



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

May 23, 2024

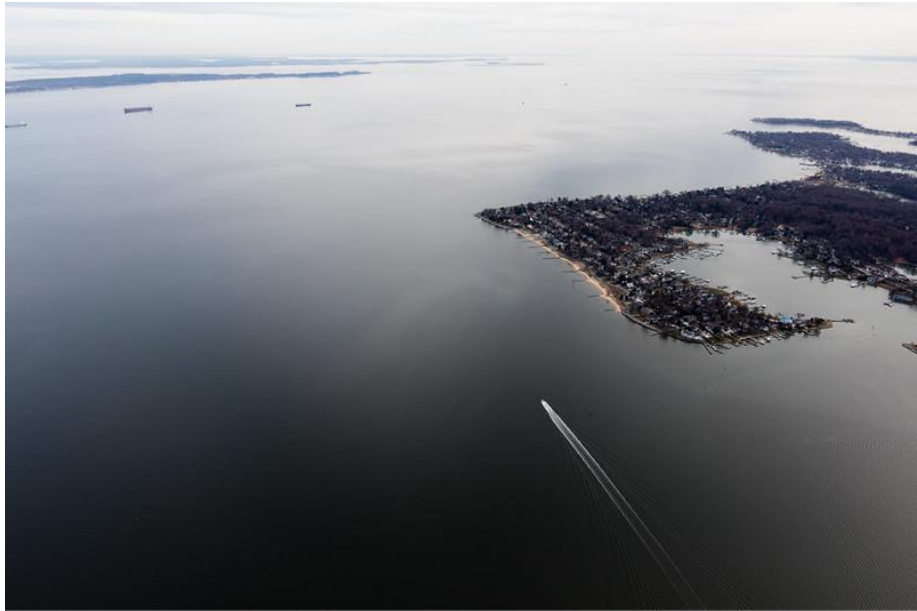
# Beyond 2025

## Public feedback period

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# What is Beyond 2025?



The Beyond 2025 Steering Committee advises on the development of recommendations to meet the Chesapeake Executive Council charge to the Principals' Staff Committee on charting a course beyond 2025.

# What is the Executive Council Charge?

Adopted by the Executive Council in October 2022, the charge directs the Principals' Staff Committee to recommend a critical path forward that prioritizes and outlines the next steps for meeting the goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement* beyond 2025.



**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.

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# Who is represented on the Steering Committee?

- Chesapeake Bay Commission
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Geological Survey
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- National Park Service
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Representatives from the six Goal Implementation Teams
- Stakeholders' Advisory Committee
- Local Government Advisory Committee
- Science and Technical Advisory Committee
- Maryland
- Virginia
- Pennsylvania
- Delaware
- New York
- District of Columbia
- West Virginia
- Two non-voting members (Chesapeake Bay Trust and Choose Clean Water Coalition)

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# What has happened so far?

- The Steering Committee determined the scope and breadth of what should be undertaken to meet the Executive Council charge and developed a plan to complete the work.
- Five small groups of subject matter experts were formed to develop findings to support the recommendation the steering committee will make to the Principals' Staff Committee.
- A contractor was retained to complete an independent evaluation of the partnership.

