



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

An Introduction to the Chesapeake Bay Program

Agricultural Advisory Committee – March 2025

Agenda

- 1 Program Overview and History**
- 2 The 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement**
- 3 Program Governance**
- 4 Advisory Committees**
- 5 Beyond 2025**

Program Overview and History

What is the Chesapeake Bay Program?

- Regional partnership guiding the restoration and protection of the largest estuary in the nation
 - ~40 jurisdictional agencies and programs
 - 19 federal agencies
 - ~1,800 local governments, represented through the Local Government Advisory Committee
 - >20 academic institutions, represented through the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee
 - >60 non-governmental organizations, including businesses, non-profits and advocacy groups.



Photo Credit: Will Parson/Chesapeake Bay Program

The Bay Program is a *partnership*



NY



DC



VA



MD



PA



DE



WV



Chesapeake Bay
Commission

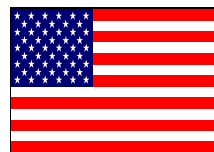


Chesapeake Bay Program



EPA

Federal
Partners



The Bay Program is a *partnership*

Academic Partners

Non-Governmental Partners



A brief history of the Bay Program



- 1970s – MD Senator Mathias sponsored 5-year study to analyze **rapid loss of aquatic life in the Bay**
 - Identified excess nitrogen, phosphorus as the primary cause
- 1983 – First Bay Agreement (MD, VA, PA, DC, EPA, CBC)
 - “assess and oversee the implementation of coordinated plans to improve and protect the **water quality and living resources** of the Chesapeake Bay estuarine systems”

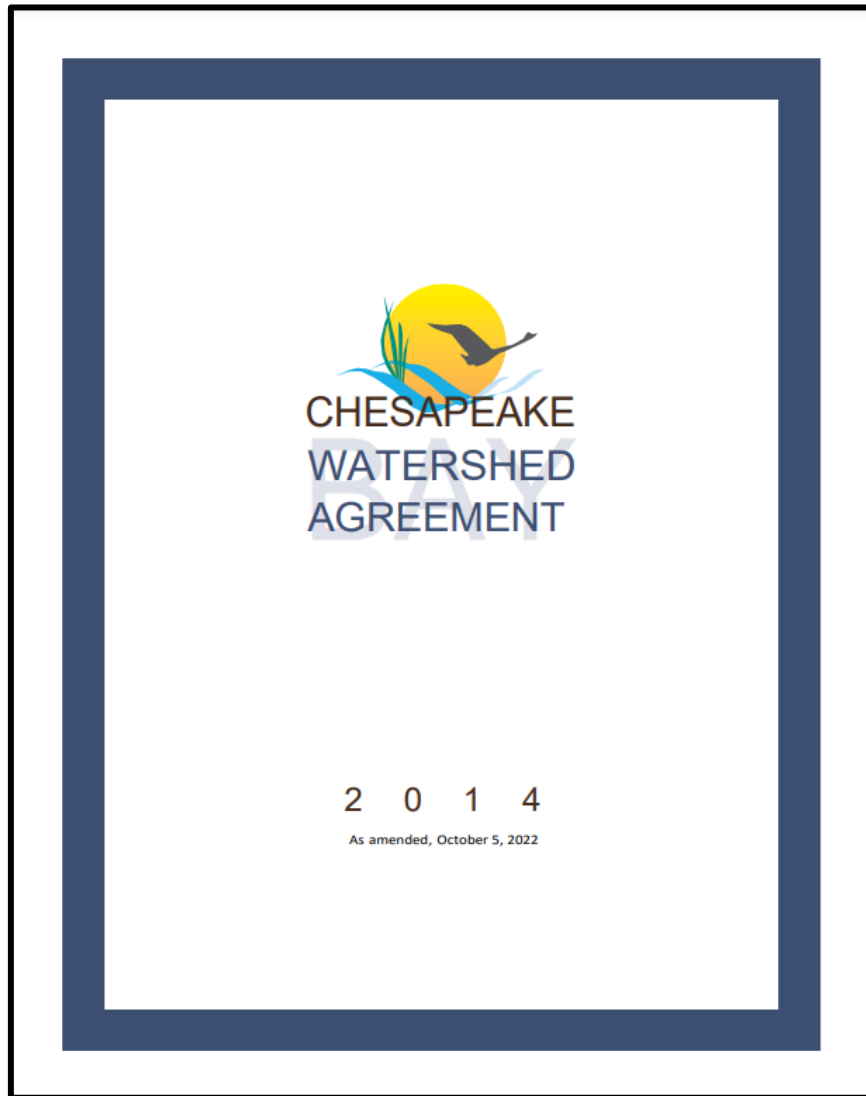
A brief history of the Bay Program

- 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement
 - Set numeric goals for pollution reduction and Bay restoration
- Chesapeake 2000
 - Strategy for restoration through 2010
- Chesapeake Bay Executive Order (2009)
 - EO 13508
 - Called on federal government to renew restoration effort
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (2014)
 - 10 goals, 31 outcomes to restore the Bay, its tributaries and surrounding land



