

Chesapeake Bay Program

Governance and Structure Revisions

To fulfill the 2025 Chesapeake Executive Council [Governance and Structure Charge](#), the Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP) Governance and Management Framework (GMF) has been prepared for Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) approval. Once approved by the PSC, the revised GMF will guide CBP group membership, leadership, responsibilities and decision-making protocols.

Consistency in policy, terminology, and interpretation are a focus throughout the GMF, however tangible revisions to CBP's governing practices include:

1. Streamlined Coordination

- a. Elimination of the Management Board reduces a layer of formal vertical coordination, which is intended to decrease decision-making redundancy and processing time, enhance Goal Team authority, and clarify roles and responsibilities across the CBP.

2. Enhanced Accountability and Adaptive Management

- a. Established an overarching framework for CBP accountability and three review mechanisms: annual program reviews and prioritization; 3-year workplans with triennial reviews; and 6-year management strategies with a program-wide review in 2033 & 2039.
- b. Integrated review cycles with principles of adaptive management to enable institutional learning outcomes at multiple scopes of implementation.

3. Explicit Decision-Making Frameworks

- a. Decision-making procedures were written more explicitly and standardized where appropriate, while also tailored to a body's membership and purpose.
- b. Clarified decision-making responsibilities between implementation and leadership groups by establishing criteria for when it is necessary to elevate a decision.

4. Consistent Opportunities for Public Participation

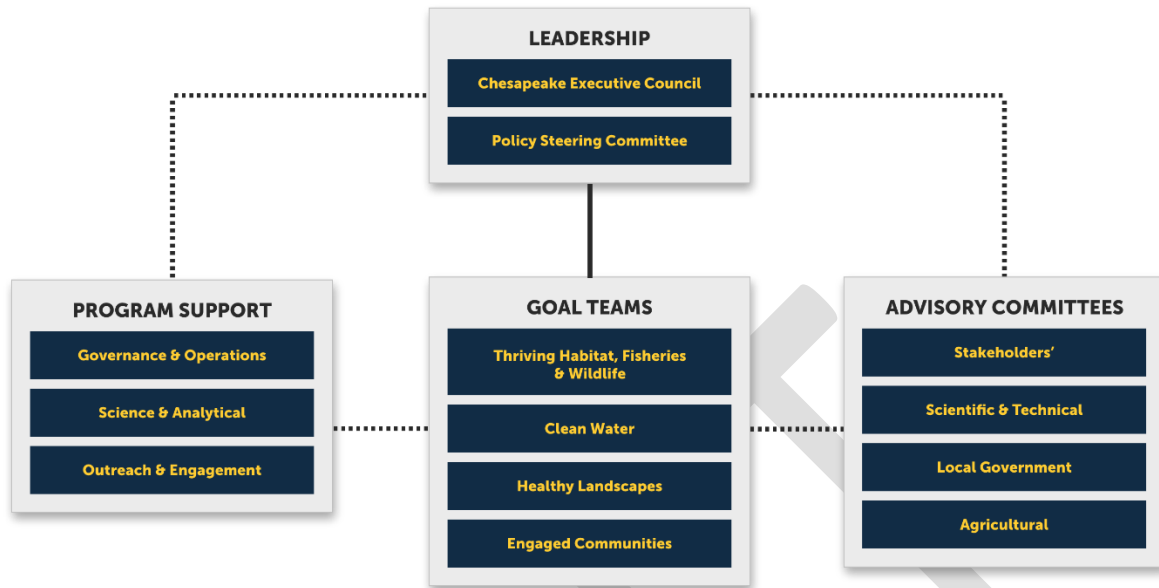
- a. Established standard practices for public participation at all CBP public meetings for consistent expectation setting and to promote accountability and inclusivity.

5. Aligned Priority Setting

- a. Established leadership responsibilities for instituting an annual prioritization process aimed at aligning CBP partners around shared issues to focus resources and meet our shared goals and outcomes.
- b. Aligned CBP support groups to address cross-program planning needs of the PSC and technical needs of goal teams and workgroups.

Moving forward, the governance and operations support group will be working to finalize a prioritization process for review by the PSC later this year and for implementation in 2027.

Chesapeake Bay Program Organizational Structure



The 2025 Chesapeake Executive Council [Governance and Structure Charge](#) identified two primary structural focus areas for CBP: **Program Leadership** and **Program Implementation**. Other than removal of the Management Board, no structural changes will be implemented for **Program Leadership**, now consisting of the Chesapeake Executive Council and the Policy Steering Committee (retitled from Principals' Staff Committee). The **Program Implementation** components consist of four goal teams, four advisory committees and three program support groups.

1. **The four goal teams reflect the four *Watershed Agreement* goals.** Leadership and signatory membership have been identified and provided as supplemental material.
2. **The four established advisory committees are maintained:** the Stakeholders', Scientific and Technical, Local Government, and Agricultural.
3. **Three program support groups will focus on internal implementation needs.** Two existing program support groups focused on science coordination and engagement , have undergone minor adjustments. a governance and operations group has been created to support the PSC, goal teams, and workgroups.

In addition to eliminating the Management Board, Goal Teams were reduced by one third and there was a net reduction of four workgroups. Several additional action teams are being stood up to support Management Strategy drafting and Phase 7 development.

Moving forward, goal teams, workgroups, and action teams will seek full membership, continue implementation and finish drafting their respective Management Strategies by June 2027.