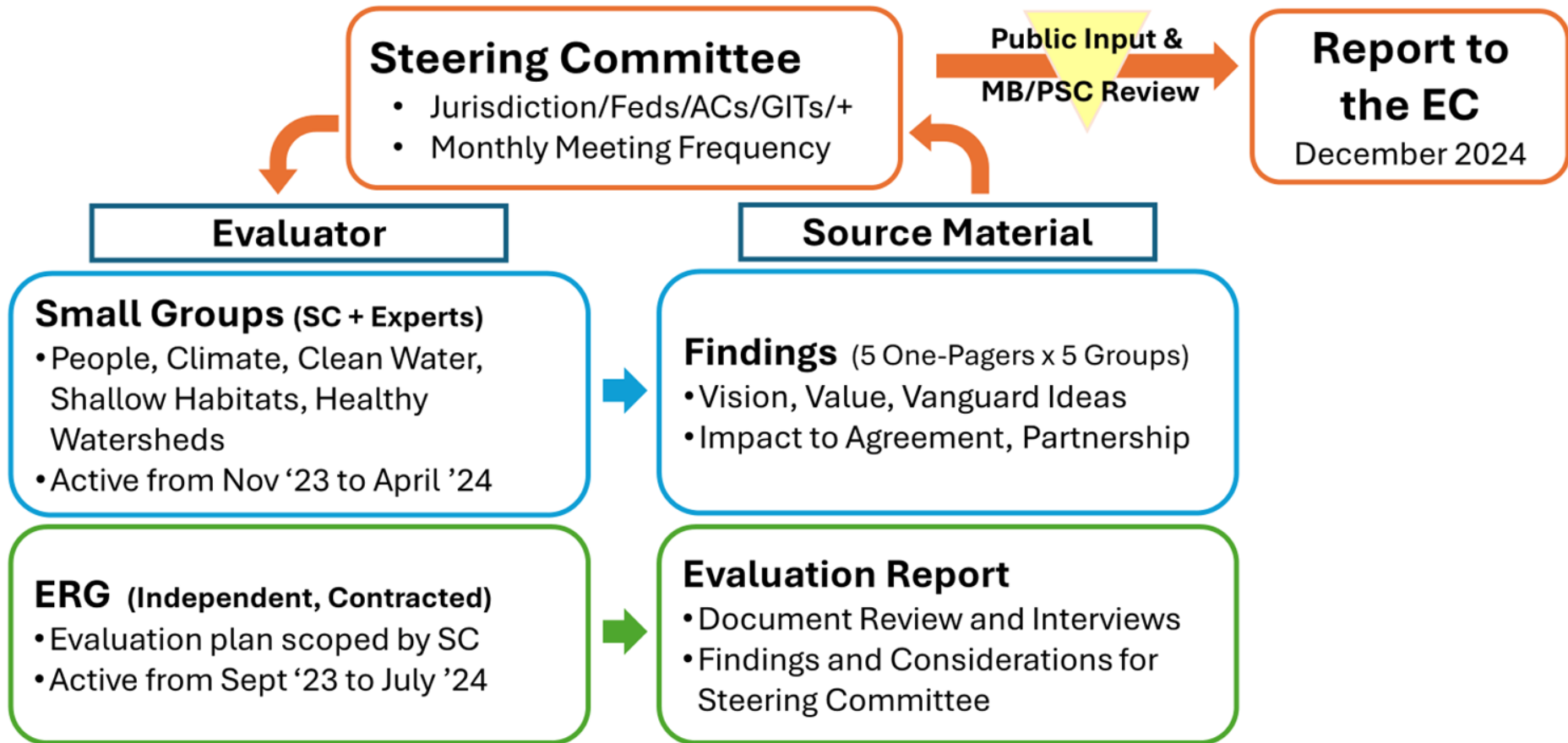
# Who are these small groups?



- Clean Water
- Climate Change
- Healthy Watersheds
- People
- Shallow Water Habitats

# Phase 1: Process

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# What materials did the contractor reference in their assessment of the partnership?

- *2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*
- Chesapeake 2000
- Governance and Management Framework for the Chesapeake Bay Program
- Achieving Water Quality Goals in the Chesapeake Bay: A Comprehensive Evaluation of System Response
- Enhancing Chesapeake Bay Partnership Activities by Integrating Social Science
- Retrospective on Lessons Learned from the Chesapeake Bay Program Strategy Review System's 3rd Cycle with Suggested Adaptations to Address Issues
- Advancing Monitoring Approaches to Enhance Tidal Chesapeake Bay Habitat Assessment
- Using Ecosystem Services to Increase Progress Toward, and Quantify the Results of, Multiple Chesapeake Bay Program Outcomes
- Charting a Course to 2025
- Rising Watershed and Bay Water Temperatures: Ecological Implications and Management Responses
- Enhancing the Chesapeake Bay Program Monitoring Networks
- Chesapeake Governance Study: Report of 2021 Decision-Maker Interview Results
- Recognizing Political Influences in Participatory Socio-Ecological Systems Models
- Linking Soil and Watershed Health to In-Field and Edge-of-Field Water Management
- Using Local Monitoring Results to Inform the Chesapeake Bay Program's Watershed Model
- Cafe Summaries and Report Products from the Chesapeake Bay Program Strategy Review System's #rd Cycle Biennial Meeting