The 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

2014 Bay Agreement: What's different?



- 10 interrelated goals and 31 measurable, time-bound outcomes
- Headwaters jurisdictions established as full signatories
- Enhanced scientific rigor, accountability, systemic learning through adaptive management decision framework and Strategy Review System

2014 Bay Agreement: What's in it?

- *Vision*
- Preamble
- Principles
- *Goals and Outcomes*
- Management Strategies

PRINCIPLES

The following principles are an overarching framework by which the Chesapeake Bay Program commits to operate. They encompass the partners' collective, core values and are intended to help guide us in our work as the Partnership develops policy and takes actions to achieve this Agreement's Goals and Outcomes.

THE PARTNERSHIP WILL:

- **Collaborate** to achieve the Goals and Outcomes of this Agreement.
- **Achieve Goals and Outcomes** in a timely way and at the least possible cost to the public.
- **Represent the interests of people** throughout the watershed fairly and effectively, including a broad diversity of cultures, demographics and ages.
- **Operate with transparency** in program decisions, policies, actions and reporting on progress to strengthen public confidence in our efforts.
- **Use science-based decision-making and seek out innovative technologies and approaches** to support sound management decisions in a changing system.
- **Maintain a coordinated watershed-wide monitoring and research program** to support decision-making and track progress and the effectiveness of management actions.
- **Acknowledge, support and embrace local governments** and other local entities in watershed restoration and protection activities.
- **Anticipate changing conditions**, including long-term trends in sea level, temperature, precipitation, land use and other variables.
- **Adaptively manage** at all levels of the Partnership to foster continuous improvement.
- **Seek consensus** when making decisions.
- **Use place-based approaches**, where appropriate, that produce recognizable benefits to local communities while contributing to larger ecosystem goals.
- **Engage 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.
- **Explore using social science** to better understand and measure how human behavior can drive natural resource use, management and decision-making.
- **Promote environmental justice** through the meaningful involvement and fair treatment of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income, in the implementation of this Agreement.

OUR VISION



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.

10 Goals from the 2014 *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*



1. Sustainable Fisheries



2. Vital Habitats



3. Water Quality



4. Toxic Contaminants



5. Healthy Watersheds



6. Stewardship



7. Land Conservation



8. Public Access



9. Environmental Literacy



10. Climate Resiliency

10 Goals from the 2014 *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*



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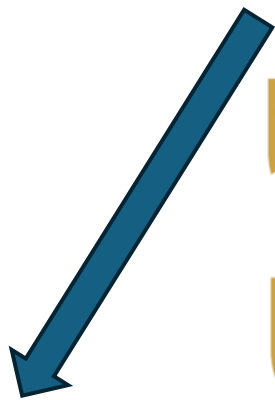
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9. Environmental Literacy



10. Climate Resiliency



“Reduce pollutants to achieve the water quality necessary to support the aquatic living resources of the Bay and its tributaries and protect human health.”

Sustainable Fisheries Goal



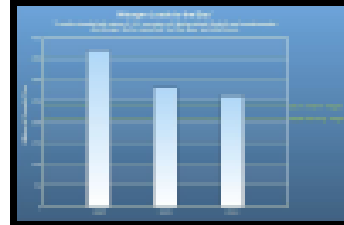
- *Blue Crab Abundance Outcome*
- *Blue Crab Management Outcome*
- *Oyster Outcome*
- *Forage Fish Outcome*
- *Fish Habitat Outcome*

Vital Habitats Goal



- *Wetlands Outcome*
 - *Black Duck*
- *Stream Health Outcome*
 - *Brook Trout*
- *Fish Passage Outcome*
- *SAV Outcome*
- *Forest Buffer Outcome*
- *Tree Canopy Outcome*

Water Quality Goal



- *2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP) Outcome*
- *2025 WIP Outcome*
- *Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring Outcome*

Toxic Contaminants Goal



- *Toxic Contaminants Research Outcome*
- *Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention Outcome*

Healthy Watersheds Goal



- *Healthy Waters Outcome*



Sustainable Fisheries Goal



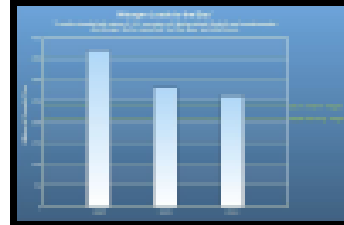
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Water Quality Goal



- *2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP) Outcome*
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Toxic Contaminants Goal



- *Toxic Contaminants Research Outcome*
- *Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention Outcome*

Healthy Watersheds Goal



- *Healthy Waters Outcome*



“By 2025, have all practices and controls installed to achieve the Bay’s dissolved oxygen, water clarity/submerged aquatic vegetation and chlorophyll a standards as articulated in the Chesapeake Bay TMDL document.”



