



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
*A Watershed Partnership*

Bo Williams, EPA

# DEIJ Action Team

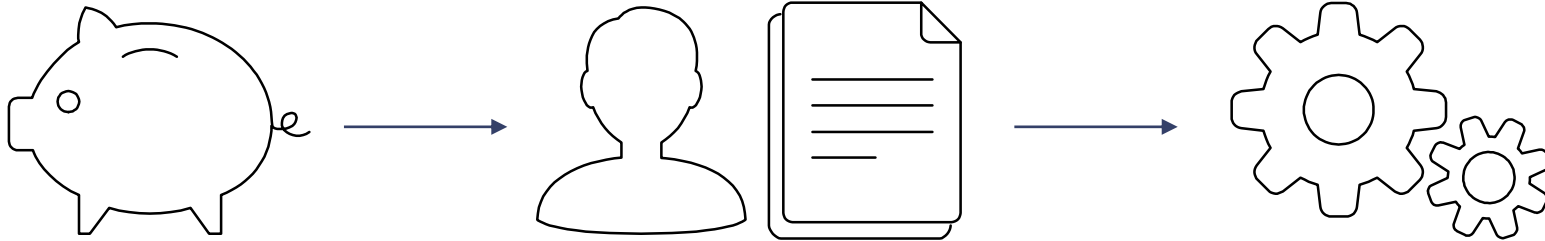
Habitat GIT Meeting 3-31-21

# Diversity and Environmental Justice in 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

- ▶ **Diversity Outcome:** Identify stakeholder groups that are not currently represented in the leadership, decision making and implementation of conservation and restoration activities and create meaningful opportunities and programs to recruit and engage them in the partnership's efforts.
- ▶ **EJ Principle:** 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.



# HOW WAS THE DEIJ STRATEGY DEVELOPED?



1) EPA-funded project awarded to independent consultant

2) DEIJ Readiness Assessment of CBP

- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Survey
- Review of policy documents

3) Draft DEIJ Strategy developed and reviewed by Diversity Workgroup before finalized in April 2020

# The five commitments in the PSC Action Statement



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Action Statement

Chesapeake Bay Program Principals' Staff Committee

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is home to diverse communities with rich variation in culture, demographics and perspectives. It is important to embrace this diversity and promote the meaningful involvement, treatment and inclusiveness of all people in the implementation of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. In doing so, we will be better able to achieve healthy local streams and lands, as well as a vibrant Chesapeake Bay that is shared by all people throughout the watershed.

The Chesapeake Bay Program partners acknowledge that individually, each partner has established policies and programs with the goal of advancing environmental and public health protection for all. Through these programs, the seven Bay jurisdictions, Environmental Protection Agency, other federal agencies, the Chesapeake Bay Commission and partners are working to address and advance diversity and environmental justice issues. We also recognize that there is more we must do as a united partnership, and for this reason we explicitly and tangibly commit to diversity, equity, inclusion and environmental justice. Partners will continue to build on this work, sharing best practices, and with the acknowledgement that this work may indeed look different across the jurisdictions and space represented as a partnership, we will move forward together. Further, we recognize the importance of addressing racism and other forms of discrimination in our efforts, structures and acts of daily practices.

Recognizing this, the Chesapeake Bay Program accepts the report and recommendations in the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Strategy (DEIJ Strategy) - developed by an independent consultant for the Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup of the Stewardship Goal Implementation Team (GIT) and finalized in 2020. To the extent consistent with state and federal law and policy, members of the Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) will strive to implement the recommendations of the DEIJ Strategy. The Chesapeake Bay Program Diversity Workgroup, which was formed in 2014, started working with an independent DEIJ consultant in 2018 to conduct a DEIJ readiness assessment of the partnership and developed a tailored DEIJ Strategy that recommends the partnership:

- Increase racial and ethnic diversity among partnership staff and leadership.
- Help partners develop as DEIJ leaders who understand, respect and embrace cultural diversity.
- Provide partners with the tools to continually assess progress towards diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice goals.

The DEIJ Strategy contains recommendations that are grouped into four DEIJ framework focus areas. The consultant developed these recommendations based on interviews with Chesapeake Bay Program teams and leadership, a DEIJ readiness survey, two focus groups, a review of key partnership policy documents and input from the Diversity Workgroup. They provide a visionary framework to be used by the partnership as a guide to help integrate DEIJ into the implementation of management strategies and inform biennial logic and action plan activities that achieve the outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.

## 5 PSC ACTION STATEMENT COMMITMENTS

To implement the recommendations in the DEIJ Strategy, the PSC commits to:

1. Within **six months** of the signing of the Chesapeake Executive Council statement, **a draft implementation plan for the DEIJ Strategy will be presented to the PSC**. The development of this plan will include direct outreach to underrepresented communities for input and feedback.
2. Within **three months** of the signing of the Chesapeake Executive Council statement, **explore a process for a community advisory board composed of environmental justice leaders and representatives from organizations led by people of color or other underrepresented groups**. This board could be part of one of the partnership's existing advisory boards (Citizens Advisory Committee or Local Government Advisory Committee).

