIEN.***