Stewardship Goal



- *Citizen Stewardship Outcome*
- *Local Leadership Outcome*
- *Diversity Outcome*

Land Conserva- tion



- *Protected Lands Outcome*
- *Land Use Methods and Metrics Development Outcome*
- *Land Use Options Evaluation Outcome*

Public Access Goal



- *Public Access Site Development Outcome*

Environmental Literacy Goal



- *Student Outcome*
- *Sustainable Schools Outcome*
- *Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome*

Climate Resiliency Goal



- *Monitoring and Assessment Outcome*
- *Adaptation Outcome*

Program Governance

Governance Overview

- [Governance document](#) outlines the program's organizational processes and structure
 - An important read for getting up to speed!
- For this meeting:
 - Organizational structure highlights
 - CBP decision-making

Governance and Management Framework for the Chesapeake Bay Program



December 1, 2022

How we're structured



CBP Leadership Groups

- Executive Council (EC)
 - Establishment authorized by Sec. 117 of Clean Water Act
 - Sets vision, strategic policy direction for restoration and protection of the Bay and its living resources
 - Governors of DE, MD, NY, PA, VA, WV; Mayor of DC; Chair of Chesapeake Bay Commission; EPA Administrator
- Principals' Staff Committee (PSC)
 - Policy advisors to the EC; sets policy and implements actions on behalf of EC
 - Accepts items for EC consideration, sets EC meeting agendas
 - Cabinet office-/Secretary-/Director-/Commissioner-level members; CBC Executive Director
 - AC Chairs = non-voting members
- Management Board (MB)
 - Provides strategic planning, priority setting, and operational guidance
 - Manages implementation of goals/outcomes/strategies and supporting policies
 - Members typically of the rank below PSC member
 - AC Chairs (and GIT Chairs) = non-voting members

Goal Implementation Teams (GITs)

- Intended to focus and drive implementation to achieve explicit progress and results within the scope of specific goal areas:
 - Protect & Restore Fisheries
 - Protect & Restore Vital Habitats
 - **Protect & Restore Water Quality**
 - Maintain Healthy Watersheds
 - Foster Chesapeake Stewardship
 - Enhance Partnering, Leadership, and Management
- In some cases, serve as “outcome lead” charged with realizing assigned outcome
- Establish workgroups for specific actions under the purview of their GIT as needed
- Seek opportunities to engage ACs as needed

Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT)

Scope and Purpose

The charge of the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) is to evaluate, focus, and accelerate the implementation of practices, policies, programs that will restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries to conditions that support living resources and protect human health. The Team reports to the Management Board and Principals' Staff Committee. Functions include:

- Provide a forum for discussion, exchange of information, and evaluation among federal, state, and local agencies, river basin commissions, industry groups, universities, and other interested parties on water quality goals, data, modeling, authorities, and restoration efforts.
- Evaluate and promote strategies to reduce nutrient, sediment, and chemical contaminant loads from municipal, industrial and onsite wastewater; agricultural lands and animal operations; urban and suburban stormwater; forested lands; tidal and in-stream sediment; and air emissions.
- Promote consistent, uniform and transparent processes to model, track, report, and verify water quality restoration efforts.
- Identify, define, quantify, and incorporate pollutant reduction and conservation practices into the Chesapeake Bay Program decision support system.
- Provide technical expertise and leadership to support the development, implementation, and tracking of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, Watershed Implementation Plans, and two-year milestones that support long-term Bay restoration goals.

▼ Watershed Agreement

Vital Habitats Goal

[Forest Buffers](#)

[Tree Canopy](#)

Water Quality Goal

[Watershed Implementation Plans \(WIP\) - 2017](#)

[Watershed Implementation Plans \(WIP\) - 2025](#)

[Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring](#)

Toxic Contaminants Goal

[Toxic Contaminants Research](#)

[Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention](#)

Agriculture Workgroup (AgWG)

- Group is currently in process of identifying priorities through 2026
 - Scope and purpose will remain intact
- Support WQGIT in achieving 2025 WIP Outcome (ag nonpoint-source load)
- BMP Crediting and Verification
- *BMP Implementation*
- *Innovation*

Scope and Purpose

The charge of the Agriculture Workgroup is to provide expertise and leadership on development and implementation of policies, programs and research to reduce pollutant loads delivered from agricultural lands and animal operations to upstream waters and the Chesapeake Bay. The workgroup reports to the [Water Quality Goal Implementation Team](#). Functions include:

- Provide a forum for discussion, exchange of information and evaluation between federal, state and local agencies, conservation districts, universities, agri-business and the corporate sector on sustainable and/or cost-effective agricultural production systems that benefit water and air quality.
- Provide recommendations on the prioritization of federal and state technical and financial resources on specific practices in priority watersheds.
- Provide technical expertise and leadership to support the development and implementation of agricultural elements within the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, Watershed Implementation Plans, two-year milestones, and tracking and reporting mechanisms that support an adaptive management approach towards Bay restoration.
- Coordinate with WQGIT [Watershed Technical Workgroup](#) to identify, define, quantify and incorporate pollutant reduction and conservation practices on agricultural lands and animal operations into the Chesapeake Bay Program decision support system. Provide data and support for the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team and Technical and Support Services.

