

DRAFT – version 2

Goal Implementation Team 4 - Maintain Healthy Watersheds Key Messages

The GIT4 has accepted the recommendation of the GIT4 Communications Workgroup to present the case for healthy watersheds using *key messages* that infuse consistent and effective language into formal and informal presentations. Our goal is to develop a compelling narrative about Healthy Watersheds and persuade leaders within CBP and EPA to support metrics for healthy watershed protection, establishing HW as a prominent and essential component of Bay recovery efforts.

Target audiences¹:

- Local Government Advisory Committee
- Citizens Advisory Committee
- Science and Technical Advisory Committee [maybe – do we consider them already on board?]
- Nick DiPasquale, Director CBP, EPA
- Jeff Corbin, Senior Advisor on Bay and Anacostia River, EPA

The follow key messages are presented using a “key message” and “proof point” architecture. Think of is as headlines follow by supporting details.

Key messages are a tool for developing strong and consistent presentations, letters, talking points or other communications pieces – this document is not a communications piece in and of itself, and is not intended to be presented as it to audiences.

¹ as identified in recommendations, and refined based on suggestions from Margaret Enloe

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SUPPORTING CURRENT HEALTH

Healthy Watersheds are the lands and waters that underpin the current health of the Chesapeake Bay – without these intact forests and woodlands, clean streams, and functioning wetlands the current condition of the Bay would be much worse, and the challenges to restoration much greater.

- Even in its current degraded state, the Chesapeake Bay is remarkably productive and deeply cherished. When we see indicators that are low or declining [fill in], we can thank *Healthy Watersheds* that things aren't worse!²

KEEPING IT CLEAN

Healthy Watersheds provide the clean water that gives us hope that we can reduce pollution, repair ecological damage, and restore the Chesapeake Bay to good health.

- Ecosystem services provided by *healthy watersheds* are expensive or even impossible to replace
- Restoration - while essential to reduce pollutant loads and repair damage already done – is expensive, with variable effectiveness.
- If Healthy Watersheds are degraded or lost, the price tag for Bay recovery goes up and the “reasonable assurance” of success goes down.
- ***How are we doing? Current development trends present a significant challenge to maintaining healthy watersheds, and current tracking makes it difficult/impossible? to assess status or trends across the Bay watershed.***

MAINTAINING HEALTHY WATERSHEDS -- KEY TO SUCCESS

Maintaining *Healthy Watersheds* as the foundation of the Bay's current level of health must be a component of successful Chesapeake Bay recovery efforts.

- **CBP should support conservation and restoration targeted to healthy watersheds – (addressing “hard to get funding” and targeting conservation \$\$)**
- **The CBP should incorporate tracking of status and trends of healthy watersheds into Bay metrics, because maintaining *Healthy Watersheds* as a critical, high-impact contribution to Bay recovery.**
- Partners in the GIT 4 and the STAC have begun working on the scientific and practical issues that must be addressed to track of the status and trends of healthy watersheds across Bay watershed, without placing new burdens upon state or local governments.
- Issues include:
 - types of indicators and data to be used,
 - how to define a “healthy watershed”,
 - creating current and repeatable measure(s),
 - producing information relevant for guiding and undertaking desired management or communications actions