

THE REVISED WATERSHED AGREEMENT

WHAT LOCAL LEADERS NEED TO KNOW

A New Chapter for the Watershed Agreement

Signed in 2014, the [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#) governs the restoration of the Bay watershed. As many milestones in the 2014 Agreement approach their target dates in December 2025, the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership has drafted a [revised Watershed Agreement](#) to chart a course for the future and strengthen the partnerships between the states, local governments and federal agencies working to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

How to Submit Public Feedback



The public feedback period for the revised Agreement is open from **July 1 - September 1, 2025**.



For more information, check out [FAQ on the public feedback process](#).



Want to learn more before submitting feedback? Register for a local government [Q&A webinar on Aug. 13 from 12-1 pm](#).

What's Changed in the Agreement

- Minor edits were made to the Agreement's Vision for "an environmentally and economically sustainable and resilient Chesapeake Bay watershed with clean water, abundant life, conserved and healthy working lands, a vibrant cultural heritage and a wide range of engaged individuals whose communities enjoy access to the waters and natural landscapes of the region."
- The Agreement's original ten goals were simplified into four broader ones. By streamlining goals, the Partnership aims to make the Agreement more actionable and accessible.
 - **Thriving Habitat and Wildlife**
 - **Clean Water**
 - **Healthy Landscapes**
 - **Engaged Communities**
- Conservation was elevated as a key theme within the Agreement. This ensures land protection and informed development decisions are viewed as essential to achieving clean water goals, and recognizes the pivotal role that local governments play in land use decisions.

SUBMIT FEEDBACK:

Submit feedback on the revised Agreement via email at comments@chesapeakebay.net

KEY OUTCOMES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

While each Outcome within the *Watershed Agreement* has been updated with new language and revised targets, the following four are particularly relevant for local governments. View all of the Outcomes in the draft [revised Watershed Agreement](#).

LAND USE DECISION SUPPORT



- Original two land use outcomes have been streamlined into one.
- Revised outcome emphasizes the importance of local land use authority.
- Further commits to producing high resolution land data and actionable information for local governments.

CHANGING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS



- Revised outcome focuses on using nature-based solutions to address changing environmental conditions.
- Nature-based solutions like living shorelines, restored wetlands, and rain gardens provide quality of life benefits while addressing stormwater and flooding.

TOXIC CONTAMINANTS MITIGATION



- Original two toxic contaminant outcomes have been streamlined into one.
- Revised outcome commits partners to focus on research and information-sharing around emerging contaminants like PFAS.
- Could be a valuable source of information for local governments looking to tackle PFAS.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP



- Revised outcome continues commitment to increase the knowledge and capacity of local leaders around water resources.
- Further supports federal and state partners in engaging with local leaders to ensure they have the tools, resources, data, and education to make the best decisions for their communities.