Agricultural Modeling Team (AMT)

- Several iterations of Bay Program modeling tools
- AMT develops ag inputs for Phase 7 of the watershed model
 - Reviews data preprocessing methods/ag inputs to ensure best available information is used
 - Reviews current assumptions related to nutrient application to ag lands
- Model-related discussions had historically taken much of the AgWG's time

Topic	
Crop nutrient application	Agricultural plant categories
Re-evaluate Land Uses	Soil and Water Extractable Phosphorus
Manure production factors	Housing and in field volatilization
Nutrient Application	Ensure Model data transparency
Legume nitrogen fixation	Re-evaluate Cover factors
Timing of crop nutrient applications	Fertilizer bucket scale processing (NOTE a fertilizer investigation is underway which will have more information by Q2 of 2023)
Manure storage and handling losses	Examine potential Agricultural data sources (NOTE a fertilizer investigation is underway which will have more information by Q2 of 2023)
Crop uptake vs removal	Feeding operations (NOTE Land Use information will be available to address this issue in 2024)
Nitrogen mineralization	Additional Soil nutrient supplement groups
Manure Transport	Revisit AAPFCO NH4 to NO3 (NOTE a fertilizer investigation is underway which will have more information by Q2 of 2023)
Double cropping	Shifting environmental conditions and crop types
Re-evaluate animal types	Biologicals

CBPO Key Points of Contact (Ag Groups)

- **Water Quality Goal Implementation Team**

<u>Chair</u> Suzanne Trevena – trevena.suzanne@epa.gov	<u>Vice Chair</u> Gregorio Sandi – gsandi@mde.state.md.us	<u>Coordinator</u> Jeremy Hanson – hansonj@chesapeake.org
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- **Agriculture Workgroup**

<u>Chair</u> Kathy Brasier – kbrasier@psu.edu	<u>Vice Chair</u> Caitlin Grady – Caitlin.grady@gwu.edu	<u>Coordinator</u> Eric Hughes – hughes.eric@epa.gov
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- **Agricultural Modeling Team**

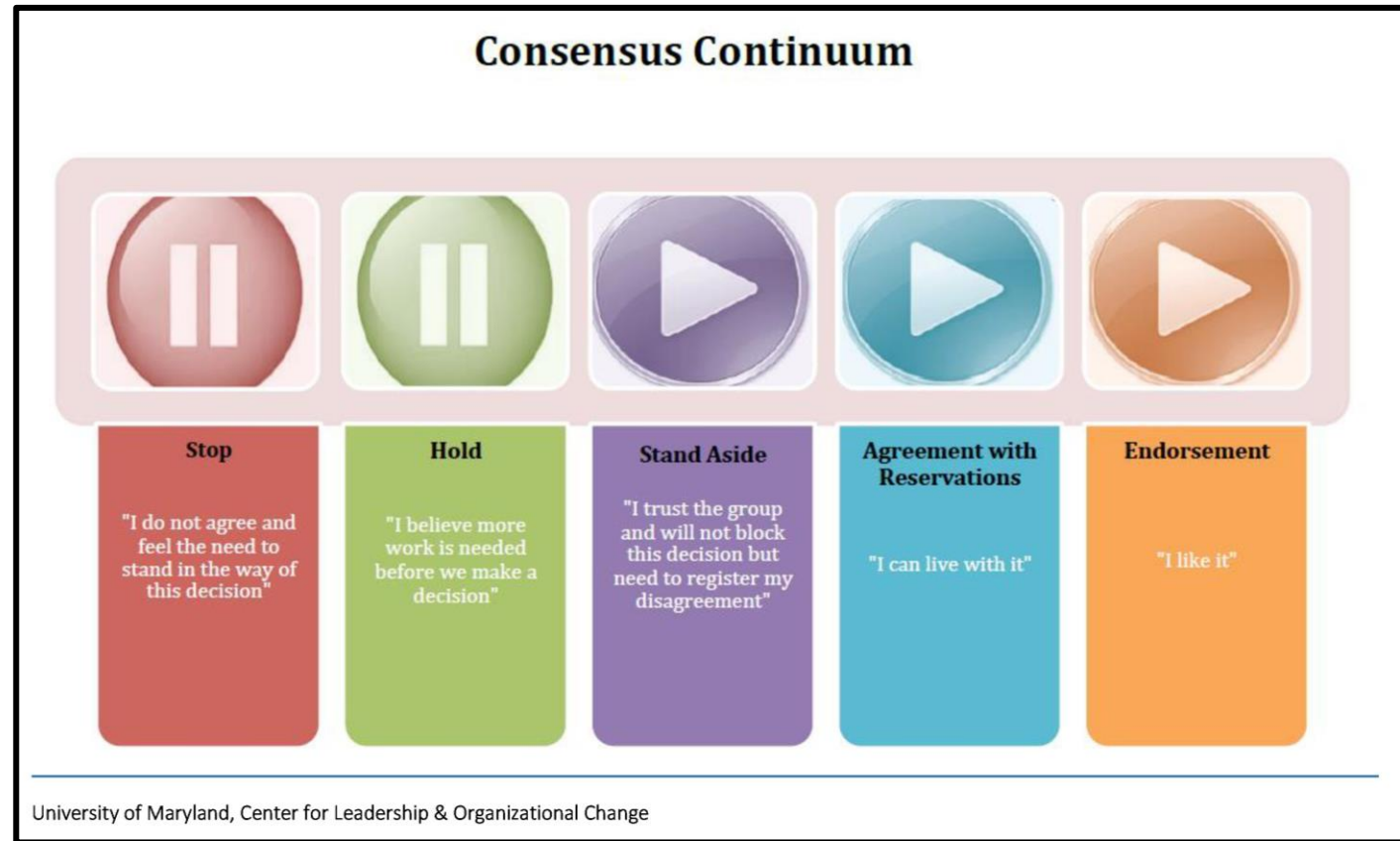
<u>Chair</u> Zach Easton – zeaston@vt.edu	<u>Vice Chair</u> N/A	<u>Coordinator</u> Tom Butler – butler.thomas01@epa.gov
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CBPO Points of Contact for Ag Work (continued)