# Phase 1: Outline

1

## Path Forward

Where we  
want to be

### Page 1 – 2: Critical Path Forward

- Our Recommendation (*Agreement/Partnership*)
- Our Vision for the Partnership (*People, Challenges, Conservation*)

### Page 3 – 7: Synthesized, Analyzed Summary

What we do  
How we work

- High-level considerations related to Science
- High-level considerations related to Restoration and Conservation
- High-level considerations related to Partnership

### Additional pages: Source Material

Where we are

- One-page Summaries from Small Groups, ERG Report
- CESR, Charting a Course to 2025, Chesapeake Progress: Outcome Attainability, and more

# What is the steering committee recommending moving forward?



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As amended, October 5, 2022

The Steering Committee recommends the *2014 Watershed Agreement* should be amended.




# Why should the Watershed Agreement be amended?

- We're making progress!
- We're not pressing 'pause'.
- Amendments can help close the gap.
- The *Watershed Agreement* was built for change.



# Outcome Attainability (as of 2023)

- 18 outcomes considered on-course.
- Two uncertain pending data updates in 2024.
- 11 outcomes will not be met by 2025.

 OUTLOOK ON COURSE	 OUTLOOK OFF COURSE
Blue Crab Abundance Outcome	Wetlands Outcome
<i>Blue Crab Management Outcome (Completed)</i>	Black Duck Outcome
Oysters Outcome	Brook Trout Outcome
Forage Fish Outcome	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Outcome
Fish Habitat Outcome	Forest Buffers Outcome
Stream Health Outcome	Tree Canopy Outcome
<i>2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) Outcome (Complete)</i>	2025 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) Outcome
Fish Passage Outcome	Diversity Outcome
Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring Outcome	Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention Outcome
Local Leadership Outcome	Toxic Contaminants Research Outcome
Protected Lands Outcome	Students Outcome
Land Use Methods and Metrics Development Outcome	Climate Adaptation Outcome
Land Use Options and Evaluations Outcome	 OUTLOOK UNCERTAIN
Public Access Outcome	Healthy Watershed Outcome
Sustainable Schools Outcome	Stewardship Outcome
Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome	
Climate Monitoring and Assessment Outcome	

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# Proposed Agreement Recommendation and Timeframe

## **By 2025 Executive Council Meeting:**

- Focus on high-level updates to the Watershed Agreement: Vision, Preamble, Principles, Goals and Management Strategies.
- Maintain focus on core: clean water, vibrant living resources & habitats, healthy landscapes and engaged people.
- Recommend adding “Conservation” to our mission statement.
  - Science. Restoration. Conservation. Partnership.
- Reaffirm commitment to partnership and continued collaboration.

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# Proposed Agreement Recommendation and Timeframe

## **Starting at the 2026 Executive Council meeting:**

- Review, refine and refresh outcomes.
  - Remove outdated dates and metrics.
  - Review completed outcomes, set plan for maintenance.
  - Add language to reflect emerging challenges (i.e., climate change).
  - Ensure outcomes have time-bound measurable targets.
- Commit to a renewed partnership.

# 2024 Timeline

July 1 - August 31

September

October

December

## Public feedback

A draft of the report will be published for public comment.

## Revisions

Revisions based on public feedback will be incorporated into the report.

## Management Board and Principals' Staff Committee Review

The Management Board and Principal's Staff Committee will receive and review the final report.

## Executive Council Review

The Executive Council will be presented with the findings of the report and have the opportunity to take action in response to its recommendations as a path forward for the Chesapeake Bay Program.

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# Public comment period

- Anyone can submit comments.
- Comments will not be addressed individually. All comments received will be posted online at [chesapeakebay.net](https://chesapeakebay.net).
- Comments will be collected and reviewed by subject matter experts. A red-lined version of the document will be posted online after the public feedback period.
- After the public feedback period, the document will be reviewed by the Management Board and approved by the Principals' Staff Committee before delivery to the Executive Council.

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**Submit comments and questions  
to**

**[comments@chesapeakebay.net](mailto:comments@chesapeakebay.net)**

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