## 5 PSC ACTION STATEMENT COMMITMENTS

3. Advancement of the DEIJ Strategy through **work plan development and implementation for all GITs and Workgroups** on their respective strategy review system schedules.
4. **Meaningful inclusion of DEIJ milestones on the agendas** for the Management Board and PSC meetings **at a minimum every six months** with a commitment to update the Chesapeake Executive Council annually.
5. **Meaningful consideration of DEIJ** in development of any future Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement(s).

# DEIJ Action Team “Vision”

## DEIJ Strategy Implementation Plan

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- ▶ Develop roadmap for implementing DEIJ Strategy Action Plan, identifying additional actions, subtasks, steps, and resources needed to ensure implementation by end of 2025.

## Community Advisory Board

- ▶ Develop recommendations for establishing a Community Advisory Board composed environmental justice leaders and representatives from underrepresented groups, identifying feasible options for board purpose, structure, membership, governance, funding/compensation, timing, etc.

## Outreach and Communications

- ▶ Engage underrepresented communities in the development of the implementation plan and recommendations for the Community Advisory Board. Use the engagement process as a foundation for organizational change and meaningful and long-term engagement with underrepresented communities.

# What are the key points of the draft implementation plan?

Four intentional areas of implementation covering policy, personnel, and practices:

- ▶ **Strengthen authorizing environment.** At the highest level, incorporate DEIJ in decision making.
- ▶ **Internal improvement.** Hiring, retention, culture, training.
- ▶ **Restoration work.** Work plans, grants, contractors, and communication.
- ▶ **Partner improvement.** Hiring, retention, culture, training.



# DEIJ Strategy Implementation Plan

***Vision:** Develop roadmap for implementing DEIJ Strategy Action Plans, identifying additional actions, subtasks, steps, and resources needed to ensure implementation by end of 2025*

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	TIMEFRAME	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	ROLES		POTENTIAL RESOURCES AND TOOLS	
3.2.b.	Develop a better understanding of environmental justice communities and organizations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This could include conducting stakeholder mapping exercise(s) to become familiar with what organizations are doing environmental justice work and related social justice work in the watershed. This could also include mapping exercises to identify communities of color and low income communities relative to CBP investments.	Phase 1: Conduct research to produce a better understanding of the EJ communities and organizations in the CB watershed. Ongoing: Update this research periodically.	What new organizations and communities have been identified? Has CBP found ways to build relationships with these entities?	Lead: Diversity Workgroup Supports: CBP GIS Team		Capture earnings from this task in related trackers (e.g., see 3.4.e)	
	Task	Description	Suggested Task Owner	Due Date	Date Completed	Current Status	Resource Needs
	Subtask 1	Refine the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Justice and Equity Dashboard	USGS GIS team	Dec-22	--	In progress. Beta version being circulated	

# DEIJ Strategy: Actions

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## Strengthening CBP's Authorizing Environment for DEIJ

>Objective 1: Create an authorizing environment for DEIJ

- **Action 1.2** Update the Management Strategies, as needed, to explicitly articulate the roles of diversity, equity, inclusion and environmental justice in achieving CBP's mission and guiding implementation of the agreement.

# DEIJ Strategy: Actions

## Advancing DEIJ through Watershed Restoration Work

>Objective 6: Advance DEIJ through GIT workplans and outcomes

- **Action 3.3.b., subtask 3:** GITs and Workgroups modify workplans to improve equity considerations (equitable distribution of benefits), with input from underrepresented communities.
- **Action 3.3.c.** Ensure implementation partnerships include organizations that are run by and primarily serve communities of color and other underrepresented communities.

# DEIJ Strategy: Actions

## Strengthening CBP's Authorizing Environment for DEIJ

>Objective 1: Create an authorizing environment for DEIJ

- **Action 1.7:** Establish protocol for tracking and reporting measures of success for all actions to include: 1) clear list and definitions of metrics for tracking; 2) protocols and time interval for measuring progress; 3) define baseline status; 4) define reporting structure.

# Next Steps—Outreach

DEIJ Action Team has developed a Communications/Outreach plan and schedule to guide internal and external outreach.

- ▶ **May-June:** Compile and incorporate internal CBP feedback from Action Team, Diversity Workgroup, and Partnership entities (e.g., Management Board, GIT Chairs, Coordinators/Staffers, SRS Team, grants teams) into plan redraft.
- ▶ **June-August:** Direct engagement with underrepresented communities via Action Team members and partner networks (including tracking); public comment period external review and comments. Develop stakeholder list with input from Action Team members.
- ▶ Efforts will build on the work of the CBP Communications Office and Diversity Workgroup who will help refine messaging and develop outreach materials.
  - ▶ Diversity Workgroup GIT-funded project , “Cultivating and Strengthening Relationships with Underrepresented Stakeholders

# Thank you

[williams.james@epa.gov](mailto:williams.james@epa.gov)