- **Ruth Cassilly** – *Non-point Source Policy Analyst*
 - Analyzes nutrient loads and sources to allow stakeholders to more effectively target BMPs and develop policies to achieve pollution reduction results
- **Mark Dubin** – *Senior Ag Advisor*
 - Offers technical assistance to staff in efforts ranging from sourcing improved agricultural data for partnership modeling tools to developing methods for tracking, reporting, and verifying BMPs
- **Caroline Kleis** – *Staffer, WQGIT, AgWG, AMT*
 - Provides critical administrative support for several CBP decision-making bodies, including our ag-focused and ag-adjacent groups
- **Kelly Shenk** – *EPA R3 Agriculture Advisor*
 - Liaison between ag community and EPA in addressing policy and programmatic opportunities and challenges facing the region's agricultural stakeholders
- **Auston Smith** – *Coordinator, Watershed Technical Workgroup (WTWG)*
 - WTWG is a cross-sector group focused on technical issues related to BMPs, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model processes, BMP implementation reporting

Partnership decision-making

- *Flow* of decision-making
 - Leadership groups (EC/PSC/MB) make decisions and can instruct subordinate groups to consider an issue (leading to decisions)
- Consensus – the system we use to make decisions
 - Each voting member takes a position on an issue, providing justification for their stance
 - If consensus *can't* be reached by a sub-management group, the issue is eventually “elevated”
- Supermajority (if necessary; leadership groups only)



Advisory Committees

What is an *Advisory Committee*?

“The ~~three~~ [four] Advisory Committees are made up of appointed and/or elected volunteers who **provide independent perspectives from critical stakeholder groups** and **strengthen the natural and social science basis for Bay protection and restoration activities**. In recognition of the partnership’s commitment to diversity, membership of the Advisory Committees should be as broad and inclusive as possible, representing the full diversity of ethnicities and cultures, including people of color and other underrepresented communities within the watershed. The Advisory Committees are the **independent thinkers and advisors to the EC, PSC and MB.**”

What does an Advisory Committee *do*?

Key Functions and Responsibilities (shared by all Advisory Committees):

- **Make independent recommendations** to the Executive Council, Principals' Staff Committee, and Management Board. Advisory Committees will use established CBP distribution lists to disseminate annual recommendations, letters, and reports.
- Participate in EC, PSC, and MB meetings as **advisors**
- Participate in **development and implementation of the Management Strategies** developed as part of the Watershed Agreement as appropriate
- Establish annual **priorities that support CBP strategic priorities** and the progress of the Agreement Goals and Outcomes
- **Advise the GITs** and the Action Teams as needed



What other Advisory Committees exist?

Local Government Advisory Committee

- Purpose: advise the Executive Council on how to effectively implement projects and engage the support of local governments to achieve the goals of the Bay Agreement through 1) *sharing the views and insights of local elected officials with state and federal decision-makers* and 2) *enhancing the flow of information among local governments*.
- Goals (not an exhaustive list):
 - Promote ongoing communication and engagement between local govts and CBP
 - Promote local govt implementation of local water quality/quantity initiatives
 - Champion local govt priorities/needs within the CBP and with state, fed partners
- Membership: 24 members (all gubernatorial/mayoral appointees)
 - Current or formal local elected or appointed officials or members of an organization representing the interests of local government
 - City, county, township representatives on current membership list

Local Government Advisory Committee

Events

- [Local Government Forums](#)
 - Annual meetings hosted by LGAC, Alliance for the Chesapeake, NFWF
 - Identify issues that limit/strategies that support local implementation of watershed protection initiatives
- Roundtables
 - Occur more sporadically than other LGAC initiatives
 - Lancaster Clean Water Partners & Campbell Foundation roundtable
- Wandering Waterways Tour Series
 - Bringing local elected officials to see conservation in practice
 - [Wandering Delmarva's Waterways](#) – benefits of BMPs; impacts of saltwater intrusion; value of ag land preservation

Local Government Advisory Committee

Resources

- [Protect Local Waterways Website](#)
 - Bay restoration resources tailored to the communication needs of leaders in local government; Learning Library: [Understanding and Supporting Ag Allies](#)
- [Watershed Currents Newsletter](#)
 - Bimonthly distribution of local case studies and informational resources

Scientific & Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

- Purpose: provide scientific and technical advice and guidance to the CBP Partnership on measures to restore and protect the Bay and its watershed, ensuring close cooperation among and between the various research institutions and management agencies represented in the Bay watershed.
- Functions:
 - Conduct and publish technical reports and position papers
 - Engage in discussion groups
 - Assist in organizing merit reviews of CBP programs and projects
 - Organize and lead technical workshops
 - Engage in ongoing interaction between STAC members and the CBP
- Membership: 38 members (11 gubernatorial/mayoral appointees; 6 federal scientists appointed by CBP Director; 21 at-large nominated by STAC members) possessing relevant scientific knowledge in needed areas of expertise
 - Substantial academic representation

Scientific & Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

- [Workshops](#) – forum for developing recommendations from scientific/technical community on information needs, opportunities for collaborations, and further management actions.
 - Recent workshop: Using carbon to achieve CBW water quality goals and climate resiliency (biochar workshop; FY2023)
 - Upcoming workshop: Identifying knowledge gaps to support market-based approaches to CBW restoration (FY2025)
 - Workshops can be proposed by STAC members or by a CBP partner/group in collaboration with a current STAC member, or a partnership group in collaboration with a current STAC member

Stakeholders' Advisory Committee

- Purpose: advise the EC, PSC, and MB on policies and programs impacting residents in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Priorities (not an exhaustive list):
 - Monitoring progress toward achieving TMDL water quality goals, outcomes in Watershed Agreement; accountability, transparency in restoration process
 - Agricultural challenges and opportunities
 - Impacts of large-scale solar development
- Membership: 28 members (gubernatorial/mayoral appointees; appointments also made by Board of Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
 - Sample of CB stakeholders, including restoration practitioners, farmers, retired government officials, policy researchers and contractors, environmental justice advocates, community organizers, educators.

Stakeholders' Advisory Committee

- Few members interact directly with CBP workgroups – this may change
- Ag interest is represented on the AC, but it is one of many interests
 - Collective desire among group members to protect working lands and sustainable agriculture within context of accountable progress toward CBP water quality/living resources goals
- Engagement activities not presented online
 - Often informal engagement through members' networks
 - Hosted farmer panel to discuss efficacy of nutrient management plans
 - Hosted large-scale-solar development panel discussing pressures of solar on farmland and agrivoltaics potential

Advisory Committee Points of Contact

● Local Government Advisory Committee

<u>Chair</u> Marty Qually – mqually@adamscountypa.gov	<u>Vice Chair</u> Josh Hastings – jhastings@wicomiconcounty.org	<u>Coordinator</u> Laura Cattell Noll – lnoll@allianceforthebay.org
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● Scientific & Technical Advisory Committee

<u>Chair</u> Larry Sanford – lsanford@umces.edu	<u>Vice Chair</u> Bill Dennison – dennison@umces.edu	<u>Coordinator</u> Meg Cole – colem@chesapeake.org
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● Stakeholders' Advisory Committee

<u>Chair</u> Abel Olivo – abel@defensoresdelacuenca.org	<u>Vice Chair</u> David Lillard – dlillard@thedownstreamproject.org	<u>Coordinator</u> Jessica Blackburn – jblackburn@allianceforthebay.org
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5

Beyond 2025

Beyond 2025 Introduction

- AAC is forming at an important time
- Partnership is currently planning the Bay Program’s future focus areas
- Why now?
 - 2025 is a critical “deadline” for several of our outcomes
 - Several outcomes will not be met. So, where do we go from here?

 WATER QUALITY			
2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) Outcome	 RECENT PROGRESS COMPLETED <i>Updated November 2021</i>	 OUTLOOK COMPLETED <i>Updated November 2021</i>	→
2025 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) Outcome	 RECENT PROGRESS INCREASE <i>Updated April 2024</i>	 OUTLOOK OFF COURSE <i>Updated April 2024</i>	→
Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring Outcome	 RECENT PROGRESS INCREASE <i>Updated October 2024</i>	 OUTLOOK ON COURSE <i>Updated October 2024</i>	→

Status summary for all outcomes: <https://www.chesapeakeprogress.com/outcome-status>

Beyond 2025 Phase 1

The 2022 Chesapeake Executive Council Charge
EC charged the Principals' Staff Committee to review progress toward achieving the 10 goals and 31 outcomes in the 2014 Watershed agreement and “recommend a critical path forward that prioritizes and outlines the next steps for meeting the goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement* leading up to and beyond 2025.”

Beyond 2025 Steering Committee

Established to address EC charge, kicking off Phase 1; ultimately provided recommendations (next slide) leading to Phase 2.



**Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership
Executive Council Charge to the Principals' Staff Committee: Charting a Course to 2025 and Beyond
Adopted October 11, 2022**

As the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership nears the 2025 date that the partnership set for several of the goals and outcomes under the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* (*Watershed Agreement*), there are many successes to celebrate. At the same time, emerging issues and changing conditions (e.g., climate change, growth, new scientific data) have impacted the levels of effort needed to meet our collective restoration priorities. We, as a partnership, remain committed to using the best available science in restoring the Chesapeake Bay as we accelerate toward the deadline and anticipate continued progress post-2025.

Thus, this Executive Council charges the Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) in recommending a critical path forward that prioritizes and outlines the next steps for meeting the goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement* leading up to and beyond 2025. The PSC is to report back to the Executive Council at our 2023 annual meeting with recommendations on how to best address and integrate new science and restoration strategies leading up to 2025. At our 2024 annual meeting, the PSC is to prepare recommendations that continue to address new advances in science and restoration, along with a focus on our partnership for going beyond 2025.

In undertaking such a process, the PSC should address the following considerations:

Science

- Identify new and emerging scientific data and studies which could modify our progress reporting and adaptive management approach, as well as the goals and outcomes under the *Watershed Agreement*.
- Enhance our monitoring and reporting capabilities to improve our understanding of existing conditions and trends.
- Define the existing and emerging challenges (e.g., climate change conditions, increasing growth, diversity, equity, inclusion and justice considerations) to accomplishing the partnership's work under the *Watershed Agreement*, and how addressing those challenges might alter our collective restoration priorities, including the possibility of extending the target date for completing restoration of water quality beyond 2025.
- Identify opportunities to leverage action across multiple goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement*.

Restoration

- Develop and begin to implement a communication strategy that identifies key partnership successes, associated ecosystem improvements and areas where more effort is needed.
- Provide snapshots of outcome attainability under the Agreement (e.g., which outcomes are likely to be met by the date(s) set by the partnership, which won't, and why) and options for communicating these snapshots to demonstrate progress in achieving our outcomes and the remaining work to be done, including gaps to be addressed.

Partnership

- Focus on moving beyond 2025 by seeking ways in which restoration can be relevant to all communities within the watershed.
- Assess the overall partnership to determine whether we
 - Are effectively hearing from and listening to all stakeholders, and
 - Have systems of evaluation and decision-making to enable meaningful action and allocation of partnership resources.
- Based on this assessment, develop recommendations for potential improvement.

Phase I Steering Committee Recommendations

1

Affirm the partnership's commitment to work together in partnership to meet the goals of the *Watershed Agreement*. Direct partnership to continue implementation of existing goals. Direct PSC to make every effort to propose specific amendments to the *Agreement*, including outcomes, by end of calendar year 2025.

2

Keep the partnership strong. Simplify and streamline structure and processes.

3

Focus on Science; Restoration and Conservation; and Partnership.



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Beyond 2025 Phase 2

The 2024 Chesapeake Executive Council Charge

Adopted by the Chesapeake Executive Council in December 2024, the charge directed the Principals' Staff Committee to 1) revise the 2014 Chesapeake Watershed Agreement and 2) develop a simplified and streamlined structure and process for the partnership.



Chesapeake Executive Council *Charge to the Principals' Staff Committee: Charting a Course Beyond 2025*

Whereas this is the final meeting of the Chesapeake Executive Council before 2025, which is the final year that we collectively set for achieving several of the key outcomes under the [2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#); We, the Chesapeake Executive Council:

- Celebrate the progress made by the partnership toward meeting the goals and outcomes of the [2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#) while acknowledging the work remaining to fully achieve our shared vision;
- Recognize that the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed are dynamic, and our work must be responsive to long-established issues, emerging issues (e.g., climate change) and new scientific understandings that have impacted the level of effort needed to meet the partnership's collective restoration and conservation priorities;
- Recognize that the [Clean Water Act](#) established the Chesapeake Bay Program to improve water quality and living resources in the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed for all communities;
- Recognize that the signatories of the [2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#) share a vision of a healthy and resilient Bay and watershed for the collective benefit of all communities and people, while also recognizing that each jurisdiction has unique challenges, resources, opportunities and goals that support their individual participation and success of the full partnership;
- Recognize that achieving both our individual and collective goals can only, and best be realized, by remaining grounded in evolving science that is inclusive of all people, especially disadvantaged communities. By centering these viewpoints together, we will be stronger as a partnership; and
- Commend the Principals' Staff Committee, Chesapeake Bay Program partners and countless interested and impacted parties in meeting the ["Charting a Course to 2025 and Beyond" Charge](#) set forth by this Executive Council in 2022.

Therefore, let it be resolved that we, the Chesapeake Executive Council, in recognition of the consensus-based work of the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee, guided by the findings of their ["A Critical Path Forward for the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership Beyond 2025"](#) report and our continued commitment to meet the goals of the [2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), hereby direct the Principals' Staff Committee to complete the following by December 31, 2025:

1. Revisions to the [2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), not a new Agreement. Revisions to outcomes should be executed pursuant to the Governance and Management Framework for the Chesapeake Bay Program. While not all outcomes will need revision, some reviews will likely result in consolidating, reducing, updating, removing, replacing, or adding new outcomes.

Revise the Chesapeake Watershed Agreement

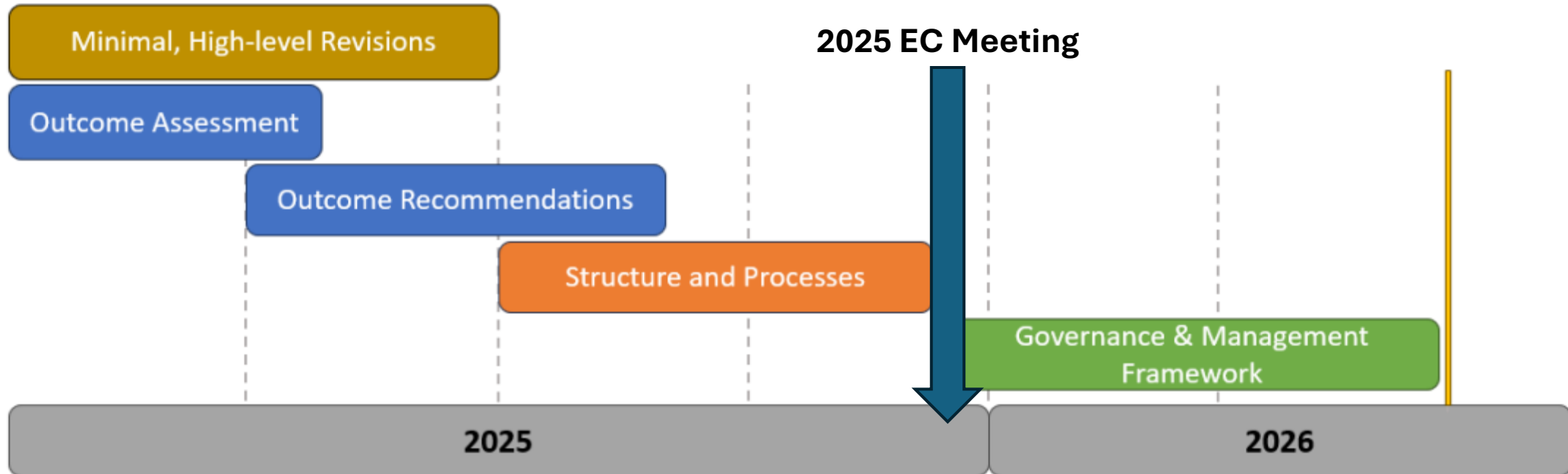
Not a new agreement. The 2014 agreement was written in a way to allow for revisions. While not all outcomes will need revision, some reviews will likely result in consolidating, reducing, updating, removing, replacing, or adding new outcomes. Every effort should be taken to complete revisions by the end of 2025.



Simplified and Streamlined Structure and Process for the Partnership

- 1** A simplified and streamlined structure and process for the partnership that supports all partners as they work toward achieving their commitments in an effective, efficient, and inclusive manner. It is the expectation of the EC that the revised partnership structure and processes will be more inclusive of all communities and more manageable for partnership staff.
- 2** The PSC must recommend this simplified and streamlined partnership structure to the EC in as much detail as possible by December 1, 2025.
- 3** The revised structure and processes must be incorporated into the CBP Governance and Management Framework by June 2026.

Phase II Schedule



How can you get involved?

- Introduce your group at an upcoming PSC/MB meeting
- 4/3 – Advisory Committee briefing on outcome reviews
- 4/10 – Decisions will be made on proposed new outcomes
- May – Language revisions; July-August – public comment

Thank you!

Contact me with
